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Historical Thinking: An Evaluation of Student and Teacher Ability to Analyze Sources

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to partially replicate the *Historical Problem Solving: A Study of the Cognitive Process Using Historical Evidence* study conducted by Sam Wineburg in 1991. The Historical Problem Solving study conducted by Wineburg (1991) sought to compare the ability of historians and top level students, as they analyzed pictures and written documents centered on the Battle of Lexington Green. In this version of the study, rather than compare historians and students, we sought out to compare the analytical skills of teachers and students. The main findings relate to the fact that the participants lacked the ability to engage in the very complex activities associated with historical inquiry and the utilization of primary sources in learning about the past. This lack of ability should be used to improve teacher professional development programs and help them develop the skills needed to not only engage in historical evaluation themselves but to also develop skills that will allow them to instruct students to do the same.

Keywords: *Document Analysis, Historical Literacy, Historical Thinking, Inquiry, Primary Sources, Teacher Education*

Introduction

With the release of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the College, Career, and Civic Life Framework (C3), teachers are increasingly urged to create and use instructional activities that provide students with the types of skills needed to be successful in both college and careers (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2012; Levine, 2014; National Council for Social Studies, 2013). The types of skills that CCSS and C3 focus on revolve around a student's ability to read, write, speak, listen, complete research-based projects, and use processes and language utilized by professionals, and, in the process, allowing students to practice elements of

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authentic inquiry along with skills needed for civic participation (Levine, 2014). More specifically, they require students to be able to cite textual evidence from primary and secondary documents, determine central ideas from primary and secondary documents, determine author's point of view, analyze charts and graphs, distinguish between fact and opinion, analyze relationships between primary and secondary documents, and construct evidence-based arguments. Integrating the curriculum with primary sources and disciplined-based methods allows educators the opportunity to meet these requirements in effective and authentic ways (Britt & Howe, 2014; Callison, 2013; Lamb, 2014; Woyshner, 2010).

Primary Sources

The utilization of primary sources provides students with the prospect of investigating historical events from a variety of perspectives, in a more authentic manner, and allows them to construct meaning from events that took place in the past (Barton & Levstik, 2003; Marino, 2012; Tally & Goldenberg, 2005; Waring & Scheiner-Fisher, 2014; Waring, Torrez, & Lipscomb, 2015). Vansledright (2004) argues that the use of primary sources in the classroom provides students with the opportunity to understand distortions in historical texts, such as bias, exaggeration, ideology, and partisanship. This type of thinking is very different than other forms of problem solving, because rather than trying to determine a question with a pre-determined answer, one is attempting to reconstruct an event that can be vague and open to interpretation (Bickford, 2010; Breakstone, Smith, & Wineburg, 2013; Wineburg, 1991). Allowing students to engage in the thoughtful analysis of historical documents can result in a more complete understanding of historical events and authentic opportunities for students to recall historical events, with more specificity and detail (Barton, 2005). The repetition of this type of analysis can bolster students' ability to independently arrive at reasonable, informed opinions (Seixas, 2000).

Typically, classroom teachers value the theories of implementing primary sources in the social studies classroom and using primary documents, as a means of promoting historical inquiry (Hicks, Doolittle, & Lee, 2004; Lee, 2002; Waring, Torrez, & Lipscomb, 2015). Despite this identification of importance, the implementation of primary source activities in the K-12 history classroom has been limited (Lee, 2002; Levstik & Barton, 2005; Friedman, 2006). This lack of primary source use can largely be attributed to the perception that these activities are too

complex to design, implement, and grade (Vansledright, 2004). Many teachers also feel that the complexity, of primary source analysis exercises, is too difficult for students to complete (Vansledright, 2004). While it has been established that students often struggle with the analysis of primary source documents (Wineburg, 1991), it has also been shown that students, as young as seven years old, have the cognitive ability to engage with and analyze primary source information (Hicks, Doolittle, & Lee, 2004). With evidence to suggest that even the youngest students have the capability of analyzing primary source documents, coupled with the increased focus on these types of analytical skills, it is imperative that teachers utilize primary sources in social studies classrooms.

Despite the limited use of primary source activities, there has been a push to extend the use of primary source-based activities in K-12 classrooms. The use of activities supporting the integration of primary sources into social studies teaching, especially those that require students to construct their own meaning of history, is strongly supported by the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS, 2013). The NCSS National Curriculum Standards, as well as the newly developed C3 standards, which were developed as a companion to CCSS, call for inquiry-based models of instruction (National Council for the Social Studies, 2010; National Council for the Social Studies, 2013). The C3 model is designed to help students develop content area literacy abilities based upon the use on inquiry methods that push students to use proper disciplinary skills (Lee & Swan, 2013). The use of the C3 model, along with the use of CCSS, should help open the social studies classroom to more effective literacy instruction, if implemented in appropriate ways.

In order to effectively implement primary source-based activities into the classroom, teachers need to be knowledgeable about pedagogical approaches that assist students in reading, understanding, and constructing meaning from primary sources (Vansledright, 2004; Barton & Levstik, 2003). Despite the need to develop knowledge regarding the implementation of primary source-based activities, it has been identified that pre-service, as well as in-service, teacher knowledge of what primary sources are and how they can be implemented in the classroom can at times be limited or non-existent (Neumann, 2010; Waring & Torrez, 2010). The question then becomes, if we are asking teachers to implement strategies into the classroom that they are

unprepared for, how can it be expected that these types of activities be implemented into the classroom with success?

Historical Sense, Habits of Mind, and Thinking

In addition to being able to independently analyze primary sources, it is vital for students to gain skills of historical sense making, to be able to think historically, and to be able to construct from the "confused tangle", of what is history, a straightforward and most probable account for what may have happened for events from the past (Bell & McCollum, 1917). Students need to be provided the skills necessary for reading, writing, and analysis to be able to properly understand and convey the stories of what we know about the past and how we know it, in both educational and public spheres (Nordgren, 2016). To think historically, students must be given opportunities to create their own authentic questions, utilize a variety of sources, have the skill set to properly examine, read, and determine the context for original sources, be able to consider alternative perspectives, find sources to corroborate and question their hypotheses, and construct their own narratives (Waring, 2011).

In order to move students towards this goal, they must be able to have opportunities to cultivate their own "historic sense" and historical "Habits of Mind" (Bell, 1917; Bell & McCollum, 1917; Bradley Commission on History in Schools, 1995). With a well-developed historic sense and historical habits of mind, students are better prepared to provide clear, intelligible, and well-articulated accounts for historical events (Bell, 1917; Bradley Commission on History in Schools, 1995). Additionally, it is important for students to be able to understand present events in light of the past, to appreciate a historical narrative, and be able to provide reflective and discriminating replies to "thought questions" about various historical situations (Bell & McCollum, 1917). History teachers need to move students along a novice to expert level continuum of historical thinking, by attending to and building historical "Habits of Mind", such as the ideas that the progression of time is preordained, there is one cause for historical events, one can learn from the past to automatically avoid mistakes in the future, historical presentism, and that one source and perspective is sufficient (Bradley Commission on History in Schools, 1995). Students need these skills in order to be more effective and productive citizens in a 21st Century democracy (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2012; National Council for Social Studies, 2013).

Specific skills that are essential to developing and fostering historical ways of thinking are sourcing, contextualization, close reading, and corroboration (Wineburg, 2010). The process of sourcing is when the individual viewing a source thinks about its author and the creation of the source. Contextualization is having the ability to situation a source and events associated with it in time and place. Close reading refers to being able to carefully consider what the source is documenting and the methods used to convey a particular message. Corroboration is the act of utilizing multiple additional sources to ask questions about important details about a source and to confirm or refute understandings made about previous source(s) analyzed. With these skills and historical habits of mind more sophisticatedly developed, students will be better able to cite textual evidence from primary and secondary documents, determine central ideas from primary and secondary documents, determine author's point of view, analyze charts and graphs, distinguish between fact and opinion, analyze relationships between primary and secondary documents, and construct evidence-based arguments (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2012; National Council for Social Studies, 2013).

Method

The purpose of this study was to partially replicate the *Historical Problem Solving: A Study of the Cognitive Process Using Historical Evidence* study conducted by Sam Wineburg in 1991. The Historical Problem Solving study conducted by Wineburg (1991) sought to compare the ability of historians and top level students, as they analyzed pictures and written documents centered on the Battle of Lexington Green. In this version of the study, rather than compare historians and students, we sought to compare the analytical skills of teachers and students. Using the Wineburg (1991) study as a guide, we attempted to examine: (a) how do people prioritize and construct meaning from historical sources that, at times, contradict each other and (b) the extent to which students and teachers source, contextualize, corroborate, and close read, while engaging with a set of historical sources related to a central historical topic.

Subjects

This study was conducted at a high school in the southeastern region of the United States. This high school is consistently ranked in the top 500 high schools by U.S. News and World Report and annually receives an A rating from its state's school ranking system. The focus of the study was on social studies teachers (7), as well as students (6). Seven social studies teachers

(TA-TG; 6 males and 1 female) participated in this study. Of these teachers, they taught standard or honors level American history (3 teachers), standard level American and world history classes (1), standard and honors level world history (1), AP human geography (1), and AP and Honors economics (1). Since none of these American history teachers taught AP American history, the content that they cover only spans from Reconstruction to modern history, as the school's state standards do not require the teaching of early American history due to its inclusion in the 8th grade curriculum. Thus, we purposely selected these participants, as they should be familiar with social studies pedagogy but do not currently teach content related to the American Revolution.

Table 1: Teacher degree and length of teaching experience.

Teacher	Length of Teaching Experience	Degrees
Teacher A	2 Years	B.S. Social Science Education
Teacher B	30 Years	JD Law, Alternative Certification
Teacher C	10 Years	B.S. Social Science Education, M.Ed. Social Science Education, Ed.D. Educational Leadership
Teacher D	8 Years	B.S. Social Science Education
Teacher E	15 Years	B.S. Elementary Education, M.Ed. General Education
Teacher F	1 Year	B.S. Social Science Education
Teacher G	1 Year	B.S. Social Science Education

Six students (SA-SF; 6 males) participated in this study. Each of these students were invited to take part in this study, because they were in the process of taking either AP American Government or AP Economics and had taken and passed both their AP American history class and AP American history exam, during the previous school year. Since students had passed the

AP American History exam as delivered by College Board, this was an appropriate baseline for the acquisition of American history knowledge. Through the AP American history class, students would have also been exposed to Document Based Question (DBQ) activities that require the analysis of both primary and secondary sources. The use, of DBQ activities, helps students prepare to write analytical essays that require the citing of content from the documents within the DBQ source set. The essay, based upon the analysis of various sources, is a major component of the AP exam, so it is important that students develop appropriate document analysis skills to be successful on the exam. The mean grade point average for all students was 3.421. All students planned to attend 4-year universities.

Materials

The materials, for this study, included eight written documents and three pictures, focusing on the events of the Battle of Lexington Green. As this study was done as a reproduction of previous work, the documents and pictures (see Appendix A) are the same as those utilized by Wineburg in his Historical Problem Solving study (Wineburg, 1991). These sources best allowed us to conduct our research, as well.

Six of the written documents were created within 7 years of the Battle of Lexington Green. The makeup of these documents included a deposition of 34 minutemen, two British diary entries, a newspaper story from London, a letter protesting British actions in the colonies, and an excerpt from a personal narrative written by a British soldier. The final two documents included a 1963 American history textbook version of the events of the battle and a 1961 American novel detailing what happened during the battle. The documents were originally chosen by Wineburg for their ability to provide contrasting details about the same event. This would, therefore, provide the impetus needed to stimulate the need for deeper analysis of what might have actually taken place during the battle.

Three paintings were used to depict the events that unfolded during the Battle of Lexington Green. Picture 1, a depiction of the battle from 1775, highlights the colonists in a state of crisis, scattered throughout with an apparent lack of order. The town of Lexington appears to have been set on fire, and there are very few colonists seen in this depiction of the battle. Picture 2, a depiction of the battle from 1859, shows a scattered colonial militia facing an organized British force. The British forces appear to have been spurred on by a commanding

officer on a horse. At the forefront of the picture, there is a woman who is tending to a wounded Colonial. Both the British and the Colonists show multiple casualties, something that is not corroborated with any of the other documents. Picture 3, a depiction of the battle from 1886, shows a defiant Colonial militia exchanging fire with the British regulars over a bridge. In the background, there is a tranquil village surrounded by the gun smoke of battle. It depicts a single Colonial causality and what appears to be a commanding officer spurring British soldiers into battle.

Procedure

The initial step taken in the study was to engage each of the participants individually in a think-aloud. In order to practice and become comfortable with the process of engaging in a think aloud, participants were provided with sample texts and asked to describe everything that they thought, while reading the sample text. Once comfortable with engaging in the process of a think-aloud, participants were presented with a set of documents concerning the Battle of Lexington Green. Participants were informed that their goal was "to try to understand what happened at Lexington Green on the morning of April 19, 1775."

Next, participants were provided with the eight historical documents and were asked to read the documents aloud, one at a time. Each individual was asked to verbalize his or her thoughts, while reading the text. No prompts were given, and no questions were asked, except during time of long silence. In those moments of silence, participants were only asked the questions "What are you thinking?" or "Why did you pause?"

Once all documents had been read aloud, each document was presented again, but this time, each document was chunked into individual sentences and placed on 5in x 7in index cards. The process of chunking information is designed to help participants slow down his or her thinking and allow individuals an opportunity for deeper analysis of each document (Johnstone & El-Banna, 2006). Once all documents had been presented for the second time, participants were given a reference sheet that included all eight written documents. This, therefore, allowed participants to see all documents at the same time and allow for easier reference during the final portions of the study.

After the distribution of the reference sheets, participants were asked to analyze three paintings, with the name of the artist and the date of the painting removed. Participants were asked to review each picture and provide statements as to what they saw. Once comments had been made about each of the pictures, participants were asked to determine which "most accurately depicted what happened during the Battle of Lexington Green." They were then asked to provide a date for each of the pictures. Once each picture had been evaluated, participants were asked to rank each of the written documents in their order of trustworthiness regarding the events of Lexington Green. A ranking of one meant that the document was considered to be the most trustworthy, while a ranking of eight meant the document was the least trustworthy.

Data Analysis

Picture Evaluation

All interviews were recorded and transcribed in full. All statements, made during the picture analysis, were coded using the protocol outlined by Wineburg in his original study. These were each given a code, based upon whether the statements the statement could be described as description, reference, analysis, or qualification. Descriptive statements are those that only refer to what the item or characteristic is. A descriptive statement does not look at the function of the object being described. A reference statement is one in which the participant either referenced one of the written documents, or one of the other two pictures. An analytical statement included comments that focused on a particular point of view or possible motives of the subjects of the work. These also may have included unprompted mentioning of the date of construction for each picture. A qualifying statement is one in which the participant makes a claim but qualifies it with another statement. A qualifying statement is also one in which the participant notated limitations of the pictures. Reliability, in the coding scheme, was determined by comparing the coding of the authors with that of a trained external rater. The interrater reliability for the raters was found to be Kappa=.73 ($p<0.001$), 95% CI.

Document Evaluation

In order to analyze the participant responses during the document analysis portion of the interview, statements were coded as one of the following: sourcing, corroboration,

contextualization, or close reading. Each of these coding categories is described further during the analysis for written documents below. Once again, reliability was determined by comparing author codes with that of a trained external rater. The interrater reliability for the raters was found to be Kappa=.72 (P<.001), 95% CI.

Findings

While many of the conclusions may be predictable, based upon the vast number of studies completed regarding student ability regarding literacy skills, there are a few interesting implications that can be drawn from a study of this nature. The American school system is about to embark into a new round of test taking, based upon the idea that students should have the ability to critically analyze primary and secondary documents and then be able to construct a valid argument using those sources. This means that teachers must possess the ability to not only analyze documents themselves but to also be able to communicate strategies that will allow students to analyze documents in a way that allows them to appropriately engage in these very complex ways of thinking historically.

In this study, teachers are supposed to represent experts, who have the ability to engage in deep analysis of historical sources, with the purpose of recognizing pertinent information that can be used in the construction of a deep understanding of historical events. Unfortunately, there seem to be a number of issues that would make it easy to question the place of the teacher as an expert on how to engage in deep analysis of historical texts. With some of the issues that became apparent through the analysis of teacher responses to both written and pictorial sources, it is not surprising that students run into many of the same issues when analyzing historical documents. These issues largely center on the way in which teachers and students analyze photographs/paintings, how they engage in the analysis of written documents, and their lack of content knowledge regarding the topic they are studying.

Overall, there seemed to be very little difference in the abilities of teachers and AP level students to engage in the analysis of historical document analysis. One thing, to keep in mind with this analysis, is that many teachers are just now moving away from a “teach to the test” model of instruction to a much more complicated model of document-based instruction. This is in contrast to a group of students who had spent the previous school year regularly analyzing primary sources to get ready for their AP American history exam. If this study had been done

with standard or honors level students, it may have painted a very different picture, as to student ability.

Picture Evaluation

When taking a close look at the way in which teachers and students analyze pictures, there are a few things that stand out. The first real deficiency that is notable among teachers and students is the lack of statements that either reference previous materials or attempt to analyze the picture to find a deeper meaning in the representation of the topic. The vast majority of statements that students and teachers made during the analysis of the pictures centered on the restatement of concrete facts from the pictures. Unfortunately, there is scarce use of statements that take the obvious and tie it to a deeper meaning throughout the painting. The lack of analytical or cross reference statements would leave one to believe that teachers are not teaching students to appropriately analyze pictures, because they themselves cannot appropriately analyze pictures.

There was also a lack of teacher and student use of the qualifying skill during the picture analysis. This would lead one to believe that teachers and students are unable to make varied distinctions on what is right and what is wrong in historical documents. Of the five instances where qualified statements were made regarding the accuracy of the paintings, two teachers merely stated that there were "inaccuracies in all three pictures" and that their choice would be inherently flawed. This statement is quite generic and fails to show the ability to grasp finite details from such a broad text. Perhaps if participants had been further prompted, they would have been able to better distinguish the flaws in their choices, but as of now, the use of the qualification skill would not be something that could be considered a well-developed skill.

When comparing the coded responses to the picture analysis portion of the study an independent t test was run (see Table 1). Only the category of descriptive statements showed a statistically significant difference $t(11)=.463$, $p< .05$. The categories of reference $t(11)=1.551$, $p<.05$; analytical $t(11)=.136$, $p<.05$; and qualification $t(10)=.542$, $p<.05$ showed no statistical significance.

Table 2: Means and standard deviations for each category.

Subject	Category			
	Description	Reference	Analytical	Qualifying
Teachers (n=7)				
M	12.50	3.67	3.00	.33
SD	7.06	3.72	1.55	.52
AMH Teachers (n=4)				
M	16.00	2.33	2.33	.67
SD	6.25	2.08	2.08	.58
Non-AMH Teachers (n=3)				
M	9.00	5.00	3.67	0.00
SD	7.00	5.00	.58	0.00
Students (n=6)				
M	14.33	6.33	3.17	.50
SD	6.65	1.97	2.56	.55

The picture that was chosen as most accurate by both teachers and students was overwhelmingly the 1886 depiction of the Battle of Lexington Green (reprinted in McDowell, 1967). Of the six student participants, five stated that they felt that the 1886 depiction was the most accurate picture, and of the 7 teacher participants, three felt that 1886 depiction was the most accurate. The one student who did not choose the 1886 depiction of the battle, as most accurate, chose the 1859 account (reprinted in McDowell, 1967). Of the four teachers who did not choose picture 2 as the most accurate, two teachers found the 1775 depiction of the battle (reprinted in Tourtellot, 1959) to most accurate, and two found the 1859 depiction of the battle to be most accurate.

After analyzing the reasons for why each individual picked their respective picture as the most accurate, there were no distinct common themes between respondents. The 1886 depiction of the battle was chosen for a variety of reasons. Student E and Student B declared that there was a bridge present, as stated in some of the documents. Student F and Teacher C stated that there were no women mentioned in the documents, and Teacher A had no real reason for

choosing for choosing the 1886 version. There were also no real commonalities in the selection of either the 1859 or 1775 depiction of the battle.

Five individuals did make qualifying statements, as to why they made their respective choices regarding the most accurate picture. Teacher D and A made the blanket statement that all three pictures contained inaccuracies and that they would be making a choice despite knowing that the document they were choosing would not be a completely truthful interpretation of what had taken place during the battle. Teacher F and Student C made similar qualifications by commenting that their choice of best picture was in spite of the fact that neither of their choices showed the 7 or 8 men who were described as wounded during the battle, in many of the documents. Student E made the final qualifying statement, by stating that the 1886 picture was the best representation of the Battle of Lexington Green despite the fact that "there's not really a stone wall in [picture 2], there is one in Picture 3, but the other aspects [of that picture] I don't much like at all."

Ranking of Documents

After analyzing participant response to the written documents, it would appear that both teachers and students run into many issues, when engaging in the processes of sourcing and contextualization. When engaging in the process of sourcing, neither teachers nor students made it a point to place the documents into the appropriate context, prior to reading the rest of the document. This start from the top left of a document and read to the bottom right is a trait that can be seen with readers, who have not been taught to appropriately analyze the content of a historical document. Both teachers and students often fumbled through some of these complex texts and were unable to make appropriate conclusions about the text due to their ignorance of the contextual evidence provided to them in the source of the document.

The main difference in the use of the sourcing skill between students and teachers was that, even though teachers did not engage in sourcing at the beginning of the text, teachers were still able to consistently make judgments about the validity of the text, based upon the source material, after having read the text. Because the sourcing skill is such an integral part of the ability to appropriately engage in the analysis of historical documents, a teacher's ability to go back and revise statements that had been previously made bodes well for their ability to demonstrate to students the importance for the reading of source materials.

The issues with the use of the contextualization skill was also quite glaring. As seen during the discussion about student and teacher ability to analyze pictorial sources, teachers and students were quite adept at providing basic factual statements about the written texts, as well. They were both, however, unable to tie those factual statements together, in a way that would allow them to create a deeper understanding of the drama that was taking place in the documents before them. This lack of reconstruction may stem from the perception that history is often just a litany of facts and that there is no need to reconstruct facts from within a document to make one's own interpretation of the event.

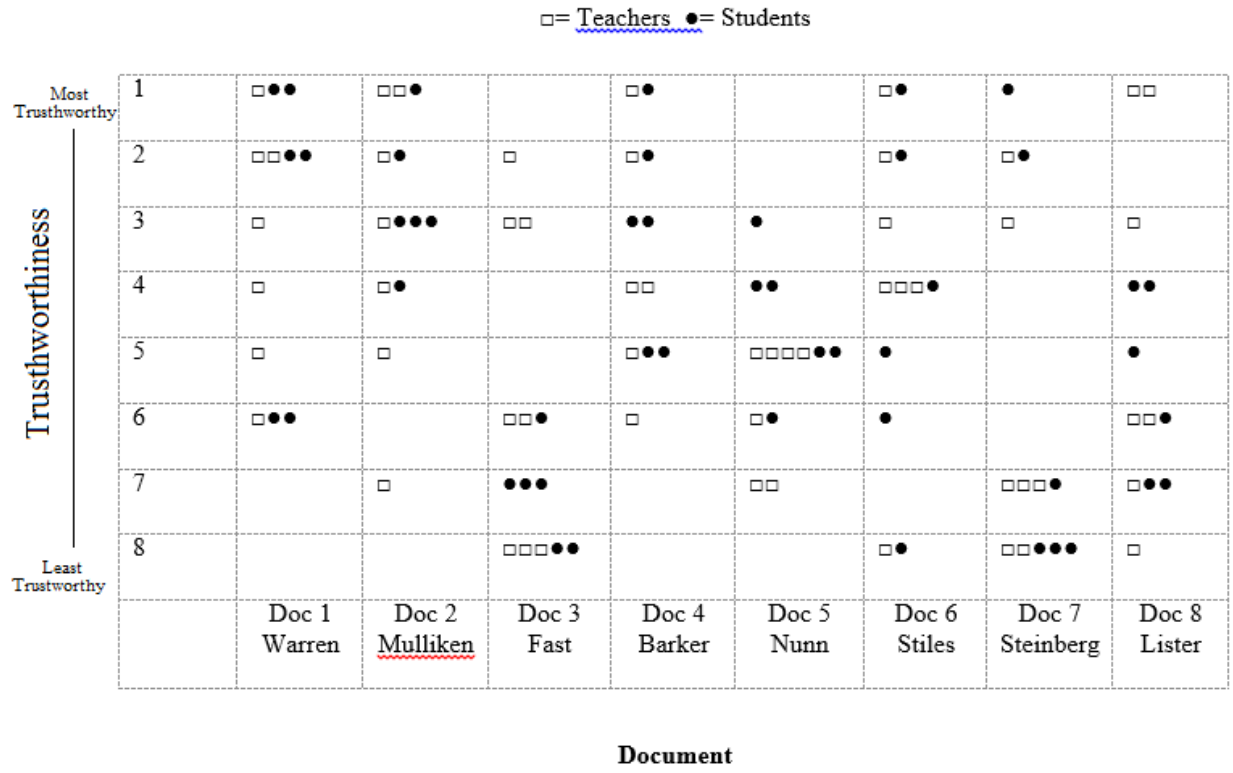
One final note on close reading comes from a comment made by Teacher G. Teacher G pointed out that a number of words may give students difficulty, if they were reading these documents during a class assignment. He, and almost every other participant, had repeated issues with the pronunciation of words like "impetuosity", "ministerial", and "wading." These issues with anachronistic vocabulary are definitely something to keep in mind, as teachers move to the implementation of more primary source-based activities.

In order to analyze the level of agreement between teacher and student document rankings, Kendall's coefficient of concordance was used. The use of Kendall's coefficient of concordance allows for the comparison of rankings between two different groups. Kendall's coefficient of concordance analysis was chosen over Spearman's rho technique, as it allows for a better analysis of tied rankings. Kendall's correlation coefficient between teacher and student ranking of documents showed a strong positive relationship with $r=.837$ and $p=.01$.

We also chose to measure the concordance of American history teachers and those who taught non-American history social studies classes. The Kendall's correlation coefficient between American history teachers and non-American history teachers showed a weak negative relationship with $r= -.143$ and $p=.01$.

Figure 1 demonstrates how each participant within the study ranked each of the documents analyzed during the study. The chart shows very similar rates of response for each document. Each document has a wide range of where they were ranked.

Figure 1: Levels of trustworthiness



Sourcing. A participant was viewed to have completed the process of sourcing, if they considered the document's attribution (both its author and how the document came into being) prior to reading anything else in the document. We were interested in determining if the participant attempted to identify the source prior to attempting to understand the context and endeavoring to close read or corroborate. Sourcing entails identifying such characteristics as the author of the document, a potential purpose for why the author wrote the document, the date of the document, the publisher of the document and the like (Wineburg, 1991). Accurately identifying the source information for a document allows the reader to place the document into appropriate context and allows for the identification of possible bias within the documents.

The use of the sourcing skill was employed on three different occasions, during the teacher interviews. Teacher D was responsible for two of the sourcing instances, while teacher A had one instance of using the sourcing skill. Even in these instances of using the sourcing skill, very little detail was gathered from the use. Teacher D noted that (s)he had never heard of

Joseph Warren before and declared document 5 to be a "primary source". Teacher A referenced the rank of Lt. John Barker and stated, "Ah, it's a Lieutenant. That makes sense." This participant went on to read the rest of the source, without further connection to his rank. Despite the fact that passing reference was made to components of the sourcing strategy, neither Teacher A, nor Teacher D, used the sourcing skill in a way that would allow for generation of a deeper understanding of the document's context.

There were a few instances where teachers identified the source three or four lines into the reading of the source. Teacher B provided the most instances of citing source information after already having started reading the document. Teacher B pointed out that Document 3 "is not a very trustworthy legal document" because of the emotion that the soldier would have felt, when dealing with the death of his father. Teacher B also used this skill during analysis of Document 4, acknowledging that the author was a British Officer and stated, "We have a different perspective here." Teacher C used the source for contextual information a few lines into the text during Document 2, when he stated that the document wasn't written "long after [the event]," but followed that statement by noting, "5 days…that's kind of a long time to either all get together and get the story your gonna tell straight, or 5 days of that's what really happened and so that is what I'm gonna go swear and say." While each of these examples would not fit the traditional definition of sourcing, the following examples show that Teacher B and Teacher C clearly have the ability to use source information to develop appropriate contextual understanding of the source. No students displayed even this form of use for the sourcing skill.

Students and Teachers were able to use the source information, after the document had been read, to go back and revise their understanding of a document. Teachers A, B, C, D, and F, along with Students C and G, questioned the legitimacy of Document 7, due to the fact that it was a textbook. Teacher B pointed out that the textbook lacked the "varying perspectives of the other documents." Teacher C also characterized the textbook excerpt as being "a cute story that we tell our kids. It doesn't have much substance to it." Had this been identified prior to the reading of the document, it may have elicited more critical statements about the legitimacy of the source.

The absence of sourcing, as they interpreted the events in the documents, did cause issues for some teachers and students. The best examples of this confusion can be seen through

Teacher C's comments regarding the end of Document 4. Here, Teacher C stated, "Ok, so before this, thinking about who is it? Now, right now, I'm thinking that it's the British army people. Um, but who knows?" Without the utilization of the sourcing skill, this participant had confusion, regarding what had taken place based on the description provided in the document. Student B also demonstrated how failing to source a document first could lead to a misinterpretation of the text. Student B initially declared that Document 8 was from the Colonist perspective, but after reading the citation at the end of the text, this student stated, "Ok, so it wasn't from [the rebels], he was a member of the British officers. I was wrong there, should have read [the citation] first." Student B also showed an inability to properly analyze source material by stating, "I'm not sure how [the father] would have been shot in the Revolutionary war, if this was published in 1961." All of these examples provide a bit of insight into the lack of ability to appropriately use the sourcing skill.

Contextualization. Contextualization is the process by which a reader tries to place the source and the events it reports in proper place and time. Scheurman and Newmann (1998) argue that understanding the context of an event requires one to explore the issues, relationships, and complexities of the topic being investigated. One cannot be said to have participated in the process of contextualization, if he or she have merely restated the order of the events for which they have read. The reader must have attempted to use the information of when and where the event took place to try and gain a deeper understanding of the event.

The analysis of student and teacher use of the contextualization skill was extremely lacking through their analysis of the documents. While teachers and students were very good about restating the information they had just read in chronological order, they almost never restated information to then try to gain a deeper understanding of the text. One of the most common statements that best fits the above definition of contextualization is the common response, made by students, to the "hostilities" noted in Document 1 as being the "shot heard round the world." This statement shows that students are able to place the events, being described in the document, in the proper time period and that they are able to make connections to outside descriptions of events being described in documents.

Teachers F, C, and B and Students E, B, and C made statements, about slavery, that may appear at first glance to fit into the contextualization framework. These participants were able to

point out that the use of the term "slavery", used in Document 1, did not refer to the type of enslavement of African Americans we are accustomed to reading and talking about in an American history class. It referred to the perception of what it was like to be ruled by Great Britain. These analytical statements show that these participants could appropriately place the concept of slavery into a broader context and understand the way in which the concept was being used in this instance. Even with statements like this, the use of the contextualization skill was very scant. While the previous examples show an ability to engage in analytical thought, they do not truly fit the definition of contextualization. They delve into historical understandings of particular historical concepts; however, these are not thoughts pertinent to the understanding of "what happened at Lexington Green on the morning of April 19, 1775".

Corroboration. Corroboration is a skill that requires participants to compare, for areas of agreement and disagreement, the information from one source with information contained in other sources. The more that the information from one document lines up with the information contained in other documents, the more likely the reader is able to determine if the information that they have read is at least plausible. VanSledright (2004) averred that corroboration is needed, because a source has no innate reliability. As compared to the use of the sourcing skill, teachers and students both utilized the corroboration skill, on a much more consistent basis, and were able to use it to create a deeper understanding of the content. Both student and teacher use of the corroboration skill focused on three critical concepts, which were 1) who fired first the first shot, 2) the number of injured soldiers killed and injured during the fighting, and 3) the time of the attack.

Teachers and students consistently referred to other sources to try and determine who fired the first shot during the Battle of Lexington Green. Teacher B's statement of "I generally try to tell myself a history story, and the story I'm telling myself here is that I'm not clear who fired first that night and I'm not certain it matters a whole lot. I think both sides were spoiling for a fight and that the British certainly got more than they expected," summed up the position of those who tried to corroborate who fired first during the battle. Despite referencing multiple accounts of who fired first, no one was able to come to a full and complete conclusion, based upon these documents, as to who fired first at the Battle of Lexington Green.

There was also quite a bit of discussion about how many soldiers were injured during the battle. Student C stated that he found it curious that so many accounts mentioned the number of soldiers who had been hurt or killed during battle, yet the author of Document 4 stated that he didn't know how many had been hurt or killed, despite having stopped to rest before moving on to Concord. Both, teachers and students, consistently linked the description of the one British causality, described in Document 5, to the naming of a dead British soldier, in Document 8.

While not quite as prevalent, many of the participants, in the study, pointed out possible inconsistencies as to when the battle was supposed to have taken place. Teacher C continually pointed out the different times discussed, for when the battle apparently took place. Teachers B and C, along with Student C, also pointed out that they were confused by certain documents, noting that the battle took place during early morning. These instances, of using the corroboration skill, show a consistent ability to try and use multiple documents to try and verify the validity of various statements regarding a historical event.

Close Reading. The process of close reading is one in which readers read carefully to consider what a source presents and the language used to say it. Close reading can be used to question the motivation of an author's statement, to read deeper into the motivations of the individuals in the text, and to build a more comprehensive understanding of the events in the text.

When identifying themes regarding the close reading process, there was very little alignment to those things talked about by teachers and students. The main close reading themes that emerged from the analysis of participant responses focused on 1) teacher analysis of where the information from Document 6 actually came from; 2) the use of text features such as quotation marks and ellipses; and 3) The observation that many of these documents could have been used for propaganda purposes.

Teachers A, E and F, along with Students B and C, pointed out possible inconsistencies that could have possibly arisen throughout Document 6. The statement that was most questioned by these participants stated that "This account Major Pitcairn himself gave Mr. Brown of Providence who was seized with flour and carried to Boston a few days after the battle; and Gov. Sessions told it to me." The main criticism of this statement can best be summed up by Teacher C, who said "Oh good gracious, and all of this is from the diary of someone else, who's not even

writing this story. This is like 5th party in." This analysis of the text provided these individuals with the ability to question the authenticity of the accounts which can be supported by Teacher F's comment that this account is "word of mouth, so it could have gotten messed up somewhere in translation."

Another example of close reading could be found in the analysis of Teacher comments regarding many of the text features throughout the documents. Teacher A made an observation about the use of text features used in Document 1, when stating, "I wonder what was taken out there with the ellipses." All seven teachers made comments regarding the use of quotation marks and italics throughout Document 7. They all made comments to the effect that the use of those terms were used to emphasize or, at times, exaggerate certain terms. No student referenced any of these text features and provided zero comment, as to their meaning.

Many students had a unique take on the possible purpose of many of the documents. Students A, B, C, and D all made comments about how many of these documents could have been used as propaganda. Students A and B both commented that the contents of Document 1 were meant to convince people to support the "Colonists' cause." Student C and D also commented on how the use of a newspaper could be used to try and sway people to the support of the British with negative descriptions of the Colonists.

Conclusion

There are a variety of implications that can be pulled from a study of this nature. One of the main things to point out is that, despite a constant push from academia to transform the classroom into a place where teachers and students alike can thoughtfully analyze primary documents, there is still a lack of ability and/or desire of teachers to engage in these very complex activities (Friedman, 2006; Levstik & Barton, 2005; Waring, Torrez, and Lipscomb, 2015) and use of primary sources does not automatically equate into authentic historical thinking (Swan & Hicks, 2007). This lack of ability should be used to improve teacher professional development programs and help them develop the skills needed to not only engage in historical evaluation themselves but to also develop skills that will allow them to instruct students to do the same.

Another implication that can be taken away from this study lies in the lack of content knowledge displayed by teachers. Even though these teachers are not tasked with the instruction of this material, many of the concepts that are discussed during the Revolutionary time period have ripple effects throughout the rest of American history, as well as the teaching of American government and European history. This lack of knowledge may signal the need to increase the amount of content area knowledge that teachers receive during their teacher education programs.

While the study provided some insight into the ability of teachers and students to think historically, the limitations must be acknowledged. Although the sample size was small and limited in diversity, the results are worth sharing. Hopefully, this study will encourage other researchers to conduct similar studies with larger sample sizes. It would also be interesting for researchers to examine whether teacher educators possess the required skills to effectively educate future teachers on the skills needed to properly analyze primary and secondary sources. It would also be fascinating to evaluate the success rates of professional development courses that teach literacy instructional skills. Each of these avenues for future development are critical to the success of implementing appropriate content area literacy skills into the classroom.

With a move towards the use of Common Core standards in the classroom, it is no longer enough to state that we must transform our social studies classrooms into a place where students can actively engage in the analysis of historical documents. These types of statements have been made over and over again since Wineburg (1991) conducted this study originally in 1991, and the state of the social studies classroom has changed very little over this time. With a shift in how education is being delivered taking place on a nationwide basis, it is time for the social studies to thrust themselves into a primary position within our schools and show how instructional leaders of this discipline can adequately prepare students to be literate citizens in a global world.

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Appendix A

Document 1

In 1775, Benjamin Franklin was the colonial representative in London. After the events in Lexington and Concord, the Massachusetts Provincial Congress put together 21 sworn depositions about the events and sent them to Franklin with the following cover letter:

To the inhabitants of Great Britain: In Provincial Congress, Watertown, April 26, 1775

Friends and fellow subjects: Hostilities are at length commenced in the Colony by the troops under command of General Gage; and it being of the greatest importance that an early, true, and authentic account of this inhuman proceeding should be known to you, the Congress of this Colony have transmitted the same, and from want of a session of the honorable Continental Congress, think it proper to address you on the alarming occasion.

By the clearest depositions relative to this transaction, it will appearthat on the night preceding the nineteenth of April instant, . . . the Town of Lexington . . . was alarmed, and a company of the inhabitants mustered on the occasion; that the Regular troops, on their way to Concord, marched into the said town of Lexington, and the said company, on their approach, began to disperse; that notwithstanding this, the regulars rushed on with great violence, and first began hostilities by firing on said Lexington Company, whereby they killed eight and wounded several others; that the Regulars continued their fire until those of said company, who were neither killed nor wounded, had made their escape.

These, brethren, are marks of ministerial vengeance against this colony, for refusing, with her sister colonies, a submission to slavery. But they have not yet detached us from our Royal Sovereign. We profess to be his loyal and dutiful subjects, and so hardly dealt with as we have been, are still ready, with our lives and fortunes, to defend his person, family, crown, and dignity. Nevertheless, to the persecution and tyranny of his cruel ministry we will not tamely submit; appealing to Heaven for the justice of our cause, we determine to die or be free.

Joseph Warren [President pro tern]

Document 2

We Nathaniel Mulliken, Philip Russell, [followed by the names of 32 other men present on Lexington Green on April 19, 1775],... all of lawful age, and inhabitants of Lexington, in the County of Middlesex,

. . . do testify and declare, that on the nineteenth of April instant, about one or two o'clock in the morning, being informed that... a body of regulars were marching from Boston towards Concord, . . .we were alarmed and having met at the place of our company's parade [Lexington Green], were dismissed by our Captain, John Parker, for the present, with orders to be ready to attend at the beat of the drum, we further testify and declare, that about five o'clock in the morning, hearing our drum beat, we proceeded towards the parade, and soon found that a large body of troops were marching towards us, some of our company were coming up to the parade, and others had reached it, at which time the company began to disperse, whilst our backs were turned on the troops, we were fired on by them, and a number of our men were instantly killed and wounded, not a gun was fired by any person in our company on the regulars to our knowledge before they fired on us, and they continued firing until we had all made our escape.

Lexington, April 25, 1775, Nathaniel Mulliken,
Philip Russell, [and the other 32 men] [Duly sworn to by 34 minutemen on April 25 before three justices of the peace]

Document 3

Major Pitcairn screamed at us: "Lay down your arms, you lousy bastards! Disperse, you lousy peasant scum!" . . . At least, those were the words that I seem to remember. Others remembered differently; but the way he screamed, in his strange London accent, with the motion and excitement, with his horse rearing and kicking . . . with the drums beating again and the fixed

bayonets glittering in the sunshine, it's a wonder that any of his words remain with u s . . . . We still stood in our two lines, our guns butt end on the ground or held loosely in our hands. Major Pitcairn spurred his horse and raced between the lines. Somewhere, away from us, a shot sounded. A redcoat soldier raised his musket, leveled it at Father, and fired. My father clutched at his breast, then crumpled to the ground like an empty sack Then the whole British front burst into a roar of sound and flame and smoke. *Excerpt from the novel* April Morning,

by Howard Fast, published in 1961

Document 4

19th. At 2 o'clock we began our march by wading through a very long ford up to our middles; after going a few miles we took three or four people who were going off to give intelligence; about five miles on this side of a town called Lexington, which lay in our road, we heard there were some hundreds of people collected together intending to oppose us and stop our going on; at 5 o'clock we arrived there, and saw a number of people, I believe between 200 and 300, formed in a common in the middle of the town; we still continued advancing, keeping prepared against an attack though without intending to attack them; but on our coming near them they fired one or two shots, upon which our men without any orders, rushed in upon them, fired and put them to flight; several of them were killed, we could not tell how many, because they were got behind walls and into the woods; We had a man of the 10th light Infantry wounded, nobody else hurt. We then formed on the Common, but with some difficulty, the men were so wild they could hear no orders; we waited a considerable time there, and at length proceeded on our way to Concord.

Entry for April 19th, 1775, from the diary of Lieutenant John Barker, an officer in the British army.

Document 5

Lieutenant Nunn, of the Navy arrived this morning at Lord Dartmouth's and brought letters from General Gage, Lord Percy, and Lieutenant-Colonel Smith, containing the following particulars of what passed on the nineteenth of April last between a detachment of the King's Troops in the Province of Massachusetts-Bay and several parties of rebel provincials Lieutenant-Colonel Smith finding, after he had advanced some miles on his march, that the country had been alarmed by the firing of guns and ringing of bells, dispatched six companies of light-infantry, in order to secure two bridges on different roads beyond Concord, who, upon their arrival at Lexington, found a body of the country people under arms, on a green close to the road; and upon the King's Troops marching up to them, in order to inquire the reason of their being so assembled, they went off in great confusion, and several guns were fired upon the King's troops from behind a stone wall, and also from the meeting-house and other houses, by which one man was wounded, and Major Pitcairn's horse shot in two places. In consequence of this attack by the rebels, the troops returned the fire and killed several of them. After which the detachment marched on to Concord without any thing further happening.

Newspaper account from The London Gazette, *June 10,1775*

Document 6

There is a certain sliding over and indeterminateness in describing the beginning of the firing. Major Pitcairn who was a good man in a bad cause, insisted upon it to the day of his death, that the colonists fired first *He does not say that he saw the colonists fire first.* Had he said it, I would have believed him, being a man of integrity and honor. *He expressly says he did not see who fired first;* and yet believed the peasants began. His account is this—that riding up to them he ordered them to disperse; which they not doing instantly, he turned about to order his troops so to draw out as to surround and disarm them. As he turned he *saw* a gun in a peasant's hand from behind a *wall, flash in the pan without going off.* and instantly or very soon two or three guns went off by which he found his horse wounded and also a man near him wounded. These guns he did not see, but believing they could not come from his own people, doubted not and so asserted that they came from our people; and that thus they began the attack. The impetuosity of the

King's Troops were such that a promiscuous, uncommanded but general fire took place, which Pitcairn could not prevent; though he struck his staff or sword downwards with all earnestness as a signal to forbear or cease firing. This account Major Pitcairn himself gave Mr. Brown of Providence who was seized with flour and carried to Boston a few days after the battle; and Gov. Sessions told it to me.

From the diary of Ezra Stiles, president of Yale College, entry for August 21, 1775

Document 7

In April 1775, General Gage, the military governor of Massachusetts, sent out a body of troops to take possession of military stores at Concord, a short distance from Boston. At Lexington, a handful of "embattled farmers," who had been tipped off by Paul Revere, barred the way. The "rebels" were ordered to disperse. They stood their ground. The English fired a volley of shots that killed eight patriots. It was not long before the swift-riding Paul Revere spread the news of this new atrocity to the neighboring colonies. The patriots of all of New England, although still a handful, were now ready to fight the English. *From* The United States:

Story of a Free People, *a high school textbook by Samuel Steinberg, Allyn and Bacon, publishers, 1963*

Document 8

To the best of my recollection about 4 o'clock in the morning being the 19th of April the 5 front companies was ordered to load which we did It was at Lexington when we saw one of their

companies drawn up in regular order. Major Pitcairn of the Marines second in command called to them to disperse, but their not seeming willing he desired us to mind our space which we did when they gave us a fire then run off to get behind a wall. We had one man wounded of our Company in the leg, his name was Johnson, also Major Pitcairn's horse was shot in the flank; we returned their salute, and before we proceeded on our march from Lexington I believe we killed and wounded either 7 or 8 men.

Ensign Jeremy Lister, youngest of the British officers at Lexington, in a personal narrative written in 1782