

# Exploring Teaching Methods Corresponding with the Theory of Basic Human Values in Late Childhood and Early Adolescence Classrooms

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EXPLORING TEACHING METHODS CORRESPONDING WITH THE  
THEORY OF BASIC HUMAN VALUES IN LATE CHILDHOOD AND  
EARLY ADOLESCENCE CLASSROOMS

by

NICOLE DALY

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
For the Honors In the Major program in Elementary Education  
In the College of Education and Human Performance  
And in the Burnett Honors College  
At the University of Central Florida  
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Thesis Committee: William Russell Ph.D.

## **Abstract**

Recent research that indicates ten universal values are shared across cultures has developed into the Schwartz Value Systems Theory. This theory describes the ten basic human values that derive from different motivational forces such as social superiority, an inner desire in novelty, and loyalty to one's group. The values and corresponding motivational forces guide an individual's decisions. After the Schwartz Value Systems Theory had been developed, two surveys have been created in order to assess an individual's value hierarchy. While both of these surveys accurately measure an adult's values, further research has indicated children possess individual values similarly to adults. As a result, the Picture Based Values Survey for Children was created in order to consider children's values. The results from the children who took the Picture Based Values Survey For Children revealed that those children as a group acquired the same value hierarchy as adults. Since motivational forces determine an individual's values, it would seem predictable that values might have an effect on a student's level of motivation to succeed in the classroom. When a student's motivational goals are met in the classroom, then they will become engaged in the lesson by aligning students' values to the teaching methods incorporated in the lesson. This thesis therefore integrates prior research on children's value development, the effects these values have on society and the classroom, and ways to exhibit values through discourse and teaching methods. Further, this seeks to apply this research in late childhood and early adolescence classrooms by examining the effects that may result from teachers exhibiting each of the ten universal values through their teaching methods through publicly shared videos.

**Dedication**

**My brother and sister**

**Casey-Jean Daly and Tim Daly**

**For showing me the importance of insight and the courage of  
compassion**

## **Acknowledgements**

*I would like to extend my appreciation to the people who have selflessly supported me throughout this process:*

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I would like to thank my family, especially my mom, Loreen Daly, for the constant encouragement and validation she has given me while writing this thesis. Lastly, I would like to thank Carlos Blandon for reminding me of my capabilities when I was ready to quit.

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## **Introduction**

As teachers, it seems we are all too often focused on attempting to mold students into what we think they should be instead of being objective leaders that encourage students to grow in the direction they choose. During my experiences in elementary level classrooms, I have come to realize that understanding one's students is imperative in order to promote this growth. From my past observations, it seems that when the teachers know and respect their students, they are more able to influence and gain respect from the students. I have seen how this influence and respect is likely to increase student motivation and decrease discipline problems. Consequentially, I have become interested in how teachers are able to show this understanding and respect for each individual student.

As a pre-service teacher candidate at the University of Central Florida's Elementary Education program, I have been given the opportunity to work with various teachers in the K-6 classroom. All these teachers have provided me with insightful advice and guidance into the profession of education. One elementary teacher in particular left a permanent impact on my perspective on the role of a teacher. When I first walked into her classroom, I had mixed feelings. She made me feel welcomed with a smile and a personalized gift basket, but I was also intimidated by the loud and terse discourse she used.

The students, however, seemed to respond positively. Curiously, it was clear that her discourse was purposeful because her remarks were effective and caused the students to work diligently. I have been in classrooms with teachers who utilized language in a similar manner, but I had never been in a classroom with so few behavioral disruptions.

This is when I began to think of the different effects that overall discourse between teachers and students can have on a classroom community. The students in my internship class seemed to respond to this use of language differently than other students I have worked with in the past have.

In order to understand the differences in student reactions to the same discourse, I decided to further analyze the dynamics between the students and the teacher's chosen use of language. While my relationship grew with this teacher, she revealed the strategies she used to better understand her students to me. She told me how she conducted an "I wish my teacher knew. . ." activity on the first day of school. Through this activity, she was able to gain a deep understanding of each student's sense of self and their expectations of her role. Throughout the school year, the teacher continued to conduct such activities and implemented questions into the curriculum that enabled her to more fully assess her students' personalities. This was interesting because I found a pattern that the teacher carefully differentiated her tone of voice according to the student she was speaking to depending on the individual student's personality. I had never experienced such a personalized classroom dynamic, and I wanted to learn more about why this approach worked. This teacher had a quote posted on the wall stating, "Fair is not everyone getting the same, but everyone getting what they need." I believe this quote summarizes the classroom management approach this teacher took through her differentiated chosen discourse.

From my experience, every student intrinsically possesses a fixed set of values that exist as the driving force behind the student's choice of direction in the classroom. I believe a student's values often determine how the student will interact with his or her

teacher in the classroom community. There has been research that shows how a citizen will often determine their preferred presidential candidate based on the values they share. I believe the relationship between the teacher and student is similar to a citizen of the United States and a Presidential candidate. Just as a citizen needs to elect a president, the student needs to elect the teacher as the leader of the classroom community. Therefore, this thesis seeks to explore student values and the ways in which teachers can increase student engagement by aligning with those values.

As part of the Honors in The Major research process, I discovered research in the discipline of political science and psychology completed on how values serve as an intrinsic evaluation system of voters during presidential elections (Schwartz, 2012). I found this research extremely interesting and wanted to explore ways to carry out this research in the elementary classroom. As I began to contemplate with this idea, I began to notice the similarities and differences between student and teacher morals. I also observed how student values corresponded and conflicted with one another. This theoretical stance of examining values or morals of each entity could start to explain a complex classroom dynamic between students and their overall engagement in the classroom. Research suggest humans share ten universal values cross culturally (Schwartz, 1992). The importance placed on each of these ten values can be determined by an individual or whole group. This thesis therefore integrates research on value development, the effects values have on voter choice, and ways to exhibit values through discourse and seeks to apply this research in late childhood and early adolescence classrooms by examining the effects that may result from teachers exhibiting each of the ten universal values through their teaching methods.

## **Chapter Two: Review of Literature**

Since this thesis seeks to more thoroughly understand complex classroom dynamics that are shaped by student values, this chapter will share the research literature in regard to a) exploring the ways teachers establish their values in the classroom, b) exploring how symbolic interactionism shapes values, c) explaining the relationship between citizens symbolic values and their preferred presidential candidate (as an analogy for the classroom), d) analyzing the relationship between students and their teacher as a political leader of the classroom community, e) noting the importance of language and teacher discourse, f) explaining the ways teachers might use language and other teaching methods to align with student values in order to attain student engagement, and g) explaining the ways teachers might use teaching methods to implement student values in order to attain student engagement.

### **Exploring the Ways Teachers Establish Their Values In The Classroom**

This section will explain how teachers and schools might hold a predetermined set of values. In a typical classroom setting, these values are expected to be executed by the students. For example, the Orange County Public School System has established a school wide value system called HOPS. HOPS is an acronym, which stands for Have respect, Own your choices, Positive attitude, and Safety first. The students are expected to exemplify these values in order to become successful students.

The differences among student values are often ignored in the classroom. Instead, the teacher will assume that his or her values, such as tradition and achievement, are

shared with the students. The teacher then often establishes a punishment and reward system based on these values with the intention of teaching students to hold values he or she believes are important for success. This approach has two implications in my opinion. First, I believe that if a teacher assumes his or her values are the only acceptable values, many students will feel disconnected from and possibly disrespected by the teacher if they do not share these values. The second possible implication with this approach to classroom management is that success is a somewhat subjective term and if a student does not feel that the teacher understands or respects his or her values, then that student might not wish to reach the teacher's idea of success in the classroom. Instead, they might prefer to strive for success in a domain that better aligns with what they consider to be important. Consequentially, the students who hold different values might disregard the teacher and disengage from the lesson.

The rules the teacher applies in the classroom community culture are the initial outline for the values held in that classroom. Generally, the teacher comes in with the expectation that students will follow these rules and adhere to his or her determined set of values. As Kyle Schwartz (2016) stated in *I Wish My Teacher Knew*, "there is much discussion on how teaching character can predict future success in a student or lead to a student meeting a long-term goal like graduating from high school" (p.154). My previous observations, however, show that this can ultimately work against the teacher's goal to attain satisfactory classroom management if the students do not honor the same values. Although ethics can be taught to students, moral judgments and prioritized beliefs are essentially internal (Copp,1995). In this sense, attempting to conform student morals to

the code of conduct pre-established by the teacher or school may prove to be counterproductive with some students.

### **Exploring How Symbolic Interactionism Shapes Values**

This section aims to understand the shaping of student values. This section will explain the concept behind symbolic interactionism and how this concept has provided the grounds for symbolic value systems theory. This section will then define symbolic values systems theory and how they shape students' perceptions in their environment.

Symbolic interactionism explains the idea that people assign meaning to things in order to decide how to act. This meaning, however, can change due to new experiences and everyday life. This is a small-scale sociology theory that focuses on individual experiences rather than larger groups. George Herbert Meade's theory that was publicized by his former student, Herbert Blumer (1962) on Symbolic Interactionism explains how humans use symbols to make sense of their daily lives and interactions with other humans. The effects of symbolic interactionism largely depend on interpretation and personal experiences (Mazzotta,& Meyers, 2008). Since humans encounter different experiences from one another, this theory may explain how individuals use their own unique perspectives as a way to assess their environment.

The theory of Symbolic Interactionism (Blumer, 1962) depicts the mind as a constantly evolving and developing machine, which uses the past, present, and perceived future to fully assess an object or person. Symbolic Value Systems are consequentially a byproduct of this theory. The theory of Symbolic Value Systems describes value

development as a process constructed within an individual's interpretation of their own experiences and perceptions. The term symbolic systems is used when referencing the use of symbols to represent and understand one's surroundings in order to effectively communicate and co-exist within his or her world. This theory of moral development contributes to the idea that morality occurs unremittingly. An individual will construct his or her ideal moral compass based off of his or her personal experiences.

While the Symbolic Value Systems Theory describes unique differences amongst individual values, the Schwartz theory of basic human values describes a proposed set of universal values that are common across all cultures. Schwartz's theory of Universal Values (1992) also describes the basic motivational forces behind these values. These motivational forces are a result of basic human needs, which every individual naturally inherits. For the purpose of clarification, the passage below describes the explanation, provided by Schwartz (2012, p. 4) for the attributed motivations behind his value theory:

“These values are likely to be universal because they are grounded in one or more of three universal requirements of human existence with which they help to cope. These requirements show the needs of individuals as biological organisms, requisites of coordinated social interaction, and survival and welfare needs of groups. Individuals cannot cope successfully with these requirements of human existence on their own. Rather, people must articulate appropriate goals to cope with them, communicate with others about them, and gain cooperation in their pursuit. Values are the socially desirable concepts used to represent these goals mentally and the vocabulary used to express them in social interaction.” (Schwartz, 2012, p. 4).



All of the ten values, including self-direction, stimulation, Hedonism, achievement, power, security, conformity, tradition, benevolence, and universalism, are found across cultures and derive from human motivational needs. For example, control and mastery are basic human needs motivating the value of self - direction. The Schwartz Values Survey (SVS) and the Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ) have been used to assess and compare these ten values between individuals and cultures. Results have shown that the ten values are ranked similarly across cultures but differentiate in importance between individuals (Schwartz 1992). I believe this shows how varied life experiences discussed in the theory of symbolic interactionism affect the varied hierarchal importance each individual contributes to the universal values but also shows a shared societal value hierarchy.

The ten Universal values as identified by Schwartz (1992) are grouped into four higher order value categories including self-transcendence, conservation, self-enhancement, and openness to change. Self- transcendence consists of universalism and benevolence values. Conservation consists of tradition, conformity, and security values. Self-Enhancement consists of power and achievement values. The fourth category, openness to change, consists of hedonism, stimulation, and self-direction values. These ten values are designed in a circular structure to visually represent each value's level of compatibility with other values. The close proximity of the values within the circles shows if they are harmonious with one another. However, values on opposite angles of the circle are incompatible. For example, openness to change and conservation are located on opposite sides of the circle while self-enhancement and self-transcendence values are opposite one another. This shows how, due to basic human needs, these ten

values are found in every culture yet these values do not always work together. As a result, not all individuals are driven by each value equally.

As a teacher, it is imperative to understand the ways in which students interact with the world around them in order to determine how their interactions have shaped their values. A teacher might be able to achieve this by asking students questions to understand their background knowledge. I predict teachers will also be able to maintain a clear understanding of student values by providing the students with the Picture Based Value Survey for Children (Döring, 2010). This survey was created as an adaption of the Schwartz Values Survey with the intention of describing values in a way that is easy for children to understand and evaluate. Teachers will then have the opportunity to differentiate their discourse and teaching methods based on these values with the intention of increasing student engagement. In order to see how values might be applicable to the elementary level classroom, this thesis first examines its role in political science. The thesis will then connect and apply the research of values in the field of political science to a variety of elementary settings available through classroom videos.

### **Explaining The Relationship Between Citizens Symbolic Values And Their Preferred Presidential Candidate (as an analogy for the classroom)**

The purpose of this section is to compare the relationship of citizens and their preferred presidential candidate to students and their teacher. This section will use a dissertation written to explain the reasons for voter choice based on the alignment of their predetermined set of value with their preferred presidential candidate (Herness, 1996).

Symbolic politics theory uses the context of symbolic value systems theory to argue that symbols, when first noticed in the political context, have the potential to elicit a predetermined response that influences an individual's preferred presidential candidate (Herness, 1996). Angus Cambell (1980) suggested the social psychological model, which describes the predictability of voter choice based on the inherent values of the voter. These voter values include party identification, group association, ethnic prejudices, and human's virtual opposition to change. When a person receives new political information, they will not typically analyze the information without bias. This is because people tend to organize information into schemas. These schemas are built and developed in the brain, but are not changed. This is because a person is usually not able to erase a memory or experience. Instead, a person will use their previous experiences to make sense of one another and make sense of the present (Herness,1996). This is a reiteration on the basic concept behind symbolic value systems that was described while exploring how symbolic interactionism and culture shapes individual's values.

Competing presidential candidates tend to focus on shared social values during their campaigns in order to their statistical chance of becoming elected (Herness,1996). American elections have shown that these values include freedom, liberty, individualism, patriotism, and equality of opportunity (Herness,1996). When one considers the analogy in a classroom, students play a similar role to the voters who elect or follow a leader, such as the teacher. The teacher, however, is given the opportunity to interact with students on a more personal level than a political candidate would typically interact with voters. As a result, the teacher is able to assess and exhibit the shared cultural values in

the classroom. This thesis will examine student values holistically to determine if those values are being respected by the teacher.

### **Analyzing the Relationship Between Students and their Teacher as a Political Leader of the Classroom Community**

To further follow the analogy of voters to president with the relationship between students and their teacher, the dynamics between student and teacher values must be examined. The purpose of this section is to connect the research completed on the effects of values on vote choice to the classroom. This section will analyze the dynamics of the teacher and students in the classroom as a community culture.

In the elementary classroom, children acquire new academic information from the teacher, but they are also processing a teacher's values related to and subconsciously examining whether those values align with theirs. Therefore, I predict the students will obtain an opinion towards the teacher based on whether their subconscious values match or are oppositional. As previously mentioned in the section Explaining How Symbolic Interactionism Shapes Values, values determine the criteria for evaluating people and values also motivate action. These are two of the six common features Schwartz has identified in the many theories regarding values. (Schwartz, 2012). This explains how individuals view their values as a contribution to their self-identity in terms of their beliefs, attitudes, and actions. Understanding our values helps us better understand ourselves and explain why we may act or react in the way that we do.

Eccles (1999) is a professor of psychology, education, and women's studies and described the importance of self identity in the childhood years in the following passage:

“Exercising their growing autonomy in school...children learn about the world outside the family, match themselves against the expectations of others, compare their performance with that of their peers, and develop customary ways of responding to challenges and learning opportunities. Through these years, they forge a personal identity, a self-concept, and an orientation toward achievement that will play a significant role in shaping their success in school, work, and life. (Eccles, 1999, p. 31).

As a result, I predict students are more likely to misbehave when their inherent values are different than those values being projected by the teacher. This is because if a child’s values are not acknowledged, then they will feel disconnected from the learning environment established by the teacher. Consequentially, they often dismiss the teacher and the teacher’s lesson with the intent of maintaining their own self-identity and intrinsic motivational goals.

Just as a political leader often aligns with citizen values in order to persuade voter choice, one could imagine that teachers might use the same strategy of value alignment to persuade students to fully engage in the classroom. A political leader realizes that he or she needs to acknowledge the varied values of the citizens because those values will often determine their vote choice. If a teacher utilizes this approach, he or she may be able to use the student’s intrinsic evaluation criteria of values to increase the students choice of involvement in the classroom.

### **Noting the Importance of Language and Teacher Discourse**

This chapter aims to explain the research behind language. It will determine the purposes of language while analyzing the conscious and subconscious messages

conveyed through language while examining the effects of teacher discourse in the classroom.

Language is the basic foundation of human communication. All other methods used for conveying meaning such as hand gestures or facial expressions have been developed based on the standard principles of language. (Hertzler, 1965). Language possesses a variety of significant purposes. Arguably, the central objective of language is to communicate and share ideas. The way in which these ideas are communicated through language can evoke certain emotions and predetermined bias in the speaker's audience. Language is often analyzed subjectively, which leaves a significant amount of room for misunderstandings and misinterpretations (Hovy, 2014). As a result, an individual's own preconception of a certain word may alter the meaning in which the speaker intended. Lexical Contextualism is the idea that words, by themselves, do not have meaning without context. In this sense, words are meaningless without background knowledge and personal perspective (Polguère, 2014). Although this concept explains the misconceptions that often occur through language, the ability to create any interpretations would not be possible if words were only given meaning through context (Polguère, 2014). This explains the relationship between subjective and intentional meaning within language.

Efforts have been made to decipher language complexities and semantics with computers, but these computers are not able to break the emotional barrier that language presents. Bernadette Sharp (2014) explains in *Towards a Cognitive Natural Language Processing Perspective*, that a large scale processing of human data has, "produced impressive results in many language processing tasks, such as speech recognition,

morphological analysis, parsing, and semantic interpretation.” (p.27). This further exemplifies how language can be used in technical and precise ways, but also shows the limitations in communication involved with using only the objective aspects of language.

The theory of Symbolic Interactionism, as described in one of the previous sections, explains how language is a special and perhaps most important kind of symbol. Social Interactionism defines language as a social object used for communication and representation while making human thinking possible. Language provides sense and significance to objects and actions. Reality and one’s perception of reality is conveyed through language which, when used from a teacher’s standpoint, can be thought of as an extremely powerful concept (Maines & Charon, 1981).

Teachers have the opportunity to use language as a tool to convey meaningful messages in their classroom communities. The social, moral, and interpersonal aspects of language are just as prominent in the classroom as the technical teaching strategies implemented through teacher discourse. For the purpose of this thesis, I will further analyze the expected student values that may be subliminally transferred through everyday teacher discourse.

### **Explaining the Ways Teachers Might Use Language To Align With Student Values In Order To Attain Student Engagement**

Research conducted by Peter Johnson (2003) in the book, *Choice Words*, has evaluated teacher discourse and the values subconsciously projected by this discourse. In the classroom, children acquire new academic information from the teacher, but they are also processing a teacher’s values. The research evaluated by Schwartz (2012) has reinforced the idea that humans subconsciously examine people’s values to “decide what

is good or bad, justified or illegitimate, worth doing or avoiding, based on possible consequences for their cherished values.” (p. 4). This research supports the idea that students will obtain an opinion towards the teacher based on whether or not their subconscious ideal values match.

The effects and consequences of word choice can be used to a teacher’s advantage when he or she is attempting to subconsciously and intuitively deliver an alignment of teacher to student values. In order for a teacher to achieve value alignment, they must first understand his or her students. Kyle Schwartz (2016) explained in *I Wish My Teacher Knew*, “Pure and simple, in order to read my students, I need to understand the strengths and weaknesses of personal character.” (p. 154). While teachers are able to analyze student values with a variety of tools and methods, I predict one effective way to explore student values is through the Picture Based Value Survey for Children (Döring, 2010). This is an adaption of the Schwartz Values Survey designed to meet the cognitive needs of children.

Once the teacher has collected a substantial amount of data regarding the students’ values in his or her classroom, the teacher will be able to effectively determine the appropriate discourse during whole group instruction. In this way, the teacher would be implementing intentional language. An example of intentional language would be using the phrase, “Never believe everything I say. Never believe everything any adult says”. This sentence is intentionally provoking a response of questioning and analysis in the listener. According to Peter Johnson (2003), this phrase, “normalizes human fallibility and asserts that no authority is above error, no matter how well intentioned or authoritatively positioned (p. 60).” This corresponds to two of Schwartz’s ten established



values, self-direction and universalism. In contrast, it directly opposes Schwartz's value of power. If used by a teacher in the classroom setting, I predict the majority of students will become engaged and motivated to learn from the teacher. This is because according to the study conducted by Doring using the PBVS-C, most children value self-transcendence values such as universalism and benevolence most and value self-enhancement values such as power and achievement least.

Individual values are often subconsciously expressed through one's daily use of language. The book *Choice Words* by Peter Johnson (2013) shows how seemingly insignificant phrases and words have a significant impact on listeners' opinions on themselves and the speaker. I predict that teachers can use the impacts of language to display students' values and as a result gain student engagement. In the following section, I will discuss different teaching methods that could be used to implement student values into the classroom.

### **Explaining The Ways Teachers Might Use Teaching Methods To Implement Student Values In Order To Attain Student Engagement**

The research on language explains how individual values are often expressed indirectly through the messages that are sent with one's chosen words and phrases. While one could imagine a teacher could show value alignment with his or her students through language, this thesis hoped to explore the notion that a teacher could directly implement these values into his or her instructional methods. Using the ten Universal Values as identified by Schwartz (1992) this section will explain how I expect each value could possibly be incorporated into different teaching methods in order to increase student engagement.

Universalism and Benevolence are both self-transcendence values because they both derive from goals that benefit and protect the welfare of others. For this reason, I believe teaching strategies that encourage community support, empathetic understanding, equality, and an appreciation of others' ideas and feelings will align with these values. Found on the opposite angle of the circular structure created by Schwartz (1992), Self-Enhancement values are motivated by the desire to attain personal victories and dominance over others. I expect the teacher could implement these values into the classroom by establishing levels of student hierarchy as well as clear acknowledgement of student success. Conservation values are placed adjacent to self-enhancement values on the circular structure of universal values (Schwartz, 1992). Conservation values emphasize, "order, self-restriction, preservation of the past, and resistance to change" (Schwartz, 2012, p.8). I anticipate teaching methods that apply familiar philosophies, community standards, and promote constancy will portray conservation values. Conservation values conflict with openness to change values, which are found on the contrasting angle of the circle of universal values (Schwartz, 1992). Openness to Change values fosters independence, exhilaration, and pleasure. Perhaps, teachers will execute these values with their teaching methods by allowing students to self-direct their education while providing them with challenge and fulfillment.

Upon further research, I discovered this idea that children's values could be implemented into teaching methods in order to improve children's learning had been discussed in the Early Childhood Australia Conference (Collins, Lee, & Howett, 2014). The conference outline reviews the Schwartz Ten Universal Values (1992) and also suggests that these values could be incorporated into instruction. Suggested teaching

approaches that are believed to align with the different Universal Values have been provided and categorized into whole group sessions, cooperative learning, and playground instruction. For the purpose of this study, I tried to match the ten different suggested whole group session teaching methods to those I found in the following ten publicly shared videos.

Higher Order Value	Incorporated Values	Suggested Teaching Method
Self-Transcendence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Universalism</li> <li>• Benevolence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to care for needs of others in the classroom</li> <li>• Equality in task presented (differentiation)</li> <li>• Equal opportunity</li> </ul>
Openness To Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stimulation</li> <li>• Self – Direction</li> <li>• Hedonism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High interest tasks</li> <li>• Opportunities to provide input</li> <li>• Choices in how the task is accomplished</li> <li>• Tasks that promote a sense of agency</li> </ul>

Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conformity</li> <li>• Tradition</li> <li>• Security</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear rules</li> <li>• Clear expectations</li> <li>• Structure around the presented task</li> </ul>
Self-Enhancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achievement</li> <li>• Power</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities for spotlight</li> <li>• Competition</li> <li>• Ability to successfully complete task</li> </ul>

The table above describes each suggested teaching method provided by the conference. (Collins, Lee & Howett, 2014, pg.21-22).

## **Chapter Three: Methods**

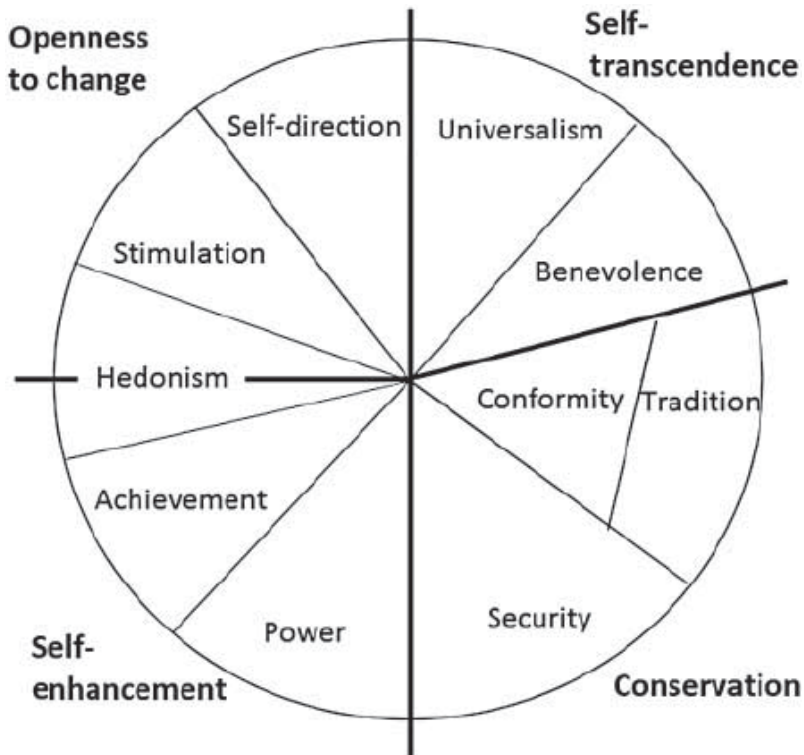
This thesis more thoroughly explores the complex classroom dynamic between teacher and student values in elementary classroom settings that have been publicly available on the Internet, and seeks to examine how different teaching methods may possibly be utilized as a tool to represent the alignment of student and teacher values.

### **Target population**

In order to predict the veracity of Universal Values, I will do a thorough search of publicly available videos, which are over a minute long. I chose to conduct my research with these videos that have been filmed in late childhood and early adolescence classrooms. I chose to focus on upper level elementary and middle school classrooms because my previous experience has shown me that students in the younger grades (K-2) are typically more driven by values traditionally exhibited in educational institutions. During my previous experience in the K-3 classrooms, I have noticed these students are usually motivated by their desire for validation from their teachers. As a result, the children are more likely to behave according to the teacher's expectations, predetermined routine, rules, and values. I have noticed that children in the upper elementary grades, however, often begin to question authority and the purpose of such rules as they contemplate with their establishing sense of self-identity. Furthermore, the results from a study assessing children's values (Doring, 2013) found data from a sample of students from eight to twelve years old. Since I will be using these results to analyze the publicly shared videos, I will only use videos that closely represent this age bracket. I will do this in order to increase the validity of the research.

## Instruments and Procedures

Below I will describe the tools I used to facilitate this research. Descriptions on how I implemented these tools are provided. I will then provide an outline that describes how I will complete the research.



The above graphic indicates the Schwartz (1992) Circular Model of Values (p.9).

This circular model represents how the ten values can be opposing or complimentary to one another. For example, power opposes universalism in the circular structure because Power is placed inside the angle congruent to the angle that includes Universalism. According to Schwartz (2012), these two values oppose one another because the underlying motivations conflict with one another.

In order to show how the motivations behind Power and Universalism conflict with one another, I will provide a fiction contextual example with two students named Will and Karen. Will placed power as his highest ranked value when he took the PBVS-C (Doring, 2010) while Karen placed Universalism as her highest ranked value when she took the same assessment. This is because popularity predominately motivates Will while Karen is mostly motivated by her peers' success. Will and Karen's motivations conflict with one another because the advancement of oneself does not correspond with the advancement of others. Schwartz explains the corresponding motivations behind the ten values in the list below. (Schwartz, 2012, pg.9-10).

- a) Power and achievement—social superiority and esteem;
- b) Achievement and hedonism -- self-centered satisfaction;
- c) Hedonism and Stimulation -- a desire for affectively pleasant arousal;
- d) Stimulation and self-direction —Intrinsic interest in novelty and mastery;
- e) Self-direction and Universalism – reliance upon one's own judgment and comfort with the diversity of existence;
- f) Universalism and Benevolence--enhancement of others and transcendence of selfish interests;
- g) Benevolence and Tradition—devotion to one's in-group;

- h) Benevolence and Conformity--normative behavior that promotes close relationships;
- i) Conformity and Tradition -- subordination of self in favor of socially imposed expectations;
- j) Tradition and Security -- preserving existing social arrangements that give certainty to life;
- k) Conformity and Security--protection of order and harmony in relations;
- l) Security and Power--avoiding or overcoming threats by controlling relationships and resources.

The PBVS-C (Döring, 2010) does not group the values by the value's corresponding motivations as Schwartz has listed above (Schwartz, 2011, p. 9- 10). Instead, the PBVS-C (Döring, 2010) separates the values by the higher order value type. The higher order value type is also indicated on the circular model of Schwartz' ten Universal Values. These include Openness to Change, Self-Transcendence, Self-Enhancement, and Conservation. These higher order values further classify the ten Universal Values into four categories that are determined by the central problem to be solved with each value. For example, Openness to change preserves intellectual and emotional Self - Direction. On the other hand, Conservation, the opposing higher order value, preserves conformity with society and relationships. The other two higher order values, Self – Enhancement and Self – Transcendence, also oppose one another's goals because self – enhancement promotes advancement of the self while self-transcendence



promotes the advancement of others. The results from the PBVS-C (Doring, 2010) indicate that the most popular highest ranked higher order value was Self – Transcendence, followed by Openness to Change, then Conservation. The most popular lowest ranked higher order value was Self – Enhancement. The following pages include a chart with links to videos representing teaching methods that correspond to each of the ten Universal Values as identified by Schwartz (1992), and a brief description of each video.

## Schwartz Ten Universal Values With Corresponding Teaching Methods

### Videos Table

Video Link	Background Description	Value
<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7mIme1bl0Fk">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7mIme1bl0Fk</a>	<p>This video shows a 4<sup>th</sup> grade classroom in East Side Elementary School. The teacher, Kelly Jones, reviews rules regarding mutual respect amongst students before their “conversation” begins. They then discuss a book they recently finished reading as a read aloud in class. Every student has the opportunity to speak and provide his or her input if they wish to do so. The other students listen carefully as their peers speak and may choose to respond.</p>	<p>Universalism</p>
<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qTr4v0eYigM">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qTr4v0eYigM</a>	<p>This video takes place at Glenview Elementary School located in Oakland, California. It shows an innovative approach to beginning the day in the classroom with dialogue circles. The students sit in a circle with the teacher and discuss how they are feeling for the day and listen to each other speak. They then discuss a certain topic chosen by the students. In the video, the students discuss their chosen topic, how to stop bullying. Students</p>	<p>Benevolence</p>

	<p>articulate their opinions and thoughts about this topic while the rest listen. The teacher is also involved in the dialogue circles as part of the class. In this school, the video shows the dialogue circles also being used to resolve conflict in the classroom. This is achieved by allowing the students to listen and understand one another's perspective.</p>	
<p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iSt1B4PBZUk">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iSt1B4PBZUk</a></p>	<p>This lesson teaches vocabulary and grammar to English Learner students. The teacher uses a song to teach the students comparative and superlative adjectives. The students are encouraged to sing along with the words of the song listed on the board. The lyrics to the song are the adjectives they are learning.</p>	<p>Hedonism</p>
<p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fdnE79miWnQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fdnE79miWnQ</a></p>	<p>This video takes place in a third grade classroom at St. Benedict Preparatory School. The students are instructed to complete a treasure hunt around the classroom. This treasure hunt is intended to be a math review.</p>	<p>Stimulation</p>
<p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mAYh4nWUkU0">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mAYh4nWUkU0</a></p>	<p>This video shows an inquiry-based learning approach in action taking place at Ralston Elementary School. The students use their prior knowledge to build their own inquiries and explore the lessons and topics established by the teachers. Students in the video are</p>	<p>Self-Direction</p>

	<p>completing hands on activities as teachers walk around the classroom to monitor their learning and understanding of the concept.</p>	
<p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WcWqLAkk4Y8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WcWqLAkk4Y8</a></p>	<p>This video shows an eighth grade classroom at St. Charles Borromeo Catholic School. The teacher, Mr. Powers, is teaching religion in this Catholic school setting. This video was publicly shared on YouTube and on the school’s website.</p>	<p>Tradition</p>
<p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Em-VRAqZTek">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Em-VRAqZTek</a></p>	<p>This is a short video exemplifying the choral response method. This video shows the teacher explaining the rules of choral response participation as the students are expected to respond in unison.</p>	<p>Conformity</p>
<p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZiuAFOv8wvw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZiuAFOv8wvw</a></p>	<p>This video displays different classrooms in middle schools located in Louisville, Kentucky. These classrooms all implement, “classroom meetings” which are held in order to foster a safe, caring, and accepting community amongst students.</p>	<p>Security</p>
<p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MRHFUnzTi40&amp;t=7s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MRHFUnzTi40&amp;t=7s</a></p>	<p>This video presents a fifth grade classroom. One student acts as the leader of the class and stands in front of the other students while conducting the lesson.</p>	<p>Power</p>
<p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZiuAFOv8wvw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZiuAFOv8wvw</a></p>	<p>This video shows a fifth grade classroom as the</p>	<p>Achievement</p>

<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UIKtj3OMAfI">ube.com/watch?v=UIKtj3OMAfI</a>	students had recently completed the “Winning In America” pledge. During this pledge, they spoke about becoming winners, not losers, in America. In the video, the principal praises each student in the classroom.	
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The table above shows each video link that exemplifies the teaching method that corresponds with the value along with a brief description of each video’s background information in order to acquire context.

**Step One: Utilize** the information found from the research conducted by Doring (2010). This research used the Picture Based Value Survey (2010) to determine student’s values. The research found that students as a whole gravitated towards certain values regardless of their culture. Individual students, however, often possessed differentiated values from one another. For the purpose of utilizing this alternative method, I will use the overall results from the survey created and administered by Doring (2013) in order to define a particular hierarchy of universally shared student values. I will do this by utilizing the hierarchal ranking of values shared by students as a whole as indicated by the results of the study.

**Step Two: Find publicly shared videos** of teachers implementing teaching strategies that closely embody each of the ten universal values. I will use the suggested teaching strategies identified in Chapter Two, Explaining The Ways Teachers Might Use Teaching Methods To Implement Student Values In Order To Attain Student Engagement. I will use these strategies as a guideline that will enhance the validity and lessen the subjectivity of this research. The guideline, however, only provides teaching methods for each of the four higher order values instead of separately suggesting a

teaching method for each of the ten values as I plan to achieve in this research. In order to accommodate this research, I will adhere to the guidelines suggested for the four higher order values (Collins, Lee&, Howett, 2014) while explaining the connection between each specific value and the teaching method shown.

***Step Three: In my personal notes,*** I will explain how these teaching methods and strategies corresponds with each value.

***Step Four: Observe and record*** student engagement in terms of eye contact, productivity levels, and responsiveness. In my notes, I will identify any positive or negative physical student responses to the teacher's chosen teaching methods such as a student's eye contact with the speaker of the lesson.

### **Anticipated Findings**

After studying the publicly shared videos, I am curious to observe if the teacher's chosen teaching method may increase student engagement if it represents the Self - Transcendence values of Universalism and Benevolence.

In a more analytical context within the classroom, children acquire new academic information from the teacher but they are also processing a teacher's values and subconsciously examining whether those values align with theirs. Therefore, I predict the students will obtain an opinion towards the teacher based on whether or not their values are acknowledged and consequentially respected. I expect that the reinforcement of student values will increase their sense of agency. As a result, I predict they will become more attentive and interested in the curriculum.

When using the Theory of Symbolic Systems in a classroom setting, the students are essentially deciding “to vote” for their teacher as a more knowledgeable figure based on their previous experiences and personal perceptions. I believe the teacher should establish mutual respect with his or her students in order for the classroom community to flourish as a productive and cohesive unit. Once the student respects the teacher as the director and mentor of the classroom community, the teacher might achieve the first step in successfully engaging the students in order to help them reach their fullest academic potentials in the classroom.

Furthermore, since values are often the motivational forces behind decision-making, I believe the teaching methods that adhere to student values will enforce these motivations. Once the motivations are enforced, I believe students will choose to engage in the curriculum. Using the results from the PBVS-C (Doring, 2010), I predict that teaching methods that align with Self-Transcendence and Openness to Change values will show the greatest and most consistent amount of student engagement. The next chapter provides the results of my analysis.

## Chapter Four: Findings and Discussion

Below I have ordered the ten values in accordance with the results of the PBVS-C (Doring, 2010). I have listed them in order from the overall highest ranked value according to the children descending to the overall lowest ranked value according to the same children who participated in the PBVS-C (Doring, 2010). Below each listed value I have included the observations I have made from each video. These observations reflect the teaching method used in the video, how that teaching method corresponds with a particular value, and the levels of student engagement amongst the classroom. These descriptions reflect the findings of this study. I have categorized the each of the ten Universal Values as identified by Schwartz (1992) into their four higher order values of Self- Transcendence, Openness to Change, Conservation, and Self- Enhancement.

### *1. Self-Transcendence*

#### Universalism

According to Schwartz (2012), the value of Universalism indicates, “understanding, appreciation, and the protection of the welfare for all people and nature.” (Doring, 2013). When I came across this particular video, I immediately noticed the word “conversation” was used to describe the lesson format. This word indicates shared ideas with no hierarchal format. Furthermore, before the students began the conversation on the book they were reading, the teacher discussed specific “rules” for the conversation. These



rules, such as “ everyone has a chance to speak” and, “wait our turn, not interrupting someone” correlate with the principles of understanding and appreciation for all people as established within the value of Universalism. The students show engagement by participating in the conversation and attentively listening to their peers as they articulate their thoughts. They also indicate engagement by responding to one another’s thoughts, which shows how they thoughtfully listen to their classmates.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7mIme1bl0Fk>

### Benevolence

Similarly to Universalism, Benevolence values the well-being of others.

Benevolence differs slightly from Universalism, however, because it focuses on the welfare of those one has direct contact with on a daily basis. (Doring, 2013). Since both Self-Transcendence values require thought for benefit of others, this video shares many similarities with the video shared previously for Universalism. For example, both teaching methods require students to listen to and understand the thoughts and feelings of others with no one person showing more importance than another. The difference in this video is the attention is placed on students’ individual issues, whereas the video chosen for Universalism asked students to focus their attention on the same larger concept, which was the book they were reading together. Therefore, this video applies more directly to Benevolence because it exemplifies how a teacher begins instruction by encouraging students to care about their peers’ problems, thoughts, and feelings. The students exemplify engagement by listening and responding to one another.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qTr4v0eYigM>

## 2. *Openness to Change*

### Hedonism

To value hedonism one must consider the feeling of pleasure to be important. This video shows a teacher giving a lesson on adjectives with different vocabulary terms to a class of English Learners. The teacher initially lists the adjectives and gestures for the students to repeat. The teacher then asks the students if they are having fun. In unison, they exclaim, “No”. As a result, he changes his teaching method and provides the information to the students through a sing along format. While this approach is cognitively helpful for students to remember the content, it also provides students with the opportunity to participate in a fun activity. Singing songs is a creative form of recreation that many people enjoy partaking in. Although this video does not show images of the students, the viewer is able to hear student participation, which indicates engagement. The teacher uses a fun and invigorating method of teaching to ensure student participation. This teaching method matches the Hedonism value by creating a fun and pleasurable classroom environment. His lesson seems to successfully engage the students while the group is loudly repeating the content and staying on task.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iSt1B4PBZUk>

### Stimulation

Stimulation can be described as having interest in something that is original and challenging. This video shows how the students were slightly distracted while the teacher

was providing the instructions, but once the scavenger hunt activity started, they become fully engaged in the lesson. I believe this is because the instructions for the activity were straight-forward and did not captivate the student's attentions, but once the scavenger hunt began the students were confronted with something new and challenging, which motivated them to become engaged. The students were clearly engaged as they walked around the classroom striving to complete the scavenger hunt lesson. Although the classroom became noisy, the students remained on task as they discussed elements of the lesson. In the video, the students are conversing with one another as they look at their scavenger hunt worksheets. When the students are not talking with one another, they are looking at both the worksheet and the problem in front of them. I believe this demonstrates that the time they are taking to think about discovering ways to solve the problems, which also signifies that they are fully engaged. As the teacher walks around the classroom during the activity, she helps one group of students but does not make any remarks about off task students. This either indicates that she does not see students who may be off task or that there are no students off task. Judging from the previous observations I have listed, there seems to be more evidence supporting the probability that there are no students off task.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fdnE79miWnQ>

### Self - Direction

The value of Self - Direction promotes autonomy as it relates to independence by choice, exploration, and creation. This video promotes the self-direction value by providing students with the opportunity for Self-Discovery.

The video shows the students working diligently on different projects while obtaining the same learning goals in the classrooms. In other words, while all students are learning the same content knowledge, they are choosing their own individual thought processes to understand the concepts. For example, a teacher in the video provides an opportunity for students to create paint in order to enhance their understanding of what paint is and how it is made. The teacher could have simply stated or explained what paint was and how it was made, but instead he fostered an environment that promoted exploration and creation. They are encouraged to utilize their personal background of knowledge and build on that knowledge by creating their own path of learning and discovery. The students are focused and a teacher states that he saw, “students being excited about finding answers to deeper level questions.” The students supported this claim as they spoke about their projects in the video. They energetically discussed the procedures they took throughout their process of learning. While making paint, one student stated, “ My question that I have is how to get this to be an even thinner pains so I have one straight line and not paint that splatters everywhere...I’ve learned that if you are making liquid paint then you can use a liquid substance to make it thinner but if you mix too many things than it might just blow up.”

The video then shows the students surrounding a type of “paint explosion” they created. I believe the student’s remarks show how implementing the Self-Direction value in teaching methods enhances a student’s involvement in the classroom. The teachers in the video explain how they are able to successfully

implement this approach by framing questions for the students that will lead the students to the “goal” or the concept of the lesson with hands on experiments and activities. One teacher explains, “For the inquiry to be successful, the question has to be appropriate. And so we really have to teach students what questions would work and how to model them.” Overall, this video demonstrates that allowing students to form questions increases their involvement in the classroom and ultimately increases student’s engagement in the lessons.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mAYh4nWUkU0>

### 3. *Conservation*

#### Security

Security ensures a sense of protection for oneself and constancy within relationships. In a classroom setting, the teaching methods representing security values will closely align those teaching methods representing values of Benevolence. This is because Benevolence principles, such as caring for the well-being of others, usually create school environments that foster a sense of protection while enhancing stable relationships. Jefferson County Public School’s superintendent, Sheldon Berman, explains, “...when students feel safe...when they feel cared about not only by the adults in the school but by other students in the school, they can do their best...” This quote shows how values of Benevolence and Security can be intertwined within an educational setting in order to assist students in reaching their full academic potentials. This video

shows a school community that implements security values into their daily routines with the principles established by an initiative called, “Care For Kids.” They achieve this by providing time for building peer relationships that ensure a stable and trusting environment where students feel safe. The classrooms in this video show teachers holding classroom meetings as part of their morning curriculum. During these meetings, they conduct student activities that help build trusting and dependable relationships. As a result, the students feel safer at school. Paul, a student body president from Olmstead Academy North, verifies the effectiveness of this teaching method by stating, “Before care for kids, it was mainly a disaster because we had a lot of bullying going on around here and kids getting scared to come to school. People hitting people and more violent stuff and now care for kids came along and changed the whole atmosphere in this school.” As a result, the attendance and student participation at Jefferson County Public Schools has increased. This apparent increase in student engagement could potentially be a result of incorporating security values into the curriculum or the benevolence values that appear to encourage these values.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZiuAF0v8wvw>

## Tradition

Tradition reflects the, “respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that one’s culture or religion impose on an individual.” (Doring, 2013). This video shows a religion classroom in a Catholic Middle School. Since the majority of students attending Catholic school are accustomed to Catholic culture, I believe a religion class in this setting would respect and show commitment to the customs and ideas of the students

in the classroom. In the video, the level of engagement between students varies. One student has his head down, while others fidget. Some students maintain eye contact with the teacher and respond to the teacher's questions. Since tradition is a Conservation value and Conservation is the second least important value children have indicated on the results of the PBVS-C administered by Doring in 2010, the mixture of reactions would seem predictable. I also found it interesting how Achievement values were also promoted with the teaching method exhibited in this video. One student explained that the teacher shown in this video, Mr. Powers, has stated, "I want you to do your best, because I believe in you. I am going to push you, because I know you can do better." Two other students proudly explain, "students in public schools are doing eighth grade math, while we are doing ninth and tenth grade math." I believe these two quotes show how success is valued in their curriculum. Since Conservation and Self-Enhancement are the two lowest ranking values established by results from the study conducted by Döring (2010) the apparent lack of apparent student engagement could have been a result from either of these exhibited values.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WcWqLAkk4Y8>

## Conformity

Conformity is the act of restraining against any behavior that may disrupt the society around the individual. In this video, the teacher instructs the students to conform to the same routine with one another as they respond in unison. While some students effectively respond, others are distracted and do not make eye contact with the teacher. Most students adhere to the teacher's expectation and respond accordingly but they do so

in a more robotic melody with little excitement. While there are no major disruptions in the class, not all the students appear to be focused on the lesson.

The connection between the Conformity values and teaching method exhibited in this video could have been mistaken because I found it difficult to find a teaching method that fully exhibited conformity values. I found this difficult because what might be considered disruptive to an individual's society is subjective. Not only this, but I believe a teaching method that would most accurately reflect conformity values is the implementation of rules. If certain rules were justified by explaining the importance of order and an absence of chaos, I believe a teacher would more explicitly demonstrate values of conformity than the teacher shown in the video. Although I was not able to find publicly shared videos exhibiting this type of rules enforced teaching method, my personal experience indicates that while this teaching method results in an orderly and quiet environment, most students are not focused on the lessons and silently disengage.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=as7QrvedhrY>

#### *4. Self-Enhancement*

##### Power

The value type power can be described as, "Social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources (social power, authority, wealth)" (Doring, 2010, pg. 440). This video only shows one student who is given the role as the teacher. She stands in front of the classroom and leads the classroom through a lesson. The student acquires an authoritative position within the classroom community. She does not make



complete and lasting eye contact with the other students. Some students demonstrate engagement as they answer her questions and making eye contact with the student teacher while some are looking elsewhere and are not interacting with the lesson. According to “Assessing Values at an Early Age: The Picture-Based Value Survey for Children (PBVS-C)” Self - Enhancement values were the lowest ranked amongst most children. While a small minority of students highly ranked this value, most do not consider this value as important as the others. For this reason. I believe that the teaching method exhibited in this video would be a marginally successful means of engaging only a few students.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MRHFUnzTi40&t=7s>

## Achievement

Achievement can be described as an individual’s advancement in society and acknowledgement of one’s ability. This video has been recorded after a classroom of students recited the “Winning In America Pledge” that promotes student achievement. In the video, the students are told to recite the phrase, “we are winners, not losers.” This embodies the value of achievement because winners usually represent success and losers usually represent failure. The principal praises the students for their accomplishments and states, “ I am so proud of you,” then continues to explain how students have progressed. After this praise, the students do not appear to be engaged. Most students are not making eye contact with the principal, while many heads are down resting on their hands and elbows. When the students recite the phrase, “we are winners, not losers” their

expressions are dull and slightly monotone. It does not sound as if the whole class is participating, and it is clear that many do not make an effort to move their mouths when they are directed to repeat this phrase.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UlKtj3OMAfI>

## **Limitations**

Throughout the process of creating this thesis, I have changed the way in which I planned to execute the research. Originally, my goal was to administer the PBVS-C (Döring, 2010) to children in fifth grade in order to determine each student's hierarchal value systems. I wanted to focus on the individual child and how their values affected their experience in the classroom. More specifically, my aim was to determine if student engagement correlated with a student's values being represented and respected by a teacher. I intended to find specific words and phrases from the book, *Choice Words* (Johnston, 2015) that I felt represented each of the ten values included in the PBVS-C (Döring, 2010). Then, while working independently with each student, I would use the words and phrases that aligned with their hierarchal value systems as determined by the PBVS-C (Döring, 2010). Unfortunately, I was placed in a kindergarten classroom for my internship and studies have shown that children do not begin to develop fixed values until they are six years old (Döring, 2010). My personal interactions have shown me how children at this age are motivated more by external factors such as validation from an authoritative source such as a parent or teacher than intrinsically.

As a solution, my thesis chair and I decided to use publicly shared videos as a way of conducting research on the possible connection between student values and their

levels of engagement. I planned to achieve this by finding a total of ten videos of classroom teaching strategies. Each video exhibited one of the ten Universal Values (Schwartz, 1992) included in the PBVS-C (Döring, 2010). I would then take notes on the levels of engagement exhibited by the students. The implication that arose with this was the inability to assess the differences in student values and how values may or may not impact each student depending on their individual hierarchical value system. Instead, this approach would assess the engagement of the class as a whole. This slightly changed the purpose of the study. Since I would not be able to utilize the PBVS-C for the study, I used the results of Döring's study showing the prevalence of each of the ten Universal Values (Döring, 2010).

Since I was not able to utilize the PBVS-C (Döring, 2010) with children in my internship, and therefore did not have a means of measuring values in the classroom, I was forced to conduct my study under the assumption that the students in these videos reflected the same values as the students who were involved in Döring's study (2010).

Another implication that occurred as a result of conducting the research through publicly shared videos was the subjectivity of the results. Because I was not provided with the student data or test scores on the subject that was taught during the videos, there was no way to statistically analyze the levels of student engagement. I instead focused on physical signs of engagement such as eye contact with the individual who was speaking and verbal participation.

Lastly, the videos represented only a portion of the classroom factors that might be involved with decreasing or increasing student engagement. As a result, there is a possibility that some classes were engaged for reasons that were not shown on the video

which would have led me to false assumptions when analyzing the results. For example, one video presented students who appeared to be engaged by participating eagerly in the lesson. While I assumed this was a result of the particular value that was exhibited by the teaching method, the students might instead have an underlying reason or inherent interest in the subject. If I made these false assumptions, the accuracy of my conclusions could be decreased.

## Chapter Five: Concluding Remarks

### Conclusions

After integrating prior research on children's value development, this thesis sought to examine the effects these values have on society and the classroom, and ways to exhibit values through teaching methods. Further, this sought to apply this research in late childhood and early adolescence classrooms by examining the effects that may result from teachers exhibiting each of the ten universal values through their teaching methods through publicly shared videos. Overall, the results indicated a possible correlation between commonly held values by students and their levels of engagement in the classroom. In particular, I noticed the importance of teachers exhibiting the Self-Transcendence and Openness to Change values including Universalism, Benevolence, Hedonism, Stimulation, and Self-Direction. Students with the most consistent eye contact and participation were found in the videos representing teaching methods that exhibited each of these values while students who appeared disengaged and distracted were mostly found in videos that exemplified teaching methods corresponding with Power and Achievement.

Several videos largely impacted my initial perceptions of student values I held before conducting this research. My observations and experiences in different classroom settings provided me with a common framework of values typically exhibited in schools. The results from this research and the research conducted by Döring show that these values do not often align with students' commonly held values. For example, every school I have had the opportunity to observe has prioritized the promotion of success

values. I believe this is a direct result of increasing attempts to close the achievement gap that is prevalent in the American Education system. The reaction of the students shown in the Achievement video caused me to consider possible counterproductive results from promoting this self-enhancement value.

The publicly shared videos that have been analyzed in this thesis show that teaching methods that incorporate Universalism, Benevolence, Hedonism, Stimulation, Self-Direction, and Security values effectively engage the students in the lessons. I was surprised to discover the effectiveness of teaching methods implementing Security values because the results from the study on children's values conducted by Döring (2010) indicates that children consider Conservation higher order values, such as Security, less important than Self-Transcendence and Openness to Change higher order values. I believe this paradox could be a result of the Benevolence values exhibited in the video creating a secure environment. In this sense, the children might have become more engaged in the classroom due to the shared sense of Benevolence as opposed to the Security values provided through instruction.

### **Significance**

Since values are an imperative driving force behind human intention and action, I believe they are a vital component of the social engineering aspect of teaching. During my time spent in elementary classrooms, I have noticed teachers often label children as "behavior problems" when the child's actions do not align with the school's values. Consequentially, this label follows the child throughout his or her elementary school experience and far too often I have observed that the child either accepts his label and

shuts down intellectually or loses his or her interest to learn. Both of these results counter the entire purpose of education, which in my opinion, should exist as a means of intellectual stimulation and growth instead of as an institution of reform and obedience.

I believe this counterproductive dynamic between students and their school might be prevented if teachers used student values to design their method of instruction. I also believe this will result in increased student engagement. This is because respecting one's values often correlates with respecting the individual as a whole. Recognizing a student's values essentially makes them feel valued. From my experience, learning and respecting a student's preferences and current stage of developmental growth has proven to be more effective than attempting to mold them into my personal ideals.

Not only do I believe implementing student values into instruction will show respect for the students, but research has shown that values often result from different human needs and motivational forces in an individual (Schwartz, 2012). Since values result from motivational forces, it would seem probable that students would naturally become more determined to find their fullest learning potential in the classroom if the method of instruction reflected their values. Throughout my experiences in elementary and middle school classrooms, I have noticed teachers and school administration promoting values of individual success amongst students. Students are encouraged to show achievement and are recognized for their demonstration of excellence in comparison to their peers. It seems as though we are teaching students how to compete or show they are better than one another, than how to work together while learning with and from one another. As a result, some students compete with one another in an effort to

become recognized for their achievements while others, who do not meet the school's criteria for success, begin to disengage from learning in a school environment.

This competitive dynamic between students is puzzling to me, because according to the research conducted by and the application of this research completed in this thesis, students usually value Benevolence and Universalism more than Power and Achievement. I believe that application of student values would lead to a classroom environment that encourages peer support and an intrinsic incentive to learn.

### **Implications for My Future Teaching**

Upon analyzing each teaching method exhibited in the ten videos, I began to reflect on my own values and how they might affect the teaching strategies I prefer to implement within the classroom. I immediately noticed I was drawn to the videos corresponding to Schwartz's Universal Values (1992) of Self-Direction and Universalism. As I viewed and reviewed each of these videos I began to study how the teacher was able to implement these methods and reflected on ways in which I could see myself using the same strategies. I then remembered the results of the Schwartz Values Survey I took during the beginning of this research when I first discovered the Universal Values Theory (1992). The Schwartz Values Survey indicated that my highest prioritized values included, in order, Self-Direction, Achievement, and Universalism. While I did not connect with the video corresponding to Achievement, I did begin to notice my use of positive praise for each student within the classroom community I have been completing my teaching internship. I believe I implemented positive praise in order to assure each student's self-efficacy, but I did not realize that I was also using language as a tool to



exhibit my personal value of achievement. While I noticed that some students would respond to this praise and others preferred to dismiss it, I did not initially understand the reasons behind the different reactions. After completing this research, it now seems clear that praise might not work for many students who do not value Achievement. The purpose of this thesis was to utilize student values instead of my own. Now, upon reflection, I now realize the seemingly insignificant ways in which these values can be conveyed. As a teacher, I will need to remain self-reflective and self-aware enough in order to prevent myself from producing my own values within my future classroom culture rather than the students' values.

I also believe it is important to note that while the majority of students who took the Pictures Based Value Survey for Children (Döring, 2010) considered Self-Transcendence values to be the most important, every student possesses their own unique value hierarchy, and I believe it is important to avoid categorizing all children as holding the same values hierarchy. As a teacher, I will need to carefully assess the community values exhibited by each new class with whom I interact. I believe that maintaining a sense of objectivity and flexibility will help me avoid using my chosen words or designing curriculum that reflects my assumptions of children's values based on the study conducted by Döring (2010), instead of the values held by each particular set of students with whom I am interacting.

### **Future Research**

Studies have shown that, using the Universal Values theory (Schwartz, 1992), the majority of adults share a similar hierarchy of values regardless of their cultural

background. Although research on children's values is new, studies have shown the majority of children share the same value hierarchy as the majority of adults (Döring, 2015). Individual values among children, however, differentiate. This indicates that while societal values as a whole remain consistent across cultures, not all students acquire the same value hierarchy. Therefore, I think it would be beneficial to research the effects that individual student values have on student engagement in the classroom. I also think it would be interesting to find a possible connection between shared student and teacher values with student respect for the teacher. This would closely align with the research I have previously described in Chapter Two, Section C of this thesis. This research shows a direct correlation between voters' values and their preferred presidential candidate. This causes me to consider potential application of this research in a classroom setting, while the students reflect the role of "the voters" and the teacher represents the position of "the president" of the classroom community. In order for this research to be conducted, the teacher would need to work closely with each of his or her students while exhibiting respect and appreciation for each student's values when interacting with them individually. I predict that this could be achieved during interventions when the teacher has the opportunity to work with the student's in a smaller group or individually. The way in which this research could be conducted is as follows.

***Step One: Student Surveys.*** In order to gain a clear understanding of the students' values, I will administer the Picture Based Value Survey for Children (Döring, 2010) to a randomly selected group of five students in an upper elementary level classroom. I will do this with the intention of determining the symbolic value systems of the students.

***Step Two: Determine words and Phrases to utilize within discourse.*** I will work closely with these students as a preservice teacher. I will choose a selection of words and phrases that have been analyzed in Peter Johnson's (2003) *Choice Words* that correlate with each student's highest ranked values. For example, Peter Johnston (2003) analyzes the phrase "that's not like you" which he observed a teacher tell the student. He explains that this phrase, "invites the child to consider who he wishes to be – and whether he wishes to alter an assumed positive identity (Johnston, p. 24). I would predict that this encouragement of identity growth would be effective when used with a child who values independence or personal growth.

***Step Three: Observe and analyze*** student engagement. Due to the subjectivity of determining a student's engagement, I will record the physical reactions from the students such as eye contact or verbal and non-verbal responsiveness. Additionally, I will be taking field notes each day and recording my discourse to look for Johnson's researched phrases and any detected interactions with students.

### **Concluding Remarks**

The research and analysis conducted in this thesis has shown me the significance of understanding students holistically in order to find their full potentials in the classroom. My previous experience as a preservice teacher has introduced me to many students who do not exhibit an interest in learning and have disengaged from the classroom. After working with these students individually, I have come to learn that each of them has their own unique set of capabilities that they choose not to demonstrate due to a developed sense of apathy for content taught in the classroom. It seems this research

shows that certain teaching methods may have a positive or negative effect on students depending on the Universal Value (Schwartz, 1992) exhibited through instruction.

This research has exemplified the importance of exhibiting Self-Transcendence and Openness to Change values through different teaching methods. Exhibiting these values through teaching methods seems to increase overall student engagement in terms of eye contact and verbal participation or responsiveness to the speaker(s) in the lesson. Contrary to the effects of demonstrating Self-Transcendence and Openness to change values through instruction, the effects of demonstrating Self-Enhancement and most values included in Conservation seem to cause a lack of overall student engagement. The two videos that exhibited the most student participation appeared to be Benevolence and Self – Direction. While I also personally preferred the teaching methods shown in these videos, I believe I will need to maintain an objective perspective when deciding on the teaching methods I will implement in my future classroom. This is because while most students seem to value Self-Transcendence and Openness to Change values, not every student will fit this generalization and as a teacher I will need to adapt my teaching methods to the values of students in different classroom community environments.

I am interested in the connection between individual values and their apparent effect on engagement in the classroom and would be curious to explore the other strategies teachers might use to integrate student values in the curriculum such as teacher discourse. I would also be interested in researching the ways in which values affect other domains that use psychology application such as marketing and further exploring the correlation between values and voter choice. I would like to explore the application of values in these different domains because the research and analysis exhibited in this

thesis shows an evident relationship between individual's values and the choices they make. After gaining a full understanding of the effects individual's values have on the choices a person makes in different domains, I hope to gain a fuller understanding of the motivations behind values in order to increase each student's motivation to engage the classroom community.

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