My quantitative research design dealt with the role of talk in developing a response to reading literature, and I believe the study may have important implications for the role of talk in learning in general. I would be happy to present with other graduate students if connected topics arise.

Reading practices in high school English language arts should lead students to write richer, more developed responses to literature. Experts suggest many activities for literature: small-group discussion, dialogue journals, drama activities, textbook questions. What works?

Do students need to talk through their responses to text, or would written responses give students a better opportunity to clarify their thinking? Is collaboration necessary, or can reading response develop as easily with solitary reflection?

In this study, teacher-led, reflective, and performance-based instructional modes were combined with either talk or writing to produce six activities for enhancing response for three classes in a Midwest suburban high school. After each of the six learning activities concluded, students wrote extended responses.

The significance of this research topic. This study lends credibility to a theoretical model that emphasizes a social construction of knowledge. While the study tests components of a high school reading program, the implications of collaboration, talk and writing may have broader application.