

https://dspace.org/

The hero within – The reading practices of boys in one grade 11 South African English home language classroom

Richter, Ellouise Elizabeth

2018

https://hdl.handle.net/10539/27166

Richter, Ellouise Elizabeth (2018) The hero within – The reading practices of boys in one grade 11 South African English home language classroom, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, <http://hdl.handle.net/10539/27166>

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

Abstract

'When I think about reading, I think about school. *I wouldn't be the person I am today without reading' (FW/L).*

The purpose of this case study was to investigate the reading practices of learners in a Grade 11 classroom in a boys' school in South Africa in order to understand whether, and if so how, these practices influenced the constitution of their current and prospective identities. The study examined the boys' response to the texts used in the classroom and whether, and if so how, these texts shaped their reading practices outside the classroom. Findings from an analysis of data collected from the boys' free writing about reading, from a questionnaire and from focus group interviews are as follows: (i) the majority of boys who read out of school, identify with the 'do-good' heroes in fantasy novels or comic books; (ii) some boys claim to see no value in reading inside or outside the classroom, despite the fact that all read social media texts every day; (iii) for some boys, reading is associated with the feminine; (iv) for most boys, what counts as proficiency in reading is limited to an ability to read aloud fluently. These findings suggest that there is a need for teachers to reconsider the texts they choose and the pedagogies they use in order to encourage boys' interest in and commitment to reading for academic and other purposes.