

assumed that these sessions of Peer Scrutiny and Discourse (PSD) would deepen students' knowledge of history (in a disciplinary sense) and lead them to outperform the students who did not engage in PSD on various measures of historical thinking and understanding.

History-specific instruction took place over a five-month period. A range of data were collected to chart students' growth in historical thinking, including pre and post-study surveys of students' views and knowledge of history, journal entries they created after key lessons and exercises, six historical argumentation writing tasks, a think-aloud task on African Americans' experiences with Southern Reconstruction and exit interviews with primary informants, and the researcher's observations of the teaching and learning that took place. The data were also used to discern the influence of PSD. The researcher found that the majority of students in both classes made gains in historical thinking, especially in the area of written historical argumentation. There appeared to be changes in students' beliefs about history in both classes; and there was some indication that primary informants who experienced PSD developed slightly deeper ideas about evidence and interpretation. The quality of historical writing was higher among students who experienced PSD until the final historical argumentation task. This study suggests that learning about America's past through historical investigations informed and driven by a theoretical framework for learning to think in history causes forward movement along the novice-toward-expert continuum of historical thinking for most adolescents with little or no prior experience with disciplinary history.

YOU HAVE TO CONSIDER THE SOURCE:
AN INVESTIGATION OF 8TH GRADE STUDENTS USING HISTORY'S
SOURCING HEURISTIC TO LEARN ABOUT AMERICA'S PAST

By

John A. Wooden

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Advisory Committee:

Professor Bruce A. VanSledright, Chair

Professor Patricia A. Alexander

Professor Peter A. Afflerbach

Professor Chauncey B. Monte-Sano

Liliana Maggioni, Ph.D.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Aside from the idea that history and the social studies are an integral part of students' preparation for citizenship, there is little that education policy makers and history education researchers agree on when it comes to what history our young people should be learning in public school and how they should be learning it (VanSledright, 2002, 2008, 2011). Although there seems to be an increase in the integration of primary sources in American history classrooms (Barton, 2005; Kelly, Meuwissen, & VanSledright, 2007), which is regarded as critical to the teaching and practice of historical thinking, most U.S. history/social studies curricula and pedagogy align with the narrative arc of American freedom and progress found in most U.S. history textbooks (VanSledright, 2008, 2011; VanSledright & Afflerbach, 2000). In fact, Barton (2005) and Kelly, et al. (2007) claim that teachers' use of primary sources is often designed to lead students toward interpretations of historical figures and events that cohere with this celebratory version of America's past.

The Florida State Legislature's attempt in the spring of 2006 to dictate how American history should be taught in their state's public schools underscores the powerful influence the story of American progress exerts on instruction. The *A+ K-12 Education Bill* (HB 7087e3) states that:

American history shall be viewed as factual, not constructed, shall be viewed as knowable, teachable, and testable, and shall be defined as the creation of a new nation based largely on the universal principles stated in the Declaration of Independence (Florida House of Representatives, 2006, p. 44).

The social studies curriculum specialists for Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) in Maryland, the 24th largest school district in the nation, followed the same line of thinking when this school system declared that their 8th grade U.S. history course “presents a chronological, narrative survey of the history of the United States” designed to “encourage identification with the American people...at various points in time in our country’s history” (Baltimore County Public Schools Department of Humanities, 2008, p. 6). A review of the curriculum guide for this course makes the ideological subtext of this statement clear: history teachers in BCPS are expected to align their lessons with the familiar story of American exceptionalism and greatness.

A more salient example of history education that is intended to foster allegiance to American democratic ideals is the testing system modeled after the *History and Social Science Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools* (Virginia Board of Education, 2001). According to these standards, the study of history in Virginia’s public schools “rests on knowledge of dates, names, places, events, and ideas” (Virginia Board of Education, 2001, p. 32), which students are expected to recall on a 70 item multiple choice high stakes assessment taken at the end of the school year (Kelly, et al., 2007). Although historical content cannot be divorced from the cognitive processes involved in the creation of historical knowledge, focusing almost exclusively on the products of historians’ inquiries, which Virginia’s *Standards* apparently require the state’s teachers to do, restricts opportunities for students to engage in analytical and creative thinking about the past *and* present (Fenton, 1967, 1975; Grant, 2003; Kelly, et al., 2007; Paxton, 1999; Seixas, 2000; VanSledright & Limon, 2006).

History education researchers/reformers in the U.S., Great Britain and Canada argue that learning history through the intellectual tools of academic historians, rather than mastering the results of their work, deepens students' knowledge of the past and sharpens their reading, writing and thinking skills (Ashby, Lee & Shemilt, 2005; Bain, 2000, 2005; Kobrin, 1995, 1996; Lee, 2005; Monte-Sano, 2008; Seixas, 2000; Shemilt, 1980; Stearns, Seixas & Wineburg, 2000; VanSledright, 2002, 2011; Wineburg, 2001). For example, high school students in San Francisco who were exposed to Stanford University's Reading Like a Historian (RLH) curriculum showed notable growth in historical thinking, including the ability to work with historical accounts, mastery of historical content and reading comprehension (Reisman, 2012). As the name of the intervention implies, students engaged in RLH spent six months engaged in classroom-based activities that were consistent with the goals, concepts, methods and cognitive processes of the discipline of history. Seixas (2000) argues that this type of instruction, which he calls disciplinary history, "provides students with standards for inquiry, investigation and debate" and thus allows them "to engage, at some level, in the ongoing debates and conversations about the past, rather than uncritically accept any particular version" (p. 33).

According to Lee (2005) and VanSledright (2004), students who learn historical habits of mind through instructional scaffolds should be able to transfer those critical thinking strategies to everyday situations. They argue, for instance, that students who know how to interrogate historical sources and their authors, and who understand the importance of this heuristic to the creation of sophisticated interpretations of the past, are better equipped to analyze conflicting messages from politicians and activists and form

reasoned opinions about current events and issues. In short, these researchers contend that putting the discipline of history at the center of teaching and learning cultivates reflective thinking about the world and hence a thoughtful citizenry. Disciplinary history therefore seems to have greater potential to deepen students' understanding of history and give them the intellectual capabilities they need to process the "mixed messages and counter narratives common to globalized and time-compressed cultural life in the 21st century" and thus participate more fully and effectively in our liberal, open society, than traditional approaches that subordinate rigorous historical thinking to knowing and recalling historical information (VanSledright, 2008, p. 137).

Purpose of the Study

The social studies curriculum where I teach 8th grade U.S. history is moving in the direction of disciplinary history. The development of a framework for teaching historical thinking in grades 6-8 in 2009 and curricular addendums containing investigative lessons have been implemented in every middle school in my district. The introduction to each addendum states that "the skills of historical thinking that form the backbone of this course are part of a grade six to eight continuum of skill development" (p. i). The development of historical thinking capabilities among students, according to the addendums, is to happen primarily through "Document Based Inquiry Tasks." The "Skills Framework" for our district's social studies courses states that students will be taught and then given frequent opportunities to analyze historical sources to determine the purposes, opinions, beliefs, and values of the people that created them and consider how the time and place in which the sources were made affect their content.

The Maryland State Board of Education's adoption of the Common Core State Standards for instruction in all major subjects, particularly the Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, which are in the draft stages, make the push toward discipline-based history instruction more critical than ever for my school district and its history and social studies teachers. The draft of the Maryland Common Core Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies state that students should be able to "make logical inferences" from a range of primary and secondary texts and "cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text" (Maryland Common Core State Curriculum Framework, 2012, p. 1).

As a history teacher and history education researcher who believes that the disciplinary approach to teaching and learning about America's past helps students become better readers, writers and thinkers, and empowers them to think reflexively and make informed judgments about the U.S. and its place in the world, I have welcomed this change in the focus of instruction. Since becoming social studies department chair for my school in 2005 and simultaneously making the switch from teaching 6th grade ancient history to Advanced U.S. History 8, I have been using a disciplinary approach to the teaching and learning of America's past. In particular I have been interested in how students view history and how they can be taught to understand the concepts of evidence and interpretation. Through informal surveys and analysis of my students' work in class, I have noticed that most students do not see a difference between history and the past. They also tend to believe that the past is fixed and known by some authority, and they treat evidence accordingly, as simply information.

In light of the curricular changes being made to increase the academic rigor of history/social studies instruction in my school district, it seemed more important than ever for me to conduct a disciplined investigation of teaching and learning in my classroom. Although I documented and analyzed the complex interactions that occurred during instruction between me (the teacher), my students, and the materials and scaffolds used to deepen their knowledge and understandings of history, the primary focus of my study is on student learning (Ball, 2007). In my view this study was an opportunity to test the effectiveness of learning history through the kinds of inquiry and materials used by experts in historical investigation in a real classroom setting on students in two of my 8th grade Advanced U.S. History courses.

According to Marilyn Johnston (2006), a teacher educator in social studies at Ohio State University, “teacher research approaches hold particular potential for social studies educators to grow as teachers” and “help our students become critically reflective and socially active citizens” (p. 78). Johnston also notes that qualitative studies from teachers who focus on their own classrooms and students “provide opportunities for critical reflection, adaptations, and personal and professional insights for both the researchers and other teachers” (p. 78). In short, my investigation of student learning in history was intended to shed light on the ideas students typically bring to the study of history and the kinds of learning experiences that are likely to move them closer to a deeper and more justified understanding of the discipline. My study was also intended to explore how activities implemented within the classroom context and constructed in concert with a research-based, theoretically-grounded framework of learning to think in

history were evidenced in the outcomes manifest by my students over the course of five months.

While the nature of this research-based, theoretically-grounded framework will be explicated within the review of the literature (Chapter 2), there are certain aspects that merit mentioning here:

1. Novices in history are likely to come to their history classes with the idea/assumption that history and the past are isomorphic. This misconception impedes the development of sophisticated understandings of the discipline of history if it is not addressed with intellectual challenges and education in history's cognitive strategies (Lee, 2005; Maggioni, VanSledright & Alexander, 2009; Shemilt, 1983).
2. Novices are more likely to begin a journey toward competence in historical thinking when they realize that the past does not speak to us directly, but instead comes to us through inquirers (usually experts) who convert accounts and relics into evidence and use them to reconstruct and interpret the past (Lee, 2005).
3. Although the realization that history is based on accounts and reasoning is a critical step in learning to think historically for novices, they may adopt the relativistic view that history is simply a matter of opinion or revert back to faith in an ultimate truth in history unless their education in historical thinking immerses them in the conceptual framework of the discipline and helps them acquire and apply the heuristics that make disciplined inquiry, reconstruction

and interpretation of the past possible (Bain, 2000; Lee, 2005; Maggioni, et al., 2009; VanSledright, 2002, 2011).

4. Since accounts, evidence and interpretation are the core of the discipline of history, these are the second-order ideas novices should be exposed to first. Along these lines, it makes sense for novices to learn how to source along with the importance of doing it early in their journey toward effective historical thinking (Lee, 2005; Reisman, 2012; Wineburg, 2001).
5. Novices are more likely to make a meaningful and lasting shift in their views and thinking about history if they are repeatedly exposed to and encouraged to work with heuristics such as sourcing, corroboration, contextualization and argumentation in ways that account for their levels of development and interests as learners (Shemilt, 1983, Lee, 2005; Monte-Sano, 2011; VanSledright, 2002, 2011). Nonetheless, adolescents should not be expected to perform at the level of historians, nor is the goal to turn adolescents into mini-historians (Lee, 2005; VanSledright, 2002).

The framework above privileges disciplinary history, which is an alternative to the traditional and predominant knowledge acquisition/collective memory approach to teaching and learning American history. It has the potential to lead students to greater sophistication in their understanding of history and their reading, writing and thinking. Discipline-centric history instruction is therefore aligned with what I see as a primary goal of history/social studies in American public education: the cultivation of analytical and reflective thinkers and life-long learners who are committed to improving themselves, their communities, the country and the world.

Research on students' engagement in history's heuristics, discussed in detail in the next chapter, demonstrates both the potential of these cognitive tools to help young people reach higher stages of academic development and the need to teach these strategies and provide many and varied opportunities for students to use and refine them. As Lee (2005) argues in his chapter on understanding history in *How Students Learn: History in the Classroom*, students "must learn to understand the discipline of history" if the past and the study of it are to have any real meaning for them (p. 70). Lee also claims that since historical thinking runs counter to the ideas and ways of thinking historical novices usually bring to the classroom, students need "the best [conceptual] tools we [teachers] can give them" if they are to develop the deeper understandings and strategic knowledge characteristic of competence in the discipline (p. 70). Lee goes on to say that this is one of the few things public education can offer young people that the "busy world outside cannot" (p. 70).

While there is increased interest in inquiry-based and constructivist approaches to history education (Yeager & Davis, 2005), there remains a shortage of studies that focus on the effects of discipline-based teaching practices on students' understanding of history and their ability to deploy the heuristics of the discipline. My study contributes to our understanding of how students learn what Bruner (1960) calls the "underlying principles" and "the broader fundamental structure of a field of knowledge" (i.e. history) that are critical to knowledge depth and "adequate transfer of training" (p. 25). According to Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993), "inquiry conducted by teachers is a way to build knowledge both locally and more publicly – for the individual teacher, for communities of teachers, and for the larger field of university-based researchers and teacher-educators,

policy makers, and school administrators” (p. 61). Thus I foresee the results of my study informing not only my own teaching practices and knowledge of how students learn history, but that of social studies teachers, curriculum specialists and administrators in my school district (and perhaps others), and education researchers at the university level.

Researcher/practitioner studies conducted by VanSledright (2002) and Stout (2004), discussed in the “Promising Practices” section of the next chapter, offer rich data and useful insights on how students perceive and work with American history before, during and after being placed in the role of historical detectives in a classroom setting. But these researchers were only able to chart students’ growth in historical thinking for a period of several months, since they were not the teachers of record for the students they taught. Bain (2000) offers an example of the effects of disciplinary history over the course of a school year. But his participants were 11th graders who studied European history. In contrast to these studies, mine centers on 8th grade students working with American history for the first five months of the 2009-2010 school year.

Researchers know a fair amount about what expertise in the history domain looks like (Bain, 2000; Seixas, 2000; VanSledright & Limon, 2006; VanSledright, 2004; Wineburg, 1991a, 1991b, 2001) and there are usable examples of how the tools of the discipline can be taught to children and adolescents (Bain, 2000, 2005; Kobrin, 1995, 1996; Lee & Ashby, 2005; Monte-Sano, 2008; Reisman, 2012; Stout, 2004; VanSledright, 2002, 2011). But we still do not know enough about how or when students acquire historical habits of mind. Despite the volume and persuasiveness of the literature on history education, there are questions that remain largely unanswered. For example, what are the most optimal ways to help students recognize and apply the core historical

concepts that all sources are authored and reflective of those authors' opinions, biases, motives, perspectives and positions in society, and that sources and the interpretation of them form the basis of all historical knowledge? How much background knowledge or context do students need before they can be expected to analyze and evaluate sources, place them in the context of the times in which they were made, and then use them to construct sophisticated interpretations of the past? And where is that background knowledge to come from? What level of historical thinking is appropriate for children and adolescents in a classroom setting? And how much practice do students need in order to move forward along the novice-toward-expert continuum of historical thinking? As Alexander (2003) and VanSledright (2002) have noted, we lack empirical data about the middle steps learners take toward achieving competence and expertise in the history domain. My study provides useful knowledge in these areas.

Focus of the Study

My views and goals as an eighth grade U.S. history instructor, the research literature that supports them, and the existing questions and problems associated with how students learn to think historically led me to conduct this practitioner research study, which was designed to chart the development of historical thinking among students in two of my 8th grade U.S. history classes in a course of study centered on key aspects of the discipline of history. In particular, I wanted to see if an intervention involving peer editing of written historical arguments and discourse about historical argumentation and other aspects of the discipline, which I refer to throughout the study as Peer Scrutiny and Discourse (PSD), would influence the development of students' historical cognition in one of the two classes. The instruction involved in what I refer to as Teaching

Intervention 1 (historical thinking exercises and PSD), and Teaching Intervention 2 (historical thinking exercises without the addition of PSD) was structured to meet the varied needs of my students, who represented a range of academic levels and interests. The reading, thinking and writing my students engaged in over this five- month period of investigative history instruction was analyzed to discern changes in my students' views and understanding of history. I also investigated the acquisition and growth of procedural knowledge in history among my students (procedural knowledge in history is defined and described in Chapter 2).

Advanced U.S. History 8 begins with the colonial period and ends with Southern Reconstruction. Since I began teaching this course in 2005 I have given myself the mission of creating lessons and exercises that can help my students know the difference between history and the past and reach a point where they are using history's heuristics without explicit prompting. Before launching my study at the beginning of the 2009-2010 school year I used instructional activities and materials I created along with what I learned from my previous students' work to guide decisions about which exercises and assessments to include for analysis. I also drew upon Shulman's (1987) concept of "pedagogical reasoning" when designing activities and selecting sources and content to help my students make gains in their historical thinking capabilities, since adapting instructional strategies and materials to fit the prior knowledge, interests, and needs of my learners was likely to increase the effectiveness of my interventions in historical thinking (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005).

The purpose of my study was to learn more about how adolescents perceive and work with history before, during, and after they engage in a course centered on the field

of history (i.e. the construction of evidence-based interpretations of the past through careful and critical analysis of sources). I was particularly interested in investigating how students can be led to know and understand the idea of historical evidence and use it to reconstruct and interpret the past. Most of my instruction and activities centered on the following concepts and types of strategic knowledge that fall under the sourcing heuristic in the domain of history: (a) recognition of the role sources play in knowing the past (b) recognition of authorial voice and perspectives in historical texts (including images) and (c) inter-textual reading and contextualization of sources. According to Calder (2002, 2006), Paxton (2002), Wineburg (1991, 1998, 2001) and VanSledright and Afflerbach (2005), connecting texts to their authors and then situating those texts in the historical contexts in which they were created are unnatural cognitive acts that are difficult for students, even those at the college level, to grasp and internalize. This is not surprising since these history-specific concepts and strategies are not typically taught in history classrooms. In fact, most history curricula and instruction, and the textbooks that support them obscure authorial voice and are virtually silent on ways that historians go about reconstructing the past (Bain, 2000; Paxton, 1999, 2002; VanSledright, 2008). Yet these strategies are the sine qua non of history and the production of sophisticated knowledge of the past.

Indicators of Historical Thinking

It was my hope that by the end of the five-month period of classroom instruction and exercises based on historical inquiry, each of my students would produce a written historical argument about the causes of the American Revolution that reflected logical interpretations of the event emanating from their own analysis and synthesis of sources

(mostly primary), specific references to those sources in the body of their arguments, and clear statements indicating how and why that evidence proved their points. I reasoned that students' argumentative writing would be a reliable indicator of the depth of their historical thinking.

Historical arguments, unlike essays that simply recap or summarize past events through the use of one or more secondary sources, present a claim or hypothesis about what a particular past means and seek to defend it through evidence (traces of the past), reasoning and creative or imaginative thinking (White, 1987). In short, a historical argument is the result or product of focused inquiry and investigation, not simply a report offering a person's understanding of a textbook's and/or a teacher's version of events, or a litany of facts presented almost as a timeline. An argument attempts to make a case for a particular interpretation of the past, which can only be successful if the author has engaged in at least several, "unnatural" cognitive acts (Wineburg, 2001). These include, but are not limited to, grappling with an important or interesting question about the past, analyzing, interpreting and connecting a range of evidence related to it, deliberate efforts to place relevant sources in context when interpreting them, and making assumptions to compensate for gaps in the evidence. Since effective historical argumentation is preceded by and dependent upon good detective work, I assumed my students' arguments would tell me a great deal about their learning capabilities in history and their growth as historical thinkers.

The learning exercises I planned for my students, including PSD, were intended to push them to a state of competence in historical thinking. But since competence in an academic domain such as history can require years of instruction or training (Alexander,

2003; Berkin, personal email communication, January 3, 2013; Rosenzweig & Weinland, 1986; Shemilt, 1983), I assumed that a lesser amount of movement toward expertise would still be a reliable indicator of whether my approach to teaching and learning in history was successful. If novices in history could be led to construct their own arguments about the past and articulate the understanding that interpretation of evidence makes this possible, they would perhaps have the foundation they needed to continue to see history as a discipline rather than a body of uncontested knowledge. They could then take this new understanding of history as an interpretive enterprise into their high school history courses and add deeper layers to their knowledge of the difference between history and the past as they learned new material and continued to write. I reasoned this could still happen even if one or more of my students' instructors taught history as more of a *fait accompli* through lectures and note-taking. If my students reached level III (AKA Testimony) of Shemilt's (1983) model of progression in historical thinking, for example, they could perhaps recognize that their teacher was choosing content or facts over dealing with the complexities of sources and interpretation. But I will concede that students who left my study with a deeper sense of history could just as easily have reverted back to their original conceptions of the subject being little more than a body of well-established facts or a single true story of the past if their subsequent teachers presented history that way.

Perhaps more importantly, I theorized that seeing changes in my students' ideas about history representing movement toward greater sophistication in thinking and writing would be instructive for history teachers desirous of exposing their students to the discipline. My efforts to test the theoretical framework of learning to think in history my

study is based on (explained in the next chapter) and connect any hoped-for changes in students' ideas and knowledge with what occurred in my classroom could shed light on which strategies help bring about deeper understandings of history and what else can be done to sustain and improve historical thinking among adolescents. To that end, I developed four main questions to guide my efforts to teach historical thinking to my 8th grade students and analyze and interpret the effects of my instruction on student learning.

Research Questions

My study addressed the following questions:

1. What do students believe about history before, during and after learning it through investigative methods?
2. How do classroom-based exercises developed and implemented in concert with a research-based, theoretically-grounded framework for learning to think in history influence novices' knowledge and understanding of the idea of historical evidence and its role in the production of historical knowledge?
3. How much time and instruction are required to move students away from their status as historical novices toward greater sophistication in historical thinking?
4. Does engagement in structured sessions of peer review and editing of students' written arguments and discourse on historical argumentation deepen students' knowledge of the discipline of history?

As I previously suggested, my goal was not to turn my students into mini-historians or prepare them to someday work in the field. I did not expect them to think

about or do history at the same level as historians. But some of the heuristics deployed almost instinctively by experts in history can be learned and used effectively by adolescents if they are immersed in them (VanSledright, 2001). Listed below are the cognitive acts/tools and understandings I targeted in most of my lessons and what I hoped my students would come to understand and use in ways that went beyond mimicking what I did and said as their history teacher. The list begins with the larger understandings I hoped my students would achieve and works down to the history-specific strategies that I reasoned would lead them to these understandings:

- Recognize and believe that history and the past are not the same; that history is essentially a matter of interpretation and that all historical knowledge is constructed and subject to revision or change.
- Know how to construct evidence-based historical arguments.
- Recognize that sources are “evidence” of the past and can be used to reconstruct and interpret events, people or conditions that no one alive today could have witnessed or experienced first-hand.
- Know the difference between primary and secondary accounts.
- Know how to “source” accounts and understand the purpose for doing it. A key to this was leading my students to see all accounts as human creations and voices rather than information to be read and summarized. In my view, getting students to see authorial voice in every source they encountered would be a significant development in their journey to becoming historical thinkers.
- Know and believe that *all* accounts are biased and reflective of a person’s or group’s perspective on the aspect(s) of the past you are investigating.

- Know how to assess accounts for reliability and the importance of doing this.
- Know how to read across or corroborate accounts and connect them to develop a picture of, and a claim or hypothesis about the past that is under investigation.
- Know how to place and understand accounts within the time period in which they were made (contextualization).
- Know how to develop and state a claim about the past.
- Know how to cite and explain accounts in support of a claim.
- Know how to deal with conflicting accounts and how to state and then refute an opposing claim or interpretation.

The discipline of history involves a great deal more than my list suggests. I did not attempt to directly teach or address every idea that historians and history education researchers regard as key elements of the discipline, including continuity and change and historical empathy (Lee, 2005; Seixas, 2002). As I explain further in the next chapter, I mostly concentrated on the larger concepts of evidence, accounts, interpretation and argumentation. I regard these ideas as they keys and building blocks of the discipline of history and therefore the most important things to teach and engage my students in to reach my goal of leading them to know that history is a continuous and evolving effort to make sense of the past (and present) rather than obtaining and summarizing facts and reciting a fixed story of America or the world.

Summary

The primary goal of my study was to shed light on how novice history students can become good historical thinkers in a classroom setting. It examines the effects of teaching and learning about America's past through discipline-centric instruction and

activities. One of the two classes that received this kind of instruction also engaged in an intervention in historical thinking that involved peer editing and discourse centered on historical argumentation.

I assumed that the PSD intervention would enhance students' knowledge of the discipline of history, especially the knowledge experts refer to as procedural or strategic - the actual "doing" of history. I reasoned that if my students could articulate what is problematic and/or effective in their peers' historical work within the framework of the history domain, it would be a strong indication of the depth and sophistication of their knowledge of history and the effectiveness of the teaching and learning that brought them to that point. Imagine a student who indicated in the pre-course survey that they believed history to be a litany of facts or one particular story of the past, actually explaining to a classmate 3-5 months later that their interpretation of the American Revolution, for example, is an effective one because it adheres to the existing evidence and explains not only how the evidence is connected to their argument, but what makes the evidence reliable. This is just one example of what can happen when students are taught and encouraged to be engaged in historical discourse.

I envision the results of my study being used to support educators that want to push their students to become good, lifelong historical thinkers. Good historical thinkers are better equipped to think reflectively and skeptically about current events and issues. My study provides data that supports VanSledright's (2004) and Lee's (2005) assertion that students who learn to think historically will become more sophisticated and careful inquirers, which gives them a distinct advantage in a society in which they are inundated

with information, making the act of discerning supportable claims from dubious ones more challenging than ever.

In the next chapter I offer a brief sketch of expertise in historical thinking and outline three main types of knowledge in the history domain. I then turn to what the research says about how students typically think about the subject of history and offer data from research I conducted on my own students' perceptions of history and their ability to read historical texts. This is followed by a review of the research that guides and supports my teaching methods and my goals as a history education practitioner and researcher. The chapter concludes with a theoretical framework of learning to think in history that guided my efforts to help my students become historical thinkers.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

Historical Thinking and the Domain of History

There is no easy way to define history; attempts to do so in the last thirty years have not been without controversy (Lowenthal, 2006; Stearns, Seixas & Wineburg, 2000). But most historians would agree that history is inquiry about the past through systematic analysis and interpretation of sources and the knowledge derived from this process (Barton, 2005; Berkin, personal communication, January 8, 2013; VanSledright, 2004). Historians' interpretations of the past, usually in the form of narratives or histories, are at the center of the historical enterprise (Davidson & Lytle, 1992; Eula, 1993; Marty, 1994; Marwick, 1994; VanSledright, 1999, 2004).

Expert historical investigators possess the sophisticated understanding that the past and the traces of it do not speak to us directly. They know that knowledge of what transpired in previous generations must be constructed from inquiry, investigation and the selection and interpretation of sources, which become evidence in light of the questions being asked. According to historian Robert Rosenstone, history "is not a collection of details. It is an argument about what the details mean" (quoted in Masur, 1999, p. 4). In his book *Lincoln's Melancholy*, which combines history with the field of psychology and mental health studies to make the argument that Abraham Lincoln's bouts with depression fueled his greatness, writer Joshua Wolf Shenk echoes this idea when he claims that "history is not what happened in the past, but the best story we can tell with the available material" (p. 56).

Historians ask questions of the past that reflect their interests and concerns. They then search for, select and analyze evidence related to their queries, piece the evidence together and then offer an interpretation of it. As Marwick (1994) notes, we have no direct knowledge of past civilizations and practices; knowledge of the past must therefore come from witnesses, historians, and other serious investigators of the past.

Although most historians subject their sources to rigorous interrogation and develop explanations of the past that are aligned with a preponderance of the evidence, they know the knowledge they create is tentative and that it cannot be used to produce immutable laws or generalizations about human behavior (Carr, 1961; Finlay, 1988; Phillips, 1985; Rosenstone, 1999; VanSledright, 2004; Voss & Wiley, 2006). As Phillips (1985) noted in an essay on the work of all scientists, historians can only collect as much evidence as possible and then make their best arguments about what it all means. The fragmentary nature of historical evidence requires that historians fill in the resulting gaps with conjecture, imagination, and/or creative thinking. As Rosentone (1999) put it, “the moment you start connecting facts into a meaningful story, you are indulging in certain forms of fiction” (p. 4). Historians accept that their theories and arguments about the past are subject to intense scrutiny and refutation. But many say it is this historical debate that keeps the discipline alive and strong (Gordon, 1991; Lorenz, 1998; Lowenthal, 1998, 2000; Marwick, 1995; Phillips, 1985). In an argument about the importance of history to the general public, Glassie (1994) claims that “history – like myth, powerful, suggestive, and inevitably fragmentary - exists to be altered, to be transformed without end, chartering social orders as yet unimagined” (p. 962).

Regardless of what vein a historian is working in, be it post-modernism, black feminism, sociocultural history, etc., he or she must assess the nature of sources to form interpretations of the past that can withstand colleagues' scrutiny and make meaningful contributions to historical knowledge (Davidson & Lytle, 1992; Marwick, 1995; Sexias, 1996; VanSledright, 2004). Wineburg (1991a, 1991b), Bain (2000) and VanSledright (2002, 2004), and full-time historians such as Calder (2002, 2006), who have reflected on their craft, have charted a series of cognitive moves historians make when working with evidence. Known generally as the sourcing heuristic in the literature on history education, the steps and questions listed below, though not always followed in this order, are the key to developing sophisticated and defensible interpretations of the past and are what distinguish reading in history from reading in other academic disciplines:

Identification of the source. What type of account is it? When was it made?
How does it appear?

Attributing the source to an author. Who constructed the source and why?
In what context did the author produce the source?

Assessment of the author's perspective. What was the author's social, cultural and political position? What values did the author possess? What did the author's contemporaries say about him or her?

Assessment of the reliability of the source. How does the content of the source compare to what other sources say? Can the source be corroborated?

According to VanSledright and Limon (2006), the intellectual tools listed above, which are peculiar to the discipline of history, can be classified as procedural knowledge. VanSledright and Limon (2006) divide historical knowledge and thinking into three

categories: first-order substantive knowledge - the products of historians' inquiries, often referred to as content knowledge in education; second-order substantive knowledge - concepts such as causation, human agency and evidence that historians impose on the past to give it meaning; and procedural knowledge - the habits of mind historical investigators engage in to construct evidence-based interpretations of the past.

My study in history education focused on my students' understanding and use of second-order and procedural/strategic knowledge of history. It was assumed that privileging history's heuristics in classroom instruction would deepen my students' understanding of first-order knowledge in American history. A disciplinary approach to history instruction formed the primary lens I used to select and review the studies in historical cognition that underpin my work as a teacher and researcher.

As the foregoing discussion indicates, history is rigorous, complicated, multi-vocal, interpretive, debatable and contested. Even if they have difficulty articulating the nature of what they do, historians know this about history, and they thrive on it. What do children and adolescents know about history? What ideas, views, conceptions and misconceptions do students bring to the study of history?

Research on Students' Perceptions of History

Students' views about the nature of historical knowledge, especially issues of evidence and interpretation, are of particular concern to me as a teacher and researcher in history education. The data presented below on how students define and perceive history are drawn from my research and observations of students in prior years and from studies from other history education researchers.

When I interviewed one of my high-achieving 8th grade U.S. history students toward the end of the 2008-2009 school year to find out more about why she rated Abraham Lincoln as one of the three most important people in American history, she told me it was because “he stopped slavery and most of the racial hatred.”¹ When I asked another student in the same class why she placed Lincoln near the top of *her* list of the most important people in America’s past, she also said it was because Lincoln was “the one who stopped slavery.” In the spring of 2004, when I taught ancient world history to 6th grade students, two of my most proficient readers and critical thinkers believed this about Lincoln too. But after participating in a think-aloud exercise with the same set of Lincoln documents that Wineburg (1998) used in his study of the contextualization of historical sources, both students concluded that Lincoln was not a national hero since, as one of the participants put it, he “didn’t really care” about racial equality (Wooden, 2008).

These sweeping and insupportable generalizations about one of the most well-known figures in America’s past may be attributable to social studies lessons in elementary school that are mostly what VanSledright (1999) calls a “steady diet of historical details, events and names” usually aligned with a story of American progress and conveyed through worksheets, lecture and other teacher-centered activities (p.2). Another reason for my students’ decontextualized view of Lincoln could be adolescents’ tendency to view historical changes as phenomena that emanate from the actions and intentions of individuals rather than from societal structures or collective action (Barton,

1 The interview was a follow-up to a U.S. History questionnaire I administered to the entire class. The questionnaire, which is a modified version of the one used by Epstein (1999) to study differences in black and white high school students’ views of U.S. history, asked students to identify three people and events they regard as the most important in America’s past and to rate various sources of evidence about history in terms of reliability.

2004). Discerning historical movements in the past requires inquiry, investigation of a wide variety of sources, and the ability to connect and make inferences from those traces of the past. This way of thinking and reading is not typically taught in history or social studies classes, which may also help explain why many students tend to attribute American progress to famous individuals.

In reference to policy makers' obsession with students' supposed lack of basic knowledge of American history, Wineburg (1992) observed, "The problem with students is not that they don't know enough about history. The problem is that they don't know what history is in the first place" (quoted in Calder, 2006, p. 1363)². My work with students has led me to the same conclusion. Since I began using a disciplinary approach to teaching American history in 2005, I have found that most of my students, including those identified as Gifted and Talented, come to my classroom believing that history is a record of the past that gets passed unchanged from generation to generation like "facts beamed through time" (Wineburg, quoted in Bain, 2000, p.338). Barton (1997) discovered similar views about the nature of historical knowledge among a class of fourth and fifth grade students in his year-long study of their perceptions of historical evidence. When asked in the beginning of the year to describe how people come to know about the past, most of the students indicated that this knowledge is transmitted orally from one generation to the next (Barton, 1997).

For many of my students, history is something that can be "looked up" in books. At the beginning of the 2007-2008 school year, I administered a modified version of a questionnaire developed by historian Lendol Calder (2006), which he uses to ascertain

² Wineburg and Calder are echoing observations Richard Brown made beginning in the 1960's about history as a school subject.

and address his undergraduate history students' perceptions of history as a field of inquiry and knowledge. My version of the survey was used for the same purpose. Consider the following statements two of my higher-achieving students wrote in response to an item on the questionnaire about what history means to them:

To me, history is a record of past events. To me[,] basically during history we learn about the past and how it affected our future. I believe that's all there is to it.

[History is] an action that has already occurred that was a turning point. It is precise [sic]/exact event that has happened. History is information needed.

Through triangulation of the responses to three survey items portraying history as fixed knowledge, I found that 93% of my students (N = 123) indicated on the pre-course survey that they felt history is primarily a record of the past. In one of my two Gifted and Talented classes, 26 of the 27 students indicated that they believed history is a record of facts from the past and that historians' interpretive role is either insignificant or not a part of history at all.³

These findings corroborate other researchers' claims about the thinking that young people tend to bring to the study of history. In an article on her teaching practices and her students' perceptions of them while teaching for "civic competence" in a 9th grade world history class in 2001, Kohlmeier (2005) noted that many of her students saw history as a collection of "interesting" facts embedded in a single and unchanging narrative of the world's past "written by 'Time Itself'" (p. 11). Moreover, Kohlmeier's students seemed to find little use for history in the real world.

³ See items 1 and 5 on the pre-course history survey in Appendix B.

Historian Patrick Manning (2007) noted similar views among his college history students. He cites oversimplification of people and events in the past as the most prominent problem among the young adults he teaches. Manning argues that if students “lack clear alternatives,” they are “tempted to describe the past as a list of facts and interpret it as one thing after another, or simply to focus on their favorite part” (p. 1).

Calder (2006) found a similar pattern in his college students’ views of history. After spending four class meetings surveying his students’ knowledge and ideas about the nature of historical inquiry, Calder found that young adults “come to college thinking that history is what one finds in a textbook: a stable, authoritative body of knowledge that, when remembered, somehow makes the world a better place” (p. 1363). In response to this, Calder infused his college history courses with history workshops centered on sourcing, interpretation and argumentation, which he claimed led to improvements in his students’ historical thinking and writing and their grasp of the content he teaches.

Data from research on elementary and secondary students’ views of history conducted by VanSledright (1998, 2002) corroborate these findings. VanSledright notes how students often come to American history classes with a view of history that is consistent with what Kammen (1997) and Lowenthal (1998) call “heritage.” According to Lowenthal (1998), heritage is primarily a celebratory view of the past often transmitted to young people for the purpose of instilling and preserving democratic ideals and patriotism. While heritage and history can be intertwined, they contrast sharply in terms of method. As noted, history values inquiry, rigorous investigation of sources and the development of evidence-based arguments about the past. Heritage, on the other hand, is based largely on memories, values and emotions. According to VanSledright (1998),

heritage leaves an “indelible mark” on American children by the time they reach fifth grade, which is when they typically begin studying U.S. history in school (p. 3). In the early phase of his historical detective work with fifth graders, VanSledright (2002) found that his primary informants thought of the American Revolution as a noble and inevitable struggle for freedom against a tyrannical king in England. This view of America’s war for independence is at the core of Americans’ collective memory of the origins of democracy and freedom in the United States.

VanSledright (1998, 2002, 2008) and other history education researchers have attempted to explain the “heritage phenomenon” in the United States (Kammen, 1997). Parental influences, popular culture, the perceived need to use the study of the past for nation-state building, and the fact that many social studies teachers, especially at the elementary level, are not trained in historical methods, are cited as primary reasons for heritage’s firm hold on many young Americans’ minds (Barton, 2004; Kelly, Meuwissen & VanSledright, 2007; Kammen, 1997; Lowenthal, 1998; Seixas, 1994; VanSledright, 1998, 2002, 2008; Wineburg, 2004). These researchers also claim that views of history rooted in heritage impede the development of deeper understandings of history among students.

Research on Novices’ Experiences with Historical Thinking

The conflation of heritage and history by many parents, policy makers, educators and students, and the idea that historical thinking involves a set of “unnatural” cognitive acts shapes the way students perceive historical evidence and the interpretive role of historians (Wineburg, 2001). Research in the reading of multiple historical accounts has shown that those not trained to analyze and compare sources and place them in the

context of their times tend to regard the first source they encounter on a historical topic as the most reliable, especially if the source is a textbook account and the subsequent sources contradict it (Stahl et al., 1996). Novices also tend to view the historical event or perspective in question primarily through their own frameworks of meaning, a phenomenon known as presentism in the research literature (Seixas, 1996, 1998; Stahl et al., 1996; Afflerbach & VanSledright, 2001; Wineburg, 2001). In a study of Canadian high school students' perceptions of popular films depicting Native American-white relations in the late 19th century, Seixas (1994) discovered that his informants tended to see the movie *Dances with Wolves* as a "transparent window on the nineteenth century West" because the actors embodied modern-day attitudes, values and personalities that were instantly recognizable and intelligible to these students (p. 261).

Wineburg's (1991a, 1991b) extensive research on how experts and novices read and think about historical texts highlights the serious limitations of heritage-inspired views of history and history teaching. The lack of sophistication that characterized the reading done by many of Wineburg's non-expert participants led him to argue for the need to teach history's heuristics in American classrooms in order to cultivate historical thinking among children and adolescents.

Using a think-aloud protocol, Wineburg (1991a, 1991b) analyzed and compared the way historians and novices read texts and images on the Battle of Lexington Green. Though a few of the historians involved in Wineburg's study were not specialists in American history, they all engaged in the same set of heuristics when examining the sources on the fight at Lexington Green. These included assessing the nature of the sources, determining subtext or the hidden meanings in each source, and judging their

reliability. The high school students in the study, all of whom were reading at or above the 12th grade level, were presented with the same sources and questions that Wineburg's experts received. But their readings were markedly different from that of the historians. Rarely did the high school students spend time "puzzling over the intentions" of the creators of the sources. For example, when asked to determine which of the images of the battle is most accurate, the students "generally sized up the pictures and made a selection without regret or qualification." Similarly, the students read the written accounts of the battle as if they were "vehicles for conveying information" (p. 83).

Wineburg (1998) conducted similar studies with a set of primary documents related to Abraham Lincoln's views on slavery and black/white relations. The results were almost identical. Though two of his non-historian participants engaged in some sourcing and inter-textual reading of Lincoln's and some of his contemporaries' utterances on slavery and relations between black and white Americans, they generally failed to do what the historians did automatically: attribute each source to an author, interrogate them, and situate the authors and their words in the context of the occasion on which they were spoken or written, including a consideration of the racial attitudes of 19th century Americans.

When I replicated Wineburg's (1998) study with two of my most proficient readers in the sixth grade, the results were similar (Wooden, 2008). My participants did engage in some sourcing. For example, both students identified Lincoln as the author of two of the documents before perusing the text they contained. But they failed to compare Lincoln's words with the other sources in the set. Moreover, although both readers somehow knew that racism against black Americans was typical in Lincoln's time,

neither placed Lincoln's comments about black inferiority in this historical context. This failure to contextualize Lincoln's statements about black Americans and slavery, along with their presentist readings of the sources caused these students to abandon their high regard for Lincoln as a person and a statesman.

VanSledright (2002) found that when he presented conflicting accounts of the Boston Massacre to novices in a think-aloud performance task, they relied mostly on what he calls comprehension-monitoring strategies to make sense of the event. One explanation for his informants' failure to move beyond basic reading strategies to more history-specific ones like corroborating evidence and judging viewpoints is their lack of background knowledge of the events leading up to the American Revolution.

VanSledright (2002) also claims that extensive background knowledge alone is not sufficient groundwork to move students into levels of reading and thinking that involve sourcing and interpretation. Like Wineburg (2001), he argues that these heuristics must be taught.

Britt and Aglinskas (2002) noticed that high school and college students did not automatically attend to source information during a historical problem-solving situation involving the reading of multiple documents. This result held true even among students who were told by the researchers to source the documents. When Britt and Aglinskas (2002) conducted subsequent experiments on the effectiveness of a computer-based sourcing tool they refer to as the Sourcer's Apprentice, students who had the benefit of using it mentioned source features more frequently in their notes and scored higher on a sourcing test than those who did not have the training in the Sourcer's Apprentice. Moreover, students with Sourcer's Apprentice training wrote essays that included

significantly more content from actual documents and more explicit references to sources.

My experience with teaching students the sourcing heuristic is similar to the experiences of other researchers who have attempted to bring novices into the discipline. Most of my students from the 2008-2009 school year indicated they believed history is an unchangeable record of authorless facts that can be stored in memory. This conception of history was difficult to dislodge. During my students' fourth guided experience working with primary documents in the 2007-2008 school year, this time using correspondence from British military and colonial officials to ascertain whether Native Americans exercised agency during the French & Indian War, a handful of students in one class were perplexed by the task of determining the perspective of each source. One student asked me, "Where does it say what Sir William Johnson's perspective is?" Another student in the same class asked, "How am I supposed to know this guy's perspective?" (Field notes, October 10, 2007).

In a study that presented five sources on the Boston Massacre to 51 12 year-old students in England who had received several years of instruction in historical thinking under the mandates of a National Curriculum, Foster and Yeager (1999) discovered that while the participants could "critique sources, find biases and ambiguities, and seek out other flaws in the evidence," they were less competent in determining what makes a source reliable and then applying that knowledge to the "sorting out of particular historical questions and competing viewpoints" (p. 315). Thus few of the participants "really broached the issue of criteria by which to judge the validity of sources," including "corroborating testimony, attention to the author's motives [and] provenance of the

document” (p. 310). Although they had repeated exposure to disciplinary history, the English students in Foster and Yeager’s study “consistently failed to appreciate what makes a source valid” (p. 310). This finding led Foster and Yeager to conclude that teachers can help students attain deeper levels of historical thinking by providing instruction in source validity issues and “how different kinds of information can be gleaned from different sources” (p. 312). They suggest that one way to do this is by engaging students in generating questions about which sources are most useful in answering certain historical questions.

Afflerbach and VanSledright (2001) studied fifth graders’ readings of innovative history texts to chart the conditions that influence the acquisition and development of critical reading in history. They noted that six of the seven participants had difficulty shifting between two primary accounts of the Jamestown Colony’s Starving Time and the text of the American history textbook chapter they were embedded in, which indicates an inability to connect the three sources and develop “accurate intertextual understandings” of the Starving Time (p. 704). Afflerbach and VanSledright went on to argue that while multiple sources form the foundation of historical thinking, they “remain inert” without explicit instruction and guidance in intertextual reading from teachers (p. 704).

Stahl et al. (1996) examined how 19 10th graders in an Advanced Placement U.S. history course processed information about the controversial Tonkin Gulf Incident and its aftermath from conflicting sources. The students were asked to either describe the events or offer an opinion of them. Instead of engaging in cognitive processes routinely used by historians, namely sourcing, contextualization and corroboration, most of the participants tended to base their descriptions of the events on short, neatly organized sources and to

make broad statements of opinion on the events that were not grounded in the texts they read. Stahl et al. concluded from these findings that the use of multiple texts alone does not encourage students to think like historians. In addition to the need for teachers to help students build background knowledge about historical events before asking them to analyze conflicting sources, the researchers argue that students need to be taught the skills of historical analysis and how to write argumentative essays in order to benefit from reading multiple texts.

Research tells us that many students in American history classrooms across the country are typically engaged in what may be called collective memory exercises. But researchers in history education have also seen a significant increase in the use of primary sources and creative, student-centered activities in history classrooms (Barton, 2005; Grant, 2003; Wineburg & Martin, 2004). For example, role-playing, web-based research activities and the use of stimulating and provocative text-based and visual primary sources appear to be more common in American history classrooms. However, Wineburg (2004), Barton (2005) and Kelly, Meuwissen and VanSledright (2007) point out that many sourcing activities are mainly used to spark interest in history or to “push students toward a particular interpretation” aligned with the freedom quest narrative of America’s past (Kelly, et al., 2007, p. 10).

How might History teachers get students to the point where they are not just encountering the past but “acknowledging confusion and learning from it” (Foster & Yeager, 1999, p. 313)? How can we overcome the powerful influence of heritage and foster the kinds of shifts in students’ epistemic stances that lead them to understand that historical knowledge is constructed and tentative? How can we move students from the

ability to spot bias (which is essential) to the understanding that the meanings of historical texts are dependent upon the questions that are asked and the ways in which they are used? How do we get students to evaluate historical evidence and use it to construct meaning and reach informed conclusions about the past and issues they will face as American citizens? In the next section I attempt to shed some light on these questions through studies that aimed to get novices directly involved in disciplinary reading, thinking and writing.

The Need to Teach Historical Thinking

My replication of Wineburg's (1998) work in the areas of inter-textual reading and contextualization of historical sources suggests that adolescents who are accomplished readers in a general sense (i.e. routine use of comprehension strategies such as re-reading, summarizing and defining words in context) tend to read documents in isolation and rarely consider their authorship or the context in which they were generated, even when given a particular purpose for reading them (i.e. to determine if Lincoln was the Great Emancipator or a white supremacist). Paxton (1999) argues that this phenomenon is largely attributable to the "anonymous, authoritative style of writing" characteristic of most history texts students use in instruction, which stems from a "preoccupation with reading comprehension that ignores the qualities of text that give shape to disciplinary practices" (p. 316). My accomplished readers' failure to see each of the Lincoln documents as pieces of the puzzle of determining Lincoln's complex views on race and slavery led them to replace their oversimplified and ahistorical perception of Lincoln as the person who put an end to slavery in America with a negative one that is

equally oversimplified and just as ahistorical (Wooden, 2008). Consider the statement below from one of the participants:

[The sources] changed the whole way I look at him [Lincoln]. I had always heard that he was a good person and that he was trying to stop slavery, but now I see that he didn't really care (p.29).

Like Wineburg (1998), I concluded that to help students develop sophisticated and useful historical knowledge, it is necessary to expose them to the same cognitive tools used by expert historical investigators, guide them in their use of these tools, and give them as many opportunities as possible to practice them.

Extensive research in the United States, Great Britain and Canada has shown that students as young as 10 can successfully engage in sophisticated historical thinking and writing skills such as the inter-textual reading and corroboration of sources and the construction of evidence-based arguments about past events and historical figures (Ashby, Lee & Shemilt, 2005; Bain, 2000, 2005; Britt & Agliskas, 2002; Foster & Yeager, 1999; Greene, 1993; Kelly & VanSledright, 2005; Kobrin, 1995, 1996; Lee, 2005; Monte-Sano, 2008; Seixas, 1993, 1996, 2000; Stout, 2004; VanSledright, 1999, 2002; Wineburg, 1991, 2001). These studies also suggest that students benefit more from learning history in ways that stress the nature of the discipline than they do in history courses that emphasize the accumulation of facts and unquestioned acceptance of traditional nation-building narratives. According to Segall (2000), history lessons that present knowledge of the past as “objective, authorless, and true” actually cause students’ estrangement from the subject (p.4).

In the next section I offer examples of teaching practices and interventions that have enhanced students' historical thinking. This body of research informed my selection of instructional practices and materials for my study.

Promising Practices in Teaching and Learning to Think Historically

Research demonstrates that elementary age students can become effective historical thinkers. Consider VanSledright's (2002) reflections on the historical detective work carried out by the 5th graders he taught and studied:

For my part, I was (and still am) convinced that children as young as fourth and fifth grade - perhaps even younger - can learn how to investigate the past themselves and benefit from the higher-status substantive and procedural knowledge such a practice can confer upon children (p. 25).

When he began his work as a researcher-practitioner engaging and guiding fifth grade students in the use of history's heuristics to investigate the Jamestown Colony's Starving Time and causes of the American Revolution, VanSledright (2002) discovered that most of his students regarded sources as stories of the past that contain literal or factual information about that can be extracted. For example, in a performance task involving conflicting accounts of the Boston Massacre designed to capture his primary informants' thinking processes before they learned how to investigate the past as historians do, VanSledright noted that 83% of his eight informants' online comments about the sources fell under the category of general reading practices. But by the end of the four months these children spent sourcing evidence related to the American Revolution, many of them could not only explain some of the events and the thinking behind the American Revolutionaries' movement for independence from England (content or first-order

substantive knowledge), but could construct evidence-based arguments about the propriety of the fight for independence and discuss the problems of historical evidence when attempting to reconstruct and interpret the past (evidence and interpretation or procedural knowledge).

Stout (2004) was able to make similar conclusions about his 8th grade students' level of historical thinking after they spent several months in the role of "historical detectives" investigating the creation of the U.S. Constitution. He noted, for example, how his students "saw history as an interpretive process" and "began to question sources in terms of reliability and perspective" (Stout, 2004, p. 125). Since Stout's participants were unaccustomed to going beyond stories and facts and doing what Perfetti et al. (1994) call "real history" (i.e. interpreting sources, constructing explanations and negotiating the uncertainties of events), Stout spent considerable time and energy building confidence in his students and transforming the class into a "community of learners" (p.ii). Stout claimed this was instrumental in helping his novices "develop deep understandings of both historical content and of the tools and practices of historians" (p. ii).

In a series of studies designed to explore the issue of enhancing students' learning and understanding of history, Voss and Wiley (2000) found that the combination of a segmented history text (presented as multiple texts) on the Irish Potato Famine and a requirement to construct an argumentative essay about it "yielded deeper understanding" of the factors and consequences involved in this historic event (p. 381). For example, the researchers noted that the multiple-segment condition and argument-writing task resulted in a higher proportion of sentences that either combined text content with background

knowledge or brought together portions of the text that were not originally connected.

They also found that the participants who developed their own arguments of the causes of the Irish Potato Famine were able to detect the bias in an additional account that blamed the Famine on the Irish people. Voss and Wiley therefore concluded that it is “desirable to have students construct and synthesize their own histories from [historical] documents” (p. 387).

Monte-Sano (2008) explored the practices of two high school history teachers to see what effect (if any) they had on students’ ability to write evidence-based historical arguments. Like Voss and Wiley (2000), Monte-Sano found that giving students frequent opportunities to use multiple sources to construct interpretive essays improves students’ ability to take a position on something or someone in the past and defend it with historical evidence. But she also notes that it is equally important for history teachers to teach their students about the interpretive nature of history and encourage them to become proficient users of the intellectual tools of the discipline. Monte-Sano claims this can be accomplished through direct instruction, modeling, guided and independent practice and teacher feedback. For example, Monte-Sano argues that an effective way to help students become good historical thinkers and writers, including students who enter their history classes with a limited set of skills, is to use a “combination of explicit instruction” in the framework and cognitive tools of disciplinary history and a “constructivist approach” that gives students frequent opportunities to engage in historical inquiry. Like VanSledright (2004), Monte-Sano argues that students who can think historically possess a skill-set that will serve them well in college and beyond.

During his time as a high school world history teacher, Bain (2000, 2005) centered his instruction on the “problematization of sources,” which involved inviting and teaching his students to “use historical thinking processes” (p. 340). Like other researchers, Bain (2000) discovered that his students brought a “static, formulaic vision of history” to his classes at the beginning of each school year (p. 337). To challenge his novices’ “fact-based suppositions of history,” Bain began the school year by helping them develop a concept map and definition of history that highlighted the difference between history and the past and the roles that historians and the public play in constructing and using historical knowledge (p. 338). Other activities, such as sourcing, journal writing, and the creation of historical narratives were used to help students develop “disciplinary competencies” (p. 340).

Although Bain (2000, 2005) hesitated to make any “definitive” statements about the benefits of using a disciplinary approach to history instruction, he does cite evidence of a more “dynamic view of the discipline” among his students (p. 347). In closing journal entries reflecting on lessons learned from Bain’s instruction, one student wrote that history “is the interpretation and organization of facts,” which demonstrates an understanding of the crucial role that historians play in history. Another student of Bain’s “learned” that “history books can be wrong, and...I can even interpret some things myself if I don’t agree...” (p. 346). Some students’ journal entries reflected their newly-acquired ability to critique historical texts. For example, one student complained about his textbook’s treatment of the 14th century plague epidemic in Europe, saying that it failed to account for evidence of human agency, which “can lead to the impression that people did nothing to try and protect themselves” (p. 347).

In a study similar to the one conducted by Stahl et al. (1996), Hynd, Holschuh, and Hubbard (2004) examined the thinking done by college students while reading conflicting accounts of the Tonkin Gulf Incident. Working from research showing students' reliance on general reading strategies when presented with multiple historical texts, these researchers taught their participants how to engage in sourcing, contextualization and corroboration before they engaged the sources on the Tonkin Gulf Incident (Stahl et al., 1996; Afflerbach & VanSledright, 2001; Wineburg, 1991). They found that 12 of the 13 students experienced “epistemological shifts towards viewing historians as constructivists and history texts as arguments rather than truth” (p. 238). Consider the statements below obtained from exit interviews with two of the participants:

I'm learning more that you can form your own interpretations. Because this unit has a lot of different people who think different ways....you have to make up your own mind.

I am reading a lot, analyzing all the data, determining who is more credible and why, and what they truly believe. [Historians do] the same thing I am doing (p. 247).

Although some might argue that college students are more capable of thinking historically than middle level learners, I believe the findings from Hynd et al. (2004) are further evidence that any student can acquire the cognitive habits of historians if they receive explicit instruction in history's heuristics and frequent opportunities to practice them that reflect an “intersection of content and pedagogy” and the transformation of disciplinary knowledge into “forms that are pedagogically powerful and yet adaptive to

the variations in ability and background presented by the students” (Shulman, 1987, p. 15).

A Theoretical Framework for Learning to Think in History

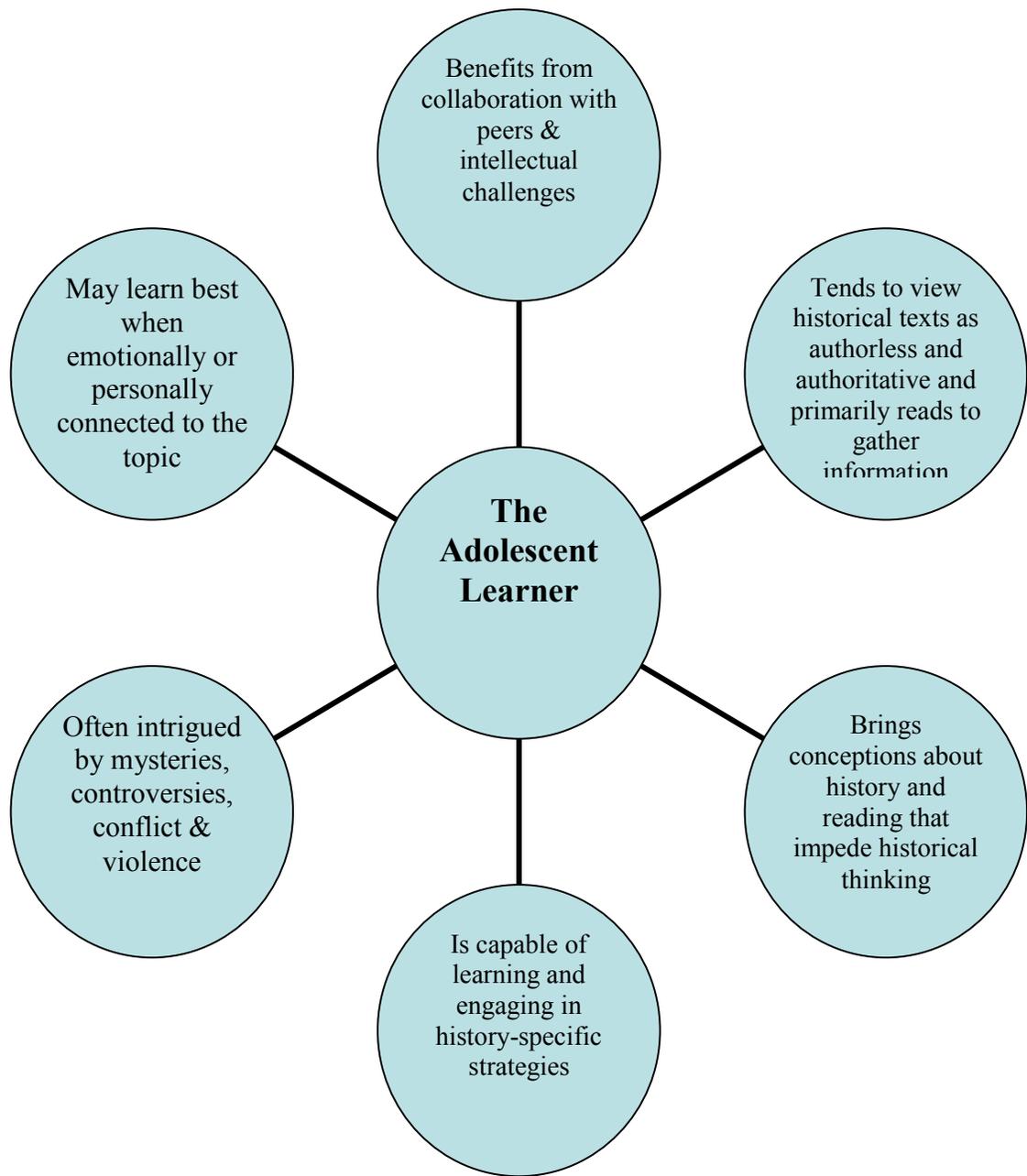
Novices in history do not come to their history classes with blank slates. Instead, they bring ideas about how the world works, including how we know about the past (Donovan & Bransford, 2005; Lee, 2005; Shemilt, 1983; VanSledright, 2002, 2011). If not addressed, students’ everyday notions about human behavior and history are likely to make learning to think historically problematic or even impossible. As Lee (2005) notes in The National Research Council’s *How Students Learn History in the Classroom*, one of the keys to leading students to learn the framework of the discipline of history is to help them shed or modify their common sense ideas about the past, truth and human behavior. Lee and other history education researchers such as VanSledright (2001, 2009) and Maggioni (2009, 2010), who have spent considerable time working with and observing history students in the U. K. and the U.S., contend that children and adolescents’ misconceptions about history (e.g. history is a copy of the past) and their common sense notions of truth, lies and human motives (e.g. stories are either true or false; people are apt to lie or bend the truth to fit their selfish purposes) make historical inquiry meaningless or even impossible for novices to engage in since the fundamental disciplinary ideas that knowledge of the past is constructed from evidence and interpretation and conflicting accounts of an event can equally valid and/or valuable contradict everyday ideas about history.

The notion that novices in history bring ideas to the classroom that are likely to impede historical thinking if they are not engaged and challenged by their history

teachers is a principle of learning (Donovan & Bransford, 2005) that comprises the theoretical framework which guided my efforts to lead my students to acquire deeper understandings of history as a disciplined field of inquiry. This framework or model for learning to think in history is derived from research conducted in history education, especially studies that focused on how students learn history (Lee, 2005; Lee & Ashby, 2000; Lee & Shemilt, 2003, 2004; Maggioni, VanSledright & Alexander, 2009; Maggioni, VanSledright & Reddy, 2009; Shemilt, 1983; VanSledright, 2002, 2009, 2011). These findings from studies on epistemic cognition in history suggest that a theoretical framework of learning to think historically must start with what students know and believe about history and who and where they are as learners. This framework must also incorporate the most important aspects of disciplinary history, such as the concepts of evidence and interpretation, how those second-order ideas and strategic knowledge compare to what novices are likely to bring to the study of history, and how their historical understandings and capabilities can begin to move forward. Figure 2.1 offers a research-based picture of what most adolescent learners' ideas and needs are when they begin their journey to becoming historical thinkers.

For adolescents such as the 13 and 14-year olds involved in my study, a process of learning how to think historically has to begin by exposing and challenging their ideas about history. As my review of history education literature suggests, novice history students are likely to equate history with the past and view it as a true story already known and told by adults that they too are expected to learn and prove they know. While some novices will indicate an affinity with or interest in one or more historical topics and instruction at the elementary level and the counterintuitive nature of disciplinary of

Figure 2.1: Where adolescent learners are likely to be as they begin to learn to think historically



history are main reasons why many students hold these views (Barton & Levstick, 1998, 2004; Lee, 2005). The key for the teacher is to uncover students' preconceptions of history with surveys and other strategies and devise ways to work with students' notions that will help them see how and why their everyday thinking will not be usable when

faced with historical problems and complexities that are inherent in the discipline. As Lee (2005) frames it, teaching for historical thinking will mean “working from less to more powerful ideas” about evidence, accounts, interpretation, and other counterintuitive concepts of disciplinary history (p. 37).

Novices are therefore not usually aware of the concept of historical evidence. Since history is not possible without the use of evidence (Lee, 2005; Shemilt, 1983; VanSledright, 2002), students must first be led to understand what evidence is and how it is used by expert historical investigators. Using the analogy of police detective work and the burden of proof in a court of law is helpful here, since many adolescents *are* familiar with what can count as evidence in a murder investigation and trial. Activities that challenge students to think deeply about how we know things about famous figures like George Washington who have been gone for over 200 years is another way to introduce and help students understand historical evidence. Knowing where students are likely to be in terms of their ideas of history, and then using concepts, strategies and information they can relate to is more likely to foster deeper ideas about how we know about the past.

Since evidence and interpretation are at the center of the discipline of history, and since the ways in which sources can be used and how traces of the past can become historical evidence (i.e. through the types of questions historians ask) are not aligned with normal ways of thinking, evidence and interpretation have to be at the center of every lesson, discussion and activity students experience in class. In addition to having some sort of organizer or graphic showing the difference between history and the past (see Appendix D for an example), students also need to be taught how to engage in the sourcing heuristic and be given frequent opportunities to apply it. This is critical to

building sophisticated ideas about important concepts like authorial voice and perspective. Students are not likely to determine what a source can or cannot tell us about the past if they do not have the sense or capability to connect it with an author. But the pedagogical acts of explaining and modeling for students will not by themselves lead to deep understandings of evidence, accounts or interpretation.

Novices are more likely to develop deeper understandings of history when they are confronted with situations that force or encourage them to re-think what they know and believe about history and the past (Bain 2000; Lee, 2005; VanSledright, 2011). Challenging what students believe to be true about the discipline or some event in the past and then leading them to see for themselves the limitations of their current ways of thinking can spark the beginnings of a shift in thinking about history. For example, novices tend to believe textbooks contain the truth about what happened long ago. To counter this belief, students can be shown two or more different textbook accounts of a controversial past event such as the so-called Boston Massacre and be asked to write a summary of what really happened based on those accounts. If they are attentive to the task, students should begin to see a problem with what their teacher is asking them to do, which can lead to a discussion about where and why the accounts differ and how this may align with one or more components of the discipline that were presented and explained to them up front. This could be followed (or preceded) by giving students some of the conflicting primary evidence of the incident that the textbook accounts were based on, and ask students to create a new textbook account of the event. Either way, the goal is to get students to begin a process of recognizing two main things: that their novice conception of historical knowledge as fixed and true information is flawed, and that

historical knowledge is constructed through evidence and always subject to interpretation.

When (or if) students begin to see that their previous notions of history are problematic or insufficient to the tasks they are being asked to do, they must be given strategies for dealing with the cognitive dissonance they will likely experience if the exercises intended to address their misconceptions are effective. This is critical, since it is entirely possible for students who come to understand evidence as sources created by humans who are inherently biased to assume that no source can be trusted, thereby making history seem like a pointless or “dubious” undertaking (Lee, 2005, p. 55).

These smaller activities intended to expose and challenge students’ untenable notions of history and equip them with cognitive tools for making sense of the past and evidence of it can be followed by invitations to dive into and attempt to resolve historical mysteries and controversies. Exposing students to a topic likely to be of interest to them, and then assigning or allowing students to develop an interesting question for them to answer through investigation and interrogation of primary sources, places students in the role of historical investigator and allows them to apply the history-specific tools they are beginning to acquire. The teacher’s role becomes that of coach and or/collaborator in the investigative process. Students are given guidance in how to apply strategies for sourcing, determining perspective, corroboration, contextualization and assessments of source reliability. Students are also encouraged to help one another by discussing the sources they are examining and the ideas they are forming about the event under investigation. But they are not told by the teacher what each source means, nor does the teacher offer his or her interpretation of the event or interpretations advanced by experts

in the topic. This puts interpretation, including the development of a claim or hypothesis that addresses the investigative question(s), squarely in the hands of students. This sort of classroom-based historical investigation is aligned with aspects of the adolescent learner, including interest in controversies, doing hands-on activities, collaboration with peers and intellectual challenges.

According to VanSledright (2002), engaging students in historical inquiry and investigative practices “closely linked to the ones historians use” is perhaps the most effective method for building among students the cognitive capacities to reconstruct and make sense of the past and evaluate the stories and claims that others make about it (p. 29). In these classroom-based historical investigations, teachers have to walk a fine line between helping students persist through the challenges of reconstructing and giving meaning to the past through multiple and conflicting sources (e.g. scaffolding the sourcing heuristic), and interpreting the past *for* students. Teachers interested in developing historical thinking capabilities among their students should also be careful not to set up historical investigations in a manner that pushes students toward a particular interpretation of the past, where they are mostly uncovering what experts, teachers and other adults already know. Though getting students to mimic disciplinary strategies and behaviors is not a bad thing, and is likely a necessary step in the process of learning to think historically, the real goal is to bring about deeper and more sophisticated ideas and knowledge about history that students can use in meaningful ways in different arenas of their lives.

To further develop students’ historical thinking capabilities, they should be given opportunities to write historical arguments on the events they investigated. As noted,

historical argumentation is the pinnacle of the historical profession, and for students and teachers it represents the best application of the cognitive habits that students are being taught and encouraged to engage in. Historical arguments can be authentic assessments of learning for history students (multiple choice history tests are not authentic because most historians do not create or take them as part of their professional activities). Though students' arguments will not reach the level of a historian's due to differences in experience, time constraints and other factors, they are still engaging in the same type of activity as those with expertise in the field. Students' written historical arguments also provide useful data on their level of historical thinking.

Another activity that professional historians engage in is peer discourse and debate and the critical evaluation of each other's arguments and scholarship (American Historical Association, 2011). According to the American Historical Association's Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct (2011), "reasoned discourse" and "fair and honest criticism" between historians with divergent views and ideas "makes possible the fruitful exchange of views, opinions and knowledge" (p. 14). Historians are thus encouraged and expected to maintain a dialogue with their colleagues and peers about the past and their craft and to subject their historical interpretations to scrutiny. It therefore seems logical, and even beneficial to allow history students to engage in something similar if we want or expect them to become good historical thinkers.

The theoretical framework that informed my efforts to cause a shift in my students' thinking in history advances the idea that immersing students in the activities of the discipline with considerations of students' level of academic development, experience and interest in history and content knowledge, is an optimal way for novices to acquire

and use the cognitive habits of historians in meaningful ways (VanSledright, 2002, 2011). I therefore reasoned that giving students several structured and guided opportunities to review their peers' historical arguments and engage in discipline-specific discourse would enhance their capabilities to construct effective written accounts of the past *and* deepen their knowledge of disciplinary history. I refer to this strategy or intervention as Peer Scrutiny and Discourse (PSD). I implemented PSD with one class only – Teaching Intervention 1 – in order to determine if the strategy had an impact on students' procedural disciplinary knowledge and their views and understandings of history as a field of inquiry. The manner in which PSD was implemented and possible influences it had on students' historical thinking are discussed in chapters 3 and 4, respectively.

To summarize, historical thinking among novices is more likely to occur and become a lasting part of their toolkit for understanding the world if they are brought into and immersed in a process of historical investigation that resembles what the experts use. Students' preconceptions about history must first be uncovered and addressed, and teachers need to meet students where they are as knowers and learners before they can move them forward along the continuum of historical thinking. The concepts of evidence, accounts and interpretation are the best places to start this process, since they are the core of disciplinary history and most elementary and middle level learners do not bring to these ideas to their history classes.

Summary

In my view, history lessons that fail to emphasize key components of the discipline such as inquiry, investigation and the crucial idea that all sources and historical knowledge are human creations deprive students of valuable opportunities to think and

write about the past in meaningful and sophisticated ways. The research literature I described in this chapter and my experiences as a history instructor lead me to believe that investigative approaches to teaching and learning in history have the greatest potential to enhance young people's reading, thinking and writing strategies. In courses that emphasize and teach historical cognition, students learn to interrogate sources, fill in gaps in historical evidence with conjecture and work their way through conflicting accounts to develop evidence-based interpretations of the past (Bain, 2000, 2005; Kobrin, 1995, 1996; Kohlmeier, 2005; Monte-Sano, 2008; Reisman, 2012; Stout, 2004; VanSledright, 2002, 2011).

Perhaps the greatest potential benefit of the disciplinary approach to history instruction is the cultivation of critical thinkers and responsible American citizens. Students who can think historically may be more likely to analyze and critique messages and arguments from politicians, activists and marketers, recognize and appreciate different perspectives on the past and present, and make sound assessments and convincing arguments about current events and issues. In short, I believe that historical thinking can transcend the classroom and be used in other areas of a person's life. This is more likely to happen if students learn history in the fundamental ways that historians practice it. These are the ideas that led me to develop and implement my investigation of teaching and learning through the sourcing heuristic and other aspects of disciplinary history. In the next chapter I describe the context and participants of my study and the methods I used to chart and interpret my students' growth in historical thinking.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

Introduction

The overarching purpose of this study was to investigate the effects that teaching and learning centered on history's sourcing heuristic might have on 8th grade students' historical thinking. This study also addressed the question of whether a focused intervention on historical argumentation, which I refer to as Peer Scrutiny and Discourse (PSD), would enhance students' ideas and knowledge of the discipline of history.

As noted, my study explores the learning outcomes of a classroom-based application of a research-based, theoretically-grounded framework of learning to think in history. The practical implications of this framework can be summarized in the following way: (1) start with where students are in their beliefs about history and their interests and learning styles (2) use this data and pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1987) to craft exercises that challenge students' preconceptions about history and expose the problems and limitations these ideas pose for making sense of the past (3) teach students the most fundamental aspects of the discipline (i.e. evidence and interpretation) and offer them cognitive strategies and tools for dealing with these complex second-order ideas (4) engage and guide students in frequent and varied opportunities to investigate contested topics in the past and construct arguments about them in ways that closely resemble what expert historians do. These steps, which are based on sound principles of learning in history, should result in the development of deeper understandings of history and the past and some level of proficiency in the use of history-specific reading, thinking and writing strategies among students who experience them.

Acting as both teacher and researcher, I designed and implemented a historical thinking curriculum in two of my four 8th grade Advanced U.S. History classes. The two classes chosen for the study received explicit instruction, guidance and practice in use of the sourcing heuristic and related aspects of disciplinary history. In addition to these structured and guided experiences with historical thinking, one class participated in four 70-minute class sessions devoted to instruction in historical argumentation and peer review/editing of students' written arguments on selected topics of America's past between 1607 and 1776. I refer to the teaching and learning that occurred in this class as Teaching Intervention 1. What transpired in the class that did not receive PSD is referred to as Teaching Intervention 2. The procedures I followed in both Interventions are outlined and summarized at the end of this chapter. For more detail about the nature of Interventions 1 and 2 and how instruction unfolded, see Appendix A.

Students in both classes were exposed to instruction intended to foster and enhance historical thinking. None of my students had received purposeful and sustained instruction with the sourcing heuristic (or any aspect of disciplinary history) prior to entering Advanced U.S. History 8. I therefore expected every participant to show growth in their knowledge of history and use of historical thinking strategies by the end of the study. I was particularly interested in determining whether giving one class significant instructional time to review and discuss their peers' written historical arguments would deepen their understanding of the interpretive nature of history. In pursuance of these goals, my research study addressed the following questions:

1. What do students believe about history before, during and after learning it through investigative methods?

2. How do classroom-based exercises developed and implemented in concert with a research-based, theoretically-grounded framework for learning to think in history influence novices' knowledge and understanding of the idea of historical evidence and its role in the production of historical knowledge?
3. How much time and instruction are required to move students away from their status as historical novices toward greater sophistication in historical thinking?
4. Does engagement in structured sessions of peer review and editing of students' written arguments and discourse on historical argumentation deepen students' knowledge of the discipline of history?

In this chapter I describe the methods I used to conduct this research study, including the design, setting and participants, instruction, data collection materials and procedures. I begin with the rationale behind my choice to use the case-study/action research approach and end the chapter with a brief description of the instructional procedures I used in Teaching Interventions 1 and 2.

Rationale for the Case Study/Action Research Approach

This research study was designed to investigate and document how my teaching practices influenced my students' knowledge of the discipline of history and their acquisition and use of history-specific reading, thinking and writing strategies. To that end I implemented an action research oriented case study. According to Bogdan and Biklen (2003), O'Brien (2001) and Yin (2003), a case study is the most appropriate and advantageous approach to studying the effects of interventions, such as teaching

practices, that are designed to change or enhance human behavior and performance in real-world situations with both practical and theoretical implications. According to Bromley (1986), case studies “get as close to the subject of interest as they possibly can, partly by means of direct observation in natural settings, partly by their access to subjective factors (thoughts, feelings and desires),” and tend to “spread the net for evidence widely” (p.23). Moreover, action research-oriented case studies are better suited to situations in which it is impossible to separate the intervention’s variables from their context (Yin, 2003). Therefore, to illuminate and honestly represent my disciplinary approach to history education and how my students experienced it required close observation and analysis of the teaching and learning in my classroom through a range of data collection methods.

Unfortunately, case studies have been stereotyped as research designs that lack precision, objectivity and rigor (Yin, 2003). This may be one reason they are underused in history and social studies education (Johnston, 2006). According to Johnston (2006), findings from action research and self-studies are sometimes viewed as less reliable than quasi-experimental control group studies due to their focus on natural settings and context and heavy reliance on qualitative data. However, Johnston claims that qualitative research methods in social studies support teachers and students by enhancing teachers’ insights and improving teaching and learning for effective participation in American democracy.

According to Merriam (1998), a case study is a “particularly suitable design if you are interested in process” (p. 33). Case studies describe the context and population of the study and the extent to which the program has been implemented (e.g. history-specific

methods of teaching and learning). Case studies can also be used to discover or confirm the process by which an intervention had the effect that it did (Merriam, 1998). Sanders (1981) argued that case studies “help us to understand processes of . . . programs and to discover context characteristics that will shed light on an issue” (p. 44). Documenting the process of teaching and learning history in my classroom is important not only for me as an instructor, but for all history teachers at the middle school level in my school district, who are now expected to implement the Historical Thinking Framework that forms the core of the Advanced World Studies curriculum currently being taught in grades 6-8. Therefore, social studies teachers in my district have an interest in learning more about what works in terms of teaching the sourcing heuristic to students. I also believe the findings from my study have implications for social studies teachers across the nation since historical thinking in regular classroom settings is gaining currency (NCSS, 2011; Reisman, 2012; VanSledright, 2008, 2011;).

Studies also suggest that case studies like mine can have a positive influence on teacher preparation programs at the university level. Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993) note that since teacher research cases are “often more powerful and memorable influences on decision making than are conventional research findings in the form of rules and generalizations, teacher educators can use teachers’ cases to study how practitioners learn from the documented experiences of others” (p.20). They also claim that teacher research conducted through case study can “contribute to the critique or revision of existing theory,” such as the idea that a knowledge acquisition/collective memory approach to history education enhances students’ sense of citizenship and patriotism. Furthermore, Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993) claim that case studies provide

data that “ground or move toward alternative theories” of teaching and learning that may be more beneficial to students, such as disciplinary history education, which has the potential to deepen students’ knowledge and academic capabilities *and* their sense of rights and responsibilities as Americans.

An additional strength of the case study approach to teaching and learning is its capacity to illuminate readers’ understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Merriam, 1998). According to Merriam (1998), case studies can “bring about the discovery of new meaning, extend the reader’s experience, or confirm what is known” (p. 30). Stake (1981) argues that “Previously unknown relationships and variables can be expected to emerge from case studies leading to a rethinking of the phenomenon being studied” (p. 47). Olson (1982) claims that a case study can “suggest to the reader what to do or not to do in a similar situation” (quoted in Merriam, 1998, p. 30). The potential of my study to inform history instruction is especially important since I investigated an innovative approach to teaching and learning history that all social studies teachers in my school district will be expected to implement in some fashion. It is my assumption (and hope) that the insights gained from my examination and interpretation of teaching and learning American history through a discipline-based approach will spur additional research, thus expanding the knowledge base of history education (Merriam, 1998).

Potential Limitations of the Teacher Research Case Study Approach

Perhaps the most significant and frequently cited limitation of case studies is the issue of generalizability. It is widely recognized that it is difficult, if not impossible, to generalize findings from a particular case to entire populations (Yin, 2003). But, as Johnston (2006) maintains, the goal of teacher research is not to generalize findings, but

to “provide opportunities for critical reflection, adaptations, and personal and professional insights for both the researchers and other teachers” (p. 78). According to Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993), the positivistic research paradigm that aims to formulate general laws is perhaps not the most useful for understanding educational phenomenon, since generalizations about teaching and learning are context free. Guba (1980) maintains that, “it is virtually impossible to imagine any human behavior which is not mediated by the context in which it occurs” (quoted in Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993, p. 15). Likewise, my study is more aligned with Shulman’s (1987) concept of classroom ecology. Instead of being primarily concerned with applying the results of my study broadly, I will use what I learned from this study to improve my teaching practices and student learning. However, my findings should generate new thinking and questions about the teaching and learning of historical thinking among other history/social studies teachers and teacher educators.

Another potential limitation of this study is my use of a convenience sample. Since I studied my own students, it could be argued that their performance on the historical thinking exercises and their responses in the interviews intended to gather data about their perceptions of history and the instruction they experienced were influenced by a desire to please me. This phenomenon, known as the social desirability effect or bias, cannot be completely ruled out. As their teacher, I was responsible for giving each of the participants in my study a grade for each of the first two marking periods. This may have had an influence on how they responded to my instruction and my inquiries. For example, some or all of my primary informants may have used the terms “evidence,” “sourcing” and “corroboration” in their interviews mostly because they thought that is

what I want them to say, which, in their minds, could have increased their chances of receiving an above average grade in history on their report cards. This potential threat to the validity of my data and my analysis of it is one of the reasons I collected an array of evidence of my students' learning during the course of the study, which I discuss in the next section. However, the fact that my students could articulate key aspects of the history domain (which I describe and explain in Chapter 4) is evidence of growth in historical thinking.

There are distinct advantages associated with teacher research in which the participants are the teacher's own students. According to Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993), teachers are uniquely situated to conduct inquiry about teaching and learning because they can "observe learners over long periods of time and in a variety of academic and social situations" (p. 15). They also argue that as insiders, teacher researchers can "make visible the ways that students and teachers together construct knowledge and curriculum" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993, p. 43). According to Lampert (2001), teachers that initiate and are active participants in researching their own classrooms have the "capacity to uncover invisible, relational aspects of the work that have not been recognized by outsiders" (p. 91). I too believe that studying my own students afforded me the most realistic and data-rich context in which to determine the influence of my disciplinary teaching practices on students' growth in the development of historical thinking and how and why certain strategies worked or did not work for my students. Consider the excerpt below from John Holt's (1964) argument in favor of teacher research:

Once we understand that some of the things we teachers do may be helpful, some merely useless, and some downright harmful, we can begin to ask which is which. Teachers can ask such questions and use their daily work with students to test their answers.... (quoted in Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993, p. 16).

Overview of the Structure of the Study and Procedures Used

The performance of 8th grade history students in two of my Advanced U.S. History 8 classes was analyzed and compared to chart growth in historical thinking. Both classes received the same format of discipline-centric or investigative history instruction over a period of approximately five months. The students involved in Teaching Intervention 1 received additional instruction in historical argumentation (PSD) in four, 70-minute class sessions spread out over the duration of the study. Each session of PSD followed the completion of a significant historical writing task, two of which were similar to the writing requirement in Document Based Questions used in Advanced Placement courses at the high school level in most school districts. During each session of PSD, students in Teaching Intervention 2 were engaged in more “traditional” social studies activities focused on the delivery and attainment of content rather than historical thinking. For example, while students in Teaching Intervention 1 critiqued a peer's essay-length argument on why the American Revolution occurred, students in Teaching Intervention 2, who also wrote arguments on the Revolution after receiving the same instruction as their counterparts, watched a video on the Revolutionary War and completed a question sheet based on recall of facts presented in the film. Disciplinary history instruction was thus suspended for students in Teaching Intervention 2 while the

students in Teaching Intervention 1 engaged in PSD so as to make the effects of this strategy more discernible.

To gauge the effectiveness of the theoretical framework of learning to think in history and the teaching methods I relied upon to move my students away from the copier view of history, I selected and implemented a variety of data collection tools I believed would help me discern whether and to what extent immersing students in discipline-based instruction and exercises would enhance their historical reading, reasoning and argumentation capabilities. Surveys, argumentative writing performance tasks, interviews, a post-study think-aloud protocol, and students' work and journal entries were the primary tools I used to collect evidence of my students' performance and growth in historical thinking. My observations of students' interactions with the strategies and materials I encouraged them to use during our Historical Investigations (HIs) and my reflections on my teaching practices were also used to discern growth in historical thinking and make a case for how students can make gains with fundamental heuristics of disciplinary history like sourcing and inter-textual reading.

The data were analyzed and coded with rubrics and coding schemes designed to ascertain students' use and understanding of history's second-order concepts and procedural knowledge. A total of ten primary informants were selected on the basis of their academic backgrounds and their work throughout the duration of the study to assist me in gaining a deeper understanding of the effects of Teaching Interventions 1 and 2. Qualitative analysis and comparison of my primary informants' history surveys, written arguments and vocalizations during the think-aloud protocols and interviews revealed important growth in historical thinking among them, and some indications that PSD

further enhanced the historical thinking of the informants who participated in it. This data will be explained in detail in Chapter 4.

Setting and Participants

The setting for the study was a middle school in a large suburban Maryland school district in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. The school is located in a mostly working class community and serves a diverse student population in terms of race, ethnicity, and socio-economic status. The racial makeup of the school at the time the study was conducted (August, 2009 to January, 2010) was as follows: 32.1% white, 33.3% black, 21.8% Hispanic and 12.5% Asian.

The participants were 8th grade students in two of the four Advanced U.S. History classes that I taught in the 2009-2010 academic year. The majority of students in each class had performed at or above grade level in the core subjects in 7th grade. Several of these students were eligible for special education services. The majority of the students (and their parents/Guardians) consented to participation in the study, though some declined to be considered for selection as primary informants. A colleague from the Math department with no stake in my study or its outcomes agreed to generate a random list of students from those who consented to act as primary informants. At about the mid-point of the study I selected ten students from this list, five from each class, to serve as primary informants on the effects of Teaching Interventions 1 and 2.

While reading scores on state and district-level standardized tests were factors in my selection of informants (see Table 3.1), my primary consideration was which students would offer the deepest insights in my investigation of the effects of my discipline-based history teaching. I mainly used scores from the Maryland School Assessment (MSA) in

reading, which my students took in 7th grade, and the Measures of Academic Progress in Reading (MAP-R) test, which they took in October of 2009, to juxtapose students from both classes for comparison purposes.

Table 3.1: Descriptive Data on Primary Informants

Informants	Gender	Race/ Ethnicity	MSA Reading Score	MAP-R Score	Individualized Education Program (IEP)
Teaching Intervention 1					
Brian	M	W	443 (Adv.)	233 (Adv.)	No
Eddie	M	B	377 (Basic)	189 (Basic)	Yes
Kelly	F	W	430 (Adv.)	226 (Prof.)	No
Naraj	M	A	460 (Adv.)	232(Adv.)	No
Anju	F	A	499 (Adv.)	234(Adv.)	No
Teaching Intervention 2					
Danny	M	W	460 (Adv.)	238 (Adv.)	No
Alana	F	B	416 (Prof.)	198 (Basic)	Yes
Maria	F	H	425 (Adv.)	215 (Prof.)	No
Archit	M	A	443 (Adv.)	230 (Adv.)	No
Tianna	F	B	443 (Adv.)	233(Adv.)	No

To get a better sense of whether PSD enhanced the historical thinking of the students who participated in it, I compared students with similar reading scores to mitigate the variable of reading ability. After many hours of reflection on participants’

performance in class, and sifting through surveys and work samples, I selected two students from each class who performed above grade level during the course of the research study and two students who performed at grade level. One primary informant in each class had a special education IEP. Table 3.1 shows descriptive data for each informant, grouped by class. While academics and cognitive development were the focus of the selection of informants, an effort was made to have an even number of males and females across the two classes and a balanced representation of the racial/ethnic composition of the school.

It should be noted that as a teacher and researcher I was also a participant in the study in two significant ways: (1) I examined and reflected on my own teaching practices on a daily basis during the study period and (2) I worked *with* my students and thus participated in their constructions of meaning in history, including, perhaps, what they had to say in their post-study interviews about the events and topics we explored and investigated from America's past.

The History Curriculum

As is the case in most public middle schools in the United States, the study of American history at the 8th grade level in my school district is primarily designed to give students a better understanding and appreciation for American democracy and citizens' rights and responsibilities. Beginning with the French and Indian War and ending with the Reconstruction period that followed the Civil War, the curriculum moves chronologically and focuses on American government and democratic values and a "shared national culture." With the exception of an investigation Rosa Parks' protest of segregated busing, the HIs in my study fell under these curricular periods and themes, but

emphasis was placed on subjects of historical controversy and debate, such as the Jamestown colony's Starving Time, Indian/white relations and the causes of the American Revolution. My decision to focus on contested periods of America's past and unresolved historical inquiries was based on my understanding of what research indicates is more likely to stimulate adolescent learners and what the theoretical framework of learning to think in history suggests about the importance of having students investigate the past.

Data Collection Procedures

The History Survey

Much like historian Lendol Calder (2006) has done with his undergraduate students, I began the 2009-2010 school year and my research study by administering a history survey (see Appendix B) in both classes to ascertain my students' knowledge and beliefs about the study of history, which some researchers refer to as learners' historical epistemologies. According to VanSledright (2002), a student's historical epistemology is essentially how he/she knows what they know about history, and how he/she comes to know it. Uncovering my students' preconceptions about the discipline would help me determine how to use what they knew to lead them to deeper understandings of history. Using a 4-point Likert scale, students were asked to rate their agreement with statements such as "History is a record of facts from the past: dates, places, events, people, and so on" and "You have to compare sources and question the people who made them in order to explain what happened in the past." The survey also asked students construct a written summary of their definition of history and why it is studied. The same survey was administered again to students in December 2010 near the end of the study. The baseline

and post-survey data proved to be critical in discerning the amount of growth my students made in their capabilities to think historically.

Historical Argumentation Tasks

In addition to the history survey, I involved students in both classes in a performance task designed to get a better sense of their epistemic stances and pre-existing knowledge and use (if any) of history-specific reading, thinking and writing strategies. The task was a whole-class exercise based on the Jamestown “Starving Time” mystery. In the winter of 1609-1610, approximately 88% of the settlers in England’s Jamestown colony in the present state of Virginia perished, apparently from starvation. Precisely what caused this catastrophe is still a matter of debate among historians, archaeologists, forensic scientists and other scholars who have attempted to solve this 405-year-old riddle. After being introduced to the “Starving Time”, which I framed as a “mystery” and “cold case” in America’s past, students were given basic background information on Jamestown and three primary documents related to the event (see Appendix C), and then were asked to develop a written explanation for why so many settlers perished. Students performed the task without teacher assistance so that base-line data on their historical thinking capabilities could be gleaned from their writing.

Students’ knowledge of the second-order concepts of evidence, accounts and interpretation and their use of history-specific strategies such as interpreting, citing, and corroborating sources were measured five more times during the course of the study through historical argumentation writing tasks. Students’ arguments were scored with a historical argumentation trait rubric that allowed for quality ratings (Strong, Moderate and Weak) for use of each trait and holistic scoring (from 0-4) based on the strength of

the argument made. The following aspects of historical reasoning, also referred to in my study as rubric criteria, were explicitly stated on what I termed the Rubric for Historical Argumentation:

- Statement of a claim or position
- Use of multiple sources to support the claim or position taken
- Explanation of how or why the evidence supports the claim or position taken
- Connection and corroboration of the sources used
- Assessment and establishment of the reliability of the sources used
- Refutation of a competing claim or interpretation
- Convincing argument made (overall quality and assignment of a holistic score)

With the exception of the Starving Time task, all students had access to the Rubric prior to writing an argument and then afterward as a vehicle and tool for making sense of teacher feedback. The criteria contained on the Rubric represents the full range of history-specific strategies I targeted in my instruction and what I hoped students would become proficient in using and understanding. Additional information on how the Rubric was applied to students' arguments is provided in the Data Analysis section of this chapter. For full details of the Rubric, see Figure 3.1.

Except for the Starving Time assessment, the historical argumentation writing tasks were assigned at the end of each HI and varied in length. For example, students' interpretations of Native Americans' involvement in the French and Indian War required two paragraphs, while their arguments about the extermination of an entire village of

Native Americans in Western Pennsylvania in 1763 by English colonists, commonly known as the Paxton Uprising, demanded five. In addition, the demands for reading and source analysis, including the number of documents and difficulty of text, were not the same for each argumentative writing task. An example of this can be seen in the differences between the Rosa Parks and Paxton Uprising HIs. The Rosa Parks HI, which occurred during the What is History? mini-unit, involved three sources, two of which corroborated on one main point, while the HI on the Paxton Uprising, which occurred at about the mid-point of my study, involved 10-12 conflicting sources (mostly primary), all composed between 1763 and 1764, posing greater reading challenges for adolescents than documents written in modern English.

Though each of the five HIs and writing tasks differed in terms of sources and requirements, the Paxton Uprising and American Revolution investigations were similar in terms of the number and difficulty of the sources and the requirements for writing arguments about these events. Though the differences between each HI and written argumentation task may place limits on what I can claim about the progression and quality of my students' historical thinking throughout the duration of the study, each piece of their writing is a strong indicator of the depth of their strategic knowledge and understanding of history.

I used these argumentative writing tasks for data collection purposes because they encompassed the history-specific strategies I was teaching and pushing my students to learn and become proficient in. The HIs posed (or encouraged) challenging investigative questions that required students to sift through, analyze, interpret, connect, select, cite and explain varied and fragmented evidence to develop meaningful answers to them. The

writing tasks therefore reflected my students' transformation of knowledge through manipulation of sources, application of background knowledge, peeling back the multiple layers in the sources (authorship, date of creation, perspective) and inferential thinking.

This was especially true of the Paxton Uprising task assigned at about the mid-point of my study, and the one on what may have caused the American Revolution, which served as a post-study performance task. These tasks placed significant reading, thinking and writing demands on my students. Both tasks encouraged them to deploy the full range of heuristics incorporated in my historical thinking Interventions, including assessments of source reliability and the difficult strategies of acknowledging and refuting an opposing claim or interpretation. I reasoned that if my students could develop and articulate claims about these events from the evidence at hand, and select, cite and explain that evidence in the context of their claims and the historical period in convincing ways, I could conclude that they had made important gains in historical thinking.

Written histories of past events, people and/or topics are a staple of the historical profession. It is where historians and other experts in history present the results of their investigations of the past, which are essentially interpretations and arguments about the past that are expected to be backed by explicit references to sources (evidence). Since my primary goal for students in both interventions was to help them move from their status as novices in history to proficiency in using the sourcing heuristic, it made sense to encourage them to produce their own histories of the subjects of America's past that we investigated. As I noted, novices in history cannot be expected to write (or even read or think) at the same level as expert historical investigators who have years of experience

and actually work in the field of history on a full or part time basis. Though my students were not asked to write monographs or journal articles, they were taught and encouraged to use the same format for doing key things in the historical profession such as stating a claim in a thesis statement and citing sources by author, date, type of source, etc.

Students' written work serves as a strong indicator of their level of mastery of the standards for effective argumentation in history (Monte-Sano, 2011; VanSledright, 2002). This includes, among other things, stating a claim and reasons behind it in a thesis statement, citing sources in support of a claim by noting the author, date, type of source, etc., then explaining why the sources support the claim and, on a higher level, why the sources are reliable. The latter involves discussing sources in their historical context – a very difficult strategy to teach and get students to perform - and discussing the sources in the context of the argument being made.

My data collection closed with a think-aloud task completed separately by each of my 10 primary informants. I audio-taped each informant as they attempted to develop an interpretation of African Americans' experiences with Southern Reconstruction by examining a set of sources related to the event and sharing their thoughts and questions about the event and the sources out loud. After each informant shared his/her interpretation of African Americans' experiences with Southern Reconstruction after examining and talking about the sources, I asked them to reflect on the task as another way of measuring their sense of the interpretive nature of history and the challenges involved in studying the past. I reasoned that if my informants sourced the evidence I placed in front of them, connected all or some portion of it and then formed a picture of the Reconstruction period for African Americans from it, all without any prompting from

me, that would be evidence of important gains in historical thinking since novices do not know to engage in these kinds of history-specific acts. Samples of informants' comments from the online portions of the think aloud protocol are presented and discussed in Chapter 4.

The sources I selected for this think-aloud task, which included images such as political cartoons and allegory created during Reconstruction (see Appendix E), were intended to give the impression that the Reconstruction era was a complex period of unprecedented change for African Americans (and white Americans) and a story of great successes and failures in American democracy. I chose this topic because it is generally unfamiliar to 8th grade students. Moreover, as Wineburg (1998) and VanSledright (2002) have shown with different sets of documents on topics in American history, this task seemed likely to produce data that would shed light on my informants' level of historical thinking, especially the ability to source and contextualize documents. These cognitive strategies were necessary for informants to develop an interpretation of Reconstruction that accounts for the successes and failures of this important historical period.

The data collected from the verbal reports produced by this performance task helped me chart the development of my students' historical thinking and level of proficiency with the sourcing heuristic. According to VanSledright, Kelly and Meuwissen (2006), verbal report protocols are "powerful tools" in understanding how young people read and try to make meaning from sources and how or whether they use them to construct interpretations of the past (p. 209). Pressley and Afflerbach (1995) show that verbal reports can reveal how readers go about making meaning from text and

subtext, in terms of reading comprehension *and* critical analysis. Thus when students vocalize their thinking during sourcing exercises with multiple texts (including images), they provide useful data on what they are able to do with history.

Interviews

Each primary informant was interviewed immediately prior to engaging in the think-aloud performance task on African Americans' experiences during Reconstruction. These were largely open-ended interviews that began with the question "what do you think history is?" Informants' comments reveal growth in historical thinking and shed light on whether PSD enhanced students' understanding of the discipline of history.

Teacher Journal

Like VanSledright (2002) and Stout (2004), I documented my thinking processes and pedagogical moves during the study in a reflection journal. This was crucial to my goal of determining effective practices in engaging students in historical thinking and equipping them with the cognitive tools of historians. My journal is also an important source of information about the PSD intervention. It allowed me to document the development of this teaching and learning strategy as it progressed from session to session with the students in Teaching Intervention 1. This includes what did and did not work in pursuance of the goal of helping my students learn to think historically.

Data Analysis

I used an open-coding process to analyze the data I collected on my students' historical thinking. Epistemic stances and use of history-specific reading and writing strategies were two broad coding categories that emerged and helped me discern how my students thought about and worked with history before, during and after the study. The

following more specific codes related to historical evidence and interpretation and the sourcing heuristic also emerged and guided my analysis of the data I collected: (1) recognition of the role of sources in knowing and giving meaning to the past and (2) recognition of authorial voice, bias, intent and perspective in historical texts.

The codes stated above are based largely on Shemilt's (1983, 2003) and Lee and Ashby's (2005) model of progression in students' thinking about historical evidence. They argue that most students begin their work with school-level history believing historical accounts are authorless bearers of information. But when taught and encouraged to use history-specific reading and thinking strategies, many students in Lee and Ashby's studies began to recognize that accounts have authors with positions and views, and that accounts are evidence of the past that can be pieced together to form a picture of what went on. I was likewise interested in seeing if my students moved beyond an uncritical faith in written statements about the past, especially textbook accounts, to viewing historical sources as pieces of a puzzle that can be combined to offer an interpretation of people dealing with their unique circumstances in the past.

I drew heavily upon VanSledright's (2002) work to assist me in my coding and analysis of the reading, thinking and writing my students did in our HIs and performance tasks. My students' reading and analysis of sources fell along a continuum similar to the one VanSledright (2002) developed to map his students' movement from general reading strategies to ones that are history-specific. For example, VanSledright (2002) added a category he calls "critical intertextual analyses" to understand the extent to which his 5th grade participants judged historical figures' perspectives, understood the status of accounts, and established historical contexts in which to situate accounts. VanSledright

(2002) argues that learners who add this type of reading to their cognitive tool kit “are beginning to read more expertly in the subject [of history]” (p. 161). I looked carefully for vocalizations from the think-aloud tasks that went beyond use of comprehension monitoring strategies, including intratextual analyses informants used to make sense of a single source. I considered instances of this among my informants to be evidence of the sourcing and corroboration heuristics.

The data sources I relied on most to chart and assess my students’ movement on a novice- to-expert continuum of historical thinking were the written arguments they produced at the end of each HI. Students’ argumentative writing served as a measure of their understanding of the larger concepts of evidence and interpretation, as well as more specific disciplinary strategies and modes of reading, thinking and writing. Discipline-specific writing is not only critical in helping students learn to think historically since it gets them directly involved in some of the same behind-the-scenes work that expert historical investigators do, it also offers important indicators of their level of mastery and understanding of the framework and tools of the discipline. Argumentative writing represents an intersection of students’ reading and thinking in history (Monte-Sano, 2008). An effective or persuasive argument, whether from an expert or adolescent, demonstrates the writer’s creation of knowledge of a given topic from various sources representing a range of perspectives, and a case for how that knowledge/topic can be understood (and used?), which comes from the writer’s own critical and creative thinking and manipulation of evidence (Leinhardt, 2000; Monte-Sano, 2008; White, 1973). In short, involving my students in historical writing, which the theoretical framework of learning to think in history I was working from suggests is important to do, was intended

to help them reach a greater level of understanding of history and sophistication in the use of its cognitive tools, while at the same time providing me with a useful measure of their historical thinking capabilities.

To assist me in transforming data from students' writing into evidence of their progress in historical reasoning and argumentation, I used a modified version of a rubric for historical interpretation and argument developed and used by VanSledright et al. in 2003 (see Figure 3.2). I streamlined the rubric, and after consultation with my university advisor added the qualifiers Strong, Moderate, and Weak to each trait (see Figure 3.2). This was done to facilitate judgments of the quality of my students' attempts to address each of the seven discipline-specific traits identified on the rubric. Since I was interested in determining how and to what extent my students' awareness and understandings of second-order and procedural/strategic knowledge in the domain of history progressed during the course of the study, in addition to how and when they begin to think historically, it made sense to have a tool that allowed me (and the students involved in PSD) to track their progress (or lack of it) with the different but overlapping cognitive habits I was trying to teach. I also assumed the revised rubric would give me a basis for comparing growth in historical thinking in each class.

My graduate courses in historiography and history education, my reading of monographs, articles and case studies in these fields, experiences with historian-led professional development, conversations about argumentation with amateur and professional historians, my extensive reading of historians' published arguments about the past (mostly America's), and my years of experience teaching historical thinking to

Figure 3.1: The Original Rubric for Historical Interpretation/Argument by VanSledright et al.

Score Description/Criteria

- 4** ___ Takes a clear position, makes a convincing argument in defense of that position, acknowledges a competing interpretation and attempts to refute it
___ Uses multiple pieces of evidence to support the position taken and makes specific references to the evidence (e.g., refers to specific documents/images, their authors/creators and perspectives present or represented)
___ Shows the connection and corroboration of sources
___ Discusses the status of sources within their historical context to establish reliability (e.g., notes/discusses author's/creator's perspectives, biases and possible motives, how and why the evidence cited supports the position taken and why that evidence is trustworthy)
___ Uses couched, conditional language (e.g., “*According to Captain Preston’s account,...*”; “*Preston may have believed...*”; “*John Tudor’s account contradicts Preston’s claims...*”) and openly admits any conjecture/speculation
-
- 3** ___ Takes a position, but argument not as clear, concise, direct or strong as a 4; limited refutation of another interpretation
___ Draws from, and refers to evidence, but does not cite it specifically enough for the reader to judge its reliability
___ Shows evidence of corroborating sources, but not as directly as a 4
___ Some effort to work with status of sources and their influence (e.g., perspective of authors, context of documents)
___ Occasional use of conditional language, but appears to ignore or dismiss conflicting evidence
___ Good essay, but lacks the overall coherence, corroboration and historical situatedness of a 4
-
- 2** ___ Takes a position with support, but questionable or weak argument and no refutation of another position
___ Alludes to some evidence but ignores or dismisses that which doesn’t fit position or interpretation
___ No real effort at assessing status of sources in order to corroborate interpretation (e.g., presence of author perspective as influencing account, situating interpretation within historical context)
___ Singular interpretation with some reasoning for or qualification of it (e.g., “*We will never know what really happened because there are different viewpoints on it. People have different views of what happened.*”)
___ Infrequent and/or no consistent use of conditional language
-
- 1** ___ Takes a position but does little to effectively argue that position
___ No mention of evidence despite offering an interpretation
___ No evidence of the connection or corroboration of source
___ Little or no evaluation of sources present
___ No use of conditional language

Figure 3.2: The Revised Rubric for Historical Argumentation

Name of Student whose work is being evaluated: _____
Name of Student evaluating the work (if applicable): _____
Date: _____

Rubric for Historical Argumentation – Advanced U.S. History 8

Description/Criteria

_____ Makes a claim or takes a clear position.

RATING: _____ **Strong** _____ **Moderate (ok)** _____ **Weak**

_____ Uses multiple sources or pieces of evidence to support the claim position taken and makes specific references to the evidence (e.g., refers to specific documents/images, their authors/creators and perspectives present or represented).

RATING: _____ **Strong** _____ **Moderate (ok)** _____ **Weak**

_____ Explains how/why the evidence supports the claim made or position taken.

RATING: _____ **Strong** _____ **Moderate (ok)** _____ **Weak**

_____ Shows the connection and corroboration of sources.

RATING: _____ **Strong** _____ **Moderate (ok)** _____ **Weak**

_____ Assesses/establishes the reliability of the sources cited

RATING: _____ **Strong** _____ **Moderate (ok)** _____ **Weak**

_____ Acknowledges that there are or could be other claims/interpretations about the same topic/event/person, etc.

RATING: _____ **Strong** _____ **Moderate (ok)** _____ **Weak**

_____ Refutes a competing claim or interpretation

RATING: _____ **Strong** _____ **Moderate (ok)** _____ **Weak**

_____ Makes a convincing argument in defense of the claim made or position taken.

RATING: _____ **Strong (3.5-4)** _____ **Moderate (2.5-3)** _____ **Weak (0-2)**

Total: _____/4

Comments: _____

adolescents converged to assist me in the identification, evaluation and interpretation of instances of my students' deployment of discipline-specific strategies in their writing. Beginning with their claims or position statements, I looked for whether and how well students cited and explained sources (evidence) to back them up, whether students portrayed their sources as authors' views and perspectives instead of information to be accepted at face value, whether they attempted to connect, corroborate and assess the reliability of the sources they chose to cite, and any attempts made to state an opposing claim or position on the topic and refute it. Though coherence and contextualization were not explicit traits on the Rubric for Historical Argumentation, these elements of historical writing did factor into the holistic scores that were assigned to each student's arguments. Students whose writing adhered to the criteria on the Rubric and was coherent and contextualized enough to be either intelligible and/or logical received a 3.5 or 4. Students who adhered to the conventions of good historical writing, but only cited 1-2 sources in support of their claims, might receive as high as a 3.

Separate scores were not given for each criterion of the Rubric. Instead, quality ratings of Strong, Moderate or Weak were used for instances of each of the traits in students' arguments. Each of these ratings was then considered and factored into the assignment of a final score representing the strength of the entire argument. Students who carefully cited, connected and explained three or more primary sources in support of a claim they developed from their understanding of the evidence at hand, mentioned at least one reason why those sources were in a position to know about the topic and therefore aid in proving the claim, and stated and then showed at least one, evidence-based reason why the opposing claim is flawed would receive a 4. Tables 3.5 and 3.6

offer examples of citations and statements rated as Strong, Moderate and Weak in terms of the sourcing heuristic and the interconnected strategies of acknowledging and refuting an opposing claim.

Table 3.2: Examples and Comparisons of Strong, Moderate and Weak References to Sources on the American Revolution Post-study Writing Task

Citation	Rating	Reason for Rating
“...George Washington wrote a letter to Bryan Fairfax in July, 1774 saying how he felt of Parliament, ‘I think the Parliament of Great Britain hath no more right to put their hands into my pocket, without my consent, than I have to put my hands into yours for money.’...” (Maria, Teaching Intervention 2)	Strong	Author’s name, date the source was created, type of source and purpose for creating the source are stated
“...George Washington once said, ‘I think the Parliament has no right to put their hands in my pocket.’...” (Kelly, Teaching Intervention 1)	Moderate	Author is mentioned, but the date of creation and type of source is not stated
Patrick Henry said “Give me liberty or give me death” in his writing....” (Keryna, Teaching Intervention 2)	Weak	No mention of the author’s name, the date the source was created or the type of source

The emphasis I placed on students’ argumentative writing as a source of data on their growth and level of sophistication in historical thinking made it seem appropriate to conduct an inter-rater reliability check. After scoring each argument myself through multiple passes, I taught my Advanced U.S. History 8 colleague to also use the Rubric for scoring purposes. I explained each trait of the Rubric, including the qualifiers Strong, Moderate and Weak, and then assigned my colleague a small set of students’ arguments to practice applying the Rubric with. Disagreements that arose in judging students’ assessments of source reliability and refutation of an opposing claim were resolved during the practice sessions. My colleague then scored 30% of the total sample of pre (Jamestown Starving Time), mid-point (Paxton Uprising) and post-study (American Revolution) arguments, which amounted to 42 arguments from 14 students, seven from each of the two Intervention classes (please note that students’ arguments on the other three topics – Rosa Parks, Indian/white relations in colonial America, and Indians in the

Table 3.3: Examples and Comparisons of Strong, Moderate and Weak Acknowledgements and Refutations of Opposing Claims on the Paxton Uprising Mid-Point Writing Task

Statement	Rating	Reason for Rating
<p>I think the killings of the Conestogas were justified, but many disagree. Some think the killings were morally wrong and unjustified. Thomas McKee, a frontiersman that lived near the Consetogas and knew them, wrote in a letter to Sir William Johnson that they [the Conestogas] could never be against them [the English colonists]. He wrote “these Indians of Conestoga have lived all of their lives...in peace and quietness with their white neighbors, and I do not believe were ever against us...” He is saying they were peaceful, loving Indians. Also, Rev. John Elder, a Presbyterian priest in Paxton, also thought the killings were wrong. He said “entreating them [the Paxton Boys] to desist from such an undertaking, representing to them [the] unlawfulness and barbarity of such an action.” The priest of the Paxton Boys was saying how wrong the killings were that the Paxton Boys committed. This source is unreliable because the Paxton Boys’ close priest John Elder was likely to lie to protect himself. This claim [of the immorality of the killings] is inaccurate. In a declaration written by Matthew Smith and James Gibson, they wrote “not only was the blood of our many murdered brethren ignored, but our poor, unhappy captured friends were abandoned to slavery among the savages.” They said the Consetogas killed or captured frontiersmen. Why would the killings be morally wrong and completely unjustified if the killings were of savages and murderers? Also, most of the people saying the killings were wrong weren’t frontiersmen and were not experiencing the fearful and frightening attacks of Indians.... (Brian, Teaching Intervention 1)</p>	Strong	<p>An opposing claim or interpretation of the nature of the killings of the Conestoga Indians is clearly stated, two different sources are used to highlight the nature of the opposing claim, and offers reasons and evidence in an effort to show why the opposing claim is flawed and why the student’s (Brian’s) claim is valid.</p>
<p>Many of the letters, diaries, etc. say it [the destruction of the Conestoga Indians] was a horrible sight but nothing about why they were killed. Some of the theory’s [sic] say why they might have been killed, but nothing for sure. In a Declaration by [Paxton Boys] Matthew Smith and James Gibson said “some to have proven to be murderers are capable of doing us harm.” We don’t know if that is the real reason, it is just a theory. In an excerpt by Rhoda Barber, it said that the Indians “seemed as much afraid of the other Indians as the whites were.” If Matthew and James’ theory was reliable then the Paxton Boys wouldn’t have killed the Conestoga Indians because they were too scared of everyone anyways.... (Sally, Teaching Intervention 2)</p>	Moderate	<p>A statement of an opposing claim or interpretation of the killings of the Conestoga Indians is made, but not in a clear or concise way. The evidence cited to highlight the opposing claim and demonstrate why it is problematic is not explained. Student (Sally) questions the reliability of a key source used to defend the opposing claim, but this could use further explanation.</p>
<p>Killing people for no reason is never justified. The Frontiersmen who marched into Philadelphia said that they were killing the Indians because the Indians killed some of their people. The Frontiersmen said that the Indians were not there [sic] friends...because certain Indians were bad and killed certain townspeople, [does not] mean that all Indians are bad. The Paxton Boys should have gone after the Indians who did the killing and not the innocent Indians.... (Eddie, Teaching Intervention 1)</p>	Weak	<p>Student (Eddie) presents the Paxton Boys’ defense of their actions, but does not provide evidence such as the Paxton Boys’ own accounts to help readers understand their defense and place it in context. There is no evidence cited to suggest or prove that the killings were unwarranted.</p>

French and Indian War – are included for analysis in my study to shed light on the progression of students’ historical thinking throughout the study period). The sample scored for inter-rater reliability is representative of the racial, ethnic and gender composition of each class involved in my study. Each argument was scored holistically with a number from 0 to 4 (sub ratings such as 2.75 and 3.5 were deemed appropriate and were used by both raters). An inter-rater agreement of 81% was reached for the assigned sample.

Procedures used in Teaching Interventions 1 and 2

Teaching Intervention 1

My instruction in historical thinking began with a mini-unit called “What is History?” Much in the way that VanSledright (2002) did with his fifth grade participants, I used students’ explanations of the Starving Time and the sources from the Jamestown task to introduce a process for historical investigation. We then moved to the concept of evidence, which included engaging students in several internet tasks that allowed them to explore the lives of various 18th century Philadelphians through a variety of primary sources. These activities served two main goals: (1) to help students see the connection between evidence and knowledge of the past and (2) to give them practice in determining whether a source is primary or secondary. I also introduced students to a deconstructed definition of history that shows the distinctions and connections between the past (actual events), accounts of the past (evidence) and historians’ interpretations of the past (arguments). I then engaged students in several activities designed to illustrate this conception of history. One of these involved modeling the process of sourcing to expose students to the specialized form of reading that expert historical investigators do

(Wineburg, 1991). I also engaged students in active and interpretive reading approaches such as Beck and McKeown's (2001, 2002) "Questioning the Author" protocol to help them interrogate textual and pictorial sources. Other tools such as document analysis forms were used to encourage the analytical and critical reading of historical sources (see Appendix F for an example).

A total of five HIs on topics and events from America's past were conducted with students. The Paxton Uprising HI represents the full range of my efforts to lead my students to become proficient historical thinkers. This HI, which engaged students in a raw investigation of an extremely violent and controversial incident in the history of Indian/white relations in colonial Pennsylvania, contained the following pedagogical and history-specific dimensions and characteristics:

- The topic piqued students' interest because it involves conflict and shocking acts of violence between whites and Native Americans
- The HI gave students an opportunity to generate their own historical questions to investigate (most wanted to know why colonists wiped out the entire village of Indians and some wondered if the killers faced any consequences)
- Students' questions about the Uprising were actually hotly debated immediately after the killings in 1763-1764 and at various times in the 19th and 20th centuries.
- The HI involved a set of interesting and conflicting eyewitness accounts and other sources from the time of the event, including an essay by Ben

Franklin and an anti-Indian political cartoon that historians say is the first political cartoon to be published in the colony of Pennsylvania.

- The HI gave students a chance to engage many of the fundamental cognitive tools that historians use: sourcing, corroboration, contextualization, source reliability assessments, perspective analysis, and the construction of an evidence-based argument about a controversial and contested past event
- The HI satisfied my district's curricular objectives of learning about Indian/white relations and the methods used by Americans in the 18th and 19th centuries to bring about political and societal change (some historians, including the famous Frederick Jackson Turner, referred to the Paxton Boys as early democrats because their actions were in part designed to get the attention of the Pennsylvania legislature and gain more representation there).

My students analyzed each source related to the uprising through organizers (see Appendix N) that prompted (and trained) them to engage in heuristics like identifying and interrogating the sources' authors/creators. The investigative work concluded with having students construct a written, evidence-based argument about the killings. In short, this unit on historical detection served as a way to get novices involved in the actual work of historians, which is at the center of the theoretical framework of learning to think in history that guided my teaching and my students' learning.

Four main considerations guided my choice of instructional materials and exercises for each HI: historical significance, student interest, readability, and relevance

to the Advanced U.S. History 8 curriculum. Published studies on historical thinking, digital primary source archives, the on-level and Advanced U.S. History 8 curriculum guides, and my own knowledge of the colonial and Revolutionary periods in American history were used to obtain materials and resources for the historical thinking interventions I implemented.

Peer Scrutiny and Discourse

Sessions of PSD were implemented with students in Teaching Intervention 1 following each historical argumentation writing task. A total of five PSD sessions were conducted. The first two sessions of PSD began with a sample written argument from a professional historian, about 1-2 paragraphs in length, and related to the topic students recently investigated and wrote about. Students were asked to read the piece one time through for comprehension, and then a second time to locate and identify the historian's claim/thesis statement and evidence used to support it. A class discussion would follow as the students and I unpacked the historian's writing together and compared the components of it to the Rubric for Historical Argumentation. I then returned students' writing pieces from the previous class session, which were ungraded, and asked them to pair up, trade papers, and review and evaluate each other's work with the rubric. Students were given time to discuss their evaluations with one another and were then encouraged make any changes their partners suggested would improve their interpretation of the historical event under consideration.

For the first two sessions, it was necessary for students to make the changes on their own time, at home or during our school's daily study hall period. This was due to the amount of time taken to read and work with historians' writing samples prior to the

peer review portion. By the third session of PSD students moved right into trading papers and evaluating them based on the criteria outlined in the Rubric, and consequently had more time to revise their work during the sessions.

The idea and assumption behind the PSD intervention is that students who are taught to critique and discuss their peers' work in the context of standards for historical writing and then given quality time to engage in this kind of discourse would not only produce better writing in history, but develop a deeper understanding of the interpretive nature of historical knowledge that might be revealed in interviews and the think-aloud task on African Americans and Southern Reconstruction. The investment of time to do this with students was significant, which I discuss in more depth in Chapters 4 and 5.

Teaching Intervention 2

Instruction for the students in the condition I refer to as Teaching Intervention 2 proceeded in much the same ways as that of Teaching Intervention 1. The major difference between the two Interventions was that students in Teaching Intervention 2 did not receive or engage in PSD. Differences between the two classes in terms of instruction and students' work with the sourcing heuristic and other history-specific concepts and strategies were minimal. There were a few instances in which I changed the warm-up activity or decided to review or discuss particular sources in more depth with one class or the other, depending on how things went in the previous class session. These pedagogical decisions and moves were minor and did not give either class noticeable advantages in terms of performance on my measures of historical thinking. But it should be noted that there were a few instances of dialogue that occurred during Teaching Intervention 2 that I felt were richer and more interesting examples of historical thinking

than that which occurred in the Teaching Intervention 1 class with the same topic and sources. For more detail about the nature of Interventions 1 and 2, see Appendix A. In the next chapter I present data collected on students' historical thinking in both conditions and discuss the possible influence of PSD on the historical thinking capabilities of those who participated in it.

Summary

Working under the assumption that students who possess and use historical habits of mind develop richer understandings of history and historical concepts, the past, and human behavior in general, and improve their ability to write evidence-based arguments, I decided to study the teaching and learning of America's past through the sourcing heuristic with two of my four Advanced U.S. History 8 classes to ascertain the effects of learning history through investigation. This study was also conducted under the notion that adolescents who can think historically are empowered to analyze and apply reasoning to issues in the present and express their views in sophisticated ways (Bain, 2000, 2005, 2006; Barton, 2004; Seixas, 2000; Stout, 2004; VanSledright, 2002, 2004; VanSledright & Limon, 2006; Wineburg, 1991, 2001).

Students in both classes that participated in the study received instruction and guided practice in/with the sourcing heuristic and other aspects of the discipline of history using content and topics aligned with my school district's curriculum. One class, however, participated in structured sessions of peer review and discussion of experts' and students' argumentative writing. This intervention was intended to enhance these students' knowledge of history, especially procedural knowledge, in addition to helping them become more effective with the craft of historical argumentation.

A variety of data were collected to chart students' possible growth in historical thinking and to determine which teaching methods, strategies, exercises, materials and pedagogical moves might have an impact on how (or whether) students learned the sourcing heuristic and possibly gained a deeper sense of the interpretive nature of history. The teaching procedures I used, and the data I selected for inclusion in the study are described, explained and analyzed in Chapters 4 and 5.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Introduction

In Chapters 1 and 3 I presented four questions that guided my investigation of the effects of a disciplinary approach to teaching and learning America's past from colonial times through the American Revolution with two classes of 8th grade students:

1. What do students believe about history before, during and after learning it through investigative methods?
2. How do classroom-based exercises developed and implemented in concert with a research-based, theoretically-grounded framework for learning to think in history influence novices' knowledge and understanding of the idea of historical evidence and its role in the production of historical knowledge?
3. How much time and instruction are required to move students away from their status as historical novices toward greater sophistication in historical thinking?
4. Does engagement in structured sessions of peer review and editing of students' written arguments and discourse on historical argumentation deepen students' knowledge of the discipline of history?

In this chapter I describe the results of my study by discussing questions 1, 2 and 4 through a range of data collected on students' views and knowledge of history and their level of proficiency in creating historical accounts. I address question 3 in the next chapter. First I describe baseline data I collected on students' beliefs about history and their level of disciplinary knowledge. Then I present and analyze data on students' growth in historical thinking as a result of the study, starting with gains in procedural

knowledge and then moving into a discussion of data indicating changes in students' epistemic stances in relation to disciplinary history. When discussing this data, I begin by addressing the performance of students involved in Teaching Intervention 1, and then summarize the data produced by students who experienced Teaching Intervention 2. I end the chapter with a discussion of the possible influences of the PSD intervention.

Baseline Data on Historical Thinking

The History Survey: The Complexity of Students' Views of History

I administered a history survey to all students at the beginning and near the end of the study in pre/post design (see Appendix B for full details of the survey). The survey was designed to ascertain students' knowledge and beliefs about history and provide baseline data that I could use to determine the level of growth (if any) in my students' historical thinking. The pre-course survey results seemed to confirm my assumption that students would enter my class with a view of history as fixed, authoritative knowledge of the past that is collected and presented in textbooks, films, museums, etc. Maggioni, VanSledright and Alexander (2009) refer to this epistemic belief as "copier" because history is perceived as little more than a copy of the past. Most of my students (98%) indicated agreement with survey items 1, 2 and/or 3, which are aligned with the copier view of history (see Table 4.1). The majority of these students also wrote personal definitions of history on the narrative portion of the survey that indicate this conception (or misconception) of the discipline. For example, a student in Teaching Intervention 1 described history as "the events, places and people of the past and what they did." This was typical of most students' responses. Many students added the popular notions that history can help us avoid repeating past mistakes and better understand the present.

While these ideas are not invalid, they do not account for interpretation and the tentative nature of historical knowledge.

Table 4.1: Beliefs about History Pre-Study Survey Results

Epistemic Understanding	Teaching Intervention 1 N=24	Teaching Intervention 2 N=25
Agreement with Items Portraying History as Fixed, Authoritative Knowledge (copier view of history)	23 Students	25 Students
Agreement with Items Portraying History as an Interpretive Discipline	8 Students	8 Students

Interestingly, approximately 1/3 of the students also agreed with survey items 4, 5, 8 and/or 9, which suggest that history is based on the investigation and interpretation of historical texts (Table 4.1). The results from the first administration of the survey indicated that more than a handful of my students held inconsistent views of history, which I had not expected. Maggioni, VanSledright and Reddy (2009) obtained similar results in their study of high school students' and college undergraduates' epistemic beliefs in history. Through two administrations of a Beliefs about History Questionnaire (BHQ) and post-study interviews, they noted that the high school students' epistemic belief systems were "more complex and less linear" than what the research in this area of history education suggests. However, as I worked with my students to help them learn the sourcing heuristic and then evaluated their first attempt at constructing an historical account, it became clear that most of my students, even those who indicated agreement with survey items portraying history as an interpretive act, did not yet know about the central role that sources (evidence) and interpretation play in the discipline of history.

The Jamestown Starving Time Performance Task

As noted in Chapters 3 and 4, another way I attempted to understand my students' knowledge of history prior to teaching them how to think historically was by assigning the task of crafting a written explanation for why 88% of the Jamestown colony's settlers perished in the winter of 1609-1610. The task was preceded by a presentation of well-known facts about the colony and the Starving Time and the distribution of three primary sources connected to the event. No instructions on how to approach or read the sources and craft an interpretation were offered to students since the task was designed to collect baseline data on their level of historical thinking.

Table 4.2 shows the number and percentage of students in each class that demonstrated use of history-specific strategies on the Starving Time task. Included in the table are qualifiers (Strong, Moderate and Weak) intended to give a sense of how effectively history-specific strategies were used by students. For example, while twenty-two students in Teaching Intervention 1 presented a claim about why the Starving Time occurred, none did so in a clear or convincing way. I coded the use of history-specific strategies as Strong if there was close adherence to the criteria stated on the original rubric for historical argumentation under the score of 4 (see Figure 4.1). For instance, the student in Teaching Intervention 2 who wrote a Strong claim had not only stated what he thought was the primary cause of the Starving Time, but why he believed it was.

As the data in Table 4.2 indicate, only a few students referred to sources to support their explanation of why so many of Jamestown's settlers died in 1609-1610, and the majority of those references lacked detailed source information. For both classes, only ten students (21%) made any references to one or more of the three sources used in

the Starving Time task, and only one of those students (2%) actually cited a source by its author. The writing below from Kelly, a primary informant for Teaching Intervention 1, was typical of the responses that included some evidentiary support. To prove her “opinion” that the Jamestown settlers’ food was poisoned, Kelly wrote:

In Source one it says their deadly enemies brought them food....”

Table 4.2: Results from the Jamestown Starving Time Whole-Class Performance Task

Historical Thinking Concept/Strategy	Teaching Intervention 1 (N= 22)	Teaching Intervention 2 (N = 25)
Presents a Claim	22 (100%) Strong: 0 Moderate: 15 (68%) (72%) Weak: 7 (32%)	25 (100%) Strong: 1 (4%) Moderate: 18 Weak: 6 (24%)
Cites one or more sources (Evidence) in support of the claim	6 (27%) Strong: 0 Moderate: 2 (33%) (25%) Weak: 4 (67%)	4 (16%) Strong: 0 Moderate: 1 Weak: 3 (75%)
Connects the source(s) cited to the claim	3 (14%) Strong: 0 Moderate: 1 (33%) Weak: 2 (67%) (100%)	1 (4%) Strong: 0 Moderate: 0 Weak: 1
Shows how the sources corroborate	0	0
Assesses/establishes the reliability of the source(s) cited	0	0
Acknowledges a competing claim or interpretation	0	0
Refutes a competing claim or interpretation	0	0

Figure 4.1: The Rubric for Historical Argumentation

Score Description/Criteria

- 4** ___ Takes a clear position, makes a convincing argument in defense of that position, acknowledges a competing interpretation and attempts to refute it
___ Uses multiple pieces of evidence to support the position taken and makes specific references to the evidence (e.g., refers to specific documents/images, their authors/creators and perspectives present or represented)
___ Shows the connection and corroboration of sources
___ Discusses the status of sources within their historical context to establish reliability (e.g., notes/discusses author's/creator's perspectives, biases and possible motives, how and why the evidence cited supports the position taken and why that evidence is trustworthy)
___ Uses couched, conditional language (e.g., “*According to Captain Preston’s account,...*”; “*Preston may have believed...*”; “*John Tudor’s account contradicts Preston’s claims...*”) and openly admits any conjecture/speculation
-
- 3** ___ Takes a position, but argument not as clear, concise, direct or strong as a 4; limited refutation of another interpretation
___ Draws from, and refers to evidence, but does not cite it specifically enough for the reader to judge its reliability
___ Shows evidence of corroborating sources, but not as directly as a 4
___ Some effort to work with status of sources and their influence (e.g., perspective of authors, context of documents)
___ Occasional use of conditional language, but appears to ignore or dismiss conflicting evidence
___ Good essay, but lacks the overall coherence, corroboration and historical situatedness of a 4
-
- 2** ___ Takes a position with support, but questionable or weak argument and no refutation of another position
___ Alludes to some evidence but ignores or dismisses that which doesn’t fit position or interpretation
___ No real effort at assessing status of sources in order to corroborate interpretation (e.g., presence of author perspective as influencing account, situating interpretation within historical context)
___ Singular interpretation with some reasoning for or qualification of it (e.g., “*We will never know what really happened because there are different viewpoints on it. People have different views of what happened.*”)
___ Infrequent and/or no consistent use of conditional language
-
- 1** ___ Takes a position but does little to effectively argue that position
___ No mention of evidence despite offering an interpretation
___ No evidence of the connection or corroboration of source
___ Little or no evaluation of sources present
___ No use of conditional language

Although Kelly cited a source to support her claim, she did not mention its author or the name, date or type of source, which would leave readers of Kelly's account unable to judge the validity or plausibility of her theory. She also appears to have ignored the other two sources, which did not fit her idea of what happened to the settlers in Jamestown, something that is not uncommon for students who are novices in history.

Only four students connected the source(s) they mentioned to their claim, and none did so in a convincing way. No student showed how sources corroborate, assessed source reliability, or acknowledged or refuted a competing claim or interpretation. As noted, this was not surprising since my students were not taught to do these things in their previous social studies classes. What surprised me were the ten students who stated a claim about the Starving Time and made an effort to support it with the sources at hand.

For the students noted above, the two or three brief historical thinking exercises they participated in as part of the Addendum to the 7th grade social studies curriculum perhaps made a difference in their thinking about history. However, their writing was in the style of a response to a writing prompt asking for textual support, rather than an attempt to make an historical argument. These ten students' instance of making a claim and providing support seemed more in tune with following a procedure than a demonstration of real understanding of the second-order concepts of interpretation and evidence in history. In their Language Arts and Reading classes students were asked to write Brief Constructed Responses (BCRs) that amounted to little more than answers with support from a single text. History-specific strategies such as source attribution, corroboration and assessments and discussion of reliability are absent in BCR prompts and the teaching that precedes them.

Growth in Historical Thinking

Changes in Students' Procedural Knowledge

Results from historical writing tasks used to collect data on my students' growth in historical thinking, especially in regard to procedural knowledge in history, suggest that their epistemic beliefs about history shifted toward an understanding that history is the result of a process of inquiry and interpretation. Argumentative writing represents the culmination of historical thinking and is the pinnacle of knowledge production in the historical profession (Benjamin, 1991; Burke, 1991; Carr, 1961; Mink, 1987; Monte-Sano, 2010). According to Monte-Sano (2012), students who are proficient in composing evidence-based written interpretations of the past are demonstrating genuine historical thinking since historical argumentation “involves sifting through sources and constructing an interpretation grounded in evidence” (p. 40).

Following the administration of the pre-course history survey and an opportunity to craft a written explanation for why 88% of the Jamestown colony's settlers perished in the winter of 1609-1610, students were exposed to six historical investigations (HIs) that privileged the sourcing heuristic and related aspects of disciplinary history. Each HI culminated with a writing task that asked students to construct an argument about the topic they investigated. It was communicated to students that the writing tasks were designed to let them show what they learned and concluded about the event and, most importantly, to practice historical argumentation, which served as a measure of their knowledge of history as a way of knowing and explaining the past.

Most of the students involved in Teaching Intervention 1 made gains in historical argumentation over the course of the study. And in most cases, students' writing was

evidence that they had developed some level of understanding of disciplinary history. Table 4.3 shows a comparison between the two classes with regard to the number and percentage of students who engaged in history-specific thinking and writing strategies on three separate writing tasks intended to measure proficiency and growth in historical argumentation. Table 4.3 also shows the rate of change in students' use of history-specific strategies from the writing task on the Jamestown Starving Time (pre), to the one based on the Paxton Uprising at about the mid-point of the study, to the final writing task on the causes of the American Revolution (post).

As Table 4.3 indicates, the historical writing of students from Teaching Intervention 1 was enhanced by receiving instruction in the use of the sourcing heuristic and practicing it through the HIs and writing tasks. Three HIs (Rosa Parks, Indian/white relations in colonial times, and Indians' involvement in the French and Indian War) preceded the HI on the Paxton Uprising. The American Revolution HI immediately followed the Paxton Uprising. The number and percentage of students engaging in citing sources (evidence) and connecting them to a claim increased significantly. In contrast to their performance on the Starving Time task, every student in Teaching Intervention 1 who submitted an account of the Paxton Uprising cited two or more sources and connected them to their claims about the event. By the end of the study, use of the strategy of corroboration had increased by 76% among students in Teaching Intervention 1, and instances of students acknowledging a competing claim or interpretation went up 81% by the mid-point mark. In addition, students' use of the strategy of refuting a competing claim or interpretation in their writing increased by 71% by the mid-point mark.

Table 4.3: Comparison of Students' use of History-Specific Strategies in Historical Argumentation Tasks

History-Specific Strategy	Teaching Intervention 1					Teaching Intervention 2				
	Baseline Starving Time Account N = 22	Mid-Point Paxton Uprising Account N = 21	Change % (Baseline to Mid-Point)	Post American Revolution Account N = 25	Change (Baseline to Post) %	Baseline Starving Time Account N = 25	Mid-Point Paxton Uprising Account N = 22	Change % (Baseline to Mid-Point)	Post American Revolution Account N = 23	Change (Baseline to Post) %
Presents a Claim	22 (100%)	21 (100%)	0	25 (100%)	0	25 (100%)	22 (100%)	0	23 (100%)	0
Cites one or more sources (evidence) in support of the claim	6 (27%)	21 (100%)	+73%	21 (84%)	+57%	4 (16%)	20 (91%)	+75%	20 (87%)	+71%
Connects the source(s) cited to the claim	3 (14%)	21 (100%)	+86%	21 (84%)	+70%	1 (4%)	19 (86%)	+82%	20 (87%)	+83%
Shows how the sources corroborate	0	20 (95%)	+95%	19 (76%)	+76%	0	9 (41%)	+41%	18 (78%)	+78%
Assesses/establishes the reliability of the source(s) cited	0	15 (71%)	+71%	4 (16%)	+16%	0	4 (18%)	+18%	2 (9%)	+9%
Acknowledges a competing claim or interpretation	0	17 (81%)	+81%	NA*	NA*	0	14 (64%)	+64%	NA*	NA*
Refutes a competing claim or interpretation	0	15 (71%)	+71%	22 (88%)	+88%	0	11 (50%)	+50%	16 (70%)	+70%

* **Note:** To focus students on citing strong evidence in support of their claims and refuting opposing claims, students were given an essay writing template that included a prepared statement summarizing the majority view on the American rebellion among people in England. Students were then expected to refute this view.

Among the students involved in Teaching Intervention 2, 82% cited and connected two or more sources to their claim about the Paxton Uprising (two students in the class cited and connected only one source to their claim). Use of the strategy of corroboration increased by 78% among these students from baseline to post and instances of students acknowledging a competing claim or interpretation went up 64% by the midpoint mark. In addition, use of the strategy of refuting a competing claim or interpretation among students in Teaching Intervention 2 increased by 45% from baseline to midpoint.

The quality of students' historical writing, measured through the Rubric for Historical Argumentation, also increased by the end of the study. On the Jamestown Starving Time task, no student scored higher than a 2.5. But ten students in each class earned a score of 4 on the American Revolution argument, which amounted to an increase of 40% of students in Teaching Intervention 1 scoring a 4, and 43% under the Teaching Intervention 2 condition (see Table 4.4).

Since it is sometimes difficult to distinguish genuine historical thinking from proficiency in following instructions for writing assignments and adherence to rubrics, determining the level and depth of students' procedural knowledge and understanding of historical inquiry from their writing can be tricky. For example, when I scored Sandy's (Teaching Intervention 1) written arguments on the Paxton Uprising and the American Revolution, I felt she had made significant gains in procedural knowledge and had come to understand that history is interpretive. Sandy made solid claims about the two events and backed them up with relevant evidence that she cited by author, date and type of source. But Sandy's definition of history on the post-study history survey challenged my

evaluation of her level of knowledge and understanding of historical inquiry since she wrote that:

To me History is Boring and pointless. It doesn't matter what happen[ed] then.

Someone once told me to live in the now. Don't let the future or the past control you.

Table: 4.4: Students' Writing Task Scores by Rubric Level

Historical Writing Task	Teaching Intervention 1 Rubric Levels				Teaching Intervention 2 Rubric Levels			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Jamestown Starving Time (Pre)	16 73%	6 27%	0	0	20 80%	4 16%	1 4%	0
Rosa Parks	5 22%	6 26%	8 35%	4 17%	2 9%	9 39%	10 43%	2
Indian/White Relations	2 10%	3 15%	9 45%	6 30%	1 7%	5 29%	7 47%	2 12%
Native Americans in the French & Indian War	4 18%	5 23%	7 32%	6 27%	1 5%	8 38%	12 57%	0
The Paxton Uprising	0	5 24%	3 14%	13 62%	2 9%	6 27%	12 55%	2
American Revolution Argument (Post)	2 8%	3 13%	9 38%	10 42%	3 13%	1 4%	9 39%	10 43%

This prompted me to take another look at Sandy's writing samples, which led me to conclude that Sandy was mostly writing the way I instructed her to, rather than truly comprehending the art of historical argumentation. Nonetheless, students' writing holds

the potential to reveal how far along the historical novice-toward-expert continuum they have moved and whether they have mastered the strategic knowledge involved in crafting evidence-based arguments about the past. Though Sandy's assessment of history at the end of the study suggests she was mainly mimicking what I had taught, I would argue that she was in a better position to acquire a deep understanding of historical inquiry than those not taught to write historically.

Presenting a Claim

As Table 4.5 indicates, every student that submitted written accounts of the Starving Time and the possible causes of the American Revolution offered a claim related to the larger investigative question addressed under each topic. However, the quality of most students' thesis statements improved from baseline to post. No student in Teaching Intervention 1 had written a Strong claim about the Starving Time, but I was able to code 18 students' (72% of the class) claims about the American Revolution as Strong because they took a clear position and stated their reason(s) for taking that position. Moreover, whereas seven students (32%) from Teaching Intervention 1 had written thesis statements coded as Weak on the "Starving Time" task, no student had written a thesis statement coded lower than Moderate on the American Revolution argumentation task. Compare the thesis statements Naraj wrote for both tasks:

Baseline: I think that the Powhatans stopped helping the colony and might have even gone to war with the Jamestown people.

Post: 33% of all Americans wanted independence from Britain because they believed that Britain was taking away their liberties by taxing them without their consent.

Table 4.5: Frequencies of Students Presenting an Historical Claim on the Starving Time (Pre) and American Revolution (Post) Writing Tasks

History-Specific Strategy	Teaching Intervention 1			Teaching Intervention 2		
	Baseline N=22	Post N=25	Change	Baseline N=25	Post N=23	Change
Presents a Claim	22 (100%)	25 (100%)	0	25 (100%)	23 (100%)	0

A similar change in quality occurred among students in Teaching Intervention 2. One student (4%) had written a thesis statement coded Strong on the Starving Time task. But on the American Revolution writing task 14 students (61%) wrote Strong claims. Moreover, on the Starving Time task, six students (24%) had their claims coded as Weak, whereas on the American Revolution task only one student's (4%) thesis statement was coded that way. Tianna's thesis statements for both tasks are an example of this increase in quality:

Baseline: The people didn't plan ahead well.

Post: In 1776 colonists in America declared independence from its [sic] mother country Britain. The colonists wanted to be its [sic] own country, because some colonists felt that Parliament, British lawmakers, were trying to enslave the colonies with all the taxes imposed on them without the colonist[s'] consent.

Citing Sources (Evidence) in Support of a Claim

Students involved in Teaching Intervention 1 made significant progress with the strategy of citing sources to prove a claim about the past (see Table 4.6). It is important to note that the quality of citations in students' arguments increased along with the frequency of citing sources. For example, 14 of the 21 students (67%) that cited sources in the body of their writing on the American Revolution received a rating of Strong for their citations, where none had received that rating on the Starving Time task.

Table 4.6: Instances of Students Citing Sources in Support of a Claim on the Starving Time and American Revolution Writing Tasks

History-Specific Strategy	Teaching Intervention 1			Teaching Intervention 2		
	Baseline N=22	Post N=25	Change	Baseline N=25	Post N=23	Change
Cites one or more sources (evidence) in support of a claim	6 (27%)	21 (84%)	+57%	4 (16%)	20 (87%)	+71%

Students involved in Teaching Intervention 2 demonstrated a greater increase (+71% compared to +57%) in citations of sources in the body of their writing from the Starving Time task to the one on the American Revolution when compared to the students under Teaching Intervention 1. This may be explained in part by what I perceived to be a loss of momentum in PSD by the time of the American Revolution HI, which I discuss in the latter section of this chapter and again in chapter 5. Further evidence of growth in historical thinking among students under Teaching Intervention 2 is demonstrated by the increase in the number of students (from zero to 12 or 60%) that received a rating of Strong for their citations on the American Revolution argument task when compared to the baseline task.

I theorized from the results on the writing tasks that most students (both classes) had realized by time of the American Revolution HI that it was necessary for them to prove whatever they claimed about the past with actual evidence in the body of their writing. This stands in stark contrast to their performance on the Jamestown Starving Time task, where their writing seems based on a perceived need to simply answer a teacher's question, rather than make a strong case for why something happened in the past and what it might mean. But how deeply my students understood this key aspect of

disciplinary history and whether they would apply these strategies in high school history and other classes was difficult to ascertain.

Connecting Source(s) to a Claim

Students in the Teaching Intervention 1 condition made significant gains with the strategy of explicitly connecting sources cited in the body of an argument to a claim (see Table 4.7). This was a difficult thing for students to do, since the strategy involves keeping your claim at the forefront of your mind and your argument, and having conversations with the sources you are using to show readers how those sources support your claim. Whereas instances of students citing sources went up dramatically from the Starving Time task to the one on Rosa Parks (from 27% to 83%), they did not start connecting sources to claims in their writing in significant numbers until the writing task on Indian/white relations in colonial times.

Table 4.7: Frequencies of Students Connecting Sources to a Claim on the Starving Time and American Revolution Writing Tasks

History-Specific Strategy	Teaching Intervention 1			Teaching Intervention 2		
	Baseline N=22	Post N=25	Change	Baseline N=25	Post N=23	Change
Connects the source(s) cited to the claim	3 (14%)	21 (84%)	+70%	1 (4%)	20 (87%)	+83%

Of the 21 students involved in Teaching Intervention 1 who stated how their sources supported their claims in their arguments about the possible causes of the American Revolution, eight (38%) received a rating of Strong in this area, and the remaining 13 (62%) received a rating of Moderate. The excerpt below from Brian’s account of the causes of the American Revolution, in which he claimed the Patriots

fought against Great Britain for their “rights and freedom,” is an example of a Strong connection made between a source and a claim:

A French man who had been in America at the time of the Stamp Act had overheard a group of men complaining about the Stamp Act, a law that made Americans furious. He had written, ‘then they was damning their souls if they would pay, and damn them but they would fight to the last drop of their blood before they would submit to such slavery.’ These men were complaining not about the money they had to pay, [but] that their freedom was being threatened and that they were being treated as slaves.

Of the 20 students involved in Teaching Intervention 2 who made explicit connections between sources and claims in their accounts of what caused the American Revolution, which amounted to an 83% increase in the deployment of this strategy from baseline to post, 11 (55%) received a rating of Strong for their use of this strategy, seven (35%) received a rating of Moderate, and two (10%) received a rating of Weak. Danny’s work serves as an example of what I regarded to be a strong connection made between a source and a claim. In his attempt to prove the Patriots rebelled against England because they were “repeatedly taxed without representation,” Danny wrote:

In a published essay by Sam Adams in 1767, he states, ‘If taxes are laid upon us in any shape without our having legal representation where they are laid, are we not reduced from the character of free English Subjects to the miserable state of slaves?’ Sam Adams meant that without consulting the people about the Stamp Act, they [Parliament] in essence made them [American colonists] equal to Slaves.

Showing Corroboration of Sources in Writing

From the Starving Time task (baseline) to the writing of arguments about the American Revolution (post), the rate of growth among students in the use of the strategy of corroborating sources cited in the body of an argument was almost identical among students involved in Teaching Interventions 1 and 2 (see Table 4.8). Four students from the Teaching Intervention 1 condition received a rating of Strong for their statements about how their sources connected to bolster their claims about what caused the American Revolution, while 15 students (80%) received a rating of Moderate for their work in this area. Students that received the Moderate rating for corroboration either used simple transition words or phrases such as “also,” “in addition,” or “another source” when moving from a discussion of one source to another in their arguments, or made one or two statements like Ethan’s, which followed his use of quotes from Revolutionaries in Connecticut and Virginia in the wake of the Coercive Acts of 1774:

These three quotes by Ebenezer Baldwin and Patrick Henry all basically say that they [Americans] needed to at least try to stop the British [government] before they forced the Americans into slavery....

Table 4.8: Instances of Students Showing how Sources Corroborate

History-Specific Strategy	Teaching Intervention 1			Teaching Intervention 2		
	Baseline N=22	Post N=25	Change	Baseline N=25	Post N=23	Change
Shows how the sources corroborate	0	19 (76%)	+76%	0	18 (78%)	+78%

As was the case among students involved in Teaching Intervention 1, four students under the Teaching Intervention 2 condition wrote strong statements that

conveyed how their sources connected to support their claims about the causes of the American Revolution. Slightly fewer students (13 or 72%) in this class received a rating of Moderate for their statements about source corroboration on the American Revolution writing task than was the case among students from the Teaching Intervention 1 condition.

The increase in instances of the deployment of the corroboration heuristic among students in both classes from baseline to post was significant. Not a single student used phrases or statements that showed agreement between the sources on the Starving Time task, but by the end of the study there was a 76% increase in the number of students making corroboration explicit among students involved in Teaching Intervention 1, and a 78% increase in this history-specific strategy among students involved in Teaching Intervention 2. The spike in instances of students using corroboration in their historical writing from baseline to midpoint was over twice as high among students involved in Teaching Intervention 1 when compared to those involved in Teaching Intervention 2 (20 students or 92% compared to 9 students or 41%). I attributed this to reinforcement of this strategy during sessions of PSD.

Corroboration was a rubric item that students under Teaching Intervention 1 were encouraged to look for in each other's writing and have discussions about what it could look like. This was something the students under Teaching Intervention 2 did not have the opportunity to do. What is less clear is why students involved in Teaching Intervention 1 slid backwards somewhat on the use of this strategy in their arguments about the American Revolution, while students under the Teaching Intervention 2 condition gained ground in this area, to the point of mirroring their counterparts'

performance. The loss of momentum that seemed to characterize the final session of PSD coupled with the provision of a detailed pre-writing graphic designed to help all students write coherent and convincing historical arguments on the American Revolution may explain why the students involved in Teaching Intervention 2 reached the same level of sophistication in historical argumentation as those involved in Teaching Intervention 1 on the final task, and why the quality of historical writing leveled out among students under Teaching Intervention 1.

One assumption I held during my study was that more of my students (in both classes) would show source corroboration in the final writing task, and do it at a higher level than was shown on the previous writing tasks. Instead, only a total of eight students had their use of corroboration coded as Strong. But corroboration is a difficult strategy to engage in. Reisman (2012) notes that in contrast to sourcing, which is more easily modeled and likely to become habitual among students due to “discrete, concrete actions” involved (e.g. directing one’s eyes to the location of source information for a document before reading its content), corroboration is a complex inter-textual strategy that requires making connections between multiple texts of different types. Though I witnessed students perform the corroboration heuristic at several points in my study, especially during the HI on the Paxton Uprising, many of them seemed to feel that it was awkward to state how and/or why two or more sources supported each other in the body of their writing (Reisman, 2012). They also seemed to believe that simply citing and describing multiple sources in their arguments automatically showed readers that the sources corroborate. Nonetheless, the act of using transition phrases to show connections

between different types of sources was a significant change in thinking and writing from the “Starving Time” task.

Assessing/Establishing Source Reliability

Even more difficult for students than making corroboration of sources explicit in argumentative writing was the strategy of assessing and establishing the reliability of the sources students chose to cite in their historical accounts. As Table 4.9 indicates, only a few students in each class deployed this strategy in their arguments about the American Revolution. However, as Table 4.10 shows, more than half of the students in both classes engaged in this strategy in

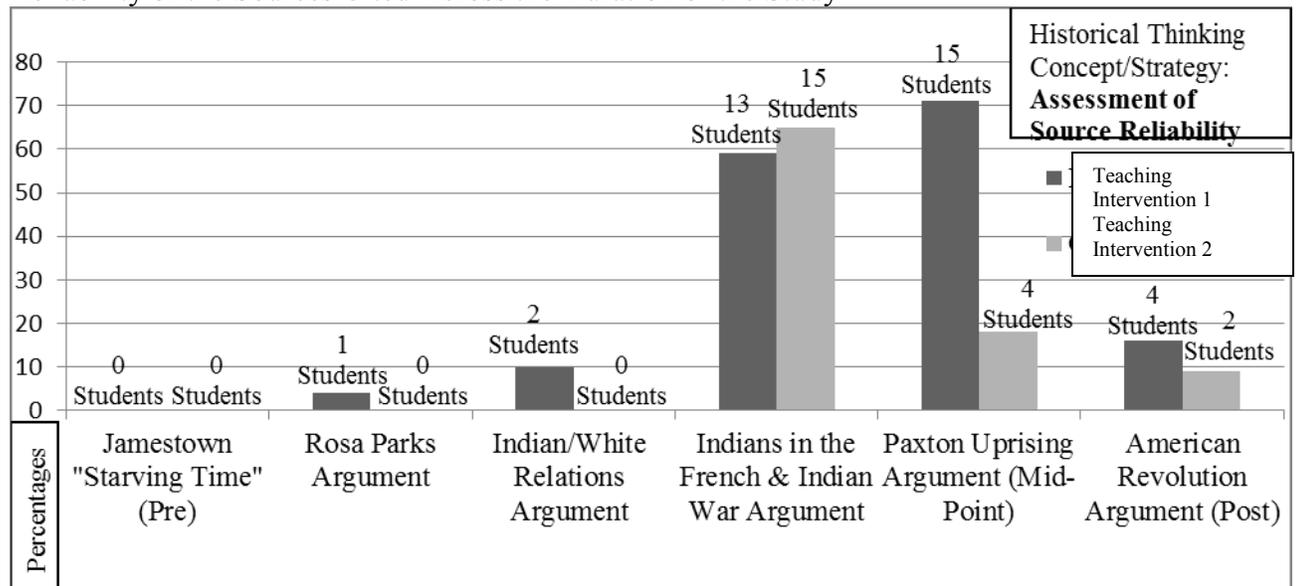
Table 4.9: Instances of Students Assessing/Establishing the Reliability of the Sources Cited

History-Specific Strategy	Teaching Intervention 1			Teaching Intervention 2		
	Baseline N=22	Post N=25	Change	Baseline N=25	Post N=23	Change
Assesses/establishes the reliability of the source(s) cited	0	4 (16%)	+16%	0	2 (9%)	+9%

their arguments about Indians’ involvement in the French and Indian War, a trend that continued for students under Teaching Intervention 1 going into the writing task that concluded the Paxton Uprising HI. Of the 13 students (59%) in the class who assessed the reliability of sources in their accounts of Native Americans’ involvement in the French and Indian War, only three received a rating of Strong in this area, while five students received a rating of Moderate, and the remaining five received a rating of Weak. The excerpt below is an example of an assessment of source reliability coded as Moderate in quality.

Kelly: Sir William Johnson, George Washington and James Glen all wrote or said that without Indians they [the British] would lose the war. These sources are easy to trust because they all had an important part in the war. Especially Sir William Johnson because he was in charge of the Indians relations so he knew what the Indians were capable of.

Table 4.10: Comparison of Frequencies of Students Assessing/Establishing the Reliability of the Sources Cited Across the Duration of the Study



Among students involved in Teaching Intervention 2, assessments of source reliability in writing were almost non-existent on the mid-point and post-study writing tasks. This is in stark contrast to the frequency of the deployment of this history-specific strategy among students under Teaching Intervention 1 on the Paxton Uprising writing task. This is likely attributable to the pointed discussions about the Paxton Boys' accounts of the Conestoga Indians that occurred among roughly half of the students during the PSD session that followed their written arguments on the Paxton Uprising. Of the 15 students (65%) under Teaching Intervention 2 who mentioned how or why the sources they cited on Indians in the French and Indian War were reliable, none received a

rating of Strong, while eight students received a rating of Moderate, and the remaining seven received a rating of Weak for their assessments of source reliability. But for students like Maria, whose statement (below) about the reliability of the sources used to develop and defend claims about Indians' role(s) in the French & Indian War was rated as Moderate, engaging in this strategy at any level was a departure from their writing up to that point and perhaps an important step in their growth as historical thinkers:

Sir William Johnson and Governor James Glen are reliable because both of them were on the Indians' side. For example, Sir William Johnson learned the Mohawk language and became New York's agent to the Iroquois.

The spike in instances of students in both teaching conditions deploying the strategy of discussing how and why an author of a source was in a position to know about an aspect of the past under investigation is attributable to an exercise students did during the HI on the role(s) Indians played in the French and Indian War that targeted the act of assessing the reliability of sources. I had engaged students in the reading and analysis of short biographies of three key sources on this topic (George Washington, Sir William Johnson and Governor James Glen of South Carolina). The question I posed to guide students' reading of the biographies was whether these men were in a position to know about Native Americans and their involvement in the conflict between France and England over control of large portions of North America. I then had students discuss their thoughts with a partner and develop a short, written assessment of the reliability of each historical figure on the question of Native Americans' involvement in the French and Indian War. Students had these summaries available to them when they composed their arguments about Indians in the French and Indian War at the end of the HI.

As Table 4.10 indicates, the absence of exercises specifically targeting the strategy of assessing source reliability immediately before students wrote historical arguments in the HIs that followed the one on Indians in the French and Indian War likely contributed to a significant drop in the use of this strategy among students under Teaching Intervention 2 when they wrote arguments about the Paxton Uprising and the American Revolution, and for students under Teaching Intervention 1 on the American Revolution writing task. My thoughts on why the use of this strategy increased among students involved in Teaching Intervention 1 going into the Paxton Uprising argument are described in the next section.

Acknowledging and Refuting a Competing Claim or Interpretation

These intertwined and sophisticated thinking and writing strategies, which are often practiced by experts in historical investigation to strengthen the arguments they make about the past, were not seen in my students' writing in significant numbers until they wrote arguments about the Paxton Uprising. The appearance of this historical argumentation strategy in students' accounts of the Uprising is likely due to the use of a detailed and scaffolded set of writing instructions intended to assist students with organizing and building compelling arguments about the Uprising, which we spent several weeks investigating through a significant number of sources. Another reason for developing these writing instructions and insisting that students use them was that this was their first experience with writing an historical argument of more than two paragraphs in length. As Figure 4.2 shows, the instructions included a section prompting students to state a position on the Paxton Boys' actions that stands in opposition to the

one advanced by students in their thesis statements, and then go about showing readers why this position is flawed or problematic.

As Table 4.11 indicates, use of the strategy of stating an opposing view increased by 81% from baseline to mid-point among students involved in Teaching Intervention 1. There was a large spike (58%) in instances of the deployment of this strategy from the writing task on

Figure 4.2. Instructions for Students’ Third Body Paragraph on the Paxton Uprising Writing Task

- | |
|--|
| <p>A. Present a claim or opinion that opposes one of your main points about the killings, which will lead the reader to question your opinion.</p> <p>B. Cite and explain evidence for this opposing claim or opinion.</p> <p>C. Then, refute this opposing claim or opinion with different evidence in order to restore your original opinion of the killings.</p> <p>D. If you can, question the logic of the opposing claim or opinion.</p> <p>E. Add a concluding sentence that rejects the opposing claim or opinion.</p> |
|--|

Table 4.11: Frequencies of Students Acknowledging a Competing Claim or Interpretation

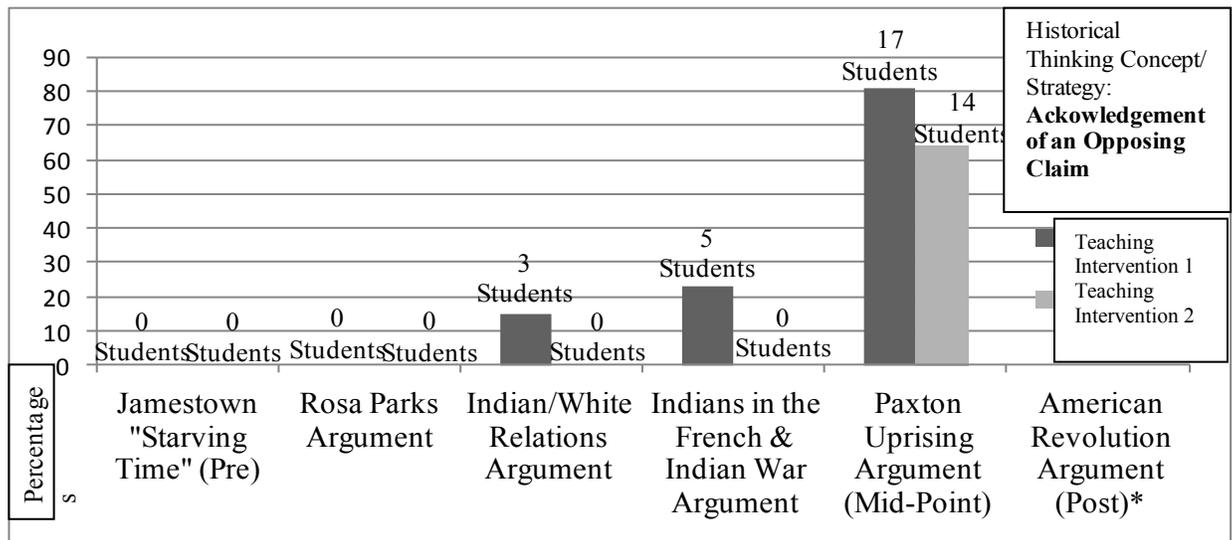
History-Specific Strategy	Teaching Intervention 1			Teaching Intervention 2		
	Baseline N=22	Mid-Point N=21	Change	Baseline N=25	Mid-Point N=22	Change
Acknowledges a competing claim or interpretation	0	17 (81%)	+81%	0	14 (64%)	+64%

Indians in the French and Indian War to the Paxton Uprising (see Table 4.12). Of the 17 students who acknowledged an opposing view of the Uprising in their accounts, seven received a rating of Strong, which was over twice the number of students under Teaching Intervention 2 who received that rating (this will be discussed further in the next section on the effects of PSD). Eight students received a rating of Moderate for their acknowledgments of an opposing view of the Uprising, and two received a rating of

Weak. The excerpt below from Lien’s (Teaching Intervention 1) argument about the Uprising, in which she claimed that the Paxton Boys were justified in killing the Conestogas, is typical of statements I coded as Strong:

Some might say that the Conestogas’ fate was not deserved for they are [were] a group of peace-loving and quiet Indians. But according to the sworn testimony of Frontiersman Alexander Stephen, the Indians are [were] anything but peace-loving, for he says, “Conestogoe Indians killed Jegrea, an Indian man, because he would not go to war with the Conestogoe Indians against the English.” Basically saying how [Conestoga] Indians killed their own for not joining war, this doesn’t seem like [the Conestoga] Indians are peaceful at all....

Table 4.12. Comparison of Frequencies of Students Acknowledging an Opposing Claim in Writing



*Note: To focus students on citing strong evidence in support of their claims and to allow them to put more energy into refuting opposing claims, students were given an argument/essay writing template that included a prepared statement summarizing the majority view on the American rebellion in England. Students were then expected to refute this view. See figure 4.3 for the prompt.

Figure 4.3. Prompt Embedded in Students' Writing Template for their Arguments on the American Revolution

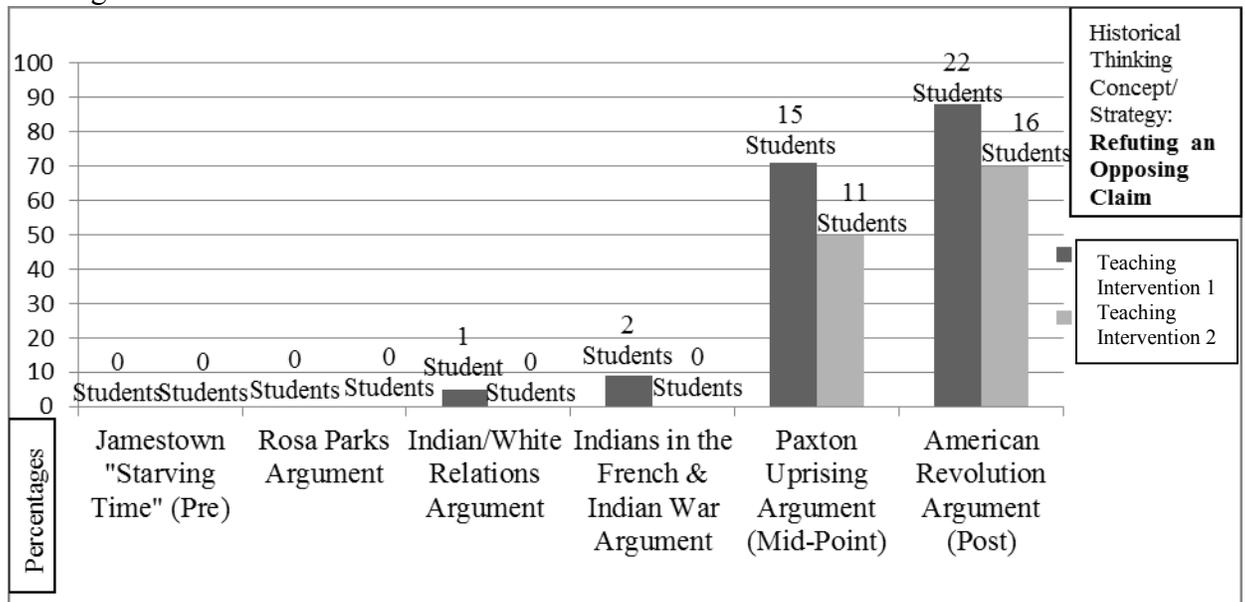
According to evidence from the time, including newspapers, journals and letters, most people in England opposed the Americans' fight for independence. Intellectuals such as William Blackstone, an authority on English law, and Samuel Johnson made claims about Parliament's authority that were popular among the people of England. First, these men pointed to the English constitution which stated that Parliament had the power to make any laws that they felt were necessary for the good of the Empire. Second, Blackstone and Johnson argued that since Parliament helped create, support and defend the American colonies, Americans owed allegiance to Parliament and the King. According to Johnson, once the Americans accepted British protection, they were agreeing to British rule and therefore could not deny or reject the authority of Parliament and the King. _____

As Table 4.12 indicates, there was a 64% increase in the use of the strategy of acknowledging an opposing interpretation among students under Teaching Intervention 2 from baseline to mid-point. Students under Teaching Intervention 2 did not engage in this strategy until the Paxton Uprising task. Of the 14 students involved in Teaching Intervention 2 who acknowledged an opposing view of the Uprising in their accounts, only three received a rating of Strong. Seven received a rating of Moderate and four students' statements were coded as Weak. The excerpt below from Maria's argument about the Uprising, in which she claimed that the Paxton Boys "killed innocent people who lived peacefully," is typical of statements I rated as Moderate:

Alexander Stephens thought differently of the Indians. Alexander believed that since the Indians fought with the French during the War, they took revenge on the English. Robert Armstrong also believed the Indians weren't as innocent as people thought. Robert described the Indians as 'very rude' people. He also said, 'they took about six acres of corn, killed several hogs, and took the fruit of about 150 bearing trees'

Students' use of the strategy of refuting an opposing view or interpretation in the historical argumentation writing tasks also increased significantly on the Paxton Uprising task, and continued for both classes with the task of constructing a written argument about the cause(s) of the American Revolution. As Table 4.13 indicates, 38 students (both classes combined) engaged in the act of refuting the notion that the American Revolution was unwarranted and seditious.

Table 4.13. Comparison of Frequencies of Students Refuting an Opposing Claim in their Writing



This change in performance is attributable to several teaching strategies and resources. In addition to the Rubric for Historical Argumentation and lots of reminders and encouragement from me, providing students with specific instructions for acknowledging and refuting a competing claim in their writing, very similar to what they received for the Paxton Uprising argument (see Figure 4.4), combined with the prompt for refutation of an opposing view embedded in the writing template for students to compose their arguments on, seemed to lead more students to make a serious attempt at

this difficult argumentation strategy. Most of the students who explicitly refuted the idea that the Patriots did not have valid claims against the British government's colonial policies from 1765 to 1775 received either a Moderate or Strong rating for their refutations.

Figure 4.4. Writing Instructions for Refuting an Opposing View on the American Revolution Historical Argumentation Task

In your third body paragraph:

- A. Read the section of your essay template that says what most people in England thought of Americans' fight for independence. This is basically the other side of the story of the American Revolution.
 - B. Prove why this side was wrong by citing and explaining evidence. This is called **refuting a claim**.
 - C. If you are up to the task, question the logic of those in Great Britain that denied the Americans' right to be independent.
- Add a concluding sentence that restates what you said about Britain's side of the conflict with America.

The excerpts below are examples of refutation statements I coded as Strong:

Anju (Teaching Intervention 1): Though many people went along with this argument, it was wrong. Blackstone and Johnson claimed that Parliament had the power to make laws that they felt were for the good of the Empire. This might have been true, but the decisions that Parliament made were not helping the colonies. James Otis wrote in a letter to Catherine Macaulay on July 27, 1769 that 'America is really distressed... The trade and economy of the colonies are dying...' Parliament's decisions were causing the trade and economy of the colonies to be ruined... Also, in the Declaration of Independence it says the King of Britain 'has repeatedly forbidden colonial lawmakers from meeting for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of his people... He has

cut off our trade with all parts of the world. He has imposed taxes on us without our consent.’...Great Britain may have thought that they were helping America or even helping themselves, but really they were just destroying their relationship with America....

Kunal (Teaching Intervention 2): The Patriots wouldn’t have agreed with any of this. The Patriots would’ve said something from the Declaration of Independence. They would’ve said ‘all men are created equal...they are given certain rights...such as Life,Liberty and the pursuit of happiness.’...After this the Patriots would’ve used another Quote from the Declaration of Independence. The quote would be ‘King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and abuse of power, all having the purpose of establishing an absolute tyranny over America...This means that King George has been a tyrant to America and has been mistreating them. These quotes show the Patriots’ view on King George....

For Anju, Kunal and most of their classmates, engaging in the refutation of a viewpoint or interpretation that ran counter to their own in both the Paxton Uprising and American Revolution arguments further developed their sense of how to argue a point about the past. Though my students were guided in their attempts at refutation with explicit steps (see Figure 4.4), it was left to them to select the evidence and cite and explain it in ways that might further convince a reader that they are correct in what they claimed about the Paxton Uprising and the American Revolution. As the theoretical framework of learning to think in history which guided my efforts suggests, placing students in a position where they are working with historical sources to develop and defend interpretations gave my students the opportunity to learn and develop historical

thinking capabilities and think about how we construct knowledge of the past as opposed to simply receiving it from textbooks, teachers and historians. Source work and historical argumentation were especially helpful in getting my students to develop a deeper understanding of the related and integral concepts of evidence and accounts. Moving from scarcely knowing what an account or evidence is (evidenced in the pre-course surveys and Starving Time tasks) to mustering sources to prove a point is an important and necessary step forward along the novice-toward-expert continuum of historical thinking.

Historical Argumentation as Evidence of a Shift in Thinking about History

It can be argued that the gains my students made in their capabilities to construct written arguments about different events and themes in America's past were more a result of students being adept at following my lead and mimicking my pedagogical moves than evidence of a genuine understanding of the interpretive nature of the discipline of history. However, my students developed their own conclusions about the events we investigated, and also made the selections of evidence with which to prove them. Moreover, many of my students used sources as evidence in the sense that they made deliberate and explicit connections between sources and their claims as opposed to simply listing documents and letting them speak for themselves. While I helped students with reading comprehension when they requested it (or when I noticed it was necessary) and asked probing questions to help them sort out their cognitive dissonance, I did not tell my students how to interpret sources, what to believe or conclude about any of the events under our investigation, or what to write when making connections between documents and claims.

My goals relative to the theoretical framework of learning to think in history that drove my efforts were to place students in a position where they would experience cognitive dissonance about the past and then teach them how to reach logical and defensible conclusions through the tools relied upon by expert historical investigators. With the Jamestown Starving Time task, my students did not seem to wrestle much with the mystery surrounding the event. The mostly read or skimmed one or more of the three sources, which for the most part corroborated or complimented each other, and treated them as authorless factual texts which they paraphrased as their answer to the question of why so many settlers died. More than a handful of students seemed to just go with their best guess or what their gut told them was likely to have occurred back then when trying to solve the mystery, despite what the sources suggested. But subsequent opportunities to ask and answer investigative questions through multiple, varied and divergent sources pushed my students forward in terms of historical thinking to the point of seeing (and believing) that evidence and interpretation play a role in what we know about the past.

Students interpreting the past and constructing their own arguments in which they articulated a particular perspective on what they were investigating was most evident with the Paxton Uprising HI. Students involved in Teaching Intervention 1, for example, developed different and conflicting interpretations of the Uprising after examining the same set of sources. Brian, for example, became convinced after reading and piecing together the sources and placing them in context (colonial frontier life with the constant threat of Indian attack) that the Paxton Boys were justified in destroying the Consetoga Indians. He, like many of his classmates, wanted to know why the Indians were attacked and killed by Frontiersmen when there was not an actual war going on between France

and England. Brian then answered this question for himself through guided analysis of the sources and the use of imagination, since the documents could only offer a limited idea of what it was really like to be an English colonist living under the constant threat of brutal attacks from Native Americans.

Brian's classmate Lien came to a completely different conclusion about the Uprising. She claimed the Indians were peaceful and defenseless and that the Paxton Boys had no right to attack them – that it was simply murder. Lien drew upon sources of her choosing to defend this interpretation when building her account. Some students claimed the attacks were morally wrong, but understandable given the difficult and tense conditions for white settlers on the Pennsylvania frontier immediately after the French and Indian War and during Pontiac's Rebellion (1763-1764). Something very similar occurred in the Teaching Intervention 2 condition. In both classes approximately 60% of students concluded and then argued that the killings were murderous and unjustified, around 20% argued the killings were unwarranted, but understandable, and another 18-20% argued that the Paxton Boys' actions were justified.

It is difficult, if not impossible to claim that my students would have constructed written historical arguments about the Uprising without the writing tools and guidance I provided. I may never know, for example, if Brian or Lien would have gone to the great lengths they did to cite evidence, write about how it connected to their claims and why anyone should believe their sources, their claims, and the logic of their arguments without my instructions, scaffolds and guidance. But immersion in historical materials and second-order concepts like evidence seemed to do more than lay a foundation for historical thinking among my students. In the next section I discuss changes that I

perceived in my students' thinking about history from the HIs and historical argumentation tasks.

Changes in Beliefs about History

It was apparent from the pre-course surveys and the Starving Time performance task that my students were historical novices at the outset of this study. Teaching and learning historical inquiry did lead to shifts in my students' beliefs about history and their use of procedural knowledge, though some of the changes (and lack thereof) were not expected.

Though I hoped that almost five months of historical investigations involving frequent and consistent use of the sourcing heuristic, and discussions about this and other aspects of disciplinary history would lead to significant shifts in my students' views of history, the results from the second administration of the history survey in December showed that most students clung to their core belief that history is essentially an authorless collection of facts and truth about the past. The number of students indicating agreement with the survey items supporting the construct of history as a fixed and unassailable body of knowledge was identical to the first administration of the survey (see Table 4.14).

Table 4.14: Beliefs about History Comparison of Pre and Post Study Survey Results

Epistemic Understanding	Teaching Intervention 1 (N = 24)			Teaching Intervention 2 (N = 25)		
	Baseline	Post	Change	Baseline	Post	Change
History is Fixed, Authoritative Knowledge (Copier view of history)	23 (96%)	23 (96%)	0	25 (100%)	25 (100%)	0
History is an Interpretive Discipline	8 (33%)	15 (63%)	+30%	8 (32%)	20 (80%)	+48%

Many students' written definitions of history indicate the intransigence of the notion that history is an objective reporting of the past. Consider the definition below from Tej (Teaching Intervention 1):

To me, history is documents and artifacts that lead us to what really happened in the past.

But while Tej apparently believed there is one correct version of what happened in any given event in the past, he seems to have recognized that analysis of evidence is the primary way to ascertain this knowledge, something he did not mention in his pre-course definition of history. The data in Table 4.14 suggests that many students recognized, and perhaps truly believed, that history involves some level of interpretation. Seven additional students under Teaching Intervention 1 (an increase of 30%) decided that investigation plays a role in knowing about the past. Consider the following revised definitions of history from other students in this class:

To me, history is a combination of facts and evidence from the past. It is also different perspectives and interpretations of the past. (Morgan)

To me, history is evidence and sources. History is things that have happened in the past. It is clues. (Elsie)

To me, history is evidence and other facts that help us find things out about the past. (Estephany)

[History] is what man believes happened in the past. (Eli)

It is important to keep in mind that these students' pre-study definitions conflate history with the past and do not mention discipline-specific terms such as evidence, sources, investigation or interpretation. For example, on the pre-course survey, Eli said history is

“about what happened in the past.” Though his post-study definition does not contain history-specific terms, Eli apparently came to the realization that history is essentially people’s interpretations of what occurred before their time.

A total of eight students involved in Teaching Intervention 1 wrote about using sources or evidence in their definitions of history on the post-study survey. It is tempting to code these students’ epistemic beliefs as Criterialist, which Maggioni et al. (2009) define as a stance that not only recognizes the importance of evidence, interpretation and heuristics in the development of historical knowledge, but understands the nature of historical accounts and how expert historical investigators judge sources and build defensible claims about the past. But it may be that these students were expressing another facet of the Copier stance, which sees expert historical investigators as “chroniclers or serendipitous finders and collectors” of evidence of the past (Maggioni, VanSledright & Reddy, 2009). Nonetheless, for these students and others in the class, history was no longer simply a copy of the past.

On the surface it seems that many students either became confused about what academic history is and what it entails as a result of our historical investigations approach, or their views and knowledge of the discipline were in a state of flux. I feel the most likely explanation for these seemingly contradictory views is that my students had accommodated their work with sourcing and interpretation with their existing Copier beliefs. In other words, my students continued to believe there is a single truth or story about the past, but decided that this truth needs to be pieced together through sources.

Though the idea that there are correct versions of the past in history is insupportable and represents a serious misconception of the discipline, the belief that

knowledge of the past has to be formed from evidence and critical thinking represents a shift in my students' perceptions of history. Lee and Shemilt (2003) refer to this as the Testimony and Scissors and Paste stages of the development of students' ideas about evidence and accounts. Their research suggests that students who are taught to think historically will begin to replace their everyday notions of history as a copy of the past and the truth-lies dichotomy with the more sophisticated and powerful idea that sources are people's reports on the past that can be probed and used to make conclusions about the past. However, at the Testimony level of thinking about history, students still tend to believe that sources can be more or less objective reports from the past and that direct eye-witness accounts are the most reliable (Lee & Shemilt, 2003). And while students at the Scissors and Paste stage of progression in thinking about evidence hold the important belief that the past can be reconstructed and interpreted despite the fragmentary and perspective-laden nature of accounts, they may not yet know the full range of texts, images and artifacts that can serve as evidence depending on the questions being asked about the past.

Contrary to my expectations, the rate of students agreeing with items aligned with historical inquiry on the post-study survey was higher among students involved in Teaching Intervention 2 (80%) than Teaching Intervention 1 (63%). This difference of five students (17%) is not easily explained. I assumed that either the students under Teaching Intervention 1 would have a higher rate of agreement with the construct of history as an interpretive act because of the time spent doing PSD, or there would be little difference between the two classes.

The investigative discussions between students involved in Teaching Intervention 2 during the Rosa Parks and Paxton Uprising HIs were richer than those which occurred in Teaching Intervention 1. It is possible that the interactions and dialogue between students under Teaching Intervention 2 and my interjections in their conversations during these HIs made a deep enough impression on them to cause a shift in their beliefs about history. In re-examining students' post-study surveys and reflecting on their attitudes and behaviors during the course of the study, I can claim that there were more students under Teaching Intervention 2 that entered the study with a healthy skepticism about human behavior than those under Teaching Intervention 1. Logan, Keryna, Vasti and Danny are cases in point. Their skepticism and inquisitiveness stood out. This may help to explain why five additional students under Teaching Intervention 2 ended up agreeing with survey items such as number 8, which states that "you have to compare sources and question the people who made them in order to explain what happened in the past." Unfortunately I cannot pinpoint any particular pedagogical moves I made during Teaching Intervention 2 that may have made a deeper impression about historical inquiry, since I taught the two classes similarly.

There is corroborating evidence for these shifts or transitions (Maggioni, et al. 2009) in many students' epistemic beliefs. Recorded conversations between students during HIs, students' journal entries, their written historical arguments, and the post-study interviews conducted with primary informants contain evidence of movement forward along the novice-toward-expert continuum of historical thinking. During a session of PSD (Teaching Intervention 1), for example, I noticed Brian and Eli debating the reliability of sources from the Paxton Boys and how they could be used in the initial

arguments they had each written about the event. Other such debates over the reliability of the sources used to investigate the Paxton Uprising, the comments students made about this investigation in several journal entries and the different conclusions they developed and tried to explain and defend in writing form additional examples of the changes that seemed to be occurring in my students' perceptions of history.

Journal entries intended to capture students' thoughts during the Paxton Uprising HI shed light on my students' shifting views of history. The Paxton Uprising investigation gave students a chance to develop the investigative questions to pursue. This HI also encouraged students to apply the historical thinking strategies they recently learned and practiced through scaffolded lessons and exercises, including source attribution, determining perspective, interrogation and corroboration of sources, and assessments of source reliability. Many students in both classes used words like "perspective," "evidence," and "argument" in several of their entries when describing their thoughts on the work they were doing on the Paxton Uprising. These terms were absent on their pre-course surveys and the vocabulary warm-up sheet on which I asked them to create a definition of history (see Appendix A for an example of the vocabulary sheet).

Comments made by primary informants during post-study interviews also reveal changes in students' perceptions of history. Each primary informant commented on the importance of investigation and interpretation (see Tables 4.15, 4.16 and 4.17). For example, according to Brian (Teaching Intervention 1), doing good history meant that you had to:

Just really try to, like with sources just try to really get the meaning out of them and what the person's trying to say and really examine them carefully [and look at] what they're trying to say, whoever wrote it; what the point of writing it was or the information you need to get out of it... Some of them [sources] aren't true, but you really need to examine all of them, that's why you need to examine them because you gotta see if they're reliable or how much you can get out of them....

Table 4.15: Post-Study Interview Results: Primary Informants' Vocalizations of Epistemic Understandings

	Teaching Intervention 1 N =5 Total vocalizations: 363	Teaching Intervention 2 N =5 Total vocalizations: 403
	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)
History is Fixed, Authoritative Knowledge*	47 (13%)	88 (22%)
History is an Interpretive Discipline**	276 (76%)	286 (71%)
Other***	40 (11%)	29 (7%)

*Comments coded "History is Fixed, Authoritative Knowledge" seemed to conflate history and the past, highlight famous people and events, emphasize activities often associated with traditional school-based history, such as listening to the teacher, gathering information to answer the teacher's questions, studying information from secondary sources, and getting good grades, and/or treat textbooks as authoritative.

**Comments coded as "History is an Interpretive Discipline" showed acknowledgement of elements of the sourcing heuristic, investigation and historical argumentation, including, but not limited to, evidence/ sources, perspective, corroboration, conflicting evidence, source reliability, connecting sources, use of logic & imagination, and making judgments about the past.

***Comments coded as "Other" were those not directly related to epistemic beliefs in history and included statements about other classes, clarification questions for the interviewer, and informants' feelings about the topics and work.

Table 4.16: Post-Study Interview Results: Vocalizations from Primary Informants involved in Teaching Intervention 1

	Brian	Eddie	Kelly	Naraj	Anju
History is Fixed, Authoritative Knowledge	3 (4%)	10 (17%)	21 (26%)	5 (8%)	9 (12%)
History is an Interpretive Discipline	79 (92%)	48 (81%)	43 (54%)	47 (73%)	60 (81%)
Other	3 (4%)	1 (2%)	16 (20%)	12 (19%)	5 (7%)

Table 4.17: Post-Study Interview Results: Vocalizations from Primary Informants involved in Teaching Intervention 2

	Danny	Alana	Maria	Archit	Tianna
History is Fixed, Authoritative Knowledge	6 (11%)	12(15%)	36 (40%)	11 (16%)	23 (21%)
History is an Interpretive Discipline	42 (75%)	64 (80%)	50 (56%)	54 (77%)	76 (70%)
Other	8 (14%)	4 (5%)	3 (3%)	5 (7%)	9 (8%)

Brian’s classmate Eddie, who gave little or no indication that he was aware of the interpretive nature of history at the beginning of the study, made numerous comments about historical detective work, which accounted for 81% of his total vocalizations (see Table 4.16). Though Eddie’s history surveys represented the complexity of views that Maggionni, VanSledright and Reddy (2009) found with the high school students in their study, he seems to have moved past the idea that history is authorless and that experts in the field are simply collectors and purveyors of evidence and stories of the past. For example, Eddie claimed that with history:

You can get sources; you can get evidence... You need learn how to like take evidence from the sources and put it in your own words... You need to like have[a] question in your mind. Even if you don’t have like a [work] sheet to do, you need to have a question like ‘Why did he do this? Why [did] it start? How did it end? Who’s the author? What date was it made?....

Kelly (Teaching Intervention 1) made a number of comments that I coded as “doing school” (comments about normal/traditional school work and vocalizations unrelated to history education or the past fall under the “Other” category in Tables 4.16 and 4.17). For example, when Kelly and I discussed what it looks like when a student is

proficient in history, she said you have to “pay attention and...know facts,” and “take the time to research things and...don’t procrastinate on doing your work.” But she also talked about analyzing evidence of the past and made the point that “if you don’t have evidence, you don’t have anything to support why you think and what you think, so without evidence how do you know anything is true?” Kelly also talked about differences in secondary sources and the need to engage in corroboration. Though Kelly held competing notions about history, she seemed to have been moving toward the criterialist stance.

Naraj (Teaching Intervention 1) discussed his understanding of procedural knowledge in history when he was asked to say what being good at history looks like:

You can interpret sources. You can find, you can figure out mysteries of the past by looking at sources...You sum it up, like, you try to figure out what happened [in the past] with the sources that you have. Like try to see which sources corroborate and which don’t...Everybody has opinions and then, like people, historians use them [their own opinions]....

Naraj also talked about the need to “imagine you were that person” who created the source you are examining in order to develop an explanation for the past. These statements, which are in stark contrast to his definition of history on the pre-course survey⁴ and his interpretation of the Jamestown Starving Time, suggest that Naraj had developed some level of understanding that history is an interpretive enterprise.

⁴ On the pre-course survey, Naraj wrote “To me, history is the past, present and future. History is a very interesting subject which talks about what happened in the past.”

Naraj's classmate Anju also showed movement toward the criterialist position in her interview. When I asked Anju to compare her experiences in 7th and 8th grade history, she commented on how "we make claims about what we think happened [in the past]. And we support it." Anju also talked about how facts come from sources and the need to "have other sources corroborate" to determine the facts and develop claims. Anju went on to say that "to get facts you have to use your imagination." She also mentioned source bias, perspectives, and the need to interrogate authors to explain the past. Like the other primary informants, Anju made selections on both history surveys that fall into each of the two constructs the items were designed to reflect: history as fixed, authoritative knowledge, and history as interpretation. But Anju's interview comments suggest that she had developed more than just awareness that the core of history is knowledge constructed through inquiry and the investigation of historical texts.

Like their peers under Teaching Intervention 1, many students involved in Teaching Intervention 2 wrote brief definitions of history on the post-study survey that demonstrate the staying power of their pre-study notion that history contains ultimate truths. Nonetheless, twelve additional students in this class (an increase of 48%) decided that investigation plays a role in knowing about the past. Consider the following revised definitions of history from selected students:

To me, history is events/people in the past. We figure it out by using primary and secondary sources. We questioned the author. And we break down what the author says. (Vasti)

To me, history is a collection of facts and documents pasted together to recreate the past. (Hairul)

To me, history is events pieced together with people, accounts, and eyewitness accounts. All events in history can be interpreted in different ways, depending on if all the evidence is looked at. (Julianna)

Seven other students offered similar statements on their post-study surveys, making a total of ten students under Teaching Intervention 2 who wrote about using evidence and sources to make conclusions about the past.

As was the case among students involved in Teaching Intervention 1, there is corroborating evidence for shifts in many of Teaching Intervention 2 students' epistemic beliefs about history in recorded conversations between myself and students during historical investigations, in their journal entries, their written historical arguments, and in post-study interviews conducted with primary informants. Anna and Julianna's debate over the reliability of key sources used in the appeal of Rosa Parks' conviction for disorderly conduct is a case in point. Their willingness to question the motives and bias of a famous historical figure (Rosa Parks) and her supporters before constructing an argument about their role in defeating a form of racial segregation may be an indication that a shift in views about history was beginning to take place.

Alana serves as another example from Teaching Intervention 2 of movement along the novice-toward-expert continuum of historical thinking. Though she gave little or no indication she was aware of the interpretive nature of history at the beginning of the study, Alana made numerous comments about historical detective work during her post-study interview less than five months later, which accounted for 80% of her total vocalizations (see Table 4.17).

For example, Alana made several comments about “collecting evidence,” which she claimed “comes from people and sources” and could be judged by “who wrote it, and if it tells the date and where it was [made] at.” Alana also mentioned the need to see “what side” an author or creator of a source is on when deciding whether or not to trust the information the source contains. These vocalizations, along with Alana’s questions and interactions with sources during our HIs and the development of her own interpretations of the events we investigated offer evidence of a shift in her pre-study Copier view of history. Though her historical writing was not particularly strong, it is reasonable to conclude that Alana had at least reached the Testimony level of Lee’s and Shemilt’s (2003) model of progression in ideas about historical evidence. At this level, students recognize that knowing the past depends on evidence and that evidence can be tested for reliability in the context of the question(s) being asked about a certain past.

In her post-study interview Maria expressed some of the ways her knowledge of history changed from participation in the study. For example, Maria shared ideas she developed about the role of inquiry in history when she described what she would do to make a convincing argument about the past:

I would put quotes from evidence I have, and I would put some quotes in there, the writing that I have, and I would put the main idea there too so people know what really happened or convince them... Sometimes they [historians] use the evidence to come up with a conclusion for their own questions, but, stories won’t answer all the questions. Everyone has different questions....

Maria seems to privilege the role of inquiry in the development of historical knowledge, and she gives herself a role in developing that knowledge. But an assertion that Maria

had moved to the criterialist stance in her beliefs about history has to be qualified with a number of comments she made about her faith in the experts, truth in history and the importance of following your history teacher's directions and getting good grades. In other words, Maria was a compelling example of a student with complex views of history. However, instead of reaching an impasse or irreconcilable conflict between truth and interpretation, Maria seems to have been moving toward an understanding of the interpretive nature of history. Further evidence of this includes her comments about procedural knowledge in the discipline. Consider Maria's comments about doing history:

Maria: You have to ask yourself 'is it [a source] reliable?'

Interviewer: Why do you have to do that?

Maria: Cuz, you want to know what really happened, so you have to ask yourself 'is it reliable or not?'

Interviewer: How do you do that?...I agree you should ask that...

Maria: The person who,[see if] the author of the writing or the picture was alive at that time and compare them to something else and see if it says the same thing.

Like Alana, Maria seems to have reached the Testimony stage of thinking about historical evidence, or perhaps even the Scissors and Paste level in Lee and Shemilt's (2003) model.

Though Danny began the study with a skeptical mind, he gave no indication that he knew or understood that history is an interpretive enterprise. But in his post-study interview he claimed that:

history isn't just written down by a record keeper. It's, sometimes people have different views on it. So they would need to take different pieces and piece them together to make, to really know what happened... Some of history is not actually proven, it's just guesses about what happened.

Danny also said that being good at history involves getting “lots of evidence so you can support your theories” and that theories lacking evidence will cause people to say “‘this is sketchy’ or ‘this isn’t exact.’” For Danny and others who experienced Teaching Intervention 2, history involved detective work, logic and imagination, things they did not mention in their pre-course history surveys or demonstrate knowledge of in their written explanations for the Jamestown Starving Time.

Though more than a handful of my students showed moments of competence with discipline-specific ideas and strategies, such as reading, thinking and writing about the Paxton Boys' accounts in the context of the dangers of the colonial frontier, I cannot claim they had fully grasped the inter-related concepts of historical evidence and accounts in light of the post-survey data and changes in performance from the Paxton Uprising argumentation task to the one on the American Revolution (e.g. the number of students engaging in assessments of source reliability dropped from 15 to 4 between the two tasks for students under Teaching Intervention 1). My informants did not indicate, for example, that they knew the difference between intentional and unintentional evidence or that what counts as “evidence” depends on the questions being asked. I can, however, claim that the majority of my students moved to a more powerful understanding of the discipline from almost five months of historical inquiry than they possessed at the start of my study. Recognizing that historical knowledge can be constructed from

accounts and being capable of assessing and connecting accounts and actively using them to prove truth claims represents a significant cognitive accomplishment for novices.

The Influences of Peer Scrutiny and Discourse

In this research study, one class of 8th grade U.S. history students (Teaching Intervention 1) received an additional learning opportunity in historical thinking that I refer to as Peer Scrutiny and Discourse (PSD). This involved spending five class sessions leading and encouraging students to examine and unpack excerpts from historians' arguments to learn more about claims and evidence and to critique classmate's written arguments from each of the Historical Investigations (HIs) via the Rubric for Historical Argumentation. As noted, the Rubric for Historical Argumentation was designed to allow students to rate their peer's work with each of the seven history-specific strategies being measured.

The primary goal of PSD was to enhance /deepen students' knowledge of disciplinary history. I theorized that providing students with additional models of expert historical writing along with structured opportunities to critique their classmates' written historical accounts and discuss aspects of the discipline would lead to greater shifts toward the criterialist stance among students under Teaching Intervention 1. I reasoned that after several sessions of PSD students would not only offer one another advice on improving the clarity or readability of their writing, but actually question the claims their peers were making about America's past and their selections and use of evidence (or lack thereof) to support those claims. If I overheard a student telling her partner (in a polite way) that she did not adequately prove her points with the evidence at hand, or make a suggestion to use a source that she left out of her account and why that source really

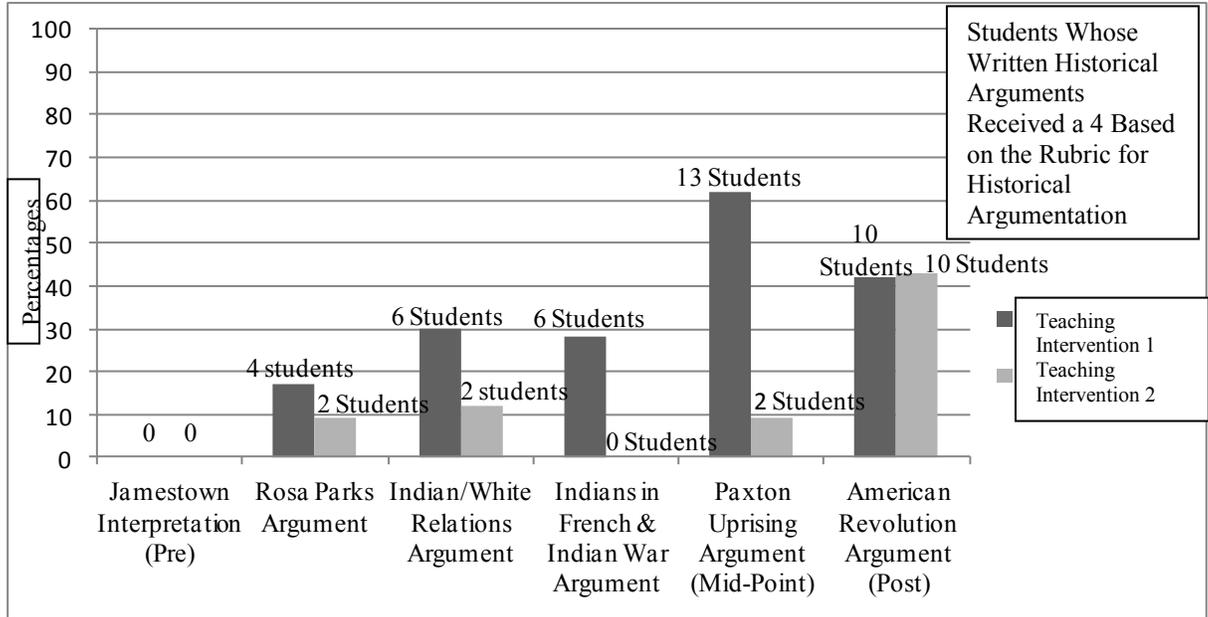
matters, then that student most likely had developed a deeper understanding of the interpretive nature of historical knowledge.

PSD appears to have led to a higher quality of historical writing among the students under Teaching Intervention 1. As Table 4.18 indicates, students that experienced PSD adhered more closely to the Rubric for Historical Argumentation, resulting in a higher number of accounts receiving a score of 4 compared to their counterparts under the Teaching Intervention 2 condition. On the Paxton Uprising Argument, for example, students under Teaching Intervention 1 outperformed those under Teaching Intervention 2 in terms of explicitness in citing sources and combining the history-specific strategies of corroboration, assessments of source reliability, and acknowledging and refuting an opposing viewpoint. This is likely attributable to these students' participation in four sessions of PSD before submitting their final versions of their arguments on the Uprising. During those sessions students spent time checking and critiquing the manner in which their peers cited sources and in many cases were reminding each other to be explicit about why their evidence was trustworthy.

Three of the primary informants involved in Teaching Intervention 1 commented on ways that PSD helped them write more effective historical arguments. For example, Naraj claimed in his post-study interview that PSD “helped a lot” because his partner might tell him that he “needed a lot more sources or if I needed a little more detail in my essay and stuff, so I think that the peer edit helped a lot.” Naraj also suggested that PSD helped him learn “how to write your evidence - to support it, like how to write it down.” Brian claimed that during PSD he and his partner would advise each other to “go more in

depth with the sources [and] explain them more,” and attempt to “give better examples of how the opposing view isn’t right.”

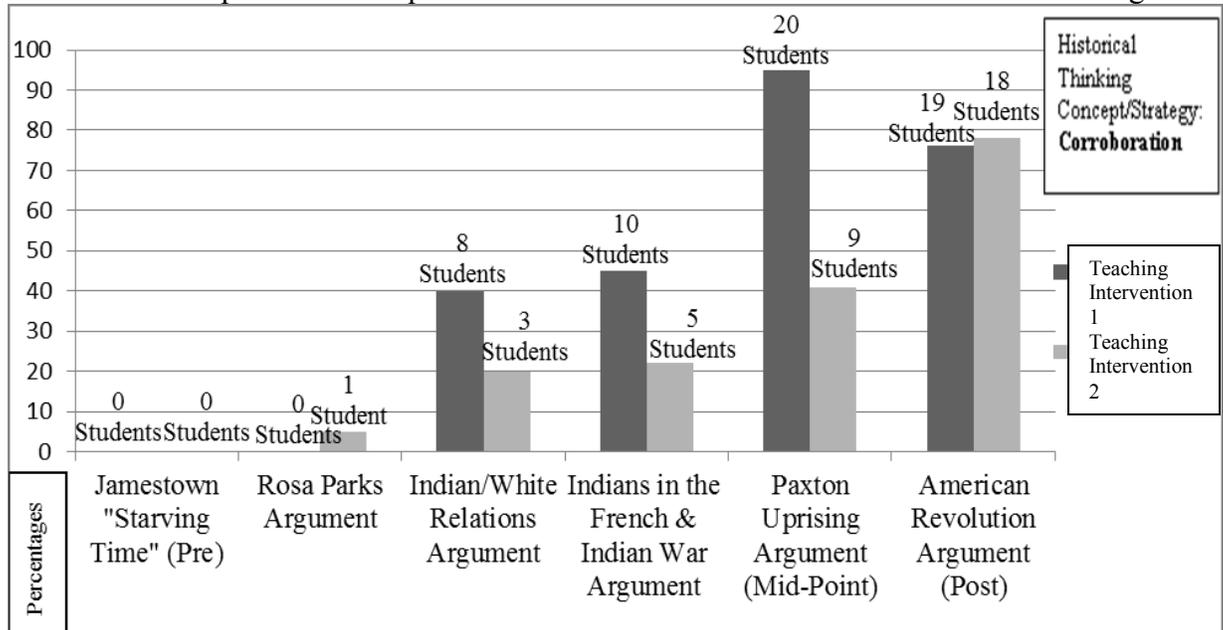
Table 4.18. Comparison of Rubric Scores on all Historical Writing Tasks



Students under Teaching Intervention 1 engaged in corroboration at a noticeably higher rate than those under Teaching Intervention 2 on three of the final four historical argumentation tasks. As Table 4.19 indicates, students involved in Teaching Intervention 1 made statements about corroboration at twice the rate their counterparts did on the written arguments addressing Indian/white relations, Indians in the French and Indian War and the Paxton Uprising. From this data I concluded that reinforcement of this strategy during PSD in the form of additional work with the Rubric for Historical Argumentation, assigning students the task of looking for and commenting on corroboration of sources in their classmates’ accounts, oral feedback and reminders about corroboration from me, and the chance for students to revise accounts combined to lead more students under Teaching Intervention 1 to include corroboration in their arguments

than those that did not experience PSD. But as Table 4.19 shows, students under Teaching Intervention 2 demonstrated corroboration of sources in their accounts of the American Revolution at a slightly higher rate than those under Teaching Intervention 1. I believe that the feedback I provided the Teaching Intervention 2 students on their accounts of the Paxton Uprising and the use of the Thesis and Evidence graphic organizer/pre-writing strategy were the main factors in this increase in the use of corroboration.

Table 4.19. Comparison of Frequencies of Corroboration of Sources in Students' Writing

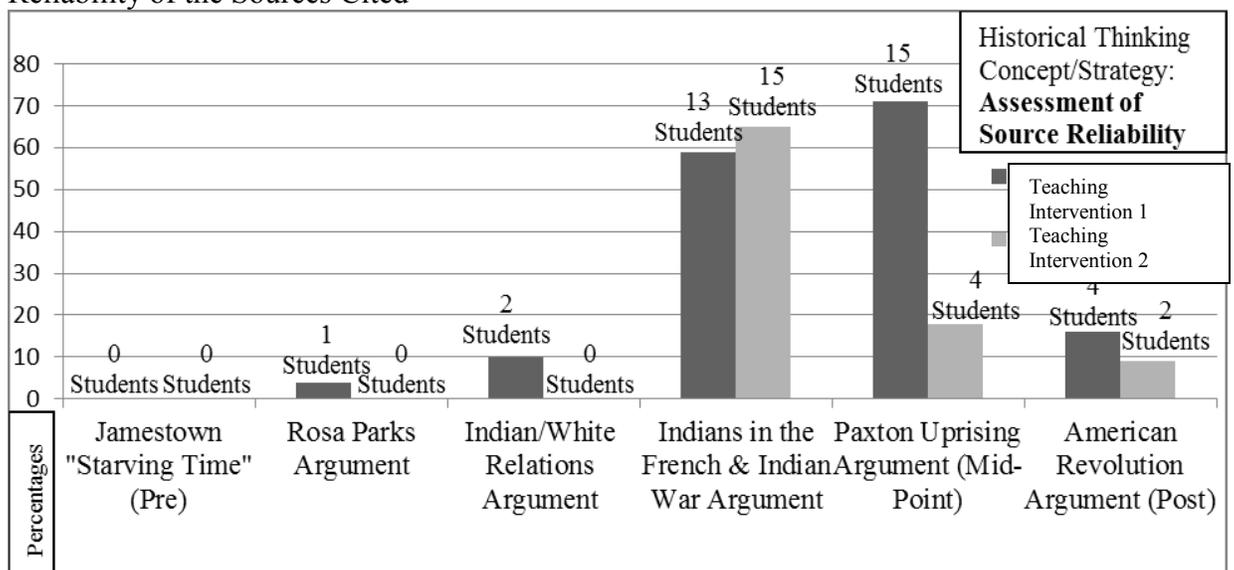


Students involved in Teaching Intervention 1 also received feedback on their Paxton Uprising accounts and used the Thesis and Evidence graphic prior to writing about the American Revolution. But the session of PSD that immediately followed students' initial construction of arguments about the American Revolution was somewhat flat in terms of engagement, student and my comments and reminders during the session privileged the strategy of refuting an opposing claim, since I wanted students to improve

their use of that discipline-specific strategy. This is perhaps why there was not an increase in the use of corroboration among students under Teaching Intervention 1.

PSD also seems to have made a difference with the strategy of assessing source reliability in the body of students' writing. This is most noticeable with the Paxton Uprising argument. As Table 4.20 shows, instances of assessing source reliability in the body of students' writing increased among students under Teaching Intervention 1 from the argument on Indians in the French and Indian War to the writing task for the Paxton Uprising, and decreased significantly (-31%) in the among students under Teaching Intervention 2. The activity targeting the reliability of the three primary sources used to investigate Native Americans' involvement in the French and Indian War led to a sharp increase in the number of students in both classes adhering to this aspect of the Rubric for Historical Argumentation when they constructed their accounts of this topic. The data suggests that the majority of Teaching Intervention 2 students saw explicit assessments of source reliability as something particular to the topic of Indians in the French and

Table 4.20: Comparison of Frequencies of Students Assessing/Establishing the Reliability of the Sources Cited



Indian War that did not need to be repeated in subsequent writing tasks, while over half of the Teaching Intervention 1 students viewed the strategy as either a requirement or a normal part of making an historical argument. I attributed the significant difference between the classes on the Paxton Uprising argument to the PSD process reinforcing this strategy.

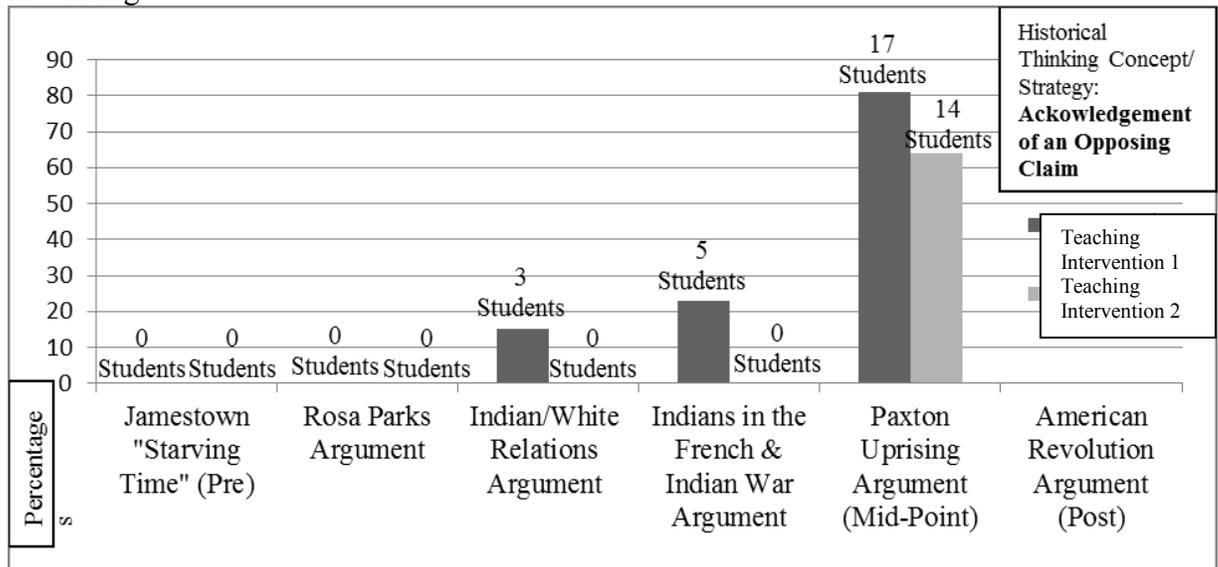
But there is the question of why both classes largely failed to use the strategy of assessing sources when writing their accounts of the cause(s) of the American Revolution (Table 4.20, last column). This I believe is attributable to the fame and renown of the sources students were asked to use to determine why the American Revolution occurred. Historical figures such as Sam Adams, Alexander Hamilton, Thomas Jefferson and George Washington loom large in American history, and though I tried to encourage my students to question their motives for rebelling against Great Britain, students seemed to think there was no need to second-guess these Revolutionaries or hold them accountable for waging war against their mother country. Not a single student was critical of the Patriots in their accounts, despite several lessons spent examining perspectives from important figures in England on the strained relations with the American colonies.

VanSledright (2002) noticed something similar among the 5th grade students he taught. He discovered during investigations of America's colonial period that his students exhibited a "decidedly U.S. way of looking at things." And though VanSledright was careful not to teach a white-washed, heritage version of the American Revolution, his students still wrote essays on the event that were "supportive of Americans' right to throw off their oppressors" and claim liberty. The American Revolution is often portrayed as a *fait accompli*, and those who led and fought in it are

commonly regarded as heroes in a struggle for freedom (Kammen, 1991; Lowenthal, 1997; VanSledright, 2002). I therefore inferred that my students did not see the point in saying whether figures like Washington and sources like the Declaration of Independence are reliable.

Another area of historical argumentation that PSD seemed to influence is the strategy of acknowledging an opposing interpretation. On three consecutive writing tasks – Indian/white relations, Indians in the French and Indian War and the Paxton Uprising - students under Teaching Intervention 1 edged out their Teaching Intervention 2 counterparts with regard to mentioning an interpretation of those events that contradicted their claims (see Table 4.21). Though the differences are slight, the PSD process reinforced and developed this strategy among the students under Teaching Intervention 1, leading more students to engage in it.

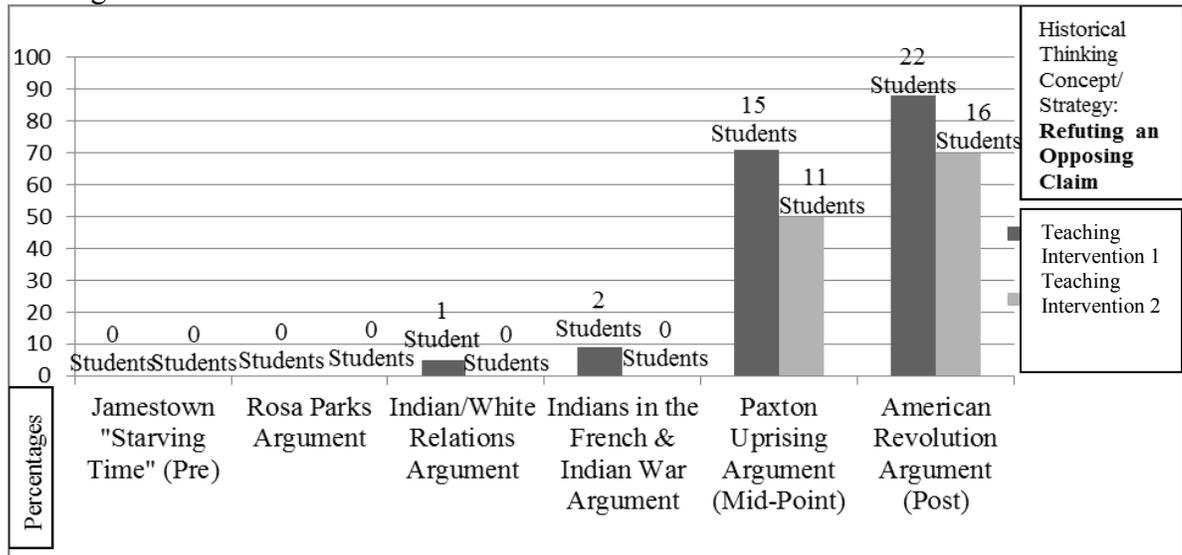
Table 4.21. Comparison of Frequencies of Students Acknowledging an Opposing Claim in Writing



The final area of historical argumentation where PSD seemed to make a difference is refuting an opposing interpretation. As Table 4.22 indicates, four additional

students under Teaching Intervention 1 attempted to prove why an opposing view on the Paxton Uprising is incorrect, and six additional students that participated in PSD did the same on the American Revolution writing task. The session of PSD that followed the task of writing about the American Revolution emphasized the refutation strategy, since it was targeted in the writing task as well.

Table 4.22. Comparison of Frequencies of Students Refuting an Opposing Claim in their Writing



The overarching goal/purpose of PSD was to move students closer toward the criterialist stance on novice-toward-expert continuum of historical thinking. Students' pre-course surveys, their responses to the Jamestown Starving Time task, other class-based artifacts and comments made about history and the past during the earlier lessons all pointed to my students being historical novices, despite their agreement with some of the survey items about interpretation in the discipline. Whether students involved in Teaching Intervention 1 moved further away from the copier toward the criterialist stance than their Teaching Intervention 2 counterparts was difficult to ascertain; more difficult

than determining which group of students had become the most proficient at writing historical arguments.

Post-study survey results were similar between the two classes. But five additional students under Teaching Intervention 2 (+17%) indicated agreement with two or more of the survey items suggesting history is an interpretive discipline, contrary to what I expected. The performance of primary informants on the post-study think-aloud task on Southern Reconstruction likewise did not yield significant differences in demonstrations of historical thinking among primary informants from both classes. Nearly every informant concluded at the end of the task that the African American experience during Reconstruction was marked by hardships *and* successes, an interpretation that is consistent with the fifteen sources informants were asked to examine and comment on (see Appendix Q for informants' interpretations of Reconstruction).

However, as Table 4.23 indicates, primary informants under Teaching Intervention 1 did make 11% more history-specific vocalizations than their Teaching Intervention 2 counterparts during the Reconstruction task. But this was primarily in the area of contextualization. Teaching Intervention 1 informants made more attempts to place the sources they were asked to examine in the context of the times during which they were made. It is not clear to me why they did better with this strategy, except to say that perhaps their experiences with the idea of source reliability during each session of PSD made several of the informants realize sources should be judged by the circumstances surrounding their creation.

There are some discernible differences between primary informants of both classes in the way they articulated their understanding and knowledge of history in the

post-study interviews. As the data displayed in Tables 4.24 and 4.25 suggest, primary informants involved in Teaching Intervention 1 made a slightly larger number of comments about history as an interpretive discipline and fewer comments aligned with the Copier stance. But what is perhaps more significant is the quality of the vocalizations from Teaching Intervention 1 informants. They seemed to make more fluid articulations about aspects of historical thinking than informants involved in Teaching Intervention 2.

Table 4.23. Southern Reconstruction Think Aloud Task Results: Frequency of Primary Informants’ History-Specific Vocalizations for all 15 Sources on Southern Reconstruction

	Source Attribution	Contextualization	Reading Subtext	Source Interrogation	Connecting Sources/ Corroboration	Total of History-Specific Vocalizations
	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)
Teaching Intervention 1 N = 5 Total vocalizations: 540	130 (24%)	97 (18%)	5 (1%)	8 (1%)	32 (6%)	272 (50%)
Teaching Intervention 2 N = 5 Total vocalizations: 591	133 (23%)	53 (9%)	20 (3%)	8 (2%)	19 (4%)	233 (39%)

Anju is a case in point. Though she actually made a fewer number of comments about history as an interpretive act, Anju’s vocalizations revealed a deeper sense of what history is and how it is practiced by the experts than Tianna. For example, when Anju and I discussed the differences between her selections on the pre and post-study history surveys, and that she came to the conclusion that knowing facts and getting information are actually not the most important part of history, Anju noted that facts are created by examining and corroborating sources and that:

There's other stuff you have to do. You have to think about how you feel about [the past] and you have to use your imagination... Like from the sources, you have to decide if this contradicts something, we have to decide if they [sources] are true or not. Like, even if they corroborate, you have to think about it to see if they really make sense... I learned you have to use your judgment...

When Anju and I discussed why she did not agree that good reading strategies are enough to learn history well, she said:

If you have good reading strategies you will know what a source says, but then you have to interpret it and really think about if it makes sense...

Table 4.24: Post-Study Interview Results: Primary Informants' Vocalizations of Epistemic Understandings

	Teaching Intervention 1 N =5 Total vocalizations: 363	Teaching Intervention 2 N =5 Total vocalizations: 403
	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)
History is Fixed, Authoritative Knowledge*	47 (13%)	88 (22%)
History is an Interpretive Discipline**	276 (76%)	286 (71%)
Other***	40 (11%)	29 (7%)

*Comments coded as "History is Interpretive" showed acknowledgement of elements of the sourcing heuristic, investigation and historical argumentation, including, but not limited to, evidence/ sources, perspective, corroboration, conflicting evidence, source reliability, connecting sources, use of logic & imagination, and making judgments about the past.

**Comments coded "History is Fixed Knowledge" seemed to conflate history and the past, highlight famous people and events, emphasize activities often associated with traditional school-based history, such as listening to the teacher, gathering information to answer the teacher's questions, studying information from secondary sources, and getting good grades, and/or treat textbooks as authoritative.

***Comments coded as "Other" were those not directly related to epistemic beliefs in history and included statements about other classes, clarification questions for the interviewer and informants' feelings about the topics and work.

Clearly, Anju came to see history as something that is constructed through reading and thinking strategies, rather than a body of knowledge that you read, remember and recite

for a teacher. Although Tianna also talked about history-specific ideas and strategies and clearly showed movement away from the copier stance she seemed to have at the beginning of the study, she made almost twice as many comments as Anju indicating that she still clung to notions of history as being more of a school subject that mostly supplies students with information about the past.

Table 4.25. Post-Study Interview Results: Comparison of Individual Primary Informants' Vocalizations

Primary Informants	History is Interpretive	History is Fixed Knowledge	Other
	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)
Brian (Teaching Intervention 1)	79 (93%)	3 (4%)	3 (4%)
Danny (Teaching Intervention 2)	42 (75%)	6 (11%)	8 (14%)
Eddie (Teaching Intervention 1)	48 (81%)	10 (17%)	1 (2%)
Alana (Teaching Intervention 2)	64 (80%)	12 (15%)	4 (5%)
Kelly (Teaching Intervention 1)	43 (54%)	21 (26%)	16 (20%)
Maria (Teaching Intervention 2)	50 (56%)	36 (40%)	3 (3%)
Naraj (Teaching Intervention 1)	47 (73%)	5 (8%)	12 (19%)
Archit (Teaching Intervention 2)	54 (77%)	11 (16%)	5 (7%)
Anju (Teaching Intervention 1)	60 (81%)	9 (12%)	5 (7%)
Tianna (Teaching Intervention 2)	76 (70%)	23 (21%)	9 (8%)

Something similar occurred when comparing Brian's and Danny's interviews.

Brian made almost twice as many comments about interpretive work in history than Danny. And these statements about source work, interpretation and argumentation

accounted for the bulk of Brian's interview vocalizations (93% compared to 75% for Danny). Brian's advice to the 7th graders that would moving up to Advanced US History 8 the following school year characterizes his part in the discussion Brian and I had about history at the end of the study:

[I would tell them to] look really deep in all the sources to try to see their reliability or how much it tells about maybe an event....

However, the interviews with Alana and Eddie, and especially Archit and Naraj, were very similar in terms of how much they said about history as an interpretive discipline and the depth of their comments. For example, Eddie noted that you "have to have a question in your mind" when examining evidence of the past, while Alana noted that in history you spend time "collecting different evidence," that evidence "can come from people and sources," and that it "proves a point." Alana also noted the value in seeing or determining "who wrote" sources, whether the authors were "there when [an event] happened...what side they were on," and their "background" to "see who they were and what they did and write." When I asked Naraj to tell me what being good at history looks like, he talked about the need to "make assumptions about what happened" in the past and that you "can interpret sources" and "figure out mysteries of the past by looking at sources." Naraj also said that you have to "see which sources corroborate and which don't" in order to know what went on in the past or what it might mean. Archit mentioned the word "sources" sixty-four times in his interview. Archit also talked a lot about bias in sources *and* among experts who examine them. For example, Archit claimed that:

Historians try to make their best judgment, but sometimes their judgment is a little hazy because of the different sources they read and because of the different opinions in each

Source and the types of sources they read....

From this comment and others it can be inferred that Archit felt as comfortable with the idea of history as interpretation as his Teaching Intervention 1 counterpart Naraj. But on the whole, Teaching Intervention 1 informants mentioned history-specific terms and concepts more often and with more confidence in the post-study interviews than their Teaching Intervention 2 counterparts. I believe this is due to the extra time they spent reading and applying the Rubric for Historical Argumentation to their own and their classmates' written interpretations of the big historical topics and questions from each HI in the study.

Summary

In this chapter I presented and described data aligned with the following three of the four questions my study was intended to address:

1. What do students believe about history before, during and after learning it through investigative methods?
2. How do classroom-based exercises developed and implemented in concert with a research-based, theoretically-grounded framework for learning to think in history influence novices' knowledge and understanding of the idea of historical evidence and its role in the production of historical knowledge?

3. How much time and instruction are required to move students away from their status as historical novices toward greater sophistication in historical thinking?
4. Does engagement in structured sessions of peer review and editing of students' written arguments and discourse on historical argumentation deepen students' knowledge of the discipline of history?

I demonstrated through data collected from a pre-course history survey and other sources that my students began their experience with historical thinking in Advanced US History 8 as novices. Post-study surveys, students' written interpretations of each big historical question addressed in each HI, the performance of primary informants on the think-aloud task on Southern Reconstruction and comments that primary informants made during post-study interviews all point to significant changes in my students' beliefs and knowledge of history. I concluded that most of my students had moved away from the copier stance that sees history as a *fait accompli* and reached levels three and four of Lee's and Shemilt's (2003) conception of progression in thinking about evidence and interpretation in the discipline. Since many of my students (in both classes) held onto some of their pre-study notions of history as an authoritative body of knowledge, as indicated by post-study survey and interview data, I cannot claim they had reached the criterialist stance, or even competence with historical thinking that I was aiming and hoping for with my historical thinking curriculum and pedagogical moves..

Several exercises within the historical thinking curriculum I taught during the course of this study appeared to influence students' growth as historical thinkers. The exercise prompting students to judge the reliability of three primary sources on Native

Americans' involvement in the French and Indian War led to a significant increase in the frequency of students engaging in the strategy of addressing and discussing source reliability in their writing. The Rubric for Historical Argumentation was useful in helping students become more proficient in constructing evidence-based interpretations of the past. Once the Rubric was implemented toward the end of the HI on Relations between Indians and colonists in colonial times, instances of corroboration, assessing source reliability and stating and refuting opposing claims went up significantly in both classes. Additionally, the scaffolds I used to help students write multi-paragraph arguments about the Paxton Uprising and the American Revolution led to better adherence to the Rubric for Historical Argumentation and higher rubric scores.

The extra time students involved in Teaching Intervention 1 spent unpacking abridged versions of experts' written arguments and reviewing and applying the Rubric for Historical Argumentation also seemed to make a difference in their level of historical thinking when compared to their counterparts in the class that did not receive this intervention. The most salient difference was in the quality of historical writing among students under Teaching Intervention 1. They engaged in history-specific strategies such as of corroboration sooner and with greater frequency than those involved in Teaching Intervention 2 on most of the writing tasks.

Though the students involved in Teaching Intervention 2 had caught up to those under the Teaching Intervention 1 condition in terms of the level of performance shown on writing tasks by the time of the American Revolution Argument, PSD was a factor in helping students' gain some level of procedural knowledge in history. I also suggested in this chapter that Teaching Intervention 1 students may have developed a deeper sense

of the interpretive nature of history based on the way several of the primary informants from that class discussed history with me in their exit interviews. They seemed to have at least recognized the idea that history is tentative knowledge constructed through interpretation of evidence and creative thinking on the part of the inquirer.

In the next chapter I address the question of how much time and instruction may be required to move adolescents who are historical novices closer to expertise in the domain of history. I also discuss several implications for teaching and learning history that emerge from the study.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Teaching America's Past with the Sourcing Heuristic: Conclusions and Implications for Educators and other Stakeholders in Education

This study was designed to determine if lessons and activities built around the sourcing heuristic and other aspects of the discipline of history would lead to growth in 8th grade students' historical thinking. The curriculum I used to foster historical thinking among my students, all of whom began the study as novices in the discipline, was aligned with a research-based, theoretical framework of learning to think in history. Of particular interest was whether an intervention I referred to as Peer Scrutiny and Discourse (PSD) that encouraged students to critique and discuss the merits and problems of each other's historical writing within the framework of the discipline, would enhance the historical thinking of the students in the class that participated in PSD. PSD was based on the principle that a purposeful education in actual aspects of the discipline (and profession) of history, including scrutiny of peer's historical arguments and reflection on the strengths and weaknesses of one's own attempts at historical argumentation, would help novice historical thinkers to develop deeper and more sophisticated understandings of history. It was therefore assumed that PSD would not only improve students' use of historical writing strategies, but also cause noticeable shifts in their epistemic stances in history.

Generally speaking, the results of my study indicate that growth occurred in my students' historical thinking. Most of my 8th grade participants, who began the school year with little or no knowledge of disciplinary history, demonstrated effective use of the

sourcing heuristic and historical writing in the context of the classroom instruction I created and delivered. It is reasonable to claim that my students' achievements in historical thinking placed them somewhere between novice status and competence on the novice-toward-expert continuum of disciplinary knowledge (Alexander, 2003; Maggioni, et al., 2009; VanSledright, 2002). Many of my students showed greater sophistication in their understanding of history as a result of learning it through investigation. This is reflected in the results from the post-study history survey, journal entries, historical arguments, and in interviews with primary informants. My study therefore suggests that learning about America's past through the conceptual framework and interpretive tools of the discipline of history leads novices to become emerging historical thinkers and may even lead to meaningful and productive changes in their ideas about history.

My findings also suggest that historical inquiry, investigation, written argumentation and some form of structured and sustained peer review and discourse as the primary means of learning history in schools is an effective way to satisfy the new Common Core standards for literacy in history/social studies (Common Core State Standards Initiative [CCSS], 2010). According to the authors of the Common Core State Standards, in order for students to achieve "College and Career Readiness," they must be able to "write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence..." This was what my students were expected and encouraged to do at the end of each Historical Investigation (HI) they participated in. Based on comparisons between students' writing on the Starving Time pre-study task and the causes of the American Revolution post-study task,

their writing improved in use of history-specific argumentation strategies, command of first-order knowledge and reasoning (see Table 4.19).

As noted, my students entered Advanced U.S. History 8 as novices in historical thinking. As evidenced by data from pre-course surveys and other exercises during the first week of the 2009-2010 school year, each of my students started their experience with disciplinary history by equating history with the past and privileging names, dates and other facts over sourcing, corroboration and interpretation. When asked to solve one of America's oldest historical mysteries in writing, only a few students attempted to support their claims with the evidence supplied to them; and the ones that did failed to include source information that might convince readers that their theory is valid or justified.

Although many of my students agreed (on paper) with the notions that experts piece together sources and use their opinions and judgments to describe and explain the past, a result from the pre-course survey that I did not anticipate, they did not actually know how to do these things. But intellectual challenges aimed at creating just enough cognitive dissonance to encourage my students to seek better ways of thinking about the past, followed by exposure to the sourcing heuristic and lots of practice, coaching and encouragement in using it seemed to be an effective way to get my students on the path to acquiring more sophisticated historical thinking capabilities. Moreover, frequent and consistent use of history-specific terms and ideas during instruction, modeling the act of sourcing and assessments of source reliability, refraining from presenting history as a *fait accompli*, exercises and graphic organizers that targeted certain aspects of sourcing and historical writing, multiple opportunities for developing written historical arguments, and

for one class, five structured sessions of PSD centered on historical argumentation, combined to move most of my students away from the copier view of history toward criterialist (Lee, 2005; Maggioni, et al., 2009; Monte-Sano, 2012; Reisman, 2012; VanSledright, 2002, 2011). All of these strategies for fostering historical thinking among my novices were presumed to have high potential for causing a shift in their historical epistemologies because of the research-based, theoretical framework that supports my work. It can thus be argued this theoretical framework for learning to think in history is a viable one that could be implemented in a variety of ways in any history class.

It would be problematic to claim that my students actually adopted the criterialist stance or even achieved competence in historical thinking by the end of the study for at least two reasons. One is the signs of the resilience of the “encyclopedia epistemologies” (VanSledright, 2002, p. 76) with which my students entered the study. Every student under the Teaching Intervention 2 condition and all but one student in the Teaching Intervention 1 condition repeated their agreement with several of the survey items aligned with the conception of history as a fact-based, objective re-telling of the past. Another reason is the lack of statements of source reliability in students’ American Revolution arguments (post-study performance task), which I attribute mostly to what may have been students’ assumptions that famous historical figures (in this case the Founders of the U.S.) do not need to be openly questioned about their words, beliefs and/or actions. The criterialist stance, which involves the understanding that “history results from a process of inquiry in which the questions asked by the investigators inform the analysis of the sources” (Maggioni, et al., 2009, p. 197) is reflective of expertise. Although my students at times showed signs of possessing this understanding, I hesitate

to conclude that they truly understood that all historical knowledge is constructed and tentative, or that it emanates from curiosities and questions.

The Value and Potential of Peer Scrutiny and Discourse

My study is a unique one in history education in part because it captured and studied the influences of strategically placed and structured sessions of peer editing and disciplinary discourse on student learning in historical thinking in a classroom setting. As noted, PSD was created and implemented in alignment with the principle of learning to think in history that suggests students are more likely to develop deeper understandings of the discipline through hands-on experiences with activities resembling real practices that occur in the profession. My work extends what we have learned from earlier studies rooted in this principle. VanSledright (2002), for example, showed how engaging students in specialized investigative processes and inter-textual reading practices led to “appreciable growth in their capacity to think and reason historically” (p. 135), including the attainment of “history-specific critical reading and analytic practices” (p. 134). My work showed that adding the practice of peer review of argumentative writing and discipline-based discourse to an historical investigations approach to learning how to think in history can increase novices’ gains in historical thinking and expand their strategic-knowledge repertoires to include strategies for written argumentation. In the next section I discuss the differences PSD made in my students’ historical thinking capabilities and my thoughts on why the strategy had some positive influences.

Although the effects of PSD were modest and less than I expected, students involved in Teaching Intervention 1 outperformed their counterparts on most of the historical argumentation tasks, as measured by the Rubric for Historical Argumentation.

Twice as many students under the Teaching Intervention 1 condition, for example, made corroboration of sources explicit in their writing on three of the four historical argumentation tasks that followed the HI on Rosa Parks. On the task that asked students to write a 2-3 paragraph argument about Native Americans' involvement in the French and Indian War, six students involved in Teaching Intervention 1 earned the maximum score of 4 while no student under the Teaching Intervention 2 condition achieved a score that high. The differences in the quality of writing were more pronounced between the two classes on the Paxton Uprising argument, which required five full paragraphs. Thirteen students under Teaching Intervention 1, which was over 60% of the class, scored a 4 for their writing on this event while only two students (8%) under Teaching Intervention 2 scored that high.

PSD offered hands-on reinforcement and enhancement of core aspects of the discipline of history, including evidence, interpretation, and argumentation, which showed in the work of students involved in Teaching Intervention 1 when juxtaposed with those involved in Teaching Intervention 2. As the framework for learning to think in history which drove my study suggests, providing multiple and varied opportunities for students to experience and work with history's heuristics, including collaboration intended to challenge and improve students' work in the discipline, should cause their historical thinking capabilities to move forward along the novice-toward-expert continuum of disciplinary knowledge. It seems that PSD had that effect for at least some of the students who experienced it.

An exception was the argument on the American Revolution, on which students in both classes performed similarly in terms of their use of the history-specific strategies

outlined in the Rubric. It seems reasonable to conclude that had PSD been more robust at the time of the HI on the American Revolution (e.g. greater emphasis placed on having students discuss the sources and use history-specific terms in their conversations), the students under Teaching Intervention 1 would have written arguments on the event that exceeded the quality of those written by their counterparts (e.g. more thorough and specific references to sources and deeper discussions of source reliability and context in the body of students' writing). The data presented in Chapter 4 showed that students under Teaching Intervention 1 acquired history-specific strategies at a faster rate. Had PSD been adjusted to reflect these students' growing knowledge of disciplinary history, they would likely have continued to surpass the Teaching Intervention 2 students' arguments in terms of quality.

What is less clear is the extent to which PSD influenced students' ideas about history. History survey data were similar between the two classes as was the data gleaned from post-study interviews and think-aloud performance tasks. As a group, informants under Teaching Intervention 1 made slightly more history-specific vocalizations (+5%) and slightly fewer vocalizations categorized as "history as fixed knowledge" (-7%) than their counterparts under Teaching Intervention 2 during post-study interviews. Teaching Intervention 1 informants also made more history-specific vocalizations during the think-aloud task on Southern Reconstruction (272 compared to 233 or 11% more) and engaged in contextualization of sources at twice the rate as their counterparts. But when informants from both classes were juxtaposed according to reading scores and previous academic performance for comparison, those under Teaching Intervention 1 did not stand out in terms of their level of historical thinking.

To summarize, PSD made a difference in students' historical writing. The intervention reinforced and extended history-specific strategies learned and practiced in the HIs, leading the Teaching Intervention 1 students to deploy those strategies with greater sophistication in writing than their Teaching Intervention 2 counterparts did on most of the historical argumentation tasks. But PSD seems to have become mundane and lost momentum by the time of the HI on the American Revolution, perhaps leading the students under Teaching Intervention 2 to catch up to the Teaching Intervention 1 students' level of historical writing and thinking. PSD may have led to a slightly higher level of sophistication in the kind of thinking done aloud by primary informants from the Teaching Intervention 1 condition during the performance task on African Americans' experiences with Southern Reconstruction, and in their comments about the discipline of history during post-study interviews.

This leads me to conclude that PSD is a worthwhile and perhaps optimal educational experience for history students to have, but should be adjusted to challenge students as their level of historical thinking grows. Comments that Brian made about PSD during our post-study interview are illustrative. They reinforce the value of PSD and the potential it has to help most students become more sophisticated historical thinkers if the intervention caters to students' needs and their growth as history scholars. When I asked Brian how he perceived PSD and historical writing, he claimed that for him, good historical writing occurs:

After you told your opinion and get other people's point of view. Because not everything, like once you see something, history is not like you see it and you

know what happened. You have to try to put it together and try to see what makes the most sense.

Brian also said that the times during PSD that he and his partner would have an “argument to find the best story” from the sources they were using to construct a written interpretation of an event featured in an HI helped him with “using multiple sources...explaining the sources, and refuting another point of view.”

Brian and his partner took full advantage of PSD and engaged in the kinds of conversations I hoped each of their classmates would have. I recall that during the last two sessions of PSD I had to play the role of task master and remind some students to stick to the agenda for the sessions rather than have conversations that were off-topic. Several students sort of ploughed through the Rubric and their partners’ writing and gave superficial feedback so they could either revise their own writing in class before submitting it, rather than have to take it home and do it, or socialize some before the bell rang. These behaviors were not widespread, but they did occur and probably lessened the power of the intervention for some students. It is therefore important for any history teacher that may want to incorporate some version of PSD to plan for the likelihood of off-task behaviors by keeping the intervention structured and perhaps differentiated to meet the needs of those who progress in historical thinking and writing at different rates.

The Challenge of Implementing Peer Scrutiny and Discourse

If it is reasonable to presume that historical habits of mind such as sourcing can be applied to important aspects of our democratic society besides our nation’s past, and that it is therefore worthwhile to teach history in a manner that encourages students to gain them, then implementing PSD as a component of a historical thinking curriculum

has the potential to deepen students' procedural knowledge in history. Though the greatest differences between the level of historical thinking among students of the two classes was seen in their writing, historical argumentation is a reflection of the sourcing heuristic and is always a combination of reading and thinking (Monte-Sano, 2010; Monte-Sano & De La Paz, 2012; Wiley & Voss, 1996). It may seem obvious that giving one group additional instruction and practice with the strategies you want them to acquire will cause them to gain those cognitive habits faster and become better at them than their peers that do not get the additional practice. But PSD amounted to something more than just additional practice. The format or structure of PSD gave students involved in Teaching Intervention 1 different ways to enhance the historical thinking strategies they were acquiring through the same instruction their counterparts were receiving. For example, seeing, examining and then discussing experts' claims and evidence was unique to PSD, as was the chance to critique a classmate's argument, receive feedback on the one you made, and then use what you learned to reflect on your argument and make adjustments to it. In short, PSD had a positive effect on my students' historical thinking, though the effects were arguably small.

There are things I could have done differently with PSD to make it more effective. This includes having additional sessions of PSD, perhaps at the mid-point of an HI rather than only after students wrote their arguments. Mid-point PSD sessions could have focused more on dissecting experts' arguments about topics related to what we were investigating. They could also have been designed to let students discuss their interpretations of the sources being used in an HI before they were asked to use them in their writing. Modeling the sort of discourse I envisioned for students to have and

insisting they make written comments on the Rubric for Historical Argumentation in addition to ratings of Strong, Moderate or Weak for each history-specific strategy right at the start may also have made PSD more effective. It must be noted that adding sessions of PSD would not have prevented the loss of momentum that seemed to characterize the final session of the intervention.

Perhaps the most obvious drawback with implementing PSD was the time and opportunity cost involved. PSD took time away from instruction that might add to students' knowledge of content or let students explore aspects of the social sciences such as economics and political science in greater depth. For example, my school district's Advanced US History 8 curriculum contains a unit on the framing of the U.S. Constitution. There are a number of interesting cases that have been heard by the U.S. Supreme Court along with current constitutional issues that students could explore to enhance their understanding of the government created by the Founders and how it affects us today. But the likelihood of teachers who engage students in investigative methods, including some version of PSD, finding time for lessons or topics not directly stated in their curriculum is slim. Most school districts have mandatory semester exams in history at the 8th grade level that test for content through multiple choice items. I can imagine teachers who want to incorporate PSD deciding there is little or no room for lessons that go beyond the curricular goals despite interest among students in current events and other topics, because they will likely feel pressure to stick to their curriculums' scope and sequence.

Sacrificing instructional time that could be used for enrichment in the form of exploring related topics or reading human interest stories is no small matter. But this

may be the only real problem with implementing PSD. Unless the time for peer discourse on history and historical writing is poorly planned, structured and/or monitored, it should prove to be productive for most students. But again, as students make progress with the use of history-specific strategies, sessions for peer discourse and editing of historical arguments may need to be modified to ensure that students are continually challenged and pushed to take their thoughts, conversations and writing in history to a higher level.

It may also be necessary to enliven sessions of PSD with excerpts from experts' arguments that are provocative, controversial or perhaps even far-fetched in order to sustain students' interest in disciplinary discourse. I can envision giving students the task of analyzing an argument that seems implausible (or may actually be so) and then encouraging them to pick it apart and assess its validity by evaluating the author's connections between the evidence cited to the claim(s) and the reliability of the evidence conveyed in the excerpt. The argument chosen for analysis could be one deemed too problematic to hold sway in academia. If students are led to determine this without being told or given hints, it could arguably be a huge step forward in their journey toward becoming good historical thinkers and a strong sign that a historical thinking curriculum that includes some form of PSD, and is grounded in the theoretical framework for learning to think in history articulated in Chapters 1 and 2, is effective at deepening students' disciplinary knowledge.

Another way to stimulate sessions of PSD when a teacher senses it is necessary would be to present an actual historical debate between experts and have students weigh in on it. An example that comes to mind is the public argument between historians

Natalie Zemon Davis (1988) and Robert Finlay (1988) over Davis' interpretation of the return of Martin Guerre, a real event that occurred in France in the 16th century. The event, which is essentially a famous case of imposture resulting in the conviction and execution of the man who pretended to be Martin Guerre when the real Martin Guerre returned during the trial of the suspected impostor, invites interpretation *and* makes it tricky since there are only two contemporary accounts of the case in existence. Finlay roundly criticizes Davis for the interpretive license she exercised and the present-day values or ideas she imposed on the case and the historical figures involved in her book-length interpretation of the event. Davis defends her work in part by arguing for the need to use imagination and draw upon conceptual knowledge generated by social sciences like sociology when reconstructing and giving meaning to the past.

The main problem with using the debate described above with 8th grade students is the difficulty of the text of Finlay's criticisms and Davis' rejoinder. Not only are the words and phrases challenging for students, but the ideas discussed by these experts could be considered esoteric. However, Finlay and Davis argue about major aspects of the discipline that a historical thinking curriculum like the one I used in this study would attempt to convey to students. Thus, except for the significant reading comprehension challenges involved, the debate between Finlay and Davis seems tailor-made for a higher-level session of PSD, or even as a part of the main instruction in historical thinking. One challenge then for teachers would be adapting the text for better reading comprehension and planning for pedagogical moves that will hook students into the debate, help them understand it and connect it to what they have been learning about the discipline of history up to that point, and thereby extend or deepen their knowledge of

history. This is a difficult task that requires more than knowledge of historical facts and good teaching strategies, which is a point I discuss in the section of this chapter on what I perceive to be the limitations of teaching for historical thinking.

Potential Benefits of Teaching for Historical Thinking

Teaching and learning about America's past through the sourcing heuristic and historical argumentation is challenging for history students and their teachers (Afflerbach & VanSledright, 2001; Ashby, Lee & Shemilt, 2005; Bain, 2000, 2005; Barton & Levstik, 1997; Britt, et al., 2000; Greene, 1993; Kobrin, 1995, 1996; Stout, 2004; VanSledright, 2002, 2011). Interpreting, interrogating and connecting sources, accounting for sources that contain conflicting views and information, and then developing a written, evidence-based argument as a way of presenting what was concluded after an HI is difficult work for anyone, especially novices in history.

Moreover, the planning and execution involved in teaching for the acquisition and understanding of historical habits of mind requires significant time and energy. Even when curriculum designed for historical thinking is available, teachers must still consider and plan for a range of factors, including students' preconceptions of history, the past, and everyday ideas about truth and human behavior, their interest and reading levels, whether or how to adapt historical texts, how much background knowledge students will need going into an HI, how that information will be learned, and how students will show what they learned or concluded about the event or topic they are asked to investigate (VanSledright, 2011). But the reading, thinking and writing strategies that students can gain from this kind of history education may justify the extra time and energy it is likely to take them to construct knowledge of the past, rather than simply consume it.

This is not to say that a more traditional history education based primarily on lecture, note-taking and question and answer activities cannot be rigorous or lead to gains in learning history. A history teacher that is a good story teller, for example, may be able to stimulate critical thought among his/her students and help instill in them a love of history. Many of us have probably heard stories from friends or acquaintances about history teachers that were “great” because they dressed up in period costumes and did their best to make you feel as if you were alive in the time period you were studying. But whether the stand-and-deliver style of history instruction or having a teacher that can bring the past alive through role-play is likely to foster and enhance students’ knowledge of the discipline and effective historical writing is unclear (VanSledright, 2008).

Grant’s (2003) case study of two high school history teachers’ different approaches to the study of the Civil Rights movement in the U.S. suggests that superficial knowledge of historical events and concepts, rather than the deeper understandings of the past and history that most educators strive for, is the main learning outcome of teaching through lecture in which a single narrative of U.S. history is conveyed to students. Although the students taught by the instructor in the case study who relied on lecture and story-telling displayed greater factual knowledge of the Civil Rights movement, they tended to regard that knowledge as a “set of facts to be learned for school purposes” (Grant, 2003, p. 58). The other teacher in Grant’s (2003) study, who taught the same topic but did so through multiple sources and perspectives and the use of simulations, may have helped her students develop deeper understandings of the struggle for Civil Rights in America and history as a field of knowledge. This teacher’s methods were more engaging than those of the lecturer and master story-teller in Grant’s (2003) study,

but they did not take students much beyond the surface of disciplinary history. If this teacher was able to help her students gain a better sense of multiple perspectives and conflict in history, imagine the historical knowledge and thinking her students may have gained if she had engaged them in attempts to understand how and why different stories of the Civil Rights movement developed and the ways in which those stories are used and understood.

Monte-Sano's (2008) comparative study of high school history teachers with traditional and disciplinary approaches to history education yielded results that suggest students who are taught through the sourcing heuristic to write essays that reflect use of history-specific strategies and historical argumentation, while those in history classes that rely on traditional teaching methods tend to write essays that are primarily lists of facts or summaries of an event based on one or more secondary sources. The results of the study led Monte-Sano to conclude that engaging students in disciplinary strategies such as sourcing and interpretation of authors' claims through activities like close reading and annotations of historical texts "offer promise" (p. 1074) if evidence-based historical writing is deemed an important goal of history education. Though advocates of placing (or keeping?) nation-building at the center of history and social studies education might disagree, it seems that teaching students how to make arguments in the context of the discipline of history is an optimal goal and approach to the study of the past in any history class, especially if students become better at retaining and using first-order historical knowledge through engagement in argumentation processes.

Wiley and Voss (1999) discovered that the assignment of an argumentative essay task through the use of separate texts resulted in more sophisticated knowledge

transformation and understanding of text concepts among the undergraduate students assigned to this condition than among those who worked under a textbook/narrative condition, which the researchers claim resembled traditional classroom tasks. According to Wiley and Voss (1999), an argumentative writing task based on separate sources yielded the most “historian-like knowledge transformation” (p. 438.9) and use of sophisticated writing techniques such as causal and connective statements. Moreover, the researchers found that the college undergraduates in the separate source/argument condition learned at least as much, if not more content and substantive knowledge about the topic they worked with than students in the textbook/narrative condition.

Reisman (2012) found that implementation of 36-50 Document-Based Lessons in five San Francisco public high schools over a six-month period under the auspices of Stanford University’s Reading Like a Historian (RLH) program yielded evidence of greater disciplinary understandings, better reading comprehension and better command of historical facts among the students involved in the treatment than their peers that did not receive the RLH intervention. Similar to the approach I relied on in my study, Document-Based Lessons began with helping students build background knowledge through secondary sources to make investigation of a central historical question through multiple and conflicting texts doable, and then engaged students in guided exercises intended to help them source, interpret, corroborate and contextualize the sources and develop text-based answers to the central question. Reisman’s (2012) results support the argument that historical thinking and the acquisition and meaningful application of facts are advanced by involving students in the work of the experts.

Like most history teachers, Bain (2000, 2005) began his teaching career by presenting history as more of a school subject that emphasizes acquisition and retention of facts. As he learned more about the discipline through his graduate work in history, Bain decided to teach his high school students to see history as an epistemic act, which included analysis of historical texts, metacognitive strategies, and the building of interpretations of past events. Bain then began to see evidence of enhanced historical cognition among his students along with a greater appreciation for the idea that history can be a useful and interesting way to view the world.

As the examples above demonstrate, history taught through discipline-based instruction, exercises and materials may hold the most promise for helping students reach a greater level of sophistication in their reading, thinking and writing in history. And this includes the important act of acquiring and using first-order historical knowledge to construct and support interpretations of the past and to adopt and defend positions on issues. Bain (2000, 2005), VanSledright (2002), Stout (2004) and other history education researchers who have experimented with teaching and learning through investigative processes and/or historical materials have experienced some success in helping students become more effective historical thinkers.

My study extends our knowledge of how placing historical habits of mind at the center of instruction in history can lead students to think historically and perhaps develop a deeper sense of what transpired in the past and its possible implications for the present. Unlike previous studies in history education, my work with historical novices demonstrated how a set of learning exercises, planned and implemented in concert with an empirically and theoretically derived set of principles for learning to think in history

and authentic practices in the discipline, took shape in actual classroom settings over an extended period of time and fostered real and measurable growth in students' views of history and their knowledge and application of the discipline's second-order ideas. Bain (2005), VanSledright (2002) and Stout (2004) taught disciplinary history in real classrooms with the primary goal of fostering historical thinking among students. Their work was also meant to evaluate the research-based idea that exposure to and engagement in domain-specific concepts and tools is a more effective (and stimulating) way of leading students to develop deeper understandings of history than the knowledge-transmission mode of history instruction. However, these researchers did not incorporate a consistent strategy for disciplinary discourse among their students or chart their development and use of interpretive tools across multiple historical argumentation tasks.

My students may have shown only fleeting moments of competent historical thinking when competence is defined as a stage of development between novice and expert in an academic domain (Alexander, 2003). But gains were made in history-specific reading, thinking, writing and understanding that would be less discernible without multiple measures of growth in these areas. For example, the assignment of six main writing tasks allowed me to see a progression in my students' abilities to construct historical arguments and pinpoint strategies that helped move their capabilities forward in this critical area of disciplinary knowledge. Moreover, from this progression in historical argumentation we can infer that certain characteristics of teaching and learning about the past are likely to lead to actual movement forward toward competence in historical thinking for most novices.

The first and foremost of these is involving students in a series of investigative tasks centered on unresolved historical events. These kinds of learning experiences are likely to disrupt the copier view of history and foster deeper understandings of the discipline, especially if they culminate in a writing requirement that encourages adherence to guild-honored criteria for stating and proving claims in writing. Historical argumentation is an authentic assessment that represents the convergence of the results of students' interrogation, interpretation, corroboration and contextualization of sources and their reasoning and conjecture. It therefore shows what students know and can do in history and enhances their historical thinking capabilities. Add deliberate and structured peer review and history-specific discourse to this process, and the gains can be even sharper.

My study corroborates Reisman's (2012) findings on the influences of the Reading Like a Historian intervention, which was an attempt to reform history instruction by incorporating disciplinary ideas and practices into traditional modes of instruction. Reisman's analysis shows us how teaching the sourcing and contextualization heuristics in conjunction with primary sources and historical debates deepens students' perceptions of history. But RLH stopped short of using assessments that measure domain-specific thinking. Nor did the intervention engage students in a range of exercises with parallels in the discipline of history. My study therefore extends what we learned from RLH by its suggestion that the use of multiple documents (more than two) to investigate an historical controversy, argumentative writing and peer editing and disciplinary discourse foster growth in historical thinking among novices to the point of pushing them away from the

copier view of history. But questions remain about how the kind of growth in discipline-specific knowledge I observed and documented can be sustained and extended.

Although survey results indicated that by the end of my study my students continued to place faith in the naïve idea that absolute truths can be found through the study of history, most of them also indicated that they no longer believed stories were simply a copy of the past. Moreover, my students appeared to go beyond recognition that experts construct knowledge to actually assigning that role to themselves. I would argue that many of my students, perhaps especially the ones that experienced PSD, came close to reaching a level of historical thinking that includes the belief that the past is known through inquiry and evidence.

In my view, these same students believed they could re-construct and pass judgment on the past by asking questions and working with the clues themselves. According to Ashby, et al. (2005), this understanding is one of the more important targets for student-achievement under inquiry-based methods of history instruction. My students' work with the Paxton Uprising, through which they developed and defended opposite interpretations of the event, along with the change in 18 students' definitions of history from simply "the past" to recognition of evidence and interpretation, and each of the eight primary informants' multiple references to investigative work in their interviews support my assessment of my students' growth in historical thinking.

Although the various measures I used to chart possible changes in my students' conceptions of disciplinary history reveal possible shifts in their thinking that resemble experts' ideas, it is still possible that students' behaviors during the HIs, their performance on the historical argumentation tasks and their comments about their work

with historical detection were more reflective of classroom rituals than having achieved real growth in historical thinking. In addition to knowing how to deploy heuristics, competence in the domain also involves knowing when to use them and why they are used (Alexander, 2003; Donovan & Bransford, 2005; VanSledright, 2004). But several of my primary informants' apparent recognition of problems in history and how they might be resolved, including gaps in our knowledge of past events due to gaps in evidence, and the need to assemble a variety of sources, look at them closely and judge their reliability, suggest they developed more sophisticated and nuanced conceptions of key second-order historical concepts such as evidence than they possessed at the beginning of the study.

Like Ashby, et al. (2005), Bain (2000, 2005), Kobrin (1995, 1996), VanSledright (2002) and Stout (2004), I planned and conducted a study of teaching and learning about America's past through an investigative/inquiry approach because I too was interested in determining whether involving students in the inner-workings of disciplinary history would help them become more sophisticated scholars. Like those before me, I wanted to see if I could move adolescent learners beyond consumption and regurgitation of experts' stories and conclusions about the past to making conclusions and historical arguments themselves.

I have a vested interest in determining whether this approach engenders growth in historical thinking among 8th grade students. My roles as a history teacher and school-level social studies department chair in a major metropolitan school district, which is currently in the process of reforming social studies education to be more reflective of disciplinary history, spurred me to engage in research and critical reflection on optimal

ways to teach for historical thinking. Through my research I was able to determine that there are significant benefits to learning history through the discipline's interpretive strategies and tools, such as conceptual shifts that are representative of movement away from novice status to toward expertise in the history domain (Alexander, 2003). A curriculum that immerses students in historical inquiry may lead them to understand that the past is inferred from evidence and that evidence can be used to give meaning to the past.

Students who can think of history as a form of inquiry and are able to engage in the cognitive processes that characterize historical detection are more likely to apply this knowledge to other aspects of their worlds and lives (VanSledright, 2004). On a more immediate level, 8th grade history students who acquire historical habits of mind will be better equipped to succeed in high school history courses that demand more writing than middle school courses typically do. This is especially true of Advanced Placement (AP) history courses in my school district. At the core of AP courses are Document Based Questions (DBQs) that contain a significant writing requirement. The typical DBQ poses an unresolved historical question to students and offers them a context reading and a set of accounts (primary and secondary sources) with which to answer the question in the form of an historical argument (stating claims, citing and explaining supporting evidence, corroboration, refutation of an opposing claim, etc.). DBQs are much like the HIs I used in my study, but more “packaged” and time constrained in terms of classroom implementation. Students that learn history mostly by reading and summarizing secondary sources, which includes teachers' lectures, will likely struggle to meet the requirements of a typical DBQ (Monte-Sano & De La Paz, 2012; Wiley & Voss, 1996).

Students who acquire the cognitive processes of experts in history have greater potential to be effective citizens. Lee (2005), Seixas (2000), VanSledright (1999, 2002, 2004, 2008, 2011) and Wineburg (2001), for example, have argued that the critical reading, thinking and writing strategies students are likely to gain from an investigative approach to history can be transferred to life beyond the history classroom and into adulthood. I agree with this line of thinking and assume that the students in my study (who are now juniors in high school) are better equipped to consider multiple perspectives on social and political issues and will be in a better position to assess claims made by politicians and special interest groups, including Super PACs and so-called Outreach groups that run ads and other media-based messages in an attempt to influence the outcomes of local, state and national elections. This claim is tentative and difficult to prove. And it highlights an area that I think is in need of research. Few, if any longitudinal studies have been conducted with high-school age students or young adults that learned history through investigative methods in elementary and/or middle school to see what impact that type of history education had on their citizenship skills.

College history professors have complained that many of their students do not know how to think historically, especially with regard to writing (Calder, 2002, 2006). Helping students gain historical habits of mind should prepare them for the rigors of college-level history courses. Though most students will not pursue an advanced degree and/or a career in history, historical habits of mind can combine to form a sophisticated way of looking at and making sense of different aspects of our democratic society. It seems reasonable to suggest that students who are able to think historically by the time they take history courses in higher education will get more out of those courses and

further enhance their set of critical thinking strategies, which can and should be applied to politics, consumerism, debates on social issues, etc. (VanSledright, 2004).

Though my study did not include a specific measure of students' feelings toward learning how to think historically, I observed a great deal of student engagement in our lessons. One question I asked each of the eight primary informants I interviewed was how our class compared to their 7th grade world history class, which privileged facts and stories over investigation. My informants all said in one way or another that HIs caused them to think more and form their own opinions about the past. When engagement in instruction is defined as active and critical thinking in addition to hands-on participation in activities, it seems that HIs are a more effective way to involve all students in history education (Bain, 2005).

As suggested by the theoretical framework of learning to think in history that informed and guided my study, one of the best ways to get students engaged in history was inviting them to solve historical mysteries or research and weigh in on past events marked by conflict. Mysterious deaths (Jamestown's Starving Time), instances of shocking and inexplicable violence (The Paxton Uprising), and passionate protests of government actions (the American Revolution) seemed to draw students into investigative work the best. Curriculum centered on historical cognition should include as many lessons or lesson sequences on real historical debates and conflict as possible. Instances of conflict in the past invite and demand investigation, interpretation and argumentation. They also tend to be more stimulating for students than simply identifying causes of events or the accomplishments of famous historical figures.

Another possible upside of investigating conflict in history, and perhaps a more compelling reason for making it one of the centerpieces of teaching and learning about America's (or any nation's) past through inquiry and investigation, is the opportunity it affords to teach students models and strategies for resolving conflicts in their own lives. As Bain (2005) notes, history includes "enduring human dramas and dilemmas" and an "amazing cast of characters involved in events that exemplify the best of worst of human experience" (p. 210). The subject matter of history therefore has the potential to give students models of conflict resolution and a better sense of the reality and importance of power struggles.

Exposure to and analysis of stories of human conflict, examining multiple texts from different perspectives to sort out events, and learning and applying history-specific strategies like source interrogation and evaluation of arguments can promote democratic tendencies and give students a strong sense of empathy and social agency. Students who can understand views contrary to their own and advocate for the views they hold through reason and evidence are in a better position to sort out their own conflicting views and emotions. It is hard to imagine a collective memory approach to teaching history fostering these skills, since the hidden or stated goal of teaching a master narrative of the past is acceptance of that narrative rather than critical thought about its merits and uses (Cole & Barsalou, 2006).

In planning which events to have students investigate, consideration should be given to what scholars and the public at large regard as important past events, ones that might shed light on the present and coincide with what our society at large is most interested in (the development of racism, for example). Some are obvious due to the

issues we face in America today and what we value (and dislike) about ourselves and our society. The American Revolution, the creation of the U.S. Constitution, American slavery, sectionalism, the American Civil War and Southern Reconstruction are all examples. These periods and topics in America's past form the first four units of most school districts' American history curriculum. But since there is limited time in a school year, and historical investigation requires significant amounts of instructional time, as my study indicates, selecting which events under these larger periods and themes to have students dig deeply into, as well as how to frame them to promote inquiry and investigation, is no easy task.

For now at least, teachers who wish to promote historical thinking could take the larger historical topics and mastery objectives contained in their district's required curriculum and develop investigative questions that challenge their students to form and defend claims to answer them, rather than having students focus on gathering information to become familiar with important past events. An example of this is having students investigate why the American Revolution occurred (which is not the settled topic that it appears to be), *and* whether the Patriots' fight for independence was justified (Rakove, 2010; VanSledright, 2002). According to the English laws and customs that governed the Patriots up to 1776, their rebellion was treason, and it is possible that they misinterpreted the British government's intentions when they claimed that Parliament and the Crown were an imminent threat to their freedom and safety, or that they seized upon an opportunity to get free of a nation they felt was preventing them from maximizing their wealth and fulfilling their desire for expansion. For this to be a form of historical inquiry that resembles what experts do, students would have to examine a variety of primary

sources, including text created by those on the opposite side of the rebellion such as members of Parliament, King George III, intellectuals and humorists in England and Loyalists in America. Investigations like this would be aligned with the curriculum, but the risk of not covering all the material delineated in the teaching guide will still be present.

Limitations and Challenges Associated with Implementing a Historical Thinking Curriculum

Though the results of my study suggest that history learned through the sourcing heuristic and other aspects of the discipline leads to growth in historical thinking among novices, there are other limitations and problems associated with this approach besides the trade-offs with incorporating PSD and the amount of time involved in doing HIs. But it can be argued that covering facts instead of using them as part of an investigation of an unresolved historical problem does not improve students' knowledge of the past. *USA Today* reported in 2007 that 14, 419 college freshman and seniors randomly selected from fifty different U.S. colleges averaged below 55% on a civic literacy test. Results from the 2010 administration of the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) test in U.S. History are even less encouraging. According to NAEP, only 17% of the 8th grade students and 12% of the 12th grade students that took the test performed at or above Proficient.

Despite the statistics cited above, it is possible that relying on HIs to teach about America's past could further limit students' opportunities to acquire knowledge considered by many to be important to a full understanding of the creation and development of the United States and the issues that face the country today. I will admit

that if my students were to have been tested on the military campaigns of the American Revolutionary War, they would have struggled or even failed. But had I simply told them about the battles, leaders and strategies, had them use a textbook to copy facts about each major battle on a chart, or had them form groups and make posters about the battles and then view them in a gallery walk, or even a combination of all these strategies, most of my students would likely have forgotten the facts by the time of the test and still performed poorly.

I cannot say with certainty that the kinds of classroom activities noted above are never effective for learning and retaining historical subject matter. What I *am* suggesting is that a history education that relies almost solely on secondary sources and only requires students to summarize what these sources say is not as likely to make information about the past and substantive concepts “stick” as well as learning it through sources made by participants in an event under investigation and using those sources and facts to resolve historical problems. Engaging in discipline-specific acts like interrogating sources is also more likely to help students discern the deeper or hidden meanings behind historical actors’ decisions and actions.

Another problem that seems inherent to an investigative approach to history education is the amount of knowledge, time and effort that HIs require of the teacher. First and foremost, history teachers that are interested in helping their students become good at historical thinking must know how to think historically themselves. This involves being able to think about history and historiography in a metacognitive way so that the sourcing heuristic can be broken into manageable parts for students. Planning and implementing a productive HI also requires knowledge of the topic or event that goes

beyond the surface in order to form worthwhile and intriguing investigative questions and secure sources of different types for students to use. For example, it is helpful to know which sources experts have tended to use or rely on in their explanations of the past that you want your students to work with, and to be aware of the latest scholarship on a particular topic so that students' questions can be addressed more effectively and useful models of historical writing can be obtained.

Yet another issue is the complexity of sources in terms of reading. When working with adolescents with different interests and reading levels, it is important to select primary sources that are likely to pique and hold students' attention, and in some cases to modify them for readability (Wineburg & Martin, 2009). Though historians would tell you that a person's word choice is central to the meaning behind a source, if students are likely to get frustrated with original text to the point of giving up, then you have not helped them understand history or the past. Distractions associated with smart phones and social media seem to have made it even more difficult for teachers to get students interested in dense and difficult to read texts such as the U.S. Constitution. In sum, those that want to teach history through investigation because of its potential benefits for students must be prepared to spend a significant amount of time finding, selecting and in many cases adapting primary sources to accommodate their students' learning styles and preferences (Stout, 2004; VanSledright, 2002, 2011; Wiley & Voss, 1996; Wineburg, Martin, & Monte-Sano, 2012).

The challenges of teaching for disciplinary literacy in history must be considered by a range of decision-makers in education, including curriculum specialists, administrators and policy makers. If history classes are to emphasize inquiry and

investigative methods, curriculum specialists will have the challenge of creating lessons and units that combine content and conceptual knowledge with history-specific strategies. They will also have the task of communicating this kind of curriculum to their district's teachers and educating them on its use. Administrators will have the job of supporting such a shift in the type of history education their students receive by explaining and promoting the inquiry approach to their school's community. Administrators will also need to be flexible in terms of the time their teachers will likely have to spend in staff development that targets the teaching of history-specific strategies. Policy makers in education will also need to be supportive of these methods, especially the time and costs involved in making a shift from content-driven history education to emphasis on the ideas and tools of the discipline.

Implications of Teaching for Historical Thinking for Educators

While a shift to inquiry-based methods of teaching about America's past will require energy, time, support and resources from a range of decision-makers in education, it is teachers and students that will be impacted the most by such a change in how history and the past are taught and learned. As VanSledright (2002) Stout (2004) discovered through their practitioner-research studies on teaching history through investigation, history teachers have the greatest influence over the implementation of investigative history instruction, even if their school district's curriculum is reflective and supportive of this approach. The wide range of learning styles, knowledge and interests among adolescents makes it doubtful that historical thinking can be "packaged" or standardized for teachers and students (Calder, 2002, 2006; Kobrin, 1995; Stout, 2004; VanSledright, 2002, 2011). It is therefore largely up to history teachers to create positive experiences

with historical habits of mind that help students attain and internalize history-specific strategies and epistemic understandings *and* valuable content.

There are a number of historical thinking resources that can assist teachers who see the value in teaching for historical cognition. The Library of Congress' (LOC) website is excellent for its extensive collection of digitalized primary sources and the Using Primary Sources webpage (<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/>), which gives teachers access to guides and analysis tools for teaching the sourcing heuristic. Sections on the page such as “Engage students with primary sources” and “Promote student inquiry” offer practical strategies and advice for teachers with less disciplinary knowledge and/or that are new to teaching historical thinking. In addition, the LOC's sourcing guides for teachers cover most types of primary materials, including manuscripts, political cartoons, photographs and prints, and even sheet music.

Teaching History.org (<http://teachinghistory.org/>) is another useful website for assistance with teaching historical thinking. Materials, resources, instructional guides and videos of experts, students and teachers doing and teaching historical thinking are grouped under the headings “Teaching Materials,” “History Content” and “Best Practices.” Teaching History.org also has links to useful sites such as TeacherServe, which features collections of essays from distinguished scholars intended to “deepen content knowledge in American history and offer fresh ideas for teaching.” From TeacherServe one can visit the National Humanities Center's Toolbox Library website, which has collections of primary sources on most of the major periods in American history “thematically organized with notes and discussion questions.”

Teach U.S. History.org (<http://www.teachushistory.org/>), the result of collaboration between museums, libraries, educators, scholars and school systems, offers a wide range of historic images and background information that provides “historical, cultural, and literary context to significant events in American history.” The website also offers lessons plans and instructional units to help teachers and students make effective use of the images and background information.

Some universities and history education researchers have developed useful and engaging lessons and activities for teaching historical thinking. University of Maryland, Baltimore County’s (UMBC) use of the Teaching American History grant resulted in a series of historical thinking lessons spanning nine significant eras of American history. The lessons, which were created by history teachers following their work with historians, are based on real lines of inquiry about America’s past and offer primary sources and strategies intended to help students use them to create evidence-based interpretations of the questions they investigate. The lessons can be found at <http://www.umbc.edu/che/tahlessons/>.

George Mason University’s website *Historical Thinking Matters* also has lessons on American history that foster historical thinking. And like *Teaching History.org*, *Historical Thinking Matters* also features instructional videos that show what it looks like when an expert applies heuristics to historical texts. These videos were made to be viewed by teachers *and* students. Students who see examples of history-specific reading from people outside of their classroom may be more likely to get a big picture sense of heuristics, and thus gain a better understanding of why experts read this way and perhaps be more motivated to take on the challenge of doing it themselves.

Another excellent resource for implementing historical thinking lessons in American history is Wineburg, Martin and Monte-Sano's *Reading Like a Historian: Teaching Literacy in Middle and High School History Classrooms* (2011). Like *Historical Thinking Matters*, *Reading Like a Historian* contains lessons that engage teachers and students in heuristics like contextualization while they also learn content. Stanford University's *Reading Like a Historian* program and history curriculum, which is affiliated with the authors of the book of the same title, contains document analysis sheets for students with questions that are labeled "Sourcing," "Contextualization" and "Close Reading" so that students and teachers are reminded of the strategies they are engaging to make sense of an important historical topic.

Though a number of user-friendly websites and resources exist for helping history teachers plan and deliver instruction that helps students gain historical habits of mind, teachers will need to be trained in several critical areas in order to be effective at using an investigative approach to history instruction. First, history teachers must be familiar with procedural knowledge in history. In other words, they must know how experts in historical investigation go about constructing the knowledge they present in monographs and articles. Knowing the conclusions of experts and staying a step ahead of students in terms of factual knowledge and even second-order historical concepts such as conflict or cause and effect relationships is not enough. Historical thinking has to be modeled and historical thinking exercises have to be carefully planned to be effective. Lacking knowledge of history's heuristics would make doing these things difficult, if not impossible. Prospective and veteran history teachers that lack this knowledge of the

discipline will likely have to take courses in historiography to begin the process of knowing history's heuristics and how to teach them to children and adolescents.

But knowing how historical knowledge is constructed, and even being capable of constructing and publishing it in scholarly books and articles does not necessarily translate into effective teaching for historical thinking. Teachers that want their students to think historically instead of being mere consumers of historical knowledge should become familiar with history education scholarship, especially in the areas of students' conceptions and misconceptions of history, the differences between the way experts and novices read historical texts and write about the past, and methods for teaching historical thinking that have shown success. History education programs and courses like the ones offered by the Center for History Education at UMBC and George Mason University are excellent for this purpose. Some school districts' social studies offices have formed professional learning communities with the aforementioned universities for the purpose of teaching teachers how to teach and create lessons for the advancement of historical thinking. To summarize, teachers that aspire to have their students do history instead of just memorize it will need to become familiar with the discipline and how to teach it to their students.

A Different Direction for History Education

With Maryland's adoption of the Common Core State Standards in history/social studies, which emphasize critical reading and the construction of evidence-based arguments about the past and issues in the present, it seems unlikely that a coverage style curriculum will lead students to meet these new standards. My study indicates that learning about America's past through teaching practices, exercises and materials

developed and implemented in concert with the literature-based, theoretically-grounded framework for learning to think in history I explained in Chapters 1 and 2 is effective at helping students gain a set of sophisticated reading, thinking and writing strategies along with a deeper sense of history. If this is the direction in which stakeholders in education want to move (or continue to move in, as is the case in my school district), then history curricula will need to be modified significantly to be reflective of historical inquiry and investigation.

But historical content knowledge *is* important. In my study, I privileged historical cognition over first-order knowledge to the point of sometimes taking time away from learning certain facts and stories about America's past that are likely covered in most history classrooms so that my students could master heuristics they were struggling with. A case in point was the extra class time I took to teach contextualization during the HI on the Paxton Uprising. I spent an entire 70-minute class session on this one heuristic for one topic, which I thought was necessary for students to be capable of placing the sources from the Paxton Boys and their supporters in historical context. How could students ever begin to comprehend why those frontiersmen killed an entire group of seemingly peaceful Native Americans without knowing the context of the times?

The larger reason for devoting a class session to one aspect of historical thinking was to help students make contextualization of sources a part of their thinking. No one would argue that this is not a valuable strategy to possess. Contextualization transcends history since any text should be examined and understood in the context in which it was made. But contextualization of sources from the past and present is a very difficult and complicated strategy to teach. And no researcher in history education can claim they

have determined the best way to teach it to children and adolescents (Reisman, 2012). In her recent study of the implementation of Stanford University's *Reading Like a Historian* (RLH) curriculum in several San Francisco public high schools, Reisman (2012) cited teaching and learning contextualization as an area of history education that is in great need of further research.

Historical thinking cannot take place without content. But which content historical investigations should focus on and how much factual knowledge should be provided or conveyed to students are difficult choices to make. Perhaps a better balance of teaching both the content required by school districts and historical thinking could be struck than what occurred in my study. What is happening currently in my school district may serve as a model for blending the two together, though there is a lot more work to be done in this regard.

The social studies curriculum specialists in my district have created an historical thinking Addendum for each of the four units of our regular 8th grade U.S. History curriculum that consist of five historical thinking lessons that coincide with certain topics and content featured in our traditional style American history curriculum. An example is a re-vamped lesson on the Stamp Act that encourages students to use primary sources with opposing views on the law to practice sourcing and determining perspective and come to a deeper understanding of the issue of Britain's colonial tax policies in the wake of their costly victory over France in the Seven Year's War. The lessons in each Addendum include historical thinking scaffolds for students and teaching strategies and tips for teachers.

There are theoretical and practical problems with this curricular model. Classifying lessons rooted in historical thinking as an “Addendum” sends the message that inquiry and investigation are secondary to teaching content. Though incorporation of the Addendum is mandatory in the Advanced history classes, and most middle school history courses in my district are now deemed Advanced, the present format makes the historical thinking exercises seem like something a teacher can do with their students *if* they can find the time to get to it. It is almost as if the lessons are presented as a supplement or as enrichment to the curriculum. But as my study and the ones that preceded it demonstrate, deeper knowledge of first-order information and understandings of concepts like political protest, rebellion and revolution are achieved through historical thinking (Lee, 2005; Stout, 2004; VanSledright, 2002, 2011). In other words, students are more likely to understand and use historical content more deeply and effectively if they have repeated opportunities to investigate it. In my view, historical thinking should be the center of our curriculum and instruction, rather than an addendum.

An additional problem with this model is that our teachers need to know, use and blend the regular and historical thinking curriculum guides, which amounts to eight curriculum guides per course. While this may not be as difficult as planning for daily instruction with two or more different courses (e.g. teaching 6th and 8th grade social studies during the same school year), it is challenging to juggle multiple curriculum guides for a single course. It is possible that this requirement sends a mixed message to my district’s teachers about the most effective way to teach history. Our curriculum writers are aware of these theoretical and practical issues and are working on the creation of a single guide per grade level that is a combination of historical thinking and the

content outlined in the Maryland State Department of Education's Voluntary State Curriculum.

The bottom line though, in my view, is to deliver history instruction that gets students to think and equips them with the tools of the discipline. This perhaps means reducing the scope and breadth of the history curriculum, a point I discuss further in the conclusion section of this chapter. It does not seem possible to expose students to every bit of discrete information suggested by state and district-level teaching guides *and* lead them to make gains in historical thinking. But students who can think historically when they are adults should be more than capable of learning information they may have missed in middle or high school as a cost of spending additional time on learning to read, think and write like a historian. It seems that domain literacy leads to more effective participation in our democratic society than only possessing the cultural literacy advocated by E.D. Hirsch (1988).

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited by several factors. The first and perhaps most significant is context. The learning gains I documented occurred in the context of my classroom and were based on materials and teaching strategies I chose to use, and pedagogical moves that I chose to make. Though my work is grounded in research literature on the strengths and limitations of qualitative studies and history education, it may not be easily replicated in other classroom settings. My study is also limited by the size of my sample and how participants were selected for closer examination. Data was collected on approximately 50 8th grade history students and primary informants were chosen largely based on the work they demonstrated in class sessions in the first two months of the study. This may

or may not affect the reliability of the data, but it was decided that students who presented interesting or compelling cases of learning to think historically would shed the most light on how students can be moved from their status as novices in history toward more sophisticated historical understandings and capabilities.

Another limitation of my study is the different number of sources used for each historical argumentation task. Since the amount of documents and the reading burden varied from task to task, the claims I make about my students' growth and accomplishments in historical thinking have to be placed in the context of each HI. This does not invalidate the claims I make about students' progress with historical writing and their understandings of evidence, accounts and interpretation. But the unevenness of the writing tasks did make the interpretation of students' growth paths in historical thinking more challenging for me as the researcher and perhaps more challenging for readers of my study as well.

Historical writing and the scrutiny and evaluation of it can never be free of subjectivity given the nature of historical knowledge. However, my U.S. History teaching colleague and I applied the Rubric for Historical Argumentation as carefully and evenly as possible. I also re-read each student's written argument several times against the criteria of the Rubric. In the few cases where I struggled with whether to assign an overall quality score of a 3.5 or a 4 to a student's argument, I would take a conservative approach and go with a 3.5. My colleague took the same conservative approach with the sample he scored.

Future Research

Though I believe my study demonstrates that 8th grade students can make gains in historical thinking by learning about America's past through the sourcing heuristic and other aspects of disciplinary history, my work calls for further research on what kinds of materials and teaching strategies are most effective at helping students internalize historical habits of mind and the understanding that history is an interpretive enterprise. Sourcing tools, constant reminders to source all historical texts, and rubrics tend to be effective at getting students to attribute documents and images to authors and illustrators and to take notice of when they were created, what type of sources they are and the authors'/illustrators' purposes for making them (Britt et al., 2000; Monte-Sano & De La Paz, 2012; Reisman, 2012; VanSledright, 2002). But discerning whether these are simply routine behaviors in the context of where they are learned and used or the result of a deeper understanding of historical detection is tricky. Future studies of teaching for historical thinking could address this issue of how to help students make historical cognition a lasting part of their reading, thinking and writing.

How students learn heuristics like corroboration and contextualization, which tend to be more complicated to teach and acquire, could also be a focus of future studies in history education (Reisman, 2012). In my study, primary informants involved in Teaching Intervention 1 with PSD engaged in contextualization of sources at twice the rate as their counterparts under the Teaching Intervention 2 condition during the post-study performance task on African Americans' experiences with Southern Reconstruction (18% compared to 9%). But I am not sure why this was the case. It stands to reason that PSD somehow reinforced the importance of placing sources in context, but I did not

target this strategy in PSD sessions, nor was it made explicit on the Rubric for Historical Argumentation. But contextualization is a key part of disciplinary history and is an area of history education that is in need of further exploration (Wineburg, 1999, 2001; Reisman, 2012; Seixas, 2000; VanSledright, 2002).

Future studies could also address how curriculum writers and teachers can resolve the tension between covering required history content and immersing students in historical detection, interpretation and written argumentation. The materials used in the *Reading Like a Historian* curriculum might help to address this issue, along with the challenge of preparing teachers to teach disciplinary history, since the historical thinking resources in this program tended to be effective at getting students to source, corroborate and contextualize historical texts despite differences in teacher fidelity in implementing the curriculum (Reisman, 2012).

An additional area for future research is determining whether learning about the past through investigative methods helps students retain and understand first-order knowledge better than traditional approaches to history education (e.g. lecture, textbook work, collecting and recording facts from history websites, poster-making, role-playing, etc). An argument against privileging disciplinary knowledge over coverage of content and experts' interpretations of key events is that the time and energy it takes novices to learn historians' heuristics results in fewer opportunities for students to acquire first-order knowledge considered important to a fuller understanding of the development of the United States and our democratic system. It is hard to imagine a single curriculum writer or history teacher that does not hope to lead students to possess deep understandings of the past. But the predominance of a knowledge transmission approach to teaching in

history and social studies indicates that curriculum writers and/or teachers either fail to see the value in exposing students to the ways historical knowledge is constructed or they assume that most children and adolescents are incapable of learning to think historically. Many educators may also believe they do not have the capacity to teach historical thinking, or assume that leaving interpretation of the past in students' hands will result in unwanted views and understandings of the past and lack of knowledge of the master narrative of American progress that has held sway in American history courses for over 100 years (Martorella, 2001; Ravitch & Finn, 1987). But consistently poor test scores on the NAEP history tests and college history professors' concerns with the writing abilities of their students indicates that the time may be ripe for history education that puts source work and interpretation in the hands of students (Calder, 2002, 2006).

Another area that I believe needs attention from researchers is whether students who learn history through investigation are able to transfer historical thinking strategies to other school subjects, and the extent to which students retain and use these strategies in high school and beyond. Longitudinal studies could shed light on just how effective teaching for historical thinking can be for adolescents. Until this kind of research is conducted, the claims that I make about the connection between learning to think historically in middle school and more effective citizenship will remain tentative.

Conclusion

I have labored to show that classroom-based historical investigations cause measurable growth in historical thinking among students. As the data from my study suggest, if HIs are carefully planned and implemented with the intention of helping novices develop historical thinking capabilities, they will not only know how to source a

document or that you should attribute it to an author before reading it, but will see a difference between history and the past and have a foundational understanding of the framework, concepts and tools of the discipline. Data from a variety of sources, including standardized test scores, national surveys and a number of research studies indicate that curriculum and teaching that intends to impart a master narrative of American development and progress with little or no attention to the development of historical cognition leaves many students bereft of critical reading, thinking and writing strategies *and* the substance of the story of American exceptionalism that proponents of this approach want students to know and inform their behaviors as citizens of the world's most influential democracy (Grant, 2003; Monte-Sano, 2008; Reisman, 2012; Seixas, 2000; VanSledright, 2000, 2004, 2008 & 2011; Voss & Wiley, 1996; Wineburg, 2000 & 2004).

Reisman (2012) demonstrated that materials, scaffolds and exercises that engage students in the sourcing, corroboration and contextualization heuristics over an extended period of time led to gains in historical thinking and better retention of first-order knowledge among students. And these results were obtained despite significant variance among the teachers in the ways that they implemented the RLH curriculum. When my students wrote argumentative essays on what may have caused the movement for American independence from England, many showed a firm grasp of what most scholars deem to be the key laws, policies and events that led Americans to fight for independence.

In my view, the apparent failure of the collective memory approach to teaching American history to meet its goal of instilling robust knowledge of a narrative of

Americans' accomplishments, ideals and evolving sense of freedom and justice among students, and the potential of HIs to help students gain substantive knowledge of America's past and historical understanding, together suggest that HIs are an optimal form of teaching and learning about the past (VanSledright, 2008, 2011). Students will still learn stories about the past if taught through HIs. But, instead of one story that is likely to give the impression that history is a *fait accompli*, which tends to make history seem boring and meaningless to many adolescents, students taught through engagement in the activities of the discipline would come to know multiple stories from multiple perspectives, and be taught ways to determine which stories are valid and which are not (VanSledright, 2008). In short, students learning American history through HIs would be taught to think, and thinking about the past in meaningful ways requires one to know facts, details, concepts, and the like.

If HIs are to replace the current textbook-based structure of American history curricula, the scope and breadth of the curriculum will need to be reduced since teaching and learning through HIs requires significant instructional time (VanSledright, 2008). Tough choices will have to be made regarding which events and historical figures will be left out of the curriculum. But efforts designed to squeeze hundreds of facts and social science principles into students' heads through lectures, Powerpoints, note-taking, reading comprehension worksheets, films, poster-making and skits has proven to be ineffective at developing deeper understandings of content and history-specific strategies over and over again (VanSledright, 2008; Wineburg, 2004).

I do not mean to suggest that the activities noted above should not be used in social studies classes. The RLH curriculum, for example, incorporated "signature

activities that stand as landmarks of social studies education” such as lecture, seatwork and teacher-led discussions (Reisman, 2012, p. 256). Bain (2000, 2005), used lecture and note-taking as part of his efforts to get his students to think historically. And my study employed lecture and other activities familiar to students before they entered my class. The difference in each of these cases was students’ relationship to historical knowledge (Bain, 2000, 2005; Reisman, 2012). Students were taught and encouraged to identify lectures and documentary films, for example, as secondary sources constructed for certain purposes, and to subject them to interrogation and corroboration to form their own interpretations of events.

In my view, the gains my students experienced in historical writing alone justify the approach I used to teach about America’s past. Historical argumentation is a public display of historical thinking, and the quality of my students’ writing indicates that they went beyond simply conforming to the way I wanted them to work with the residua of the past. PSD made a positive difference in students’ writing throughout most of the study, and it may have even enhanced the disciplinary understandings of at least some of the students that experienced it. Though some might argue that I short-changed my students in terms of exposure to factual knowledge and stories of the past that might foster a strong sense of patriotism and civic virtue by spending a great deal of time teaching history’s heuristics, I feel that getting students fully engaged in instruction and equipping them with sophisticated reading, thinking and writing strategies is more valuable than learning things that are intended to make you feel good about your country. In fact, I believe that fostering historical thinking, which includes a healthy skepticism toward human behaviors and motives, make students even better citizens than those whose

history education consists mostly of learning a univocal story of American achievements. In sum, students that *do* history are more likely to think deeply about our nation and question the rhetoric and decisions made by politicians in ways that hold them accountable to their constituents and American democratic values.

Despite the limitations of my approach to history education, my study shows that it is possible for novices to work with and understand the tools of disciplinary history. Moving to a model of teaching and learning about America's past through the sourcing heuristic and other aspects of the discipline will be a challenging undertaking with implications for education policy makers, teacher educators, curriculum writers, administrators and, most of all, teachers and students. Most students are not accustomed to working with primary sources for a sustained period, let alone learning how to source, interpret and corroborate historical texts, place them in the context in which they were made, and use them to construct evidence-based arguments. Teaching novices how to do these things requires a lot from teachers. In addition to knowing historical subject matter and general teaching strategies proven to be effective for most students (e.g. communicating learning objectives and executing lessons that combine direct instruction, opportunities for collaboration and discourse, independent practice and a summarizer), teachers that hope to get their students thinking historically will need to at least be familiar with how experts construct historical knowledge and what history education research says about novices' perceptions of history and how they might be led to acquire the cognitive strategies and understandings of the discipline. The results of my study suggest that such an endeavor is worth the effort.

No approach to history education is without flaws, problems or limitations. But my study, which builds upon a number of case studies in disciplinary methods of teaching history, suggests that opening up the discipline of history for students and leading them to adopt its range of sophisticated and interesting ways of reading, thinking, writing and looking at the world is a more fruitful approach.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

TEACHING PROCEDURES

What follows is my account of how students involved in Teaching Interventions 1 and 2 were taught to think historically. I describe the major units and lessons, pedagogical moves and student participation that highlight my efforts to cause a shift in my students' copier views of history. My account was constructed from detailed notes contained in my private journal of reflections on key lessons, actual lesson materials and students' work.

The lessons and exercises I describe in the pages that follow illustrate the kind of teaching I did and the activities and materials I used to push my students to learn and apply the sourcing heuristic and develop an understanding of the interpretive nature of disciplinary history. Most of my account focuses on key lessons and strategies I used with the students involved in Teaching Intervention 1. This includes descriptions of each Peer Scrutiny and Discourse (PSD) session. As noted in Chapters 3 and 4, instruction proceeded similarly and with similar results with the students involved in Teaching Intervention 2.

Key lessons, exercises and moments of student interaction with disciplinary ideas and strategies are presented in chronological order (see Table A.1 for a comprehensive list the HIs used in the study). In the interest of space, I do not mention every HI, or every lesson in a key HI such as the Paxton Uprising, although greater attention is paid to the latter because of the influence it apparently had on my students' historical thinking. An important consideration when reading my description of teaching and learning with

the sourcing heuristic is the idea that this was a journey for my students and I, one that was never short of challenges for everyone involved. As a student involved in Teaching Intervention 2 noted in the last of his seven journal entries for personal reflection on the Paxton Uprising investigation three months into the study, the work was “tuff [sic] because it’s hard taking all the evidence that I have and combining it...” A classmate of this student noted in her final journal entry that even though it was “fun learning more each day about the killings of the Conestoga Indians and it’s sad that it’s over”, it was “challenging to try to understand the perspective[s] of the author[s] of the sources we read...” The same student also said that she was:

having a really hard time writing my argument on the [Paxton Uprising]. There are a lot of sources that says [sic] the killings were wrong and a few that approves [sic] the Paxton Boys’ actions. I don’t really know whether to think the Paxton Boys were innocent or not.

This student’s expressions of cognitive dissonance were shared by many students during the Paxton Uprising HI, and more than half of the students in the study said directly or indicated in other ways that they considered historical writing to be an arduous task.

Mini-Unit: What is History?

During the first full class session (70 minutes) of the 2009-2010 school year, I engaged all students in a warm-up activity that asked them to develop a definition of history from their knowledge. This was the format I used for most of the warm-up activities in the study (see Figures A.1 and A.2). I then invited students to share their definitions aloud, which many were eager to do. I responded to each definition that was offered with comments such as “thank you for sharing”, “that is a thoughtful response”

and “that is a part of history.” I wanted to acknowledge students’ responses and their willingness to share their ideas about history publicly without discussing or revealing aspects of the discipline that could influence how they responded to the history survey I would soon be giving them.

Table A.1. Sequence of HIs, Lessons, Activities and Historical Thinking Concepts

Unit or Historical Investigation	Lesson Topic(s) & Objective(s)	Activities	Historical Thinking Concepts
What is History?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History v. the Past, or how history is conceived/defined by expert historical investigators • The Jamestown colony “Starving Time” mystery • Develop an 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student-generated definitions of history • History survey • Defining “evidence” • Mini-investigation of the cause(s) of the “Starving Time” • Chart of steps involved in historical detection • Re-examination of “Starving Time” sources and revision of students’ original explanations for the event in small groups 	Sources and evidence, sourcing, corroboration, source reliability, interpretation, argumentation (stating a claim, citing and explaining sources in support of the claim, etc.)
Rosa Parks – HI 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging the popular story of Parks’ defiance of segregated seating on buses in Montgomery, Alabama • Development of an evidence-based interpretation of Parks’ protest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students share their knowledge of Rosa Parks • Investigation of where Parks sat on bus #2857 when she was arrested • Creation of evidence-based interpretations of Parks and her act of protest 	Evidence, sourcing, corroboration, source reliability, interpretation, argumentation
Indian/white relations in Colonial Times – HI 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactions between Native Americans and colonists before the American Revolution • Development of an evidence-based interpretation of relations between Native Americans and colonists • An understanding and appreciation for the complexity of relations between Native Americans and colonists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis and corroboration of 8 primary sources on Indian/white relations between 1692 and 1753 • Creation of evidence-based interpretations of Indians’ involvement in the French and Indian War 	Sourcing Perspective Source interpretation Corroboration of sources Development of a claim Citing evidence in support of a claim

Unit or Historical Investigation	Lesson Topic(s) & Objective(s)	Activities	Historical Thinking Concepts
Indians in the French and Indian War – HI 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indians’ involvement in the War, including whether Indians exercised influence during the conflict • Development of an evidence-based interpretation of Indians’ involvement in the War 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement with secondary sources, including readings, a Powerpoint and video clips to build background knowledge • Analysis and corroboration of three primary sources on Indians’ role(s) in the War • Source reliability exercise • Creation of evidence-based interpretations of Indians’ involvement in the French and Indian War 	Special emphases on source corroboration and reliability Development of a claim Citing evidence in support of a claim
The Paxton Uprising – HI 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Killing of 20 Conestoga Indians by settlers on the PA frontier in 1763 • Construct an original account of the Paxton Uprising from multiple, conflicting sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students listen to reading of an introduction to the event and then develop investigative questions about it. • Investigation of the Uprising via multiple and conflicting sources • Special exercise designed to help students place the killings in historical context • Use of the PROP method to determine source reliability • Creation of multi-paragraph, evidence-based interpretations of the Uprising 	Special emphasis on determining source reliability
The American Revolution - HI 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible causes of the movement for American independence from England • Creation of evidence-based account of the reason(s) Americans declared and fought for independence from England 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigation of key events between 1765 and 1776 via a variety of sources to determine why Americans rebelled against the government of the British Empire • Special exercise designed to help students interrogate a famous leader of America’s independence movement and work with the concept of weight of evidence • Creation of multi-paragraph, evidence-based interpretations of America’s fight for independence 	Evidence, sourcing, corroboration, source reliability, interpretation, argumentation

Figure A.1: Warm-Up Format Posted on Promethean Board in Most Lessons

Lesson Title/Date:

Your Ideas about History

Word of the Day/Date: 9-3-09

history

(use your knowledge to create a definition)

Question:

What did you learn from your classmates today?

Homework

Answer today's Warm-Up question with 2 sentences

Figure A.2: Students' Warm-Up and Vocabulary Builder Template

U.S. History Warm-Up & Vocabulary Builder

Date: _____



Lesson Title: _____

Word of the Day: _____

Definition: _____

Example(s)/Picture:	Synonyms:	Antonyms:
	○	

Question: _____

Answer: _____

Sentence describing a personal connection to the word of the day: _____

Immediately following this extended warm-up activity on students' conceptions of history, I administered the pre-course history survey (see Appendix B). I told my students to "take what is already in your brain about history and put it on the survey." I also announced that the surveys would not be graded and that there was no right or wrong way to respond to the items. Twenty-four of the 25 respondents involved in Teaching Intervention 1 (96%) agreed with the survey items suggesting that history is essentially a set of unalterable facts and stories about the past. In the class session that followed I shared these results from the survey and then challenged my students to think differently

about history. I told them that over the next five months I would be teaching them to think about and do history in some of the same ways that experts do.

Our journey into the interpretive nature of history began with a whole-class historical thinking exercise on the Jamestown colony's Starving Time, similar to what VanSledright (2002) used with the fifth grade students in his study on historical thinking. The Starving Time task gave me baseline data on my students' procedural knowledge⁵ in history *and* it served as a point from which to begin having students engage in what Davidson and Lytle (1999) call the "art of historical detection."

The Starving Time task involved a limited amount of teaching on my part. Aside from challenging my students with the question of why so many of Jamestown's settlers died of starvation (or something else) in the winter of 1609-1610, and presenting basic background information on the colony, they were left to interpret and explain the event themselves. In stark contrast to the way I went about teaching historical investigation and argumentative writing in the days, weeks and months that followed, I did not even suggest to my students that they should examine the three primary sources I distributed to them. I did, however, tell them that I was deliberately refraining from assisting them because I wanted to see what they could do with historical materials before we really began to work with history in the class.

Re-visiting the Starving Time

When my students came to the class session that followed their completion of the Starving Time performance task, they were greeted with a warm up activity that prompted them to find and copy the definition of the term "evidence" presented in the

⁵ Procedural knowledge in history involves knowing what to do with the residua of the past. It includes strategies such as sourcing, contextualization and corroboration.

1993 edition of the *Scott, Foresman Intermediate Dictionary*. After having a student read the definition aloud (“anything that shows what is true and what is not; facts; proof...”), I told my students that evidence is an important part of history and that we would be learning what it is and how it fits with the study of the past. I then asked my students to think about George Washington and consider how we know he existed. One student answered, “Books written about him,” and some mentioned the internet. I told students that those are secondary sources and briefly explained why. I then displayed three images of sources related to Washington’s existence on the Promethean board (see Figure A.3) and asked students to examine them. Following this I put students into groups of four and told them I wanted them to work together to “come up with a synonym for the word ‘evidence.’” During the discussion that followed student volunteers said “proof”, “facts”, “non-fiction”, “truth”. To the latter term I responded, “Evidence is used to reach the truth.”⁶ I asked students to add “clues” to their list of synonyms. I then explained the objective for the lesson, which was for students to “develop an evidence-based interpretation of the Starving Time.”

Figure A.3: Images of Sources shown to students in the Lesson on Evidence
Evidence of George Washington’s Existence



Earliest known portrait of Washington painted by his friend Wilson Peale in 1772



A letter Washington wrote to his wife Martha in 1776

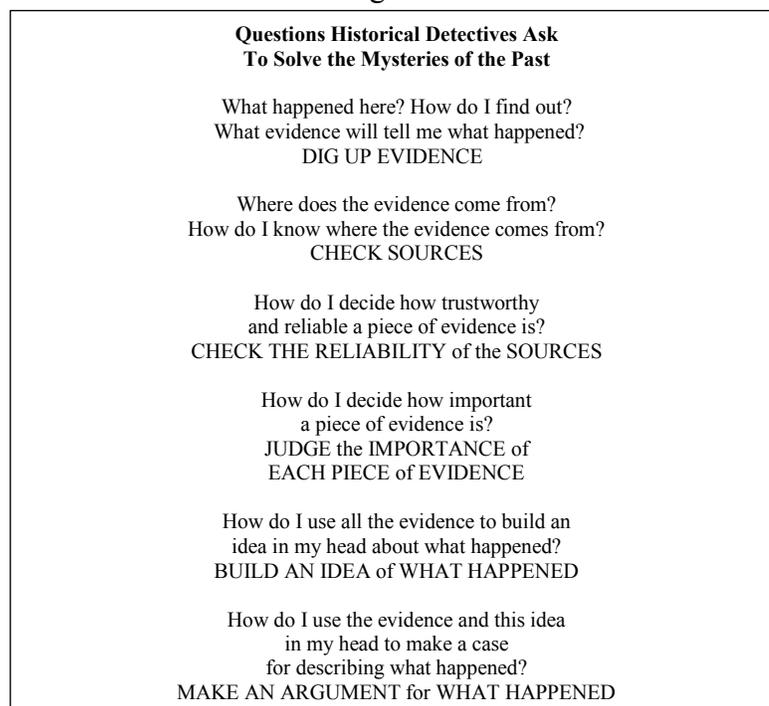


Washington’s house

⁶ In hindsight, it may have been better to say that evidence is used to form ideas about what happened in the past, since objectivity is beyond the reach of history. For more on the issue of objectivity in history, see Peter Novick’s *That Noble Dream* (1988).

I then encouraged my students to consider what experts in history do to try to solve mysteries of the past like the Starving Time. Just as VanSledright (2002) did with the fifth graders he encouraged to behave like expert historical investigators, I posted a chart of procedures that experts typically follow to know and explain the past, and had my students copy them in their notebooks (see Figure A.4). I also told students that this chart would guide a lot of the work we would be doing in the class.

Figure A.4. Chart Posted for Students during the Lesson on Evidence



Now that they had a tool designed to help them solve the mystery of why most of Jamestown's 500 settlers died of starvation in 1609-1610 when an ample supply of food was apparently available, I invited my students to work in their groups to "develop the most convincing theory they could" about the cause(s) of the Starving Time. After telling students to use the chart of historical detective work as a guide, I had them spend

approximately fifteen minutes re-examining the original three Jamestown sources (See Appendix C).

The class session that followed students' second look at the Starving Time sources began with asking them to define the term "interpretation" via the dictionary. After reviewing the dictionary's version of the meaning of this term, I posted the following more history-specific definition of interpretation for students to copy:

The way someone thinks about and explains something from the past or a current event, usually in writing. The meaning that someone gives to an event, person or thing, such as slavery (the past) or the War on Terror (currently).

I also posted the synonyms "view" and "perspective" for students to copy. I then asked if there might be another synonym to write, and a student came up with the word "explanation."

To reinforce the meaning of interpretation in history for students, I displayed a sampling of their interpretations of the Starving Time. I pointed out that they had all viewed the same evidence related to the Starving Time, but still developed different interpretations of it. I also said that "history is interpretation" and that it is common in history to have different interpretations of the same event. I then announced that we would continue examining the Starving Time evidence, and that our goal was to "create evidence-based interpretations of the Starving Time."

I conducted a sourcing demonstration for my students in order to teach and encourage them to use the steps of the sourcing heuristic they had copied in their notebooks. Just before returning their attention to the Starving Time sources, I conducted a read-aloud of an excerpt from George Percy's 1624 account of Jamestown's struggles

in 1609-1610, which is where the Starving Time gets its name. I did this to model the act of sourcing a document that could be used to answer a puzzling question about the past. Since my students were not likely to have witnessed a teacher model the way historians read sources, I went to great lengths to explain what I was about to do and why I was doing it. I also told students to watch and listen to me carefully and to take notes on “things you notice me doing as I read the source.” I then presented the following scenario:

Let’s say I want to be serious about solving the mystery of the Starving Time. I go to the University of Virginia to find out what I should do first, and a professor says “read this,” and gives me a book.

I paused and told my students that I would now demonstrate how someone with my training in history (an expert) would read this source, and then said the following:

Ok. This looks like it is primary. The sketches look like they are from the 1600’s. I need to know if this is primary or not. I see a couple of dates: 1609, 1624. Ok, it looks like this was published in 1624. I need to know the author to be sure. Who is the author of this? Where is the author’s name? I’m looking, looking. Alright, I see that this is from George Percy. He wrote this. It is definitely primary, because I know from a college history class that Percy was in Jamestown during the Starving Time. I know he was the colony’s leader. But I have to wonder about something. I do not know if I can trust what Percy said in his book. He was in charge of Jamestown, and many of the settlers died while he was in charge, so he may have exaggerated or left things out to make himself look good. The King of England could have been upset that 88% of the settlers were

lost under Percy's leadership. This was good reason for Percy to lie or bend the truth about what happened. I will read this carefully then. I do have to take this source seriously. Percy was the leader of the colony, and was there.

I then read the text of Percy's account aloud and demonstrated general comprehension strategies designed to build intra-textual meaning (Pressley & Afflerbach, 1995; VanSledright, 2002).

When we debriefed, some students told me they noticed I was trying to see if the source was primary, but they did not seem to perceive my attempt to identify and assess the author of the source prior to reading its content. I had to draw this out from students with further questioning.

Following my sourcing demonstration, I encouraged my students to continue examining the evidence at hand and to use a combination of what their charts said to do with sources and what they remembered me doing with Percy's account of the Starving Time. Students then collaborated in their groups to produce "convincing" theories or interpretations of the Starving Time. As students worked I circulated the room and spent several minutes with each group reviewing their written work and prompting them to prove their theories.

Lien's group (Teaching Intervention 1) was fixed on the idea that the starvation of Jamestown's settlers was caused by an Indian siege of the Jamestown Fort. I asked them, "Did you prove it [their theory]?" "How do you know this happened?" They proceeded to explain their idea and mentioned Captain John Smith to me, but did not cite him in their account. I told them to cite Smith. They went back to the sources and actually read them aloud and discussed them. Even Greg, who had been very quiet and showed little

interest in history up to this point, got directly involved in the process. This class session was noteworthy for the high level of student engagement and the quality of students' work, especially their discourse. It seemed that students under the teaching Intervention 1 condition were eager to develop and prove their theories of the Starving Time.

Introducing the Rubric for Historical Argumentation

As part of the follow-up to our investigation of the Starving Time, I presented students with a rubric designed to guide all subsequent historical writing tasks (see Figures 3.3 and 3.4). I used the rubric to evaluate each group's interpretation of the Starving Time and attached it to each group's paper. I asked students to re-assemble and review the contents of the rubric and how I marked it, and be able to state what I regarded as the strengths of their interpretations and what they could improve upon when asked to do the next historical writing task.

Many students recognized the need to improve their topic sentences and cite more evidence when proving points about the past. Most students did not, however, comment on using more effective citations in their writing. On every rubric I checked the item "Draws from evidence, but does not cite or reference it specifically" because most papers did not include an author's name, his or her position in society, the person's connection to the event and the date and type of source. The reference below from Smriti's group (Teaching Intervention 1) was the most specific instance of citing among all the interpretations.

In Source # 2, John Smith said, 'we starved because we did not plan well, work hard or have good government'

Following students' review of the Rubric for Historical Argumentation and their paragraphs on the Starving Time, I exposed them to two distinct interpretations of the cause(s) of the event from experts in historical investigation. Working with materials gleaned from the Clues and Evidence section of the website *Secrets of the Dead, Case File: Death at Jamestown* hosted by PBS (2008), I had my students examine each interpretation of the Starving Time and look for and summarize the expert's theory and the evidence used to develop and support it. I also asked students to state their opinion of each expert's interpretation. My students were intrigued by the idea posited by forensic pathologist Frank Hancock that the settlers perished from arsenic poisoning, possibly carried out by an operative of the Spanish government. Quite a few students told me they were skeptical of Dr. Hancock's theory and his evidence. I praised them for this kind of critical thinking, and the merits of Dr. Hancock's claims became a topic of discussion during the summarizer for the lesson.

This is how I would end each of the five HIs that I asked my students to participate in during the course of the study. I also took pains not to reveal what experts in history or textbooks claimed about the events we studied until after my students had a chance to develop their own interpretations. I did not want them to feel or assume that the case was closed, so to speak, with any aspects of the past we explored. I was also careful to frame experts' interpretations as ideas, arguments or stories about the past that they had "constructed" from evidence, and which could prove to be incorrect in some way by other investigators, perhaps through newly discovered or previously unused evidence. We also used experts' written interpretations of the past as examples of how to

write historical narratives. This was especially true of the PSD sessions, the first of which is described below.

Peer Scrutiny and Discourse: Session 1

PSD was intended to give one class opportunities to critique and discuss their written historical arguments and thereby discuss the interpretive nature of the discipline of history. I assumed that these discussions, which were teacher-directed and scaffolded in the beginning, would become more sophisticated as students gained experience with the PSD procedures I laid out for them, and as their knowledge of history grew from the work they were doing with the sourcing heuristic during the HIs.

I implemented a total of five PSD sessions, one following each historical argumentation writing task. Each PSD session involved seven steps: (1) an activator designed to get students thinking about historical writing; (2) communication of the mastery objectives of having students become proficient in writing historical arguments and deepening their knowledge of history; (3) review of the rubric for historical argumentation; (4) strategic reading of an excerpt from an argument written by an expert historical investigator; (5) peer review of students' arguments written at the end of an HI; (6) discourse about student-generated feedback between editing partners; and (7) revision of students' arguments based on the feedback received.

Finding Claims and Evidence: Evaluating Peers' Written Interpretations of Rosa Parks

I began the first session of PSD by asking my students to reflect on the importance of effective writing. Several students offered the idea that good writing helps you get your opinions across to others. I agreed, and then suggested that effective writing

can help you persuade others to agree with your views and perhaps take action on an issue you think is important. I also told students that good writing in history is a positive reflection on their intelligence. Finally, I noted that proficiency in historical writing will cause you to be better at writing in other subjects, since historical argumentation is arguably the most sophisticated kind of writing anyone can do. Next I informed students that we were going to spend the day's class session and several others throughout the semester learning how to be better writers in history and deepening our knowledge of what history is and how it works. I followed this by communicating the immediate objectives for our first experience with PSD: for students to find an historian's claim and supporting evidence and give useful feedback to classmates about their Rosa Parks arguments.

After reviewing the Rubric for Historical Argumentation, students read and applied the INSERT strategy to an excerpt from Howard Zinn's *A People's History of the United States* to get the gist of Zinn's claim about the Continental Army during the American Revolution (see Appendix J for the excerpt). A brief discussion of the main idea of the excerpt ensued, with students stating that the reading was about getting Americans to fight the British. I then encouraged them to read the excerpt a second time to pinpoint Zinn's claims about the recruitment and discipline of American soldiers. Students noted that Zinn claimed the leaders of the American Revolution distrusted ordinary white males and used measures to force them into the fight for independence. One student said he underlined the part where Zinn said the leaders of the Revolution coerced reluctant American men into fighting. A different student pointed out the Connecticut conscription law from 1778 as evidence of Zinn's claim, and yet another

student noted Zinn's use of a chaplain's comments about harsh discipline in the Continental Army. During this discussion of Zinn's interpretation of the American Revolution, I projected the excerpt on the Promethean board, circled Zinn's claim and highlighted each piece of evidence students identified. I also clarified why Zinn's references to sources constituted evidence and why Zinn cited them the way he did.

Students were then invited to read and evaluate each other's Rosa Parks arguments with the historical argumentation rubric as a guide. Since students' first and second readings of Zinn's argument and the discussion that followed took more time than expected, they had just enough time to critique and offer feedback on their partner's work, but little time to actually revise their interpretations of Parks' protest in light of the feedback.

Historical Investigation 2: Indian/White Relations in Colonial America

Working with Evidence, Corroboration, Source Reliability and Interpretation

The Rosa Parks investigation was designed to give students additional practice with the concept of historical evidence, introduce corroboration, and allow students to develop grounded historical interpretations of a famous past event. The next lesson sequence in historical thinking added source reliability to a growing list of history-specific concepts and strategies that I wanted my students to use and understand. In HI 2 I asked my students to sort through varied accounts and combine their knowledge of evidence and corroboration with judgments of source reliability to form written interpretations of relations between Indians and colonists in colonial America prior to the American Revolution. Though my school district's 8th grade U.S. History curriculum emphasizes conflict between these groups, I chose sources that might lead students to

perceive and write about the complexity of relations between Indians and colonists. I reasoned that students who developed an interpretation along these lines would be accounting for the conflicting sources instead of ignoring those that did not fit pre-conceived notions of how these groups interacted.

After communicating the objective for HI 2 (“to develop an evidence-based interpretation of Indian/white relations in colonial America”), I tapped my students’ knowledge and assumptions about Indians and how they interacted with colonists. Working from the assumption that many of my students learned things about Indian/white relations from their unit on colonial Maryland in 5th grade, and were exposed to interpretations of this topic in film and other media, I believed they could easily make a connection to it. I assumed most of my students would tell me that Native Americans were war-like people who rarely got along with the white population of the French and British colonies.

After making a list of what my students claimed to know or believe about Native Americans, which, as I expected, included the terms “primitive”, “savage”, “barbaric”, and “violent,” I told them that I would be displaying three images that are evidence of Indian/white relations (the term “relations” was front-loaded) and that I wanted them to think about how each one compared to their knowledge or beliefs. Much like history education researcher and former high school history teacher Robert Bain (2005) did with his students on the topic of Christopher Columbus and the notion of a flat earth, I asked my students to determine whether each source “supports,” “contests” or “extends” their knowledge /assumptions about Native Americans and their interactions with whites in colonial times. I had to explain this assignment and give an example, since this was not

something my students had ever done in a social studies class before (see Appendix K for the handout)⁷. We began with a painting called “The Death of Jane McCrea” (Figure A.7), which I believed would support my students’ knowledge of Indians and their relations with colonists.

Starting with the painting of Jane McCrea’s death was deliberate since I believed it would confirm my students’ notion that Indians were excessively violent and were in a constant state of conflict with colonists. I was correct. Every student but two indicated that the painting supported their knowledge/assumptions about the topic. I was setting my students up to experience some cognitive dissonance that I hoped would encourage them to see the value in knowing where your knowledge comes from and the importance of seeking and examining evidence to sort out historical questions, problems and controversies.

The two images I chose to follow Vanderlyn’s depiction of Indian brutality represent peace and acculturation in Indian/white relations. I hoped that showing evidence which contradicted what my students claimed to know and believe about Indians and colonists would provoke a collective desire among them to see and examine additional evidence to determine what kind of interactions these groups actually had.

Figure A.7: “The Death of Jane McCrea” by John Vanderlyn (1804)



⁷ I actually took a quick survey of my students to see if they had engaged in an activity like this before, since I suspected they had not been asked to reflect on their knowledge of the past in their previous social studies classes.

The next image I displayed is a painting of Moravian missionary David Zeisberger preaching to Delaware Indians who had converted to the Moravian form of Christianity (see Figure A.8). When we discussed students' comparisons of this painting to their knowledge, most of them indicated that they had chosen "supports" or "extends" on the handout because they assumed Zeisberger was a colonial leader informing Indians that they would have to give up their land to white settlers. Students' misinterpretation of Schussele's painting caused them to regard the source as further confirmation of their assumption that Indians and colonists were in a constant state of conflict. It should be noted that I displayed the painting without its title. Had I included the title, my students likely would have interpreted it differently.

Figure A.8: "The Power of the Gospel" by Christian Schussele (1862)



The last image, an engraving of the baptism of Delaware Indians into the Moravian church in 1757 (Figure A.9), was unusual to my students, and they struggled to identify what was being depicted. After using scaffolded questions to lead students to infer that the scene was a baptism of Indians, students asked if the Indians were being forced into acceptance of Christianity. Many of them seemed perplexed when I noted that other evidence suggests the Indians were willing participants in the event. I then tried to build on the apparent cognitive dissonance these sources caused my students to

experience and called upon them to investigate Indian/white relations in more depth in the next class session.

Figure A.9: Engraving of a Baptism of Delaware Indians by Moravian Missionaries, circa 1757. The artist's identity is unknown.



Students worked with the sources in stations with the assistance of what I often referred to as a “sourcing chart.” As students examined the sources, they talked to one another about the evidence *and* things totally unrelated to the HI. I therefore spent a great deal of time circulating the room helping students stay on task and use the sourcing heuristic by asking questions about their reading of the sources and pointing out aspects of the sources that I thought would interest them. For example, I mentioned to a few groups examining the recorded speech from a Minisink Indian to a British officer about the fur trade that it was not uncommon for white fur traders to get Indians drunk before doing business in order to get the better end of the deal.

My interactions with students at the stations also involved encouraging and helping them identify and interrogate the authors/creators of the sources, determine whether sources were primary or secondary, and decide if the information contained in each source could be trusted. I tried to make determining source reliability a big deal in the context of the objective of the HI, which was for students to construct an evidence-

based interpretation of relations between Indians and white colonists in colonial America. As I moved between the stations I advised students to continually ask the question “was the author/creator of this source in a position to know about the topic we are investigating?” At the station that featured a letter from George Washington about Indians operating for and against the British during the French and Indian War (1754-1763), I asked my students if Washington would have “known what he was talking about.” Some students inferred, correctly, that since Washington was in the military in a time of war, he would have had experience with Indian fighters and probably needed to form as many alliances with Indians as possible in order to defeat the French.

I started the second class session of the HI by having students create their own definitions of the term “evidence.” Students chosen at random to share their definitions said evidence is “a document that helps you prove something”, “proof used to support a theory,” and other similar responses. It seemed that at least for some students the concept of evidence was sticking.

The third and final class session dedicated to investigating and interpreting Indian/white relations in colonial America was focused on writing. Students’ writing was preceded by a discussion about characteristics of effective writing in history. I asked my students to come up with three or four characteristics of “believable” interpretations of the past. One student said “topic sentence”, to which I responded that this should be where they state their claim. Other students added “evidence” and “support.” We then reviewed the Rubric for Historical Argumentation, which was intended to guide students’ writing, and I noted that evidence needed to be cited “specifically” in their arguments and that they were expected to connect their evidence to their claims. I also told my students

that they were not required to claim that Indian/white relations were all one thing or another. By this I meant that all of the evidence should be accounted for and dealt with in their minds and in their arguments.

Peer Scrutiny and Discourse: Session 2

Additional Practice with Recognizing Experts' Claims and Supporting Evidence

In the second PSD session, which followed students' writing of an argument about Indian/white relations, I asked my students to look more closely at their peers' arguments and determine how well their writing met the criteria stated in the rubric. The revised Rubric for Historical Argumentation, which included the qualifiers Strong, Moderate and Weak, allowed students to give more specific ratings to their partners' use of each history-specific trait stated on the rubric. There was little change in the kinds of comments students made about their peers' work, except to say that the quality of their critiques seemed to have decreased slightly. There were fewer instances of students being critical or complimentary of their peers' claims and use of supporting evidence. It could be that my students felt the ratings they assigned to their partners' arguments were self-explanatory. I decided that in the next PSD session I would have to remind my students about the need to make written comments and offer them a rationale for this new requirement.

Historical Investigation 3: American Indians' Role(s) in the French & Indian War

Additional Work with Source Reliability

Following two -three class sessions designed to help students build background knowledge about the French and Indian War (1754-1763), mostly through secondary sources including expository texts, images and film clips, I presented students with the

big historical question of American Indians' involvement in this imperial contest between France and England. I told my students that historians throughout American history have interpreted this topic differently. I noted that some portrayed Indians as helpless victims of French and British competition for control of North America, while others claimed that Indian groups acted primarily as mercenaries for whichever European power promised the greatest economic advantages, and that these Indians struck fear in their enemies with shocking acts of brutality, including scalping and other forms of mutilation. Evidence suggests that the reality was much more complicated and that Indian groups exercised significant power and influence during the conflict. I did not share this with my students, since I wanted them to come to that conclusion, or a different one, through investigation.

The sources I chose for this investigation are short and concise. They included a letter from Colonel George Washington to a fellow colonial militia officer in 1754, a letter from Sir William Johnson, the Superintendent of Indian Affairs for New York during the War, and a speech from James Glen, the royal Governor of South Carolina at the time of the conflict (see Appendix M for the sources). I showed students primary portraits of each man, since I wanted them to perceive their words as real voices from the past. One thing that set this HI apart from the previous ones was greater emphasis on determining source reliability. The main exercise I used to help students assess the reliability of Washington, Johnson and Glen on Indians' involvement in the War was a resource sheet presenting short biographies of each man.

Following my students' work with sourcing and interpreting the three sources with a tool designed for that purpose, I stated that I wanted them to "make a judgment

about the reliability of each man on our big historical question.” The exercise was effective. Each student was able to determine that all three men were in a position to know about the involvement of American Indians in the French and Indian War. In addition to this, I asked students to determine if the three sources corroborated in any way, and many students were able to articulate that each source suggested Indians were useful to the British and that they exercised some control over their situation.

Most students’ writing on this topic, which was completed in one class session, contained explicit references to sources and varying levels of corroboration and source reliability assessments. As with the writing on Indian/white relations, I encouraged students to use the Rubric for Historical Argumentation and circulated the room offering advice on supporting claims, citing evidence, how to discuss source reliability, etc..

Peer Scrutiny and Discourse: Session 3

The third session of PSD involved less time for students’ evaluation of a sample argument from an expert historical investigator, which gave them more time to critique each other’s arguments about American Indians’ involvement in the French and Indian War. The students under the Teaching Intervention 1 condition were becoming more skilled at identifying an author’s claim(s) and supporting evidence, which was an expectation of PSD. One notable difference between this session and the two before it was a higher level of history-specific discourse between students and me, and between students as they critiqued each other’s work.

Historical Investigation 4: The Paxton Uprising

Combining History-Specific Strategies to Interpret a Controversial Past Event

The Paxton Uprising investigation was designed to give my students an opportunity to apply the historical thinking strategies they had been learning and practicing to a controversial event that demands an explanation. The so-called Paxton Uprising, which occurred in Lancaster, Pennsylvania shortly after the end of the French and Indian War in 1763, seems tailor-made for novices to take on the challenge of historical detective work and develop an argument that gives meaning to a seemingly incomprehensible and shocking act of violence in America's past. The Paxton Uprising is not found in my school district's Advanced U.S. History 8 curriculum. But the potential of the event to foster historical inquiry among students and deepen their knowledge of the discipline justified our divergence from the prescribed series of lessons on the colonial era.

There were five key differences between the Paxton Uprising HI and the three that preceded it: (1) the violence associated with the Uprising is shocking to our modern sensibilities and is therefore provocative; (2) the sources (see Appendix N) from the event are diametrically opposed in terms of what they say about the Frontiersmen that committed the violence and the Indians they killed, making corroboration of sources and assessments of their reliability essential to the development of a reasoned interpretation of the Uprising; (3) the investigative questions were developed by students; (4) students were encouraged to use a new tool for assessing source reliability called the PROP Method (see Appendix N); and (5) students were expected to conclude their investigation by constructing a 5-paragraph argument about the event.

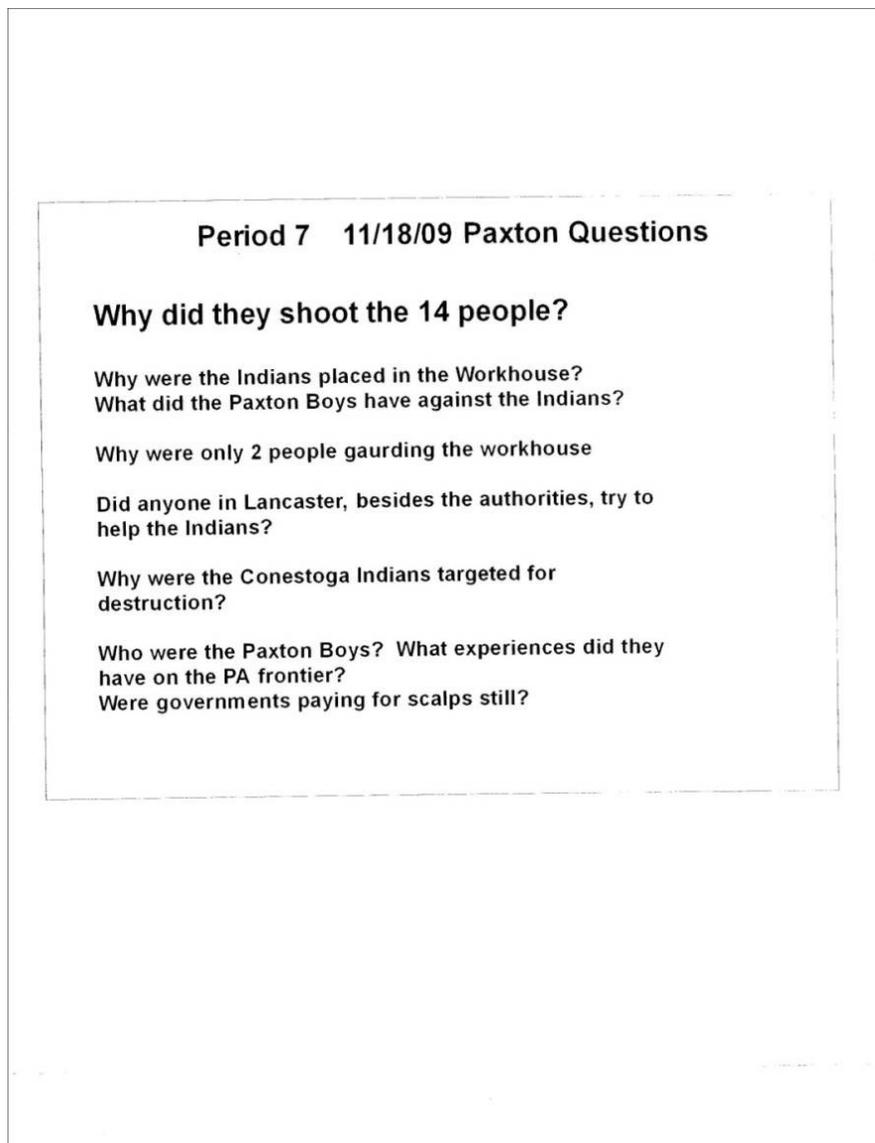
I began our investigation of the Paxton Uprising by reading aloud an introduction to the event, which I noted was a secondary account (see Appendix N). I then asked my students “What do you want to know about this event? What questions do you have about it?” Students fired away with questions ranging from “Why did the Paxton Boys kill the Indians?” to “Were governments still paying for [Indian] scalps?” I typed students’ questions and projected them on the Promethean board for everyone to see (see Figure A.10).

My students’ questions, which I believed were thoughtful and sophisticated, indicated they were eager to do some detective work to get to the bottom of the killings. I then told my students that it might be possible to develop answers to all of the questions they asked, but that they would need to examine evidence and perhaps do some imaginative thinking in order to do so. I suggested that it made sense for us to try to determine why the killings occurred. So I decided that our big historical question would be “Were the killings of the Conestoga Indians justified?” I assumed this investigative question, which encompassed most of my students’ queries about the Uprising, would encourage students to examine and draw upon evidence from both sides of the public debate on the Paxton Boys’ actions that ensued in the wake of the killings.

As with HIs 1, 2 and 3, it was important to help my students contextualize the Uprising and the sources associated with it by front loading vocabulary and providing background information. This was especially important for the Paxton Uprising since most of the sources are letters and other types of personal statements from people involved in the event that do not provide or explicate information I regarded as essential for students to know before examining these primary accounts. For example, none of the

sources explain who the Paxton Boys were (Scots-Irish immigrants) and why they lived where they did, since this information was well-known to the audiences the sources were originally intended for.

Figure A.10: Questions about the Paxton Uprising from the Students Involved in Intervention 1



As an alternative to the lecture and PowerPoint strategy for helping students acquire background knowledge for this HI, I set up stations with readings, maps and images about the people and places involved and key events that preceded the Uprising (see

Appendix N). For example, Station 1 had maps of Lancaster and Paxton, Stations 2, 3 and 4 had descriptive information about Pennsylvania's Quakers, the Conestoga Indians, and the Scots-Irish settlers living on the Pennsylvania frontier, and Stations 6, 7 and 8 asked students to define key terms likely to be unfamiliar to them and to preview the PROP method they would be using to determine source reliability.

Our work with original sources connected to the Paxton Uprising started with an account from Edward Shippen, Chief magistrate for the town of Lancaster at the time of the killings. When Shippen learned of the Paxton Boys' attack on the Indian village of Conestoga, he wrote a letter to the Governor of the colony of Pennsylvania informing him of the attack. I modeled the act of sourcing Shippen's account, and then read its contents aloud for students so they could get a sense of the letter's tone and purpose. I then had students work in pairs to determine Shippen's perspective on the killings. I suspected this would be challenging, so I developed a three-step process for students to follow (see Appendix N). Many were able to identify Shippen's use of the terms "murdered" and "Murderers" to describe the killings and the perpetrators as the main clues for determining Shippen's perspective on the attack. This sparked a short discussion of the idea that perspective can be reflected in the words individuals use to describe events.

The second of the eight class sessions we spent investigating and developing evidence-based interpretations of the Paxton Uprising was used for sourcing and examining a letter to Governor John Penn written on behalf of the Conestoga Indians one month prior to their demise. Students were asked to source the letter, which was followed by an exercise that helped students identify the "claims" made by the

Conestogas (through Montour) and to get them accustomed to using the “Sourcing Tool” for the Paxton Uprising (see Appendix N). After a brief class discussion about the Conetoga’s claims, students were introduced to the first of Governor Penn’s letters or Proclamations to colonial authorities in response to the killings and asked to “see if what he [Penn] says corroborates what the Conestogas claimed about themselves.”

Students worked in pairs and were able to determine that Governor Penn supported the Conestogas’ claim to have lived peacefully among Pennsylvania’s colonists before and during the French and Indian War and Pontiac’s Rebellion. As a way to summarize the lesson and see what students were thinking about the Uprising, I asked them to record whatever “theory” they had about the event at that point in the HI. Students were invited to share and explain their initial theories, which involved encouraging them to justify their claims by make references to the evidence and/or background information. Most students said they thought the Indians were probably killed out of hate and/or fear. Students also had an opportunity to record an entry in the journal I asked them to start keeping about their work during the HI.

For the next five class sessions, students worked either in pairs or alone, examining, summarizing and interrogating the remaining sources. Most were diligent about filling in their sourcing charts with source information and perspective, though it seemed that some students were relying too much on their partner’s reading and interpretations of the sources. For example, a few students simply copied their partner’s chart for some of the sources. Whenever I noticed this behavior I reminded these students that they needed to read each source for themselves so that they could form their own idea of why the Consetogas were killed. I also noted that this was important because they were going to

construct an argument about the event on their own. I was careful not to exercise too much control over my students' work, lest they get the impression that historical detection must proceed in a certain manner, or that I would dispense answers to their questions about the Uprising if they could not come up with them.

History novices do need direction, coaching and encouragement, which is why I provided tools and other scaffolds for their examination of the sources. I tried to strike a balance between coaching and directing students' work. I did not want students to get the impression that the Paxton Uprising had already been figured out and that I was simply challenging them to uncover what experts already knew about the event. But students' journal entries indicated they realized there was not a definitive explanation for the Paxton Boys' behavior. This was especially true after they read the Paxton Boys' justifications for their actions, which portray the Conestogas as enemies that had to be eliminated.

One difference between this HI and the ones that preceded it was my insistence that students use the PROP method to determine the reliability of each source. This step in the HI was the most challenging to get my students to engage in, which is understandable for several reasons. First, it was difficult for students to process the sources because of the 18th century language and students' limited background knowledge. Second, the whole idea of questioning a source provided by the teacher for instructional purposes was still new (and foreign) to my students. Some students struggled with what it meant to ask if someone had a "reason to lie" (represented by the R in the PROP method). I explained that "reason to lie" meant it was for us as investigators to "decide if the author of a source *could* have gained something from lying, not whether or not he/she actually lied." I also

told students that the PROP method was not intended to be the kind of scientific procedure they might follow with an experiment in their science class.

Though I found myself constantly reminding students to go through the PROP method and make their “best judgment” about the reliability of each source, there were notable instances of students assessing source reliability without prompting. For example, in regard to the letter from Reverend Elder from the town of Paxton, in which he warned colonial authorities that members of his church were bent on destroying the Conestoga Indians despite Elder’s “entreating them to desist from an undertaking” that would be “cruel and unchristian in its nature...,” several students openly questioned Elder’s motives for saying these things. Two students thought Elder’s letter might be a cover up because he most likely shared the settlers’ opinions of the Conestoga Indians, since he lived among the frontiersmen and was probably dedicated to them. Other students thought Elder could have been opposed to the Paxton Boys’ actions because he was a religious leader.

I also witnessed the PROP method cause students to re-examine and then make judgments about other sources, such as the sworn testimony against the Conestogas given by a Frontiersman named Alexander Stephen. Several students were torn between dismissing the statement because Alexander might have taken part in the attacks or supported those that did, and taking the testimony at face value because it was made under oath. Two students suggested that it would be good to know more about Stephen’s background as a way of deciding the reliability of his statement. I suggested to them and others that they could see if other sources corroborate Stephen’s account as another way of deciding.

With the exception of Reverend Elder's account, the sources students had examined prior to Alexander Stephen's testimony were condemnations of the killings from government officials and a prominent citizen of Lancaster. I arranged the sources this way so that students could get a firm grasp of one side of the debate before attempting to understand the killers' views, *and* to build suspense about the killers' explanations for their actions. This tactic worked. Many students noted in their journals after this class session that they wanted to get the Paxton Boys' perspectives. I found that creating suspense was a powerful way to get students motivated to do historical detective work. Reading the introduction to the Paxton Uprising, which primarily describes the violence, helped my students generate excellent investigative questions to pursue. But not every historic event lends itself to this kind of suspense.

After spending two class sessions having students apply the sourcing heuristic to documents and a political cartoon from the Paxton Boys and their supporters, I decided there was a need to devote a class session to having my students determine and articulate the Paxton Boys' perspectives on their actions. Anticipating that it would be difficult for students to comprehend the Paxton Boys' claims, I developed and implemented an activity designed to help students place the Paxton Boys' actions in historical context (see Appendix N). Students were given a timeline of events leading up to the Uprising and instructions to highlight information that they thought would "help explain why the Paxton Boys killed the Conestoga Indians and whether the killings were justified." The activity also encouraged peer discourse about the timeline and whether any of its contents shed light on the Paxton Boys' actions.

In the same class session, I began the writing process with my students by reviewing the instructions and the criteria on the Rubric for Historical Argumentation. I also provided several writing and thinking aids, including a chart showing categorization of the evidence into accounts “Condemning” and “Supporting” the Paxton Boys, and a list of basic and undisputed facts from the event (dates, locations, number of Indians killed, etc.). I also told my students that it was not so much the position they took on the Uprising, but how well they argued it and supported it with evidence that really mattered.

Peer Scrutiny and Discourse: Session 4

Critiquing Peers’ Arguments about the Paxton Uprising

The students involved in Teaching Intervention 1 showed an appreciation for having the opportunity to fix their written arguments about the Paxton Uprising during the fourth session of PSD. But, as I noted in my journal, the discourse was “not at a high level.” One explanation for this may be my having refrained from giving specific prompts about what to discuss. Students therefore went methodically through the rubric editing their peer’s work and then revising their own.

Historical Investigation 5: The Possible Causes of the American Revolution

Though I tried to portray the American Revolution as a “mystery that needs to be explained” and pointed out to my students that it was a violent struggle that cost at least 50,000 human lives, our investigation into what may have caused Americans to fight for independence from Great Britain was not characterized by the same level of student interest and investigative fervor as their attempts to crack the Starving Time case or understand why the Paxton Boys “shot, scalped, hacked and cut to pieces” an entire group of Native Americans. Nonetheless, I pushed forward with the idea of history as an

interpretive act and invited my students to construct knowledge about this significant part of America's past that is still debated by accomplished scholars (Rakove, 2010).

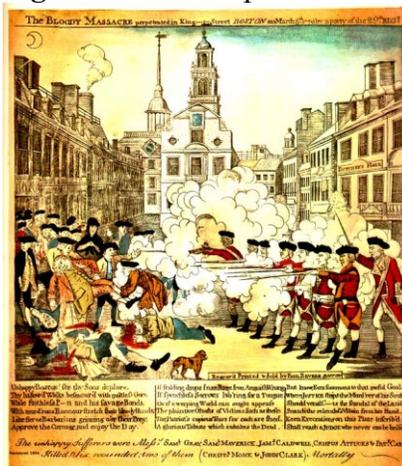
I placed an emphasis on using and interpreting source material and presenting topics and events involved in the Revolutionary period as unresolved questions that are worth investigating and developing explanations for. I was careful not to present the American Revolution as something that was destined to occur. Our look at the Revolution was intended to be a critical one, rather than a patriotic treatment of the period. I also wanted my students to try to recapture the uncertainty of the times and the passions felt by people on all sides of the struggle for American independence.

Due to the distance between modern political issues and the ones that Americans argued about in colonial times (e.g. the power of the British Parliament to tax its colonists and the idea of virtual representation of the colonies in that law-making body), I decided that I would need to spend more time than in previous HIs helping students build content knowledge. For example, our look at the infamous Stamp Act of 1765 involved reading both a textbook entry on the subject and watching a 20-minute film segment about it prior to using original sources to get to the core of Americans' protests of the Act. Whenever we used secondary sources I would explain what the sources were (e.g. Wikipedia, PBS's *Liberty* website, textbook entries, film clips, etc.), how the creators of the sources acquired the knowledge they contained, and why we were consulting them (because it would take too long to discover all the facts we needed to know through interpretation of primary sources).

I divided our study of the causes of the American Revolution into segments based on key events in what our textbook calls "The Road to Revolution." What we did for the

so-called Boston Massacre was typical of the lessons and activities we used to determine why Americans rebelled against England. I launched the mini-investigation by tapping students’ existing knowledge/assumptions about the event. Then I read a short introduction to the incident from a secondary source. I followed this by stating and explaining the objective, which was for students to “develop an argument about why the shootings occurred on King Street in Boston on March 5, 1770,” and that we would accomplish it by “examining and interpreting primary and secondary sources.” We then applied the sourcing heuristic to a variety of evidence (see Figure A.11 for examples) in pairs, groups of four, and stations, and with the use of sourcing tools and guidance from me. While students worked on interpreting, comparing and interrogating sources connected to the incident, I constantly used the words evidence, source, claim, argument, perspective, interpretation, corroboration and reliability.

Figure A.11. Samples of Sources used to Interpret the Boston “Massacre”



Paul Revere’s “Bloody Massacre” Engraving (1770)



John Buford’s “Boston Massacre” Engraving (1856)

Witness testimony from Andrew, slave of Oliver Wendell, a political leader in Boston:

The People seemed to be leaving the soldiers, and to turn from them when there came down a number from Jackson’s corner, huzzaing and crying, “damn them, they dare not fire, we are not afraid of them.” One of these people, a stout man with a long wood stick, threw himself in, and made a blow at the officer; I saw the officer try to ward off the stroke; whether he struck him or not I do not know; the stout man then turned around, and struck the [soldier’s] gun at the captain’s right hand, and immediately fell in with his club, and knocked his gun away, and struck him over the head; the blow came either on the

As with the previous HIs, it took prompting, scaffolding and direction from me to get students to interrogate sources such as Paul Revere’s famous “Bloody Massacre” engraving. It also took some nudging to get my students to form reasoned judgments

about possible motives behind the creation of images about the event, which many students still tended to take at face value. But the high level of student engagement and the large number of references they made about Revere's work in their writing made the extra time and effort worthwhile.

At one point during the American Revolution HI I developed and implemented an activity designed to reinforce the sourcing heuristic and the concept of weight of evidence. Having recently read about a confrontation that took place between John Hancock (an alleged smuggler), and Royal authorities in Boston attempting to enforce the British Parliament's Townshend Acts (1767-1770), I created an exercise that focused students on a serious consideration of Hancock's motives for protesting Parliament's colonial taxation policies (see Appendix O). I presented my students with the idea, in the form of a thesis statement, that Hancock protested Britain's taxes only because they interfered with his ability to make profits as an importer. My students examined evidence related to Hancock's background and Britain's taxation of the colonies and were asked to determine whether the evidence supported the claim that self-interest was Hancock's prime mover in protesting Parliament's colonial tax program, or if the evidence contested that idea, giving merit to Hancock's claims about Parliament overstepping its bounds. By design, the weight of evidence fell on the side of supporting Hancock's arguments against Parliament, which helped many of my students see that the amount of corroborating evidence can help one develop a logical and defensible interpretation about something in the past.⁸

⁸ It should be noted that research in history education suggests many students hold the misconception that the weight of evidence is a fool-proof way to determine truth. Students who depend on the weight of evidence to develop summaries of the past often ignore conflicting sources and thus do not account for the

At the close of our extended and somewhat compartmentalized investigation of the possible causes of the American Revolution, I asked my students to compose a multi-paragraph argument about what caused Americans' break from England. It was challenging for students to pull together ten years' worth of events and issues that marked the deteriorating relationship between England and its 13 American colonies. But what I was mainly looking for in their writing was the presence of claims and supporting evidence and the use of logic and reasoning to tie them together. In this HI I provided a pre-writing graphic organizer that was designed to help students develop and write their claims in the form of a thesis statement, and select, arrange and explain supporting evidence (see Appendix P). This pre-writing strategy was developed by social studies curriculum specialists in my school district and is featured on the Semester 1 Exam that all of the district's 8th grade students are required to take.

Peer Scrutiny and Discourse: Session 5

Encouraging Higher Levels of Discourse about Evidence and Interpretation

Though I prompted my students to discuss their written arguments on the possible causes of the American Revolution in the context of the Rubric for Historical Argumentation, I failed to remind them to write thoughtful comments on their partner's rubric papers. Only a few students wrote comments that were specific and reflective of the interpretive nature of history. But our work with a sample argument from a historian was productive. When selecting sample arguments for students to "unpack," I considered student interest and background knowledge and the readability of the argument, in addition to the potential of the argument to show students how to state and defend claims

complexity of past events. For more on this topic, see Terrie Epstein, "Preparing History Teachers to Develop Young People's Historical Thinking," *Perspectives on History*, (2012).

about the past. I drew upon an article by Texas A & M University history professor Troy Bickham, an expert on the British Empire during the 17th and 18th centuries. Bickham argues that the British public admired George Washington while he was leading the war for independence against their government. My students showed an interest in the topic and I hooked them into a critical reading of it by having them predict what Bickham would be arguing before they read the piece. Most assumed Bickham would show how much the people of England despised Washington, to which I replied that they (students) “might be surprised” by what Bickham claims. What followed students’ strategic reading of the excerpt was a productive discussion about Bickham’s claim and how he went about defending it. We also discussed Bickham’s reliability as a source on Washington. I used Bickham and his article as an opportunity to model sourcing, since I was still trying to get the sourcing heuristic to become a life-long part of my students’ toolkit for understanding the world.

APPENDIX B

PRE AND POST STUDY HISTORY SURVEY

Pre-Course Survey for Advanced United States History 8

Instructor: John Wooden

Academic Year: 2009-2010

Student's Name: _____

What is History?

For the statements below, please CIRCLE the number that best shows your level of agreement with each statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. History is a record of facts from the past: dates, places, events, people, and so on.	1	2	3	4
2. History is a set of true stories about important past events.	1	2	3	4
3. Knowing facts and getting information is the most important part of studying history.	1	2	3	4
4. History is created by experts that piece together documents and other sources.	1	2	3	4
5. Experts in history use their opinions and judgments to explain what happened in the past.	1	2	3	4
6. Textbooks tell us what really happened in the past.	1	2	3	4
7. Good reading strategies are enough to learn history well.	1	2	3	4
8. You have to compare sources and question the people who made them in order to explain what happened in the past.	1	2	3	4
9. There can be different stories of a single event or person in the past, such as the American Revolution and George Washington.	1	2	3	4
10. In my experience, history is a very interesting subject.	1	2	3	4

APPENDIX C

PRIMARY SOURCES USED IN THE JAMESTOWN “STARVING TIME” TASK

Document A: Captain John Smith, 1624. (Primary Source)

Original version: “...What by their crueltie, our Governours indiscretion, and the losse of our ships, of five hundred within six moneths after Captain Smiths departure [October 1609-March 1610], there remained not past sixtie, men, women and children.

This was the time, which still to this day [1624] we call this the starving time; if it were too vile to say, and scarce to be believed, what we endured; but the occasion our owne, for want of providence industrie and government, and not the barrennesse and defect of the Countrie, as is generously supposed....”

Modern Version: Six months after Captain Smith left, the cruelty of the [Powhatans], the stupidity of our leaders, and the loss of our ships [when they sailed away] caused 440 of the 500 people in Jamestown to die.

We still call this time the "Starving Time." What we suffered was too terrible to talk about and too hard to believe. But the fault was our own. We starved because we did not plan well, work hard, or have good government. Our problems were not because the land was bad, as most people believe.

Document B: William Simmonds, 1612. Excerpt from Simmonds’ *The Proceedings of the English Colonie in Virginia Since Their First Beginning* (Primary Source)

Original Version: "...It was the Spaniards good hap to happen upon those parts where were infinite numbers of people, whoe had manured the ground with that providence that it afforded victuall at all times; and time had brought them to that perfection (that) they had the use of gold and silver, and (of) the most of such commodities as their countries afforded; so that what the Spanaird got was only the spoile and pillage of those countrie people, and not the labours of their owne hands.

But had those fruitfull Countries beene as Savage, as barbarous, as ill-peopled, as little planted laboured and manured, as Virginia; their proper labors, it is likely would have produced as small a profit as ours....”

Modern Version: It was the Spaniards’ good luck to find lands where there were huge numbers of people [Native Americans] who worked so hard that there was always food. These people were so advanced they developed the use of gold and silver and other things their land provided. The Spanish pillaged and robbed these people. They [the Spanish Conquistadors] did not work for what they got. If these rich nations had been as savage, uncivilized, as poorly planted and with as few native peoples as in Virginia, then the Spanish would not have made more profits than we [English settlers] did.

Document C: George Percy, 1607. Excerpt from George Percy's Account of the Voyage to Virginia and the Colony's First Days, 1607 (Primary Source).

Original version: It pleased God after awhile, to send those people which were our mortal enemies to releve us with such victuals, as Bread, Corne, Fish and Flesh in great plenty, which was the setting up of our feeble men, otherwise wee had all perished. Also we were frequented by divers Kings in the countrie, bringing us store of provision to our great comfort.

Modern Version: Thanks to God, our deadly enemies saved us by bringing food - great amounts of bread, corn, fish, and meat. This food saved all of us weak and starving men. Otherwise we would all have died. Leaders from other tribes also brought us food and supplies which made us comfortable.

APPENDIX D

GRAPHIC ORGANIZER USED TO HELP STUDENTS KNOW

COMPONENTS OF HISTORY

What is History?

Parts of History:

ACTUAL EVENTS– the actual things that happened in the past

-often difficult to determine, especially the things that happened hundreds or thousands of years ago.

-must usually be reconstructed from accounts of events and artifacts.

Accounts of Events – the records of an event left behind by the people involved in it or who were alive at the time.

EVIDENCE
(Primary Sources)

Artifacts – objects, including photographs, used or made at the time of an event.

HISTORIANS' INTERPRETATIONS –

historians try to make sense of the evidence and give it meaning. **They are not just messengers that tell us exactly what happened in the past. They tell us what happened in the past through their own eyes.**

APPENDIX E

SAMPLES OF SOURCES USED FOR THE THINK-ALLOUD TASK ON
AFRICAN AMERICANS' EXPERIENCES WITH
SOUTHERN RECONSTRUCTION

A.



Cartoon published in Harper's Weekly in 1865. The Artist's name is unknown

B.

A eyewitness account of a military wedding sketched in 1866 by a reporter and artist for *Harper's Weekly* named Alfred Waud. Waud traveled throughout the South after the Civil War to document social and political changes brought about by the 13th amendment. He said he drew the scene "just as it appeared."



C.

This sketch by Alfred Waud shows the Zion School for Colored Children in Charleston South Carolina in 1866. Waud reported that "It is a peculiarity of this school that it is entirely under the supervision of colored teachers...."



Commemorative print published by the Currier & Ives
 print company in 1872

D.



"First Colored Senator and Representatives in the 41st and 42nd Congress of the United States." (Left to right) Senator Hiram Revels of Mississippi, Representatives Benjamin Turner of Alabama, Robert DeLarge of South Carolina, Josiah Walls of Florida, Jefferson Long of Georgia, Joseph Rainey and Robert B. Elliott of South Carolina.

E.



Image of some of the members of the Tennessee state legislature in 1885

Portrait based on a photograph featured in an 1870 issue of *Harper's Weekly*

F.



The text reads "HON. J. J. WRIGHT, JUDGE OF THE SUPREME COURT OF SOUTH CAROLINA"

G.



The text at the bottom reads "SOUTHERN RULE IN A RECONSTRUCTED STATE"

L.

Beginning in 1890, every Southern state passed laws designed to stop black men from voting. A Charleston, South Carolina newspaper declared that the goal of these measures, known as Jim Crow laws, was to “reduce the colored vote to insignificance in every county in the State” and to make it known that the white South “does not desire or intend ever to include black men among its citizens.”

APPENDIX F
EXAMPLE OF A SOURCING TOOL USED IN THE STUDY

Topic: Indian/White relations in colonial America

Big Historical Question: What kind of relations existed between Indians and colonists during colonial times?

Source Analysis Tool

Source Information

Exact Type of Source:

Title (if it has one):

Date made:

Primary or Secondary Source: *Was the author at the event or have firsthand knowledge of the event or topic you are exploring?*

Author's or Creator's Name & Description:

Who made the source? What is his/her background?

Perspective

Purpose: *Why did the author/creator write or create this?*

Point of View: *What seems to be the author's/creator's opinion or point of view about this topic?*

Evidence/Clues

Interpretation: *What can you infer about relations between Indians and white colonists from this source?*

This source shows or tells me that _____

APPENDIX G
HERBERT KOHL'S TEXTBOOK ACCOUNT OF ROSA PARKS

ROSA PARKS
TEXTBOOK ACCOUNT

Author and educator Herbert Kohl surveyed how more than 20 history textbooks told the story of Rosa Parks' refusal to give up her seat on December 1, 1955. Here, he writes the standard story told by these textbooks.

"Rosa was tired: The story of the Montgomery bus boycott"

Rosa Parks was a poor seamstress. She lived in Montgomery, Alabama, during the 1950s. [In] those days there was still segregation in parts of the United States. That meant that African Americans and European Americans were not allowed to use the same public facilities such as restaurants or swimming pools. It also meant that whenever it was crowded on the city buses African Americans had to give up seats in front to European Americans and move to the back of the bus.

One day on her way home from work Rosa was tired and sat down in the front of the bus. As the bus got crowded she was asked to give up her seat to a European American man, and she refused. The bus driver told her she had to go to the back of the bus, and she still refused to move. It was a hot day, and she was tired and angry, and became very stubborn.

The driver called a policeman, who arrested Rosa.

When other African Americans in Montgomery heard this they became angry too. So they decided to refuse to ride the buses until everyone was allowed to ride together. They boycotted the buses.

The boycott, which was led by Martin Luther King Jr., succeeded. Now African Americans and European Americans can ride the buses together in Montgomery.

Rosa Parks was a very brave person.

Source: Herbert Kohl (2005). *She Would Not Be Moved*. New York: The New Press. pp. 7-8.

APPENDIX H
THE INSERT STRATEGY FOR CLOSE READING

INSERT Marking System

- ✓ **Confirms** what you already know —
“I knew that!”
- X **Contradicts** what you thought—
“I thought differently.”
- ? **Perplexes** you—
“I am not clear on this.” OR “Why would that be the case?”
- + **Adds** to your knowledge - Something new—
“I did not know that!”
- ! **Wow** – surprises you
“Wow, really?” “Seriously?”
- * **Very important** to remember
“This seems important”

APPENDIX I
CORROBORATION RESOURCE SHEET USED IN THE
ROSA PARKS HISTORICAL INVESTIGATION

Name: _____ Date: _____ Period _____
Rosa Parks Investigation

Source: Diagram of the seating on the bus from 1956

Check the one that applies and then explain your choice:

_____ This source **CHALLENGES/CONTRADICTS** the textbook account because

_____ This source **CORROBORATES** the textbook account because

Source: Rosa Parks' autobiography, published in 1992

Check the one that applies and then explain your choice:

_____ This source **CHALLENGES/CONTRADICTS** the textbook account because

_____ This source **CORROBORATES** the textbook account because

Exit Card: What is evidence in history?

What role can evidence play in history?

APPENDIX J

HISTORIAN'S ARGUMENT USED AS A MODEL IN PSD

Recognizing an Author's claim and use of Historical Evidence

The excerpt below is from a well-known book about American history written by historian Howard Zinn called *A People's History of the United States*. As you read the excerpt, which is about the Revolutionary War, look for the claim that Zinn makes about the war and the primary source evidence that he uses to back it up.

When you find Zinn's claim, circle it.

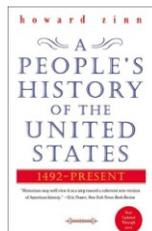
When you find the evidence he uses to support his claim, highlight it.

The leaders of the American Revolution distrusted the poor white males of America, and they knew the fight with England had no appeal to slaves and Indians. They would therefore have to convince the armed white population to join in the fight against England. Realizing that only about 1/3 of the American population openly supported the Declaration of Independence and war against England, the Founding Fathers used measures to force unwilling Americans to become soldiers in their war for independence from the mother country.

The force of military preparation had a way of pushing neutral people into line. The legislature of Connecticut, for example, passed a law in 1778 requiring military service of "all white males between sixteen and sixty...." According to a report from the Connecticut legislature that same year, eighteen men that failed to report for military duty under this new law were thrown in jail and had to "take an oath to fight in the war" in order to be released. Harsh measures were also taken to keep American men in the American Armies. Watching the new, tight discipline of General Washington's army, a chaplain in Concord, Massachusetts wrote: "New lords, new laws. The strictest government is taking place and great distinction is made between officers & regular men. Everyone is made to know his place & keep it, or be immediately tied up, and receive not one but 30 or 40 lashes with the whip."



Howard Zinn



APPENDIX K

SOURCE ANALYSIS AND REFLECTION TEMPLATE FOR THE HI ON INDIAN/WHITE RELATIONS IN COLONIAL AMERICA

Relations between Native Americans and Colonists in Colonial America

Activity 1: Reflecting on Your Existing Knowledge

What do you know about Native Americans in colonial times (1607-1783)? What was their culture like? How did they behave? How did they get along with white colonists? In the space below, record whatever you know or believe about this topic.

Activity 2: Images of Indians & Whites in Colonial America

Directions: Complete the chart as you examine each of the images of relations between Native Americans and colonists and then reflect on how each image compares to your knowledge of this topic.

Image # 1:

Step 1. Observation

Study the picture for 2 minutes. Form an overall impression of the picture and then examine individual items.

Next, divide the picture into quadrants (four) and study each section to see what new details become visible.

Use the chart below to list people, objects, and activities in the picture.

PEOPLE	OBJECTS/LANDSCAPE	ACTIVITIES

Step 2: Reflection:

_____ this image **supports** my knowledge/beliefs about relations between Indians & colonists

_____ this image **contests** (goes against) my knowledge/beliefs about relations between Indians and colonists

_____ this image **extends** my knowledge/beliefs about relations between Indians & colonists because _____

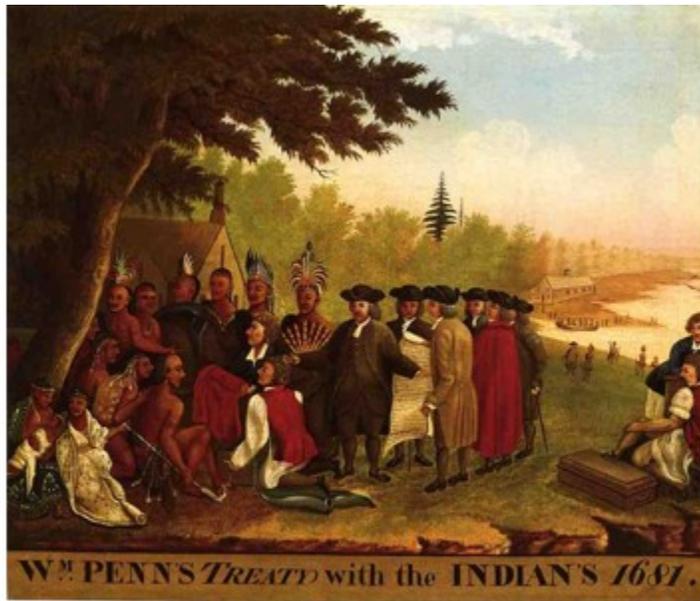
APPENDIX L
SOURCES USED IN THE HISTORY ON INDIAN/WHITE RELATIONS IN
COLONIAL AMERICA



Engraving titled "The massacre of the settlers in 1622"
By Matthaeus Merian in 1628. Merian's Hand-colored engraving
was used in a book called *America*, which was printed in 1628



This image depicts an Indian raid on the town of Deerfield, Massachusetts during a war between France and England known as Queen Anne's War, which lasted from 1702 to 1714. Source information is not available for this image. It was probably created in the late 1800's.



Painting of William Penn, the founder of Pennsylvania, concluding a treaty with Indians in Pennsylvania. The painting was made by Edward Hicks in 1847. Edward Hicks (born [April 4, 1780](#) – died [August 23, 1849](#)) was an [American folk painter](#) and a respected Quaker [minister](#).

Before he led American soldiers against the British during the American Revolution, George Washington was a colonel in the British army fighting against French soldiers and their Indian allies during the French & Indian War between 1754 and 1763. Below is part of a letter Washington wrote to the British Governor of Virginia while he was stationed in the western part of Virginia with a small force of English soldiers. The letter was dated April 24, 1756.



Washington in his French & Indian War Colonel's uniform



Washington leading troops in a battle with French soldiers and Indians

....Three families were murdered the night before last, at the distance of less than twelve miles from this place; and every day we have accounts of such cruelties and barbarities, as are shocking to human nature. It is not possible to fully understand the situation and danger of this miserable country. Such numbers of French and Indians are all around, that no road is safe; and here we do not know when we may be attacked.... You spoke of sending some Indians to our assistance, in which no time should be lost, nor anything not done to encourage all the Catawbias and Cherokees, that can possibly be gathered, and immediately to send them to me. Unless we have Indians to oppose the Indians fighting with the French, we may expect but small success....

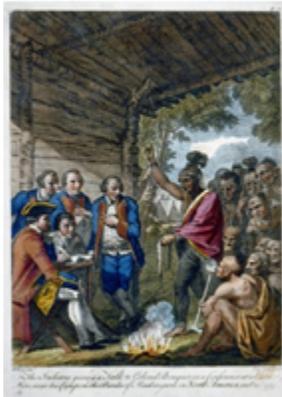


"The Indians delivering up the English Captives to Colonel Bouquet near his Camp... in North America in Nov. 1764"

—
 painted by artist Benjamin West in 1766. West was born in Pennsylvania in 1738, but moved to England in 1760, where he made most of his paintings.

Colonel Bouquet was British military officer that took part in England's last war with French soldiers and their Indian allies in North America between 1754 and 1763.

The speech below was given by Papoonhoal, chief of the Minsi Indians living in Pennsylvania, during a meeting with a British military official in Fort Pitt in Pennsylvania in 1760.



Brother, it has come into my mind to mention something to you that I think wrong in your Dealings with the Indians. You make it public that you will give a certain price for our beaver and fox Skins, and that they are to be weighed and Paid for at that set price according to their weight. Brother, there are two bad things in this way of Dealing. You change the price that you say you will give for our Skins, which can never be right. God cannot be pleased to see the price of one & the same thing so often changed. Our young men finding that they are to get paid for their Skins according to their weight play tricks with them... to make them weigh more....

Brother you see that there is no love or honesty on either Side.... Therefore, Brother, we propose to stop this way of trading for otherwise we shall never agree and love one another as we ought to do. Now Brother, I desire you will not charge too high a price for your Goods, but to lower them so as you can afford it, that we may live and walk together in one Brotherly love and Friendship as Brothers ought to live.



Engraving of a Baptism of Indian converts in Pennsylvania in 1757.

The Moravian missionaries who came to Pennsylvania in the 1740s soon established several missions among the Delaware and Mahican Indians. This 1757 engraving shows Indians separated into male and female groups to receive baptism. Missionaries expected converts to adopt European cultural practices and spiritual beliefs

"Your People Live Only Upon God, 1691"

This excerpt was translated into English in 1910, but was originally written by a French priest named Chrestien LeClerq in 1691 as part of his book which described his experiences as a missionary in New France from 1675-1686. In this excerpt LeClerq recorded the views expressed by a Micmac Indian regarding the differences between his culture and that of the French.



Sketch of a Micmac Indian

"... You [criticize] us, very inappropriately, that our country is a little hell in contrast with France, which you compare to a... paradise, [because it gives you, or so you say] every kind of [food] in abundance. You say... that we are the most miserable and most unhappy of all men, living without religion, without manners, without honor, without social order, and... without any rules, like the beasts in our woods and our forests, lacking bread, wine, and a thousand other comforts which [you say you have in great quantity] in Europe.

Well, my brother, if you do not yet know the real feelings which our Indians have towards your country and towards your entire nation, it is proper that I [tell] you at once. I beg you now to believe that, as miserable as we seem in your eyes, we consider ourselves nevertheless much happier than you... we are very content with the little that we have, and believe... that you deceive yourself greatly if you think to persuade us that your country is better than ours. For if France... is a little... paradise, are you [wise] to leave it? And why abandon wives, children, relatives, and friends? Why risk your life and... property every year, [to travel in any season and weather]... in order to come to a strange and [wild] country which you consider the poorest and least fortunate of the world... Learn now, my brother, once and for all, because I must open to you my heart: there is no Indian who does not consider himself infinitely more happy and more powerful than the French...."

Image sketched by Father Chretien LeClercq, which he used in his book about his work bringing Christianity to Micmac Indians in French-owned Canada. Chretien made the image in 1691.



Father LeClercq

Micmac
Indians

Transcript of Sir Johnson's Indian certificate



By the Honorable Sir William Johnson, Bart.,
His Majesty's sole Agent and Superintendant of Indian
Affairs, for the Northern Department of North America,
Colonel of the Six United Nations, their Allies and
Dependants, &c. &c.

To _____

WHEREAS, I have received repeated proofs of your
attachment to his Britannic Majesty's Interests and Zeal for
his service upon sundry occasions, more particularly
_____ I do therefore give you this public
Testimonial thereof, as a proof of your _____ and
recommending it to all his Majesty's Subjects and faithful
Indian Allies to Treat and Consider you upon all occasions
agreeable to your character, Station and services.

Given under my hand and seal at Arms at
Johnson Hall the _____ day of _____ 17____
By Command of Sir W. Johnson^r

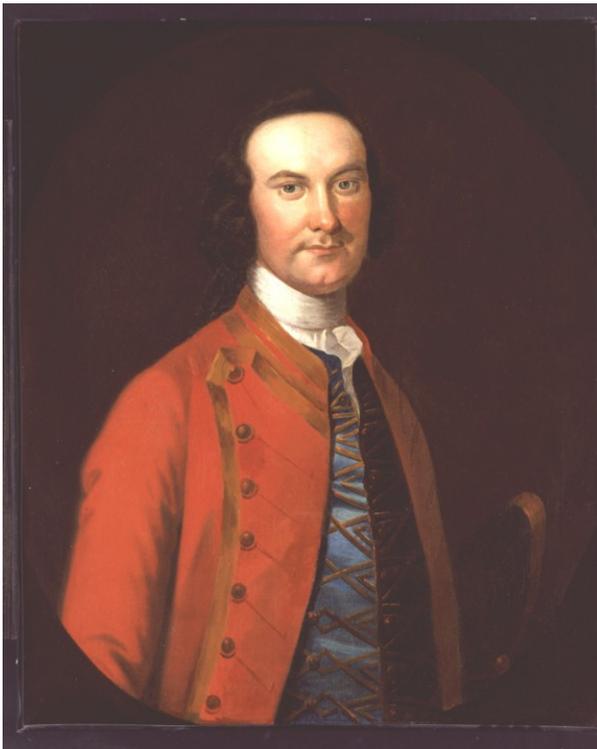
APPENDIX M

SOURCES USED IN THE HISTORICAL INVESTIGATION ON

NATIVE AMERICANS' ROLES IN THE FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR

Sir William Johnson was in charge of relations between Indians and the British in North America during the French & Indian war. Below is a statement he made about the Indians in the Ohio region in 1752, two years before the war began:

... [The] Friendship or alliance [of the Ohio Indians] is ... worthy of courting or continuing, wherefore if we lose them, who have been for these three years past so firmly attached to the British Interests..., it must be our own faults and the consequences may be very bad....



Below is an excerpt from a letter George Washington wrote to Colonel Joshua Fry while Washington was on his expedition to tell the French to leave the Ohio Valley region. Colonel Fry was Washington's immediate commander.

TO COLONEL JOSHUA FRY.

23 May, 1754.

SIR,

...I would recommend, in the strongest terms possible, your writing to the Governor for some of the treaty goods, or any others suitable for the Indians. Nothing can be done without them. All the Indians that come expect presents. The French take this method, which proves very acceptable; besides, if you want one or more to conduct a party, to discover the country, to hunt, or for any particular service, they must be bought; their friendship is not so warm, as to prompt them to these services gratis; and that, I believe, every person, who is acquainted with the nature of Indians, knows. The Indian, that accompanied me down the river, would go no further than the Forks, about ten miles, till I promised him a ruffled shirt, which I must take from my own, and a watch-coat. He said the French always had Indians to show them the woods, because they paid well for so doing; and this may be laid down as a standing maxim amongst them. I think were the goods sent out, and delivered occasionally, as you see cause, that four or five hundred pounds' worth would do more good, than as many thousands given at a treaty.

I hope I may be excused for offering my opinions so freely, for I can aver we shall get no intelligence, or other services from them, unless we have goods to apply to these uses. I am, &c.

The source below is a speech given by Governor Glen in 1761, two years before the official end of the French and Indian War. Glen was the Royal Governor of the colony of South Carolina. The focus of the speech was the role Native Americans played in the rivalry between France, England and Spain.

The Situation, Strength, and Connections of the several Nations of Neighbouring Indians. The concerns of this Country are so closely connected and interwoven with Indian Affairs, and not only a great branch of our trade, but even the Safety of this Province, do so much depend upon our continuing in Friendship with the Indians, that I thought it highly necessary to gain all the knowledge I could of them; and I hope that the accounts which I have from time to time transmitted of Indian affairs will shew, that I am pretty well acquainted with the subject....

The Catawbow Nation of Indians hath about Three hundred Fighting Men; brave fellows as any on the Continent of America and our firm friends; their Country is about two hundred miles from Charles-Town.

The Creek Indians are situated about Five hundred miles from Charles-Town; their number of fighting men is about two thousand five hundred, and they are in Friendship with us.

The Choctaw Nation of Indians is situated at a somewhat greater distance from us, and have till within this year or two been in the Interest of the French, by whom they were reckoned to be the most numerous of any nation of Indians in America, and said to consist of many Thousand Men.

The people of most experience in the affairs of this Country, have always dreaded a French war; from an apprehension that an Indian war would be the consequence of it; for which reasons, I have ever since the first breaking out of the war with France, redoubled my Attention to Indian Affairs: and I hope, not without Success.

The powerful Chocktaw Indians, which the French for many years past, played against us and our Indians, even in times of Peace, is now happily turned against themselves, and I believe they feel the force of it....

I shall be particularly cautious of doing anything inconsistent with the peace so lately concluded: but I think... that it will be impossible to retain... Indians... in his Majesty's interest unless we continue to trade with them.

... the [peace and safety] of South Carolina will depend upon preserving our Interest with the Indians, which it will be very difficult to do, unless the presents are continued to them....

APPENDIX N
SCAFFOLDS AND SOURCES USED IN THE
HISTORICAL INVESTIGATION ON THE PAXTON UPRISING
THE PROP METHOD

The PROP Method
For Determining the Reliability of Sources

- P** **primary or secondary source?**
(eyewitness or not eyewitness;
created by a person alive in the time
period under consideration or not?)
- R** **reason to lie?**
(would someone benefit if the truth were
distorted?)
- O** **other evidence to support the evidence in
this source?**
(eyewitness accounts, journals,
statements, official documents,
broadsides, sketches, paintings,
political cartoons, photographs, etc.)
- P** **public or private statement?**

***Evaluate the source overall:
How reliable is it?
What are its strengths and weaknesses?**

Adapted From: O'Reilly, Kevin, *Critical Thinking in United States History: Book One: Colonies to Constitution*; Critical Thinking Press and Software, 1990.

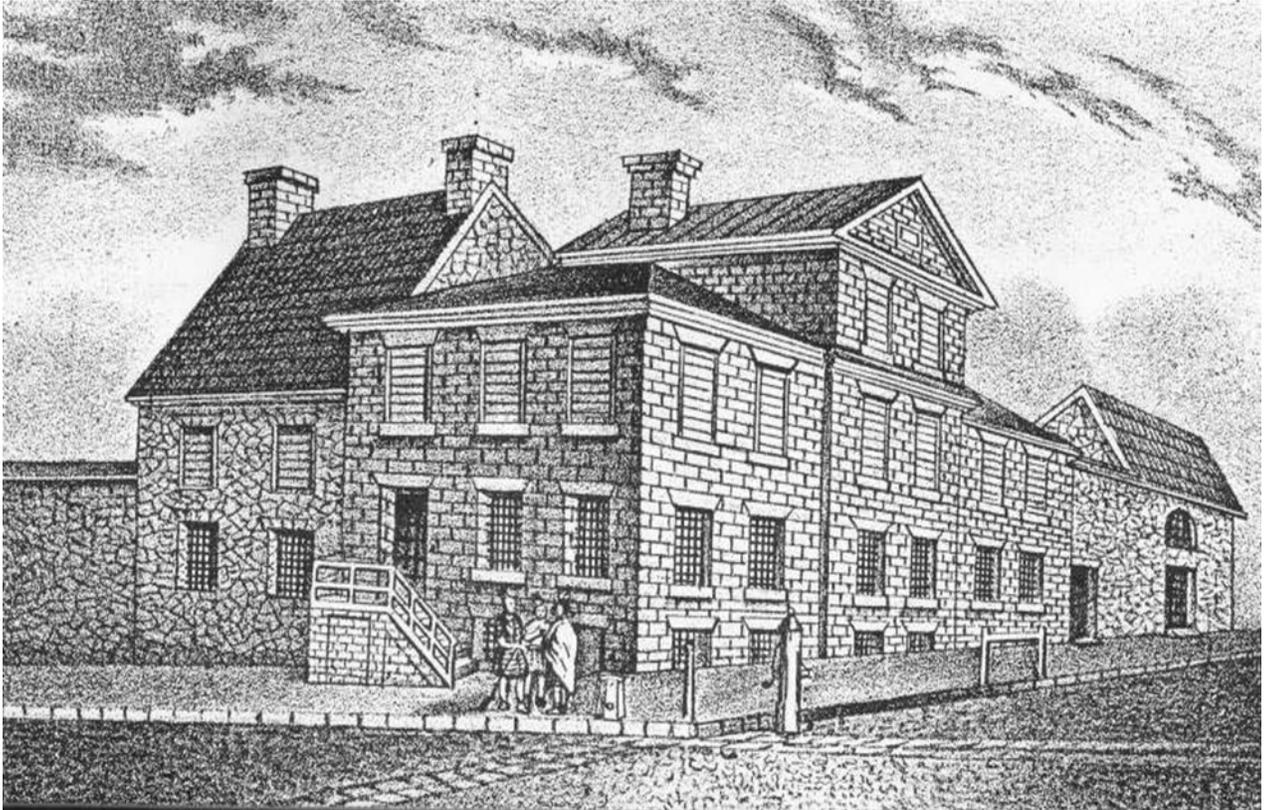
Sourcing Tool for the Paxton Uprising Documents

Question: Were the killings of the Conestoga Indians justified?	Name of author or authors? Author's background (job, social status, cultural group)? Title of the source (if applicable)? Type of Primary Source (letter, government doc, etc.)? Date the source was created?	What is the author's perspective on the killing of the Conestogas? What does he or she say about the event & the people involved?	Evaluating Source Reliability: <i>Apply the PROP method to the source</i>
Source A			
Source B			
Source C			

INTRODUCTION TO THE PAXTON UPRISING

Introduction to the Paxton Uprising

On the morning of December 14, 1763, approximately fifty armed men from the Lancaster County, Pennsylvania town of Paxton and surrounding areas rode into a small Indian village called Conestoga Manor near the city of Lancaster, killed and scalped the six Indians there – two men, three women and a child – and burned their houses. Local government officials quickly rounded up the remaining fourteen Conestoga Indians that had been away at the time of the attack on their village and put them in the Lancaster Workhouse (see picture below) to protect them from further attack. Thirteen days later, between fifty and one hundred “Paxton Boys,” rode into Lancaster, pushed aside the sheriff and coroner, and killed all fourteen of the Indians in the Workhouse. The killings were carried out in a brutal fashion. A resident of Lancaster named William Henry called the scene of the killings a “horrid sight.” According to Henry, the fourteen Conestoga “men, women and children [were] spread about the prison yard; shot, scalped, hacked and cut to pieces.”



The Lancaster Workhouse as it appeared in 1763

ACTIVITY USED TO BUILD BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE ABOUT

THE PAXTON UPRISING

Background Knowledge Needed for the Paxton Uprising Investigation

____ **Station # 1**

Look at the maps with the locations of Lancaster & Paxtang, Pennsylvania. The killings of the Conestoga Indians took place west of Lancaster and in the town. Most of the Pennsylvania Frontiersmen that killed the Conestoga Indians lived in a small town called Paxton or Paxtang. This is why they were called the Paxton Boys.

____ **Station # 2**

Look at the images of Quakers. These peaceful people started the English colony of Pennsylvania under the leadership of William Penn (a Quaker). By 1763 about 50,000 of Pennsylvania's 250,000 people were Quakers. In 1763, the year of the killings, Quakers were still in control of the main government of Pennsylvania, which met in Philadelphia.

____ **Station # 3**

Read the description of the Indian village of Conestoga and look at the map that shows their land holdings. Conestoga was located a few miles west of Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

____ **Station # 4**

Look at the images of European-American settlers on the Pennsylvania frontier. These people were mostly poor, Scots-Irish farmers that are often described as "Independent-Minded" since they had to depend on themselves for survival.

____ **Station # 5**

Look at the images of Indian raids on frontier settlements during the French & Indian War and Pontiac's rebellion between 1754 and 1763. Most of the Indian raids took place on the frontiers of New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland & Virginia.

____ **Station # 6**

use the dictionary to define the word below:

magistrate (def. # 2) - _____

____ **Station # 7**

Use the dictionary to define each word below:

declaration (def. # 2) _____

remonstrance (second half of the definition) _____

____ **Station # 8**

Skim the PROP method sheet & record one question from it:

**SCAFFOLD FOR DETERMINING THE PERSPECTIVE OF A KEY SOURCE
ON THE PAXTON UPRISING**

Your Goal: To determine Edward Shippen’s perspective on the killings of the Conestoga Indians

Your Task: Find two adjectives that Edward Shippen used to describe the Frontiersmen that killed the Indians from the village of Conestoga & use those words to determine how Shippen viewed the killings.

1. Find the first adjective in the last sentence of Shippen’s first letter; record the word on your loose-leaf paper.
2. Find the second adjective in the last sentence of Shippen’s second letter – the sentence starts with the words “The Sheriff and Coroner...”; record this word too.
3. Now look at the two words, think about their meanings, and answer the question below with a complete sentence:

What was Edward Shippen’s perspective on the killings of the Indians from the village of Conestoga?

**SOURCES USED IN THE PAXTON UPRISING
HISTORICAL INVESTIGATION**

Edward Shippen's letter to Governor John Penn about the attack on the Indian Village of Conestoga. Edward Shippen was magistrate of the town of Lancaster.

LANCASTER, 14th December, 1763, Evening.

Honoured Sir:

One Robert Edgar, a hired Man to Captian Thomas M'Kee...acquainted me to-day that a Company of People from the Frontiers had killed and scalped most of the Indians at the Conestogoe Town early this Morning; he said he had his information from an Indian boy who made his Escape; Mr. Slough has been to the place and held a Coroner's Inquest on the Corpses, being Six in number; Bill Sawk and some other Indians were gone towards Smith's Iron Works to sell brooms; but where they are now we can't understand; And the Indians, John Smith, & Peggy, his Wife, and their child, and young Joe Hays, were [out] last night too, and lodged at...Peter Swar's.... These [Indians] came here this afternoon, [and] we acquainted [them] with what had happened to their Friends and Relations, and advised them to put themselves under our Protection, which they readily agreed to; And they are now in Our Work House by themselves, where they are well provided for with every necessary. Warrants are issued for the apprehending of the Murderers, said to be upwards of fifty men, well armed and mounted.... I am with all due Regards,

Sir, Your Honour's Obliged

Friend, and most humble Servant,

EDWARD SHIPPEN.

The Honourable JOHN PENN, Esquire, Governor

After receiving Shippen's and other government officials' reports of the destruction of Conestoga Manor and the six Indians there at the time, the Governor of Pennsylvania, John Penn, issued the proclamation below.

A Proclamation:

"WHEREAS I have received Information, That on *Wednesday*, the Fourteenth Day of this Month, a Number of People, armed, and mounted on Horseback, unlawfully assembled together, and went to the *Indian* Town in the *Conestogoe* Manor, in *Lancaster* County, and without the least Reason or Provocation, in cool Blood, barbarously killed six of the *Indians* settled there, and burnt and destroyed all their Houses...: And whereas so cruel and inhuman an Act, committed in the Heart of this Province on the said *Indians*, who have lived peaceably and inoffensively among us, during all our late Troubles, and for many Years before, and were justly considered as under the Protection of this Government and its Laws, calls loudly for the vigorous Exertion of the civil Authority, to detect the Offenders, and bring them to condign Punishment; I have therefore...thought fit to issue this Proclamation, and do hereby strictly charge...all Judges, Justices, Sheriffs, Constables, Officers Civil and Military, and all other His Majesty's liege Subjects within this Province, to make diligent Search and Enquiry after the Authors and Perpetrators of the said Crime, their Abettors and Accomplices, and to use all possible Means to apprehend and secure them in some of the publick [jails] of this Province, that they may be brought to their Trials, and be proceeded against according to Law.

GIVEN under my Hand, and the Great Seal of the said Province, at Philadelphia, the Twenty Second Day of December, in the Fourth Year of His Majesty's Reign, and in the Year of our Lord One Thousand Seven Hundred and Sixty-Three. JOHN PENN

By His Honour's Command,
JOSEPH SHIPPEN, jun. Secretary.
GOD SAVE THE KING.

As Shippen described in his December 14th letter to Governor Penn, the 14 Conestogas that were away from their village during the attacks were placed in the Lancaster Work House for protection. Shippen described what happened after the Paxton Boys got word of the Indians' whereabouts in another letter to Governor Penn.

LANCASTER, 27th December, 1763, P.M.

Honoured Sir:

I am to acquaint your Honour that between two and three of the clock this afternoon, upwards of a hundred armed men, from the Westward, rode very fast into Town, turned their Horses into [the Innkeeper] Mr. Slough's Yard, and proceeded with the greatest [speed] to the Work House, stove open the door and killed all the Indians, and then took to their Horses and rode off, all their business was done, and they were returning to their Horses before I could get half way down to the Work House; The Sheriff and Coroner, however, & several others, got down [to the Work House] as soon as the Rioters, but could not...stop their hands; some people say they heard [the Paxton Boys] declare they would proceed to [Philadelphia], and destroy the Indians there.

I am with great Respect, Sir,

Your Honour's most Obedient humble Servant,

EDWARD SHIPPEN

The Honourable JOHN PENN, Esquire, Governor

Below is a second proclamation from Governor John Penn, which he issued on January 2, 1764, six days after the Paxton Boys killed the remaining 14 Conestoga Indians in Lancaster.

A Proclamation:

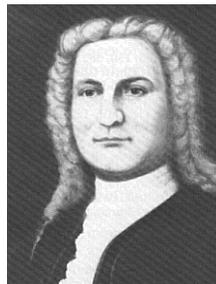
.... I have received Information that... a large Party of armed Men again assembled... in a riotous... Manner, ... and proceeded to the Town of *Lancaster*... and butchered... fourteen of the *Conestogoe Indians*, Men, Women and Children, who had been taken under the immediate Care and Protection of the Magistrates of... Lancaster County.... Justice loudly demands, and the Laws of the Land... require that the above Offenders should be brought to... Punishment; I... hereby strictly... command all Judges, Justices, Sheriffs, Constables, Officers Civil and Military, and all other His Majesty's faithful... Subjects within this Colony, to make diligent Search... after the... Perpetrators of the said... Offence, and their... Accomplices, and... use all possible Means to apprehend and secure them in some of the public [jails] of this Colony, to be dealt with according to Law. And I do hereby further promise... that any... Persons, who shall apprehend and secure, or cause to be apprehended and secured, any Three of the Ringleaders of the Offenders... shall have and receive for each, the public Reward of *Two Hundred Pounds*; and any Accomplice, not concerned in the immediate shedding the Blood of the said *Indians*, who shall make Discovery of any or either of the Ringleaders, and apprehend... them... shall, over and above the said Reward, have all the Weight and Influence of the Government, for obtaining His Majesty's Pardon for his Offence.

GIVEN under my Hand, and the Great Seal of the said Province, at Philadelphia, the Second Day of January, in the Fourth Year of His Majesty's Reign, and in the Year of our Lord One Thousand Seven Hundred and Sixty-four. JOHN PENN

By His Honour's Command,
JOSEPH SHIPPEN, jun. Secretary.
GOD SAVE THE KING.



Governor John Penn



Joseph Shippen

The Pennsylvania Assembly's Message to Governor Penn, January 3, 1764. One day after the governor's Proclamation of January 2 offering a reward for the capture of the Paxton leaders, the assembly voted money for the purpose of stopping the "further wicked designs" of the Frontiersmen.

MAY IT please your Honour:

The Assembly have given their most serious and immediate Attention to the important Business laid before them in Your Honour's Message of this afternoon, and considering that the military Force of this Colony is presently engaged in the defence of our long extended Frontier, by your Honour's orders, have unanimously voted to provide money for paying the cost of raising additional troops that you find necessary to stop the further wicked Designs of those lawless Rioters who have committed the most inhuman murders on the poor defenceless Indians, ancient Friends of this Colony, and living under the protection of its government. Our Treasurer now has money which can immediately be applied to the purpose of repelling those bold invaders of Law and Justice, and thereby supporting the Honour and Dignity of the Government.

Signed by the Order of the Assembly,

January 3, 1764

ISAAC NORRIS, Speaker



Isaac Norris

be imputed to these frontier Settlements, For I know not of one person of Judgem^t or prudence that has been any wise concerned in it, but it has been done by some hot headed, ill advised persons, & especially by such, I imagine, as suffer'd much in their relations by the Ravages committed in the late Indian War.

I am, Sir,

Y^r most obed^t &

very hu^e Serv^t.

JOHN ELDER.*

To the Hon^{ble} Jn^s. Penn, Esqr.

JOHN PENN TO REV. JOHN ELDER, 1763.

Philadelphia, 29 Decem^r, 1763.

Sir,

I received your favour of the 16th Instant,* & much approve of the measures you took in dispatching an Express after the lawless party of Rioters, and using your Endeavours to prevent the Execution of their wicked Designs of Destroying the Conestogo Indians. I am just informed that another large party came on Tuesday last to Lancaster, and there cruelly put to death the remainder of those Indians who were in the Workhouse.

As it is absolutely necessary for the preservation of Peace and good Order in the Governm^t that an immediate Stop be put to such Riotous proceedings, I beg you will continue to use your best Endeavours to discourage & Suppress all Insurrections that may appear among any of the people over whom you have an Influence; And that you will be pleased to take all the pains in your power to learn the names of the Ringleaders & perpetrators of those Barbarities, & to acquaint me with every thing you can discover concerning them.

The Commissioners not thinking it necessary any longer to keep in pay more than one person to command the Troops on the East side of Susquehanna, came Yesterday to a Resolution to discontinue the pay of yourself and M^r. Seely as Commanders of the Companies

William Henry, a gun maker and an intellectual that lived in Lancaster, saw the aftermath of the Paxton Boys' second attack on the Conestogas. Below is part of a letter he wrote to his friend John Heckewelder, who was a missionary that taught Christianity to Indians in Pennsylvania.

....I saw a number of people running down street towards the [Workhouse], which enticed me and other lads to follow them. At about sixty or eighty yards from the [Workhouse], we met from twenty-five to thirty men, well mounted on horses, and with rifles, tomahawks, and scalping knives, equipped for murder. I ran into the prison yard, and there, O what a horrid sight presented itself to my view!- Near the back door of the prison, lay an old Indian and his squaw, particularly well known and esteemed by the people of the town, on account of his placid and friendly conduct. His name was Will Sock; across him and his squaw lay two children, of about the age of three years, whose heads were split with the tomahawk, and their scalps all taken off. Towards the middle of the... yard, along the west side of the wall, lay a stout Indian, whom I particularly noticed to have been shot in the breast,This man's hands and feet had also been chopped off with a tomahawk. In this manner lay the whole of them, men, women and children, spread about the prison yard: shot-scalped-hacked-and cut to pieces....

The statement below is “Sworn” testimony from frontiersman Alexander Stephen recorded by Lancaster County court official Thomas Foster in 1764.

LANCASTER COUNTY

Alexander Stephen, being qualified as the Law directs, said that an Indian Woman named Canayah Sally told Stephen that since the French & Indian War, Conestogoe Indians killed Jegrea, an Indian Man, because he would not go to War with the Consetogoe Indians against the English.

Sworn & subscribed before Thos. Foster and signed by Alexander Stephen

The statement below is “Sworn” testimony from frontiersman Robert Armstrong recorded by Lancaster County court official Thomas Foster in 1764.

LANCASTER COUNTY

Robert Armstrong, being qualified as the Law directs, said a Conestogoe Indian named Seahaes with several others lived near his house in the year 1762; some of them were so bold as to say that they had been at War with the White People & would soon be at War again, particularly one Issac, who called Seahaes his Uncle. In the year 1762 as the Indians were coming down to the Treaty meeting, they happened to stay at Armstrong’s House and then apparently went to Philadelphia to get guns and ammunition; On their return these Conestogoe Indians stayed four days on Armstrong’s Place and proved very rude, took about six acres of Corn, killed several Hoggs, & took the fruit of about 150 bearing Trees.

Sworn & subscribed before Thos. Foster and signed by Robert Armstrong

Thomas McKee lived near the Conestogas and knew them. Below is an excerpt from a letter he wrote on February 15, 1764 to t Sir William Johnson.

.... these Indians [of Conestoga] have lived all their Lives . . . in Peace and Quietness with their [white] Neighbours, and I do not believe were ever... against us....

Several weeks after the Paxton Boys killed the Conestogas, about 200 frontiersmen began a march to Philadelphia to kill 140 Christian Indians that were under the protection of the Government. Ben Franklin intercepted the rioters in Germantown and persuaded them to stop. Representatives of the Paxton Boys Mathew Smith & James Gibson, stayed behind to create the *Declaration* below, which lists their grievances.

The Declaration of the injured Frontier Inhabitants, together with a brief sketch of Grievances the good inhabitants of the Colony of Pennsylvania labour under.

INASMUCH AS the killing those Indians at Conestogoe Manor and Lancaster has been the subject of much Conversation, many unfamiliar with the real conditions of the frontier may be led to pass a Severe Disapproval on the people who did the killings. We think it, therefore, proper to declare the reasons for our behavior.

Ourselves, then, to a Man, we claim to be loyal subjects to the best of Kings, our rightful majesty George the third, and are firmly attached to his Royal Person, Interest, and Government, & of consequence, are opposed to the Enemies of His Throne & Dignity, whether they openly declare themselves enemies or are more dangerously concealed under a mask of falsely pretended friendship.

These Conestogoe Indians, known to be firmly connected in Friendship with our well known Enemies from other Indian nations, and include some who have proven to be murderers, are capable of doing us harm. These Indians were treated as dearest friends by government people in Lancaster and Philadelphia.

At the last Indian Treaty held at Lancaster, not only was the Blood of our many murdered Brethren ignored, but our poor unhappy captured Friends were abandoned to slavery among the Savages, by making a friendship with the [Conestoga] Indians, and allowing them to conduct a profitable trade with the Quakers and others in Lancaster.

While our settlements were attacked by Savage foes in the late wars with the French and the followers of Pontiac, the Publick money was used to protect His Majesty's worst of Enemies, those falsely pretended Indian friends at Conestogoe. At the same time Hundreds of poor distressed Families of His majesty's Subjects are forced to abandon their Possessions & fly for their lives and are left in the most distressing Circumstances, to starve neglected, except what the friendly hand of private Donations has contributed to their support.

Added to these complaints is the decision of the Quaker Government in Philadelphia to stop offering payment for Indian Scalps. Yet, when a few of the Conestogoes known to be... friends of our Enemies, and some of them murderers themselves, have been attacked by a distressed and injured people of the Frontier, a generous reward is offered for their capture, and their behavior is painted in the most atrocious colours, while the horrid Ravages, cruel murders, and most shocking Barbarities, committed by Indians on His Majesty's Subjects, are covered over, and excused by Quaker Officials.

Below is an excerpt from *The Remonstrance*, which was also written by Mathew Smith and James Gibson on behalf of the people in the frontier Counties of Pennsylvania.

....Thirdly, during the late and present Indian War, the Frontiers of this Province have been repeatedly attacked and ravaged by Skulking parties of the Indians, who have with the most Savage Cruelty murdered Men, Women and Children, without distinction, and have reduced near a thousand families to the most extream distress. It grieves us to the very heart to see... our Frontier Inhabitants... [suffer] the loss of their parents, their Children, their Wives or Relatives, left destitute by the public, and exposed to the most cruel Poverty and Wretchedness while upwards of an Hundred and twenty of these Savages, who are with great reason suspected of being guilty of these horrid barbarities, under the Mask of Friendship, have ... [been]...taken under the protection of the Government, with a view to [escape] the Fury of the brave Relatives of the murdered, and are now maintained at the public Expence. Some of these Indians now in the Barracks of Philadelphia, are confessedly a part of the Wyalousing Indians, which Tribe is now at War with us, and the others are the Moravian Indians, who, living with us under the Cloak of Friendship, carried on a Correspondence with our known Enemies on the Great Island.

Fourthly, we humbly believe that it is bad policy, and extremely dangerous to our frontiers, to tolerate any Indians, of what tribe soever, living among the White people of this Province, while we are engaged in an Indian War with the followers of Pontiac. Experience has taught us that all Indians are hostile and their Claim to Freedom & Independence gives them the power to act as Spies, to information to our Enemies, and to supply them with food and weapons. We, therefore pray that this grievance be taken under consideration and remedied.

Signed on Behalf of ourselves, and by appointment of a great number of Frontier Inhabitants.

MATHEW SMITH,
JAMES GIBSON,

February 13th, 1764

The source below is an excerpt from “*A Narrative of the Late Massacres*”, written by Ben Franklin and published in 1764. Franklin’s *Narrative* is one of many pamphlets to come out soon after the killings of the Conestogas in Lancaster.

O YE Perpetrators of this horrid Wickedness! Think for a moment about the Mischief ye have done, the disgrace ye have brought on your Country, on your Religion, and your Bible, on your Families and Children! Think about the anger of the United Five Indian Nations, who had been our Friends, but are now provoked by your murdering one of their Tribes and will probably become our bitter Enemies. Think of the mild and good Government you have so boldly insulted and the Laws of your King, your Country, and your God you have broken. JUSTICE, though slow, will come at last. All good people every where hate your Actions. You have covered your Hands in innocent Indian Blood. The dying Shrieks and Groans of the Murdered Indians, will often sound in your Ears. Their ghosts will sometimes be upon you, and frighten even your innocent Children!

140 peaceable Indians remain under the protection of the Government here in Philadelphia. They are all now trembling for their lives. Unmanly Men! Who are not ashamed to come with Weapons against these Unarmed Indians, to use the Sword against Women, and the Bayonet against young Children; and who have already given such bloody Proofs of their Inhumanity and Cruelty. Let all good Men join heartily and as one in Support of the Laws, and in strengthening the Hands of Government; that JUSTICE may be done, the Wicked punished, and the Innocent Indians protected; otherwise we can, as a people, expect no Blessing from Heaven, there will be no Security for us and our Property, Anarchy and Confusion will prevail over all, and Violence, without Judgment, will take away everything.

.... I shall conclude with observing, that Cowards can handle Weapons, can strike where they are sure to meet with no Resistance, can wound, mangle and murder; but it belongs to brave Men to spare, and to protect; for, as the Poet says,

‘Mercy still sways the Brave...’

Below is an excerpt from “Recollections written in 1830 of life in Lancaster County 1726-1782 and a History of settlement at Wright’s Ferry, on the Susquehanna River,” by Rhoda Barber. This memoir describes relations between the Indians of Conestoga and white colonists of Lancaster from a personal perspective, based on the recollections of family members who experienced the event when the author, Rhoda Barber, was a very young child.

They were called the Conestoga Indians, but I think there was some among them of the Shanee tribe...they were here when the first white settlers came, they were entirely peaceable and seemed as much afraid of the other Indians as the whites were, they often had their cabins here by the little mill. My older brother and sisters used to be whole days with them; they were great beggars and the children were so attached to them they could not bear to hear them refused any thing they asked for. Their principle residence was at the place called Indian Town about 9 miles down from here at a little distance from Turkey Hill. The land was given them by the proprietor; they made brooms and baskets and exchanged them for food and often spent the night by the kitchen fire of the farmers round about; they appeared so much attached to the white people, calling their children after their favorite neighbors.... a company from Paxton township under the name of the Paxton boys agreed to come by night and destroy the poor Indians at their town – previous to this the Indians complained that they were suffering, they were afraid to go any distance to sell their [brooms and baskets] as people began to threaten them with what was likely to be their fate, in consequence of this James Wright and a person of the name of Hare, a German who lived near the Indian town, were appointed by the [Lancaster] government to supply them with flour and other necessaries for their subsistence; they were advised to [stay] in their town, their Christian neighbours sympathised with their situation, ... most were Germans of the Menonist society ... [who]... are against war or violence of any kind....

Quote from a pamphlet called *An Historical Account of the Late Disturbance...*, written in 1764 by a resident of Philadelphia that was sympathetic to the Paxton Boys.

....the White People most in General, hates any Thing that Savours of the Name of an Indian....

Below is another excerpt from Ben Franklin's *A Narrative of the Late Massacres in Lancaster County*, written in 1764:

.... If an Indian injures me, does it follow that I may revenge that Injury on all Indians? It is well known that Indians are of different Tribes, Nations, and Languages, as well as the White People. In Europe, if the French, who are White People, should injure the Dutch, are they to revenge it on the English, because they too are White People? The only Crime of these poor Wretches seems to have been, that they had a reddish brown Skin, and black Hair; and some People of that Sort, it seems, had murdered some of our [people]. If it be right to kill Men for such a Reason, then, should any Man, with a freckled Face and red Hair, kill a Wife or Child of mine, it would be right for me to revenge it, by killing all the freckled red-haired Men, Women and Children, I could afterwards any where meet with....

TIMELINE OF EVENTS USED TO HELP STUDENTS

CONTEXTUALIZE THE PAXTON BOYS' SOURCES

**Directions for Paxton Uprising
Historical Context Timeline**

DIRECTIONS: As you read the entire timeline, look for and highlight 3 or more parts of it that help you answer the questions below:

QUESTIONS:

- Were the Conestoga Indians peaceful or **real** enemies of the frontiersmen?
- What was the frontiersmen's perspective on relations with Indians in general?
- Was the violence against the Conestogas justified?

Friends & Enemies in Penn's Woods: Timeline for Establishing the Historical Context of the Paxton Uprising

1740's – The small Indian town of Conestoga that was once “far back in the woods” becomes surrounded by colonial farms. An old Indian man named Sheehays was said to have been the leader of Conestoga. Here is some other information about the village of Conestoga & its Indian residents based on various primary sources:

- several hundred acres of land were reserved for them by William Penn in 1701
- The Conestogas survived by growing corn, renting land, raising hogs, hunting deer on the two nearby farms that allowed them to hunt, making and selling baskets and brooms to nearby colonists, getting supplies of flour, clothing and other supplies from the Pennsylvania government. They sometimes begged at the doors of nearby colonists.

1755 – Beginning of the French & Indian War. France's Indian allies and some Delaware Indians begin raiding colonists' farms on the Pennsylvania frontier. The Indians of Conestogas start fearing for their lives. One Conestoga said in 1758, “The colonists frighten ye Indians saying in their Talk with one another over our land that the Indians will be killed.”

1756 – July & November – Pennsylvania officials hold peace talks on the frontier with Delaware Indian leaders. The Delawares say that fraudulent land deals are the main cause of their attacks on colonists.

December - Quaker leaders establish the Friendly Association for Regaining and Preserving Peace with the Indians by Pacific Measures.

1756 – 1763 – Frontiersmen send dozens of petitions to the Pennsylvania government to get sympathy for their sufferings at the hands of Indian raiders *and* to get protection. One petitioner tried to tell government officials in Philadelphia that he and his fellow colonists felt “naked and defenceless” in their “Bleeding Country”, because they were “Exposed to the Inhuman Cruelty of Barbarous Savages” and “the Ravages of our Restless, Barbarous, and Merciless Enemy.” When Conrad Weiser, a colonial government agent who helped make deals between Indians and colonists, raced out to meet over 400 angry frontiersmen who gathered in a town south of Philadelphia in 1755, they shouted “why must we be killed by the Indians and we not kill them!” The men wanted the government to return to payments for Indian scalps, but when Weiser told them that he had no power to do that, the frontiersmen began to “curse the Governor and the lawmakers and called me a Traitor to the Country.”

1758 – 1762 – Some agreements are made between colonial officials and hostile Indians to give some land back to the Indians. Indian raids decrease.

1763 – *February* – Britain and France make peace (Britain won the war)

May – Led by a chief named Pontiac, some of Britain's Indian allies become angry with British Indian policies and start a war. Indian raiding parties again strike colonists on the Pennsylvania frontier.

July – “This Township is breaking up . . .,” exclaimed colonist John Harris from Paxton, “there is such a General Pannick and Confusion Prevailing among the while Countrey.” Frontiersmen from Paxton start patrolling the mountain passes. In late August, 110 colonists from Paxton headed up the west branch of the Susquehanna River looking for hostile Indians and were surprised by an Indian war party, who came roaring over a hilltop “naked, painted black, running like so many Furies.” They killed four of the men and wounded six others. The rest escaped downriver in the dark, the wounded men “groaning & crying enough to make one's heart ache.”

October – Paxton colonists again march up the Susquehanna to an area where a handful of colonists from Connecticut had staked a claim following a fraudulent land deal with Iroquois Indians. Whether the armed Paxtonians went to oust these squatters or kill Indians (or both) is unclear. What they found, though, was those New Englanders, nine men and one woman, “most cruelly butchered; the woman was roasted, and had two Hinges in her Hands – supposed to be put in red hot; and several of the Men had Awls thrust in their Eyes, and Spears, Arrows, Pitchforks, &c. sticking in their bodies.” The killings were most likely an act of anger and revenge – anger at Connecticut's invasion, revenge for the mysterious fire, arranged if not actually kindled by Connecticut men, that killed Teedyuscung and destroyed the Delaware town there the previous spring.

December 14 & 27 The attacks on the Conestoga by frontiersmen from Paxton and nearby settlements.

APPENDIX O

THESIS-PROOF ACTIVITY ON JOHN HANCOCK

THESIS - PROOF

Thesis: John Hancock's complaints about Parliament were motivated by personal economic interests and revenge.

Evidence Supporting:

Evidence Refuting:

CONCLUSION

Thesis: John Hancock's complaints about Parliament were motivated by personal economic interests and revenge.

Evidence Supporting:

1. **Ann Hulton's report.** She said that Royal tax collector Henry Hulton's family was being harassed and threatened by members of the Sons of Liberty, an organization led by Sam Adams, Paul Revere and Hancock.
2. **Parliament's response to the Boston Town Meeting Resolutions.** Parliament claimed that the people of Boston were in a state of disorder and rebellion and that their complaints about parliaments' taxation were illegitimate.

Evidence Refuting:

1. **Sam Adams' statements.** He claimed Parliament's taxation of Americans was unconstitutional because it was done without the colonists' consent. He also believed the British soldiers stationed in New York was for the purpose of making colonists obey what he saw as parliament's unfair laws.
2. **John Dickinson's essay.** Dickinson claimed that allowing Parliament to tax Americans without their consent would cause all their rights as Englishmen to vanish.
3. **George Mason's letter.** Mason claimed that Parliament had no right to tax Americans without Americans' consent.
4. **James Otis's letter.** Otis claimed that Parliament had put Americans in a state of Panic with its tax laws. He also claimed that Royal tax collectors were abusing their authority and behaving badly in general.
5. **South Carolina Merchant's Non-Importation agreement.** These American businessmen said that they would be boycotting most goods made in England until the Townshend Act taxes were repealed.
6. **Boston Town Meeting Resolutions.** This large group of Boston's citizens claimed that the right of taxation belonged to the Massachusetts legislature only.

APPENDIX P

PRE-WRITING ORGANIZER FOR THE HISTORICAL ARGUMENTATION

TASK ON THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Causes of the American Revolution: Thesis Statement & Evidence

Main Question: Why did approximately 33% of Americans fight for independence from England between 1775 and 1783?

Directions: Upon analysis & interrogation of each source related to the fight for American independence from England, develop a claim about why Americans wanted independence from England’s government and record it in the form of a thesis statement in the box marked *Thesis Statement/Claim*. Then, line up the evidence you believe supports your claim and record each piece of evidence in the chart marked *Evidence & Connection to Thesis/Claim* along with an explanation of how or why each piece of evidence (source) connects to ad backs up the claim you formed.

<i>Thesis Statement/Claim</i>

Evidence & Connection to Thesis/Claim

Evidence	Connection to Thesis/Claim

APPENDIX Q

COMPARISON OF PRIMARY INFORMANTS' INTERPRETATIONS OF AFRICAN AMERICANS' EXPERIENCES DURING RECONSTRUCTION

Interpretations	
Teaching Intervention 1	Teaching Intervention 2
<p>Danny</p> <p>“Even though they [former slaves] got compensated – clothed, fed and freed – the people of the South and the North still hated blacks even if there were laws to not show any violence toward them”</p>	<p>Brian</p> <p>“African Americans were given freedom but they still experienced danger and they weren’t accepted by a lot of people, especially Southerners. [What stood out to me were] the pictures of slaves gaining power in the government – just how quickly they went from being slaves to having really important jobs in the government. They gained power really quickly.”</p>
<p>Alana</p> <p>“That they [African Americans] still had to like, they still had to keep on trying to work together so the government could be equal. The Northerners [sic], and the black people [needed to work together because] the [Southern] white people were trying to make sure they were ruling still, the country. Their motto was that white people rule the country; and some of the quotes and articles in the documents said black people weren’t educated and were inexperienced and the white people were educated and knew what to do. But they just weren’t treating everybody equal and following the Constitution. [What stood out to me is] that they [African Americans and Northerners] like 10 years, 20 years later they all started working together in the government and stuff.”</p>	<p>Eddie</p> <p>“I think it was – they [former slaves] had a better life than they had during the [Civil]War –in Reconstruction they had their freedom and they had school, hospitals and clothes and food. But some people really didn’t like that because they still think –they wanted to believe that they are still slaves and ask ‘who is their master’...I think their life was better [during Reconstruction]. [For example,] Source N...was a proven fact – it was a photograph that a black man was a judge of a Supreme Court of South Carolina. It was in 1970 [sic] and that was the same time period they [former slaves] had the right to vote. And that tells me they were educated and they could be in the upper class and do what the white people could do.”</p>

Archit

“I can conclude that sure they got freedom, sure they went they went through many hardships, but along the way to freedom they were beaten, killed, shot whipped and were put down by every other white person in the South. But in the North they were supported, so that [is] probably what made them go on, so they were protected, so they had no fear because they were doing something good for themselves and their people. I’m basing all that on these letters from the Ku Klux, from the photos, from the papers that they showed it shows pictures of how these black men are hurt, shows pictures of how these black men were treated, shows pictures of how these black men rebelled to have their freedom back. And these sources, the written sources, they say that the slaves were happy that they’re being free, but also that they’re being put down by these white men and these Ku Klux Klan.”

Maria

“They [African Americans] went through a harsh time because a lot of whites didn’t want them to have rights like they did – they wanted them to stay slaves. They didn’t want them to be free. They thought that slaves were considered to be slaves and should stay that way. Even though some people wanted them to be free, most of them didn’t want the slaves to be free. Even though like some African Americans became involved in stuff, whites didn’t like it. Some of them became senators and some of them had the right to vote. They [white Americans] didn’t like it. Obviously African Americans were kind of glad they were becoming involved in stuff like that. But white Americans didn’t like it. They were like, mad.”

Naraj

“I can say they were really scared and life was really hard for them. They must have been happy they got their freedom, but they didn’t get any jobs. I mean it was sharecropping. They were happy to get their freedom, but they didn’t know what to do after that. And then the government tried to help them by building schools and other things like hospitals, but the KKK scared them and burned some hospitals and schools. And when people living in the South got a hold of their state legislature again, they made the Jim Crow laws and that made life even harder for – and that limited the rights of A Americans even more. Must have been a big struggle.”

Kelly

“Well they got them more rights but there were still people that thought that they shouldn’t have these rights and so they took it upon themselves to try to get slavery back like the KKK, which put African American in danger and thought they were better off as slaves. Part of it was good for them [African Americans] – like their rights – they got more rights. But at the same time they were in danger.”

Sadie

“It was difficult, but in some ways it was better than slavery and in some ways worse. Because now that they weren’t slaves anymore there were a lot of white people like the KKK and the League of white men or something, they didn’t like black people being free, so then they were doing a lot of things – killing them, beating them, hanging them, burning down houses, they would do a lot of things to hurt them because they wanted black people to stay low, and not be part of the government or anything. But also in other ways it got better. For people like moved up if they were, like some black people became judges, part of the government. They moved up, so it was good for them. So all in all it was like, it wasn’t all that great, but it was still pretty good.”

Anju

“I guess it was kind of like confusing because they [African Americans] didn’t know who they could trust because even some Northerners wouldn’t believe them – and I guess it was hard, but they had help by the Freedman’s Bureau – but I think it was mostly confusing, like chaotic for the black people.”

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