

**Developing Self-Efficacy Through Collaboration: Building Math Confidence in Grade 6
Girls Through Academic Discussion Skills**

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Abstract

This action research study examined the impact of academic discussion skills on developing discipline-specific self-efficacy in two Grade 6 girls' math classes using the R.E.A.L.® discussion framework. This intervention addressed the gender confidence gap in mathematics learning, whereby girls report lower levels of math confidence than boys in their peer group (Zander et al., 2020). Research shows that cooperative learning is an effective tool for teaching mathematical problem-solving in a whole class context (Klang et al., 2021), and that combining scaffolding for discussion skills and math content can increase conceptual understanding (Kazak et al., 2015). I contended that math discussion skills provide a mechanism to increase math self-efficacy through their capacity to enable mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and positive emotional states, which are the primary sources of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). A math-specific version of the R.E.A.L.® discussion framework, initially developed for use in humanities classes, was generated in a collaboration between R.E.A.L.® and me and piloted during the six-week action research period. The research was conducted at Nashoba Brooks School in Concord, Massachusetts, USA. The project began with a student orientation to the R.E.A.L.® discussion framework, where students learned the primary tools (relate, evidence, ask, and listen) they would use during discussions, as well as how to prepare notes for discussions and write post-discussion reflections. Collected data were primarily

qualitative in discussion question preparation notes, reflection notes, student journal entries, field note observations, and video recordings of discussions. Quantitative data were collected through Likert scale surveys administered throughout the intervention to measure self-reported math self-efficacy. Data were analyzed through organization, description, and interpretation using a coding process that grouped data into frequently recurring themes (Mertler, 2020). This action research study found that math-specific academic discussion skills using the R.E.A.L.® framework increased student confidence when discussing and understanding math material. Specifically, the R.E.A.L.® discussions generated evidence of growth in all four areas of self-efficacy development as outlined by Bandura (1997). The findings are significant for math educators and leaders in girls' schools as they suggest that math-specific academic discussion skills are effective in closing the gender confidence gap in mathematics learning. Future practice should incorporate explicit teaching of discussion skills alongside other constructivist modes of instruction to maximize self-efficacy development opportunities in math classes.

Glossary

Self-Efficacy: a person's confidence in their ability to perform behaviors that produce a specific outcome (Bandura, 1997). Math-specific self-efficacy refers to a person's confidence in their ability to learn and demonstrate math skills.

Mastery experience: an experience where a person perceives themselves as successful in achieving a goal or completing a task (Bandura, 1997).

Vicarious experience: an experience where a person witnesses someone else achieve a goal or complete a task, specifically someone who is significant to them, such as a peer (Bandura, 1997).

Social persuasion: feedback and support from others (peers, teachers) that a person receives that pertains to their ability to perform tasks successfully (Bandura, 1997).

Confidence: students' belief in their ability to perform the behaviors that will contribute positively to their math performance.

Effective: producing a positive outcome as measured by learning outcomes, collaboration evidence, and/or positive feelings.

Developing Self-Efficacy Through Collaboration: Building Math Confidence in Grade 6 Girls Through Academic Discussion Skills

Student agency is a critical component in an effective mathematics learning environment for girls. Research shows that constructivist methods of teaching and learning mathematics, where students are active participants in creating knowledge, help girls develop agency in math and contribute to a sense of empowerment in the classroom (Fernandez et al., 2022). Research also highlights that self-efficacy discrepancies based on gender impede girls' ability to be agential actors in their own math learning (Zander, 2020). My action research question is: How does implementing R.E.A.L.® Discussion frameworks in mathematics discussions develop self-efficacy in Grade 6 girls?

Explanations of the gender gap in STEM have changed over time, with recent studies frequently determining a self-efficacy gap between boys and girls as a primary factor in unequal STEM performance. Research shows that while girls have similar grades to boys in mathematics, they exhibit lower levels of discipline-specific self-efficacy, which impacts both academic and career achievement in math studies and fields (Zander, 2020). This study investigated the relationship between effective academic-style communication and the generation of mastery, social persuasion, positive emotional state, and vicarious experiences in math learning. Action research, as outlined by Mertler (2020) was used as a guiding methodology for this project.

Action research engaged participants directly and facilitated ongoing refinement of the implementation of the R.E.A.L.® framework to generate rich math experiences for students.

Literature Review

Historically, the gender gap in STEM has been attributed to innately lower abilities of women in mathematics; however, a recent systematic literature review of the gender gap in STEM studies found that gender stereotypes “are strong drivers of the gender gap in general, and the Leaky Pipeline and Stereotype Threat in particular” (Verdugo-Castro, 2022, p.1). When women feel that they do not belong in STEM environments, this can negatively impact self-efficacy (Hall et al., 2015).

Bandura's (1997) book *Self-efficacy: The Exercise of Control* is a founding work on self-efficacy theory. Bandura posits that people with strong self-efficacy believe they can exercise control over threats in their environment and that the skills associated with exerting control over one's environment minimize anxiety. Zander et al. (2020) found that girls have similar grades to boys in math classes but still report lower discipline-specific self-efficacy. While girls may have objective evidence of mastery in the form of high test marks and grades, these mastery experiences do not translate into confidence in mathematics as they do for boys (Zander).

Marshman et al. (2018) found that in an introductory college-level physics course, women who earned A grades in the class reported self-efficacy levels consistent with men earning C grades. The study's findings suggest that even highly qualified women experience lower levels of self-efficacy based on gender, which may contribute to the underrepresentation of women in STEM studies and careers.

Bian et al. (2017) found that stereotypes of women's intelligence impede girls' ability to see themselves as mathematicians and begin to impact their choices as early as 1st Grade.

Findings from this study showed that by age 6, girls changed their behavior to avoid activities they believed to be for people who are "really, really smart" (Bian et al., 2017, p.389), suggesting that internalized beliefs about gender stereotypes of intelligence might contribute to the underrepresentation of women in careers perceived as requiring high-level intellectual ability (brilliance), such as mathematics. In a separate study, researchers found that “for young girls who do endorse stereotypes about math and gender, contextual activation of these stereotypes may impair their intuitive number sense, potentially affecting their acquisition of formal mathematics concepts and developing interest in math-related fields” (Gonzalez et al., 2021, p.1).

Stereotypes of women’s math abilities are not the only barrier impacting girls’ math self-efficacy; the literature shows that math anxiety and perfectionism are also factors. McCaughey et al. (2022) found a negative correlation between self-efficacy and math anxiety and a positive correlation between perfectionism and math anxiety in a college-level statistics setting. Results in this study held when controlling for gender, suggesting that the presence of perfectionism and math anxiety may be the mechanisms for decreased self-efficacy rather than an innate quality of gender.

Krendl et al. (2008) documented changes in the neural activity of women studying mathematics when primed with gendered math stereotypes. In this study, women with strong math discipline identities experienced robust activation in the area of the brain associated with social rejection when asked to solve basic math problems while under stereotype threat.

Stereotype threat refers to the threat that one's performance will confirm a negative stereotype about an aspect of that individual's social identity. Furthermore, a 2012 study by Dweck et al. found that:

In a longitudinal study of calculus students (Study 3), students' perceptions of 2 factors in their math environment—the message that math ability is a fixed trait and the stereotype that women have less of this ability than men—worked together to erode women's, but not men's, sense of belonging in math. Their lowered sense of belonging, in turn, mediated women's desire to pursue math in the future and their math grades.

Interestingly, the message that math ability could be acquired protected women from negative stereotypes, allowing them to maintain a high sense of belonging in math and the intention to pursue math in the future. (para. 1)

Collaborative group work centering math discussion is an effective strategy to increase mathematical conceptual understanding (Klang et al., 2021) and scaffolding discussion skills, and, along with math concept skills, facilitates increased conceptual understanding in the context of collaborative learning (Kazak et al., 2015). A 2024 study by Verdín and Castillo investigated belongingness using an intersectional approach and found that fostering an atmosphere of mutual respect and validating messages enacted by peers impacted belonging in engineering classrooms. Verdín and Castillo's study provides an intervention point (through promoting belonging) to address the social rejection shown in Krendl et al. 's (2008) aforementioned study using MRI imaging of women's neural activity under stereotype threat.

While collaboration is an effective learning tool in math classrooms, the quality of student interactions determines the effectiveness of collaboration in producing favorable learning outcomes (Kaendler et al., 2015). Traditional procedure-based math learning based on algorithm memorization produces a fragmented understanding of math concepts (Jonsson et al., 2014). Math discussions that center topics known as "shift-problem lessons," or topics designed to facilitate a deepening of conceptual understanding, have been shown to facilitate mathematical

level raising (Calor et al., 2019). A math-specific R.E.A.L.® Discussion framework to scaffold level-raising mathematics discussions aims to produce effective student collaboration in a girls' learning environment. While the primary aim of this intervention is to increase students' self-reported feelings of self-efficacy, it also aims to increase peer social support in students seeing themselves as mathematicians and experiencing discipline-identity enhancing feelings of belonging.

A study by London et al. (2012) of gender-based rejection sensitivity in highly competitive academic institutions found that women cope with perceived gender-based rejection with self-silencing and other strategies that reinforce alienation and lead to decreased motivation. These findings suggest that explicit teaching of discussion skills and practice asserting one's ideas in the context of a math classroom can give girls productive tools to persevere in the face of the implicit stereotype threat they are likely to face in high-level mathematics.

Research Context

Research for this project was conducted at Nashoba Brooks School in Concord, Massachusetts which enrolls students of all genders in grades preschool through 3 and girls in Grades 4–8. The School centers its five core values of integrity, collaboration, inclusivity, resilience, and empathy in all areas of school life. Students at Nashoba Brooks School demonstrate high levels of achievement in academics, athletics, and the arts, and are impactful community members.

Mathematics is a core academic subject in Grades 4–8 and students meet five times weekly for a 45-minute block daily. Two classes of Grade 6 students participated in this research, totaling 23 participants. While some of these students were new to Nashoba Brooks this year, I had taught most students in my Grade 4 math class, and had known them for several

years. In Grade 6, math students cover various topics spanning pre-algebra concepts. Students engage in critical thinking in math class and collaborate in learning teams to co-create mathematics regularly.

Parents and guardians received notification of the study in a letter explaining the research plan, and a consent form was signed and returned to permit student participation. A presentation of the study to parents and guardians took place at the onset of the data collection period. I ensured that all data collected were de-identified and kept confidential.

The Action

The R.E.A.L.® Discussion framework employed in this action research study is a tool that requires students to use four discussion skills to address a set of questions related to a given central topic. These four discussion skills are relating ideas, using evidence, asking questions, and listening. During the student orientation to the framework, students received explicit instruction on these skills and practiced using them in example scenarios. R.E.A.L.® discussions began with “DQ Prep Notes,” where students used a graphic organizer to write down their ideas about the discussion question and provided evidence to support the claims they made during the discussion.

During the action research period, students engaged in five formal discussions using the R.E.A.L.® framework. These discussions covered prime factorization, order of operations with exponents, division of decimals, multiplicative inverse, and ratio and proportional reasoning. Each discussion encompassed two DQs, or discussion questions, on a larger math topic. Students tracked their use of the four primary skills in the activity. They engaged in a written reflection on their participation in each DQ and the way they related and interacted with peers in their discussion groups. These written reflections asked students to record two points made by peers

during the conversation and their responses to these points, as well as a sentence summarizing their self-perception of their performance in the activity. The ultimate objective of each discussion was to generate a one-sentence answer to each DQ in the activity. In using the four skills of the R.E.A.L.® framework, students focused on effectively and accurately using mathematical evidence to support the claims made and questions asked.

During formal discussions, I observed and made field note observations. If discussions stalled, I suggested a skill to use to continue moving the conversation forward. This coaching became less necessary as students gained practice with the framework and used the prompts to move through a discussion plateau independently.

Data Collection

As the purpose of this action research study was to improve math-specific self-efficacy via the development of discussion skills, data collection focused on metrics indicative of self-efficacy development in students as mathematicians as their fluency with the R.E.A.L.® framework improved. Collected data showed how effective discussion skills impacted student self-efficacy by gauging students' skill level in discussion skills via their ability to relate ideas, use evidence, ask questions, and listen in tandem with their self-perception as mathematicians.

This study employed a mixed-methods approach (Mertler, 2020) to gather and analyze qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data were collected through field note observations, video recordings, journals, and by analyzing student notes and discussion reflections. Observations conducted during the preparation of notes for formal discussions, during formal discussions, and collaborative group work provided data in the form of field notes. Student journal entries were collected anonymously via Google Forms, which prompted students to reflect on their math confidence, perceptions of their peers' comprehension of math material,

opportunities to receive peer feedback on math material, and confidence in asking questions when participating in R.E.A.L.®. Classroom artifacts consisted of student notes using the R.E.A.L.® templates for DQ Prep notes and “In-R.E.A.L.® -Time” notes.

Regarding quantitative data, Likert survey scales collected baseline and post-intervention data using questions based on student confidence in learning new math material and using available resources to move forward when stuck on a concept. Data generated from student voices were polyangulated with observations and analysis of classroom artifacts to include the girls’ input.

Observations during the preparation of notes and formal discussions collected data about students' progress in structuring their thinking around math discussions and their progress in executing such skills during the formal discussions. Observations were structured in the field notes style as defined in Mertler (2020), using a chart with columns for observations and notes on those observations. The data from these observations were polyangulated with student journals, which asked students to describe their experiences preparing notes and participating in formal discussions.

Data Analysis

Data analysis methods varied depending on the type of data collected. Qualitative data were analyzed by taking transcripts of observations, journals, and classroom artifacts, removing any names and identifying information, and running them through Google's Gemini AI platform to identify the most frequent keywords and phrases. Keywords and phrases identified by frequency of appearance emerged and formed the basis of thematic analysis using the elements of self-efficacy development as outlined in Bandura (1997). The coded qualitative data fit broadly into the themes of demonstrating understanding through math skills, asking questions or

building effectively on peers' ideas, connecting math accurately to real life, and positive and collaborative verbal and written sentiments.

Discussion of Results

During the six-week intervention, which included five formal R.E.A.L.® discussions, most students participating in the study demonstrated increased self-efficacy in Grade 6 mathematics content. Evidence of self-efficacy development, broken down into the four constituent components of mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and positive emotional states, provided the basis for evaluating student progress throughout the study. These findings align with existing research on self-efficacy development, which indicates that giving students opportunities to develop experiences in these categories increases mathematics self-efficacy (Joët et al., 2011; Lau et al., 2018).

R.E.A.L.® Discussions Generate Mastery Experiences for Girls

While studies investigating math self-efficacy in girls found interpersonal sources to be relatively more significant than for boys (Zander, 2020), mastery experiences have been found to be the most significant predictor of mathematics self-efficacy overall (Byars-Winston et al., 2017). Data analysis of discussion question preparation or DQ Prep notes, video recordings of discussions, and teacher field note observations indicated the math-specific R.E.A.L.® discussion framework generated mastery experiences of Grade 6 math content for students. During the intervention, data trends illustrated that the discussions demonstrated an increasingly complex mathematical understanding of the study topics for many students, as evidenced by a movement in early discussions from vague notes with low precision to more specific and complex math concepts in the final discussions. For example, in our second discussion on the order of operations, Student R wrote in their DQ Prep notes that the problem "did $4+2$ then

added the exponents," which shows a vague understanding of the topic but lacks the specificity and mathematical precision to demonstrate Grade 6 level mastery of the skill discussed (see Figure 1a). In the fourth discussion on the relationship between multiplicative inverse and the standard algorithm method of dividing fractions, the same student wrote DQ Prep notes that used a higher volume of math-specific vocabulary correctly to demonstrate an understanding of reciprocals at a Grade 6 level (see Figure 1b).





| DQ PREP: BEFORE DISCUSSION | | |
|--|---|--|
| TOPIC: <u>Order of Operations</u> | | |
| DQ1: <u>How would you correct Leroy's work?</u> | | |
| SOURCE INFO <small>Page, Number, Section, etc.</small> | EVIDENCE WITH EFFICIENCY <small>Use ellipses (...) to save space</small> | EVIDENCE WITH EDITORIAL <small>Bullet points only - no full sentences!</small> |
|   | He thought $4^2 + 2^2$ is 36. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He did $4+2$ then added the exponents • You must compute the exponents, not add the #'s. |
|   | He did division before multiplication. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That is correct • If he did multiplication first, it would get another answer |

Figure 1a - Order of Operations Discussion

DQ1: How is MI alike and/or different from dividing fractions?

| SOURCE INFO Page, Number, Section, etc. | EVIDENCE WITH EFFICIENCY Use ellipses (...) to save space | EVIDENCE WITH EDITORIAL Bullet points only - no full sentences! |
|--|---|---|
| | $\frac{5}{1} \times \frac{1}{5}$ $\frac{4}{5} \div \frac{5}{8} = \frac{4}{5} \times \frac{8}{5}$ MI (Reciprocal) is basically flipping #s | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Its different, because MI is multiplication • Its similar, because its kind of like they both flip the 2nd and multiply |
| | $\frac{3}{8} \times \frac{8}{3}$ $\frac{7}{9} \times \frac{9}{7}$ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, because they are the same numbers across from each other and they will be canceled out. • no matter what they are the same numbers across from each other |

DQ2: Will the MI always = 1?

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Figure 1b - Multiplicative Inverse Discussion

When asked how they had grown during the first three discussions, one student noted, "I have grown by talking more confidently and have more belief in what I say. I also have grown by talking more often." This sentiment indicates that the R.E.A.L.® process was impactful in solidifying the connection between the written math evidence students generated as proof for their explanations and those verbal demonstrations of understanding. A student wrote in a midpoint journal reflection that with R.E.A.L.®, they "have a better understanding when doing

problems." Another student journaled, "it feels like the discussion starts and ends in different spots. So it has accomplishments at the end of the discussion."

In the final discussion of the data collection period, one group of students discussing a ratio and proportion word problem demonstrated a strong grade-level understanding of the math topic and an advanced understanding of extending the math concept using algebraic reasoning. These specific examples of student mastery were polyangulated with transcripts of recorded discussions in the second half of the intervention, which were analyzed and coded for instances of Grade 6 math content mastery. Student reflections and teacher field note observations also confirmed that R.E.A.L.® discussions generated math mastery experiences for students.

Mastery experiences are a key component of self-efficacy and agency because students with mastery feel confident in their ability to use their skills to impact learning outcomes and influence their environment (Bandura, 1997). A study investigating academic self-efficacy in Grade 3 students indicates that girls report lower levels of mathematics mastery than boys (Joët et al., 2011). The opportunity to enable these experiences with the R.E.A.L.® framework is thus important.

R.E.A.L.® Discussions Facilitate Girls' Vicarious and Social Persuasion Experiences

R.E.A.L.® discussions generated vicarious and social persuasion experiences for students. Among the four sources of academic self-efficacy, research shows vicarious and social persuasion (interpersonal sources) to be the most impactful for girls (Zander, 2020). Vicarious experiences of peers demonstrating mastery in math-specific discussions build self-efficacy by providing students with a peer model of achieving success in a math task, thereby giving them proof of their possibility of success (Bandura, 1997). As a student noted in a math journal entry about asking questions in R.E.A.L.® discussions: "Yes I feel confident, because all the people

around me are also confident (which makes me confident). I feel like I'm listening very well when my classmates ask questions about the math material." As illustrated in the data, student experiences indicative of social persuasion were encouragement and agreement with math ideas enacted by peers and instances of peer acceptance of multiple perspectives. When asked if they felt confident asking questions about math material in R.E.A.L.® discussions, one student journaled: "Yes, very. I feel like I'm not the only one who is confused if I am, and we can all learn together." This study's findings are consistent with existing literature, which shows that peer recognition is an essential component of mathematics identity development in girls (Cribbs et al., 2015).

Analysis of DQ Prep notes and transcripts of video recordings of discussions show that the quality of students' observations of their peers increased throughout the study. One student wrote in a math journal prompt about observing their peers asking questions: "I can tell they are engaged and that they are listening and paying attention." DQ prep notes and transcripts of video recordings of discussions coded for instances of students collaborating and engaging in conversation dynamics indicated active listening and comprehension of math questions generated. Student J wrote in their discussion notes for the ratio discussion that, "a lot of my classmates did it a tiny bit different way but we still got the same answer. Another classmate did it the same way as me and I responded by agreeing with them."

The same student wrote in their reflection for the order of operations discussions that a classmate said, "Step 3 is correct, I thought the opposite, but they explained it and I understood." Student D wrote in their reflection on the ratio discussion that when a classmate shared an idea, they "responded by adding the next step to the problem." Video recordings of discussions and field note observations confirm that using the R.E.A.L.® discussion framework generated

vicarious and social persuasion experiences for students and allowed them to reflect on those experiences using the "In R.E.A.L.® Time" notes.

R.E.A.L.® Discussions Increase Girls' Confidence and Positive Emotional States

Students expressed positive emotional states in the context of their math discussions, both in their written journals and reflections, and in their body language and tone during discussions, as illustrated in video recordings and field note observations. Prevalent themes from data analysis of math journal entries were that using R.E.A.L.® increased student confidence and participation in discussing math material. In their math journal entries, students remarked that R.E.A.L.® makes them feel "less shy, and more confident about my voice" and "more organized and productive when having discussions." Students additionally shared that R.E.A.L.® "has made me feel better about sharing my math ideas" and "has made me feel that everyone has had a chance to speak." Students observing other girls mastering math content in a process with visible struggle provided an important vicarious experience. Research shows that other girls as role models, as well as hard-working role models, can improve girls' math performance (Bagès et al., 2015). Another student wrote that discussing math with R.E.A.L.® makes them feel "good, because I have a more confident attitude and answer."

A systematic review of girls' math identity literature shows that early confidence development is important to combat negative attitudes and gender stereotypes in mathematics and "that positive girls' mathematical identity was consistently linked with increased performance, participation and persistence in mathematics" (Fernandez et al., 2022, p.1). To this end, students expressed that having math discussions with R.E.A.L.® was "fun." Even when students expressed that a discussion did not go well, they expressed that it had value in producing some level of math understanding and, in most instances, could articulate an area for

improvement in their subsequent discussion. This process of students preparing for, leading, and independently reflecting on their performance in mathematics discussions was a powerful demonstration of girls as agential actors in their math learning.

Conclusions

My action research project investigated how math discussions can develop discipline-specific self-efficacy via their potential to generate experiences that comprise the four constituent components of self-efficacy development, as outlined by Bandura (1997) in his work on self-efficacy as a lever for agency. The literature analyzing the gender confidence gap in mathematics learning and outcomes suggests that self-efficacy differences are a primary factor in closing the gender gap in mathematics achievement.

Studies suggest that creating a sense of belonging in math classes, specifically in the context of peer relationships, is a key component of discipline-identity development and for girls seeing themselves as mathematicians (Fernandez et al., 2022). The findings in this research study indicate that math-specific discussions increased the volume of direct peer interaction in math class. Students reported increased confidence in asking math questions and understanding concepts underpinning the discrete skills in pre-algebra and proportional reasoning taught in the Grade 6 Math Curriculum. Most students in the research study reported that they enjoyed using the discussion framework and that it increased their confidence in math learning.

While the results were largely positive, implementing the discussion framework in the fast-paced environment of the math classroom was challenging. The Grade 6 Math Curriculum covers a significant volume of discrete skills, and finding time to fit in discussions that covered larger conceptual topics proved challenging at times. Some students reported that they found the

discussions frustrating based on how air space was shared in conversations or how their peers engaged in discussions.

This study points to many future research areas within self-efficacy development in girls' math classes. Exploring differentiation for math levels and learning styles would add depth to the discussion framework application. A continued study of different types of discussion questions and their impact on mastery of Grade 6 math topics is another important area of continued exploration. By pursuing the application of discussion skills in the context of math learning in girls' math classes, researchers and educators can continue to close the self-efficacy gender gap in mathematics learning and empower the next generation of women mathematicians.

Reflection Statement

As a mathematics educator in a girls' school, I aim to empower all my students to see themselves as mathematicians. It is my deeply held belief that empowering girls empowers everyone, and giving girls the tools they need to persevere through mathematics is a critical component of intellectual empowerment. This project has inspired me to continue seeking innovative ways to address the systemic barriers that impact girls developing math confidence. The positive impact of this action research project on my classroom and on myself as a teacher has reminded me that persevering through challenges over time can add to important contributions to the field of mathematics education.

I want to conclude this paper by extending my sincere and heartfelt gratitude to the Head of School at Nashoba Brooks, Danielle Heard. Ms. Heard uses her vision and brilliance daily at Nashoba Brooks School to create an environment that values every person. Within this environment, I found my voice as an educator and felt empowered to impact change in my classroom. Her belief in me and support of this project have changed the way I see myself in

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