

2016 *Journal of Literacy Innovation* Article of the Year

“THESE FRAGMENTS I HAVE SHORED AGAINST MY RUINS”: INTERTEXTUALITY IN THE DIALOGICAL SECONDARY CLASSROOM JENNIFER JACKSON WHITLEY THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

Abstract

This article explores Mikhail M. Bakhtin’s (1981) theories as expressed in *The Dialogic Imagination*. In it, one will find a synthesis of Bakhtin’s ideologies surrounding texts, as well as a discussion of Kristeva’s intertextuality, and Derrida’s implication for future texts. Specifically, dialogism and intertextuality explore the interrelatedness of all texts: past, present, and future. Intertextuality can be used in the classroom; if educators introduce it to their students, students will begin to find connections between texts on their own, as well as become empowered in relation to their education, giving them ownership of what they learn. Teachers hold this power in lesson planning, finding historical and contemporary utterances that support each text they read. In doing so, they will improve their classroom dynamic and have fewer students asking, “Why are we reading this?” and more asking, “Who?” “What?” “When?” “Where?” and “How?” By removing the veil from intertextuality, teachers create unique classes full of utterances; ones students develop from their own cognitive reservoir.

“These fragments I have shored against my ruins”: Intertextuality in the Dialogical Secondary Classroom

I remember the first time I read *The Waste Land* by T. S. Eliot. It was for a 20th Century British Poetry class at the University of Georgia. I was a soul-searching junior writing poetry in a Moleskine journal between classes. I was going to be a writer. I remember this poem because it spoke to me. I had to read it twice because the first time, I was so enamored by the language that I didn’t pay attention to the content. As I read, the words danced together on the page, and reminded me why I changed my major from biochemistry and molecular biology to English. Getting lost in literature is what I loved. It was not until my class lecture, though, that the poem changed my life. My professor identified one possible reason why Eliot quoted so many other works and authors in his poem. In a way, Eliot was saying that no text is new. Instead, each one is a response to other works. This idea does not mean that texts cannot be unique; no, they are merely a continuation of a conversation that begins with the first book one reads. I remember leaving class with “how” questions consuming my mind. Once I got home, I was in a state of literary catharsis that confirmed I was doing right by my heart in changing my major. I felt enlightened.

The theme of textual interconnection continued throughout my undergraduate degree and into my graduate programs. As I read and responded to literature, it became more apparent just how connected things were. Theorists from my modern American literature courses blended with those from educational psychology; difficult poetic themes became more universal. I found myself remembering utterances from lectures long past, and discerning these connections: what do they mean; what does “the conversation” entail? Is Eliot right; are we merely reformulating ideas that have already been formed—am I merely a piece of a puzzle that will never be finished? Do we write to support language, to shore it against its ruin? Unanswered questions flooded my mind; and while I loved the quest, I was spinning a web of textual connectivity that seemed like it had no end. That is, of course, until I encountered Mikhail M. Bakhtin, and discovered that it, indeed, would never end. However, this time, I was okay with that idea.

Just as I connected with T. S. Eliot and *The Waste Land*, a similar enlightenment happened the first time I encountered Bakhtin’s (1981) *The Dialogic Imagination*. In it, among other things, Bakhtin addresses the thousands of questions circulating my mind. Through a review of the novel, dialogism, and context, Bakhtin supports the very ideas raised in Eliot’s poem, but on a practical level: everything is understood in relation to its history and context. My mind was blown—of course everything is connected; how else can we learn, but to read and respond to that reading? Reviewing Bakhtin’s work reminded me of my twenty-one-year-old self reading Eliot. This time, though, I was no longer a wide-eyed junior. However, I never lost that self—she still speaks to me each time I encounter Eliot in my own classroom, with my own students. Reading Bakhtin, I am reminded of that passion, yet questions still linger: can educators inspire similar, aesthetic responses (Rosenblatt, 1982) in their secondary school students? Can teachers use dialogism to their benefit? If everything really is connected, can anything be unique? Are we writers at all, or merely readers who respond?

Seeking answers in Bakhtin’s theories, I found that dialogism, or the idea that language is social and ever-changing and therefore texts are affected by both past and future contexts, addresses students’ age-long question that plagues teachers each year: “Why are we doing this?” That one question—why?—is the reason. If we can get students to question texts in effective ways, then they begin to develop understanding through response, illuminating the purpose of education. I cherished my time in college because of the connection I felt with the literature I read. I did not need to search for meaning, I constructed it through a close reading of texts, allowing so much to resonate with my working memory. I developed context. The key to my impassioned response to *The Waste Land* was not merely in its literary value; it was in my personal, and its historical, context where an aesthetic, emotional response was born. The same fervor can happen for all students. Each time we embark on a journey inside an English classroom, we are continuing the literary conversation, creating context, building intertextuality and generating responses that continue the dialogic process. Bakhtin’s dialogism (the idea that texts are altered both by their past and future contexts) offers many implications for the

secondary school classroom, and when English teachers invoke him in their classes, students benefit from diverse, aesthetic responses to the texts they read.

In order to build a successful secondary English classroom, and inspire response in students, teachers should consider context and its place within their lessons. If everything exists and is indeed part of a larger whole, teachers should not ignore this gift, and build their lessons around dialogic theories, alluding to and presenting connections from each generation of literature. If curriculum is built dialogically, students can obtain the right schemas in order to come to their own deduction of texts, instead of resulting to unitary deductions devised by an author's style, intentions or societal norms. Using Bakhtin's theories in a classroom in tandem with fervid teaching can create a space that stimulates stronger, independent learners who respond dialogically to literature, thus continuing the intertextual conversation by coming to their own unique understandings. However, this process can only be accomplished if educators allow it. To build a dialogical classroom, students should become involved in the literary conversation in our classes while we inspire response through creative means. If we present enough information about each text encountered in a classroom, students will more easily understand interwoven meanings or contextual allusions. Once students have the tools to work with, response will come naturally, and understanding will erupt through creative conversation (Fecho, 2011; Fecho, Falter, & Hong, 2015; Whitley, 2015). In this paper, I will discuss how theory has informed my practice, allowing me to move my classroom toward a dialogical space in order to build lessons that trouble how we learn and what it means to teach.

Bakhtin, Kristeva, and Derrida's Textuality

Bakhtin (1981) defined dialogism as "the characteristic epistemological mode of a world dominated by heteroglossia" (p. 426). Meaning, everything is understood "as a part of a greater whole—there is a constant interaction between meanings, all of which have the potential of conditioning others" (p. 426). Texts, thus, are built upon other texts. One encounters heteroglossia, or "the base condition governing the operation of meaning in any utterance," (p. 428) the first time s/he encounters another human, whether in person or through his or her writing. Therefore, we cannot escape it. T. S. Eliot deliberately quoted many other writers in his poems, but every writer does just that, or something similar to it, whether intentionally or not. The presence of the past exists in every utterance, every writing, and cannot be forgotten (Bakhtin, 1981; Eliot, 2004; Shusterman, 1988; Takacs, 1989; Tobin, 1983). Each person has inspiration, and invokes it with every stroke of a pen. How does this idea relate to the classroom? For starters, it forces teachers and students alike to focus on literary context instead of merely reading a text. It encourages readers to place a text in its context while simultaneously creating a new context founded in the reader's personal schemas.

Context leads readers to conversation and understanding. Humans learn from each other both in person and through reading and responding to the pages of a text. Bakhtin (1981) asserted

that discourse lives, as it were, beyond itself, in a living impulse toward the object; if we detach ourselves completely from this impulse all we have left is the naked corpse of the word, from which we can learn nothing at all about the social situation or the fate of a given word in life (p. 292).

Therefore, one must interact with each text he or she reads, determining its social situation in order to come to a clear understanding. Interaction occurs not only in reading the text, but building the context, understanding the text's place in history, as situated both when it was written and when it was read. Interaction could look like writing and responding to the text, creating a new context in which to build knowledge and learning. However, one cannot simply dive in, the presence of the past must be revealed.

Appropriate context, inspired by a dialogical classroom, leads to meaning-making, and according to Michael Holquist (2002), "the meaning of whatever is observed is shaped by the place from which it is perceived" (p. 21). Specifically, dialogism asserts that meaning is contingent upon "a result of the relation between two bodies occupying simultaneous but different space" (p. 21). Context plays a role in shaping one's perception—not altering one's view, but giving a stance from which to view. Dialogism encompasses textual connection across history, but it also connects a text to self. In fact, "there is an intimate connection between the project of language and the project of selfhood: they both exist in order to mean" (Holquist, 2002, p. 23). If a text is built from language, and language exists to create meaning through communication, then dialogism is a basis of understanding. Meaning, though, cannot exist without context; yet, context cannot exist without reading, writing, and creative thought. A text has multiple modalities: a novel, poem, or essay, sure, but in a classroom, a text can be verbal, a discussion, or interactive through the use of technology. Therefore, understanding also comes in different forms. By combining the two forces of context, effective meaning is formed. If one sees his or herself in a text, or, if one can make connections between texts read, personal meanings arise from each interaction, building utterances that allow students to learn intertextually (Jones, 2008; Whitley, 2015).

No matter the text observed in a classroom, the past and present contexts of it are always in continuous play. Words are not unique in and of themselves—they have existed for centuries. What one does with words, in reference to linguistics, creates additional utterances from old texts. Bakhtin's (1981) dialogism asserts that texts are all related and understood by their relationships to other texts. Dialogism does not end with a text, though; everything is related because everything has a name, and therefore carries with it a schema and preconceived conception and/or context. According to Todorov (1984), "Not only have words always already been used and carry within themselves the traces of preceding usage, but 'things' themselves have been touched, at least in one of their previous states, by other discourses that one cannot fail to encounter" (p. 63). Because Bakhtin's theory of dialogism applies encouragingly to the secondary school classroom, it should not be left out of pedagogical conversation. In fact, if

teachers unveil this concept in their classes, students are more likely to create individual meaning from texts, building critical thinking skills in the process. This practice does not have to be done blatantly, but can be done through modes of meaning-making; finding connections and incorporating texts into their context.

Riding on the back of Bakhtin's dialogism, Julia Kristeva presented ideas of intertextuality in her essay, *Word, Dialogue and Novel*. In this piece, she defined intertextuality as "a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another. The notion of intertextuality replaces that of intersubjectivity, and poetic language is read as at least double" (Kristeva, 1986, p. 85). One cannot think of intertextuality as a mere referencing of other texts; instead, it is an inherent connection between readers and writers—both work together inherently, without push to do so. Specifically, there is not a single text existing that does not, in part, contain traces of other texts within itself (Eliot, 2004; Holquist, 2002; Lesic-Thomas, 2005). For instance, "utterances lead to thoughts and other utterances that lead to citations, and the conversation continues" (Kristeva, 1980, p. 46). Kristeva's use of "conversation" here is dialogical, but her focus is not on the repetition of ideas in context; instead, she, like Eliot, treats intertextuality as a contextual process that leads to meaning-making (Kristeva, 1980; 2010).

While both Bakhtin and Kristeva presented ideas on the interconnectivity of texts, they do not hold parallel beliefs. For instance, Bakhtin (1981) focused on the importance of language in connection with heteroglossia; understanding through the multiplicity of linguistics. Additionally, in dialogism, "literature is seen as an activity that plays an important role in defining relations between individuals and society" (Holquist, 2002, p. 86). However, Kristeva (1980) argued that "the text is a productivity" (p. 36). Meaning it "can be better approached through logical categories rather than linguistic ones; and...that it is a permutation of texts, an intertextuality: in the space of a given text, several utterances, taken from other texts, intersect and neutralize one another" (p. 36). Their differences lie within their application of dialogism. Bakhtin's theory refines the importance of context, while Kristeva placed focus on the connectivity of the works themselves.

However different, dialogism and intertextuality work together to build—and build upon—context for a secondary school classroom. Employing the notion that texts relate to each other, teachers can guide students to create understanding based on synthesis. Essential to intertextuality is the acknowledgement of utterances. According to Pam Morris (2005), "every utterance actively responds to other utterances and equally shapes itself in anticipation of an addressee's response" (p. 61). Morris elaborated upon Bakhtin's ideas: "In effect, every utterance is about other utterances." Therefore, discourse is not a singular event. Instead, it is a continuous set of stairs, ever-building upon another to continue a conversation begun long ago. It does not matter the subject; all words are responses. Moreover, Bakhtin (1981) argued, "Every utterance participates in the 'unitary language' (in its centripetal forces and tendencies)

and at the same time partakes of social and historical heteroglossia (the centrifugal, stratifying forces)" (p. 272, parentheses in the original). Specifically, "no living word relates to its object in a singular way: between the word and its object, between the word and the speaking subject, there exists an elastic environment of other, alien words about the same object, the same theme" (p. 276). Therefore, no text we read, no piece we write is brand new. It is new-*ish*, but is mostly a response to our social context, a continuation of what we have read and studied in our lifetime. Fresh ideas may sprout from others' responses, but we never create from "the top of our head"; instead, we continue others' thoughts in combination with our own. We build upon the literary and theoretical canons together, working through social collaboration.

In addressing intertextuality, one cannot discuss Bakhtin and Kristeva without referencing Jacques Derrida. According to Mariela Vargova (2007), "Derrida considers any moment of refounding as a new interpretation and any instance of constitutional interpretation as a new beginning, he nevertheless stresses the role of repetition, conservation and redemption in constitutional judgment" (p. 416). Derrida took the idea of dialogism and built upon it, asserting that each response is a new beginning, therefore creating yet another social context for readers. Furthermore, every act of response—writing, reading, speaking—is a continuation of another's work, but it is also unique to the author in that it allows his or her interpretation to become visible. According to Derrida (1978), "Imagination is the freedom that reveals itself only in its works. These works do not exist within nature, but neither do they inhabit a world other than ours" (p. 7). In relation to dialogism, Derrida revealed the obvious nature of intertextuality, but lent focus to linguistics, writing and spoken word. He opened the door for creative imagination and its role in understanding.

Vargova (2007) continued Derrida's conversation, describing his intertextual constitution as interpretative dialogue in two ways: "First, his constitution represents a dialogue between the moment of founding and future reinterpretations; it is thus an intricate interpretative interchange between the past and the future," and secondly, "Derrida offers an idea of legal and constitutional judgment as an open process, one characterized by both undecidability and ongoing deliberation" (p. 428). Derrida is focused on the future of text, not the past—on the evolution of it (Derrida, 1978; 2007). Our students' reactions to these texts are precisely one faction of that evolution. In addition, Derrida's contribution to dialogism can be found in his 1978 piece, *Writing and Difference*: "Everything begins with reproduction. Always already: repositories of a meaning which was never present, whose signified presence is always reconstituted by deferral, *nachträglich*, belatedly, supplementary" (p. 211, emphasis in original text). Instead of "intertextuality," he refers to "reproduction," similar to Eliot's (2004) ideas of making the past renewed in present writing.

Bakhtin, Kristeva, and Derrida illuminated qualities of intertextuality. While each argument differs in defining the author and reader's roles in a text, these theorists believe language is social, and therefore connected. Language, whether spoken or written, is intertwined with both

the author's past and current social context. If this notion is true, teachers can use dialogism and intertextuality to their benefit in their classroom. If curriculum is built around its past and current social context, teachers can assert similar notions and inspire students to synthesize the information they read through literary texts, both contemporary and classical. If utterances are products of previous utterances, and precursors to future ones, then students' responses create additional utterances from which to build upon. This web of responses allows any classroom, standards-based or eccentric, to become creatively unique. Maybe the ideas that sprout from lecture are not wholly new, but the conversations held will improve dialogue among students as well as give them ownership of the works they read. Once students know to identify intertextuality, reading will become proactive as well as interactive, instead of merely forced by the teacher. Just as T. S. Eliot brought his muses to light for his readers, teachers can identify similarities between texts for their students.

Implications for Practice: Creating Awareness

While theory seems a daunting task to discuss with on-level middle and high school students, part of creating awareness in the classroom is by telling students why each lesson is formed, allowing them to become part of lesson planning in a dialogical way. One way to build intertextual awareness is to inform students of the theories that support it. Maybe a teenager will not fully grasp heteroglossia, but s/he can understand why we look at literature through the lens of its historical and/or present context. If we prepare our students' minds by giving them a context from which to read, we can do fewer lectures about novels and more discussions delving into them. Answers exist—despite the blank faces sometimes looking back at us—we just have to give students a chance to construct them. If we do not create spaces for students to build schemas in the backs of their minds, they will not have a basis for inquiry. According to Bakhtin (1981), dialogue can be both internal (between two different selves, past and present) and external (between different people). Therefore, to create both internal and external dialogue in students, we must make their utterances heard by revealing utterances to them.

One way to make dialogism known to students is through pop culture. Specifically, Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* would not exist without Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* and other tragic love stories. *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins could not exist without Orson Scott Card's *Ender's Game* and other dystopian novels. The hardest part about getting students to care about or understand literature is not merely introducing classical novels. Instead, if we find something that piques their interest while introducing intertextuality as the basis of analysis, students will find connections on their own—that, and they'll find themselves enjoying the novels they once called "boring." According to Patricia A. Duff (2003), "Intertextuality involving pop culture...is a powerful resource for the display of teachers' and students' social and cultural identities and affiliations and also a potential source of consternation for those who do not have insider knowledge of the pop culture texts under discussion" (p. 233). Perhaps, if we make

connections to more easily-relevant texts in our classes, students will come to their understanding faster and more clearly than without pop culture references. This process includes reading young adult literature—either alone or as supplement to canonized novels, or watching clips from popular television shows or movies to support an argument in a text. There are so many ways to incorporate contemporary texts in a room, and students benefit from these connections, as they respond aesthetically to things that emotionally involve them (Fecho, Falter, & Hong, 2015; Jones, 2008; Whitley, 2015; 2016).

Duff (2003) continued her discussion, claiming that students’ “pop culture expertise may also give [them] a sense of power and authority” in the classroom (p. 234). If we have the chance to give students ownership of their textual responses, why not let it happen? Why not pair an article on #BlackLivesMatter with King’s (1963) *Letter from Birmingham Jail* and have students discuss intertextual examples? Better still, students can self-select texts they believe relate to one another and explain the connections they make. While pop culture is a valuable source to secondary curriculum, it must be used wisely. Clearly, if contemporary references are used, they, too, must be presented in context. Intertextuality relates to all texts, not just classical pieces. One cannot build an intertextual basis for *The Waste Land* without discussing *Tristan und Isolde*, *Hamlet* or Baudelaire’s *Fleurs du Mal*. Furthermore, one should not introduce a new text to his or her classroom without giving students background knowledge on that piece, and contemporary pieces that respond to it. By creating a reservoir of knowledge within our students, they will become lifelong learners who achieve individual understanding based on dialogism and intertextuality, as these utterances will continue to arise even after class is done. We cannot merely read novels and expect students to determine themes, symbols, and allusions if they have no receptacle to construct ideas from. We cannot expect students to relate to texts that do not represent, in some way, who they are. Curriculum could benefit from Bakhtin’s ideas, implementing them in order to weave a web of allusions from past works, allowing our students to learn and grow (Fecho, 2011).

One way, specifically, that I have incorporated popular culture into my classroom in order to spark intertextual lessons and conversations is through the use of music. Dialogical classrooms are built upon meaningful relationships between students, teachers, and the texts they read. However, it can only be meaningful if it comes from everyone, and not just the teacher. When I taught both high and middle school students, I always assigned an essay on the first day or during the first week. I know, I was mean; however, I tried to make it more of an introduction between myself and them—between my likes and theirs—and not just about collecting initial data on their writing strengths and growths. The question changed, but it was usually something like: What are the three songs that mean most to you right now and why? After introducing the assignment, I would play parts of my three songs for the class (at least one or two of them changed every year due to context) and talk about why I chose them. Last year, it was “Glory” by Common and John Legend, “Shake it Off” by Taylor Swift, and “Goodbye Sky Harbor” by Jimmy Eat World.

After listening to excerpts from the songs together and discussing what they meant to me, I would have students free write about the songs they liked, and then the floor would be opened to them. These conversations were never perfect—there was always at least one student who hated music, but could write about something else (video games, cars, movies, vacation spots, etc.), or another student who wanted to discuss a nonconventional song in detail, inciting laughter and wide eyes from his or her peers—but, there were other students who showed a deep connection to music, whether it was because of their powerful message (like “Glory”), or whether it was because the song was silly and reminded them to not let others’ opinions get to them (like “Shake it Off”), or whether, still, the song reminded them of the person they loved most in the world (like “Goodbye Sky Harbor” reminds me of my husband). It may not seem like much, but this assignment—and others like it—opened the door to intertextual dialogue on the first day of class and, for me at least, it set the precedence that my students matter, and that the things they read and like to talk about matter, and that those things have a place in our classroom. We were able to bring what we talked about during these lessons into later conversations about other texts we read, such as *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Bronx Masquerade*, *A Letter from Birmingham Jail*, and many more texts. Moreover, we were able to talk about what influenced these texts and how they influence us—continuing the intertextual exchange for the rest of our time together.

The quality intertextuality adds to the classroom grows ever more valuable when measured alongside the skills students learn from a dialogical atmosphere. When students ask “Why are we doing this?” or “How is this going to help me in my future career?” we cannot simply say, “We have to do it because it’s in the standards” (Whitley, 2014). We have to involve students in these difficult conversations in order to give them ownership of their education. If students ask these questions, they create teachable moments that allow intertextuality and dialogism to shine. After all, intertextuality is not merely about texts relating to and borrowing from one another. The larger picture is in “the conversation.” This conversation refers to a life outside of the classroom—to the dialogue students will carry with them once they graduate and merge into adulthood, to their careers and future children. The learning that results from a dialogical atmosphere sticks.

When teachers demonstrate the importance of intertextuality and dialogism in their lessons, students may begin to see a larger picture, appreciating texts on a new, more aesthetic level. After all, according to discourse analysis, “Meaning is not manifested in words, but is realized as a function of their internal and external relations” (Widdowson, 2004, p. 77). Once students learn how to use context effectively, they will be able to apply this concept to situations outside the classroom. Dialogism merges into everyday life, carrying the weight of words along with it. Kristeva (1980) claimed, “As capitalist society is being economically and politically choked to death, discourse is wearing thin and heading for collapse at a more rapid rate than ever before” (p. 92). With advances in technology, this idea rings even more true; students are too often

losing themselves in social media, not books. We need to rekindle students' love for learning in our classes. This action can be done through the use of intertextuality and highlighting similarities between Meyer's Edward and Shakespeare's Romeo—through Tupac and e e Cummings—through Mildred Taylor and #BlackLivesMatter. Students will care if we give them reasons to, if they can learn how to make connections from texts to what they care about—from words to life.

Conclusion

As I write, I am reminded of an exchange I had with one of my eighth grade students last year that left me feeling defeated. I was handing out a cycle test—a practice standards-based exam. Every teacher at my school had to give a cycle test every other week in preparation for our state's high stakes end-of-course standardized test—no exceptions. We were also supposed to retest during the other weeks. Most of my students, then, were testing in every class at least once a week—on top of another hour they were forced to spend on a computer-based test preparation program each week, too. As I handed this student a copy of the test, he dramatically rolled his eyes and said, “Gah—this is SO STUPID! I *hate* school and these dumb tests!” My immediate reaction was to turn quickly to him and say something like, “Excuse me? You need to remember who you're talking to and try that again!” After a moment, though, I looked at him and silently agreed, shaking my head and shrugging. I wanted to stop everything and talk about why he was right, how his words of frustration also sang in my heart, and how every Wednesday when I had to test or retest, I lost a bit of my teacher soul, just like he lost a bit of his student one. I got it—I got him in that moment, but with that test in my hand, we could never see eye to eye.

Instead of dialogically addressing his frustration—*our* frustration—I acknowledged it by putting the test on his desk and blaming the system for our failure. That day sticks out in my mind because I had the opportunity to engage in a dialogical conversation about standardization and the history of power and bias that feeds high stakes testing. I didn't, though, which brings me to my final point: theory is just that—an idea, a proposition, a foundation of principles. When in the heat of teaching, when facing those delicate moments, when provided the opportunity to dialogue with our students and hold intertextual conversations, we are not necessarily going to invoke Bakhtin and hold a perfect classroom discussion. We are people. We are real, and we make mistakes. Our students may not immediately understand our intentions, they may not know how to speak dialogically, and they may not want to engage in this work. However, it is my hope that this paper offers a reminder of the possibilities of dialogue and what can happen when we invite it into our classrooms.

Bakhtin and his predecessors have provided us educators with implications for dialogism and intertextuality. One cannot deny that every text is influenced by another text, either implicitly or explicitly. Words build upon other words, utterances come from past utterances and probe

future ones. If language is so interrelated, we should make its connections known to our students. If we give our students background knowledge to what they read, and practice finding connections between texts and pop culture—or, say, texts and activist culture—they will learn to address and utilize heteroglossia on their own. Maybe then, when a student calls out my actions when handed a practice standardized test, we can hold a thoughtful conversation about our world using the words we have read about in class. This process may be difficult at first, but will eventually, *hopefully*, encourage aesthetic, emotional responses within our students, especially if we can find contemporary texts and ideas to relate each work to, allowing a sense of empowerment or ownership in these students' hearts. If they can come to intertextual realizations on their own, they might just have similar responses to my twenty-one-year-old self. They may not be as impassioned as I was when I read Eliot, but any kind of learned ownership instills a response that is worth remembering.

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