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ENDURING THROUGH CHALLENGING MULTI-MEDIA TEXT IN MIDDLE SCHOOL SOCIAL STUDIES: HOW TO INCREASE MOTIVATION WHILE IMPROVING LITERACY AND COMPREHENSION

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KATELYN N. BURNS

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BETHEL UNIVERSITY

ENDURING THROUGH CHALLENGING MULTI-MEDIA TEXT IN MIDDLE SCHOOL SOCIAL STUDIES: HOW TO INCREASE MOTIVATION WHILE IMPROVING LITERACY AND COMPREHENSION

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ABSTRACT

Middle school students often find social studies classes boring and unnecessary and are underperforming on national reading and writing assessments. There is a disconnect between what they learn in the classroom, and their own personal experiences. This research explores strategies for teaching comprehension and literacy while fostering student motivation in middle school social studies. Research was conducted through online databases, educational websites, and printed educational books. Multiple strategies can be used to teach literacy of text and visual sources as well as increase student motivation. By using and combining these strategies, student achievement will increase and students will be set up for future success in and out of the classroom.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

"History is boring" is a phrase you might hear as a 7th grade social studies teacher. At the start of the school year, this is something I hear from many students. To many people, history is all about memorizing facts and dates from the past without connecting those facts to how they impact and connect to us as individuals. "Some students simply do not understand the importance of Social Studies content and cannot make connections between what has happened and how it has shaped what is happening on global, state, and local levels. Social Studies is often deemed boring and filled with too many dates and people to remember"(Gaston, Martinez, & Martin, 2016, p.75). Students have learned through experience that learning history is about being able to regurgitate the information presented to them on a test.

In the modern social studies classroom, educators are not only teaching students about the events of the past, but it is the social studies teacher's duty to teach students to think critically, to think like historians, and help students develop and grow into critical and informed citizens. The purpose of teaching students these skills is not to train them to be historians, but to prepare students for the *vocation of citizen* (Wineburg & Reisman, 2015). Social studies curriculum should not be focused solely on obtaining historical knowledge, such as the history of humankind, people, places, governments, and current events, but also to foster literacy and critical thinking skills, that when combined with their knowledge, prepare them to be active, engaged, educated citizens.

Students are often unable to connect their learning to their lives outside the classroom. In the classroom they have found dusty textbooks, rote memorization and boring, monotone teachers and topics (Reisman, 2012). Outside of the classroom, students are relentlessly

bombarded with images, soundbites and blurbs that society wants them to see. Students are facing overstimulation of information from the palms of their hands. There is simply far too much information and no way possible way to discern what is true and what is vital and relevant without guidance and practice. It is our job as educators to help students make connections, help students learn about the important events of the past, and connect those events to the condition of the present while teaching students vital skills such as comprehension and literacy so they can analyze information and come to conclusions.

Callahan states (2015) “Studying history has purpose beyond demonstrating some degree of familiarity by passing standardized exams. Developing students’ historical competence can prepare students for challenges they are likely to face as active citizens who must critique information regarding complex issues and act according to their well-informed conscience” (p.58). The plan is that teachers can encourage, motivate, educate, and prepare students to use their minds beyond the classroom and become active citizens who have a better understanding of the world around them.

Personal and Professional Experience

I am a third year social studies teacher working with 7th grade students. Our required textbook varies in readability from a seventh grade reading level to an eleventh grade reading level. Students across the nation are performing below the expected proficiency level on the National Assessment of Educational Progress. In 2017, only 36% of eighth grade students were at or above proficiency in reading and writing (The Nation’s Report Card, 2017). With many students struggling to read at grade level, using texts written at a high school level is often unhelpful and leads students to disengagement.

Throughout my time in the classroom, when the textbook or reading is mentioned, students groan and complain and take out their textbooks as slowly as possible. Many students open the book, but that is as far as a reading assignment would take them. When I asked my students to raise their hands if they think the textbook is boring, all but one student raised their hands. When asked if they thought the textbook was difficult to read, about half raised their hands. Approximately a third of my students are below grade level in reading, and in one class I had three students who were illiterate, not able to read or write. One can imagine how disheartening it would be to be studying a complex topic with the additional struggle of reading a challenging text. Teachers need to find a way to motivate students to read, and develop the ability to comprehend and analyze what they read.

Researchers (Fontichiaro, 2010; Milman & Bondie, 2012; Tally & Goldenberg 2005; Winburg & Reisman, 2015) and teachers, including myself, have found that the use of primary sources in the classroom can bring history to life and make students feel like they are doing history or discovering history rather than being lectured at and dealt the task of rote memorization. Thinking like a historian is something social studies educators aim to teach students. It involves developing critical thinking and literacy skills. This would be considered disciplinary literacy in the area of social studies. Students do not simply read, memorize, and recite information, “students evaluate the trustworthiness of multiple perspectives on historical issues and learn to make historical claims backed by documentary evidence” (Stanford History Education Group, 2019). Students are more compelled to engage in guided critical thinking when presented with primary sources that they can connect to personally, rather than a dry academic textbook that is potentially many grade levels above their own reading levels.

In my classroom, I try to incorporate as many images into presentations, lessons, and activities as possible. We frequently start class with the basic "See, Think, Wonder" chart as a visual literacy tool. It is meant to encourage students to think about the image, draw on background knowledge and make connections to what we will be talking about that day. This is a useful strategy, but students would benefit from more guidance and strategies as to how to look and how to think when they are given a visual text such as a photograph as well as when they encounter written text.

Current Trends

Disciplinary literacy skills, such as Reading Like a Historian, have become an important part of social studies classes. Teachers are moving away from simply using the textbook to using more outside primary and secondary sources to teach their students. Primary sources can give students different perspectives of events and help them discover the answers they seek for themselves and draw their own conclusions, rather than reading the information from a textbook or conducting a quick Google search. Teachers must know how to use these primary sources in order to produce the desired result of student engagement and implementation of historical thinking strategies (Cleary & Neuman, 2009). Students are expected to comprehend and interpret primary sources in social studies classes to gain a deeper understanding of historical perspectives and events.

About a quarter of students in a study by Tally and Goldenberg (2005) stated that using sources besides the textbook made class feel different and that they feel like they are learning more deeply. One student stated "Seeing the primary source documents has helped me be more

interested in history. Also, when we just read textbooks, we did not learn the whole picture of history. History books do not always tell what happened the way we have been able to learn it" (p.9). This study shows that student engagement and motivation significantly increases with the use of primary sources in lessons.

The school district in which I teach has implemented a literacy initiative in our social studies classes. We work with our students weekly on textual literacy skills and end each unit with a higher level question which assess students in literacy. We use a variety of primary and secondary sources. Textual literacy in social studies classes is important, and requires a variety of strategies for students to learn how to interact with different formats of information. For struggling students, even when the text is at or below grade level, they tend to find it so challenging that they often disengage. They say that it is just too hard. I've started incorporating primary source images into my lessons and incorporating a variety of visual literacy strategies that I have found to increase student interest, motivation and achievement to coincide with the textual literacy piece.

A Canadian study (Levesque, Ng-A-Fook & Corrigan, 2014) used eye-tracking technology and think-alouds to examine how students looked at historical photographs. This rather small study, which included students and historians, showed that many students do not know how to thoroughly read a photograph for understanding . This information made me wonder what strategies we can use to teach students to look at images and think critically about what they see to gain knowledge. This skill is imperative in the visual world of the 21st Century

Being able to comprehend, understand, and analyze visual and textual documents is an important skill in and out of the classroom. With students interacting so often with visual images

outside of the classroom, I think that being able to better analyze and learn from images is an imperative skill that can be combined with our focus on disciplinary literacy and literacy initiative.

Guiding Research Questions and Purpose of Study

There are three questions guiding this research. The first, what are the pillars in reading comprehension, the second, what are best practices in integrating multiple literacy skills into the middle school Social Studies classroom? The third, how can educators encourage student motivation and engagement in social studies? The research will focus on comprehension, visual literacy strategies and examine strategies that combine visual and textual literacy using primary and secondary sources in the middle school social studies classroom. It will also investigate how to increase student engagement and motivation in social studies.

Motivation, literacy, and comprehension, are imperative skills that students must develop. I see how students quit trying (physically and mentally) and do not persevere in attempting to understand text assignments and tasks. I see how excited they are to do activities that involve images, even when those images are combined with texts. I want to research the best strategies for teaching comprehension and visual literacy in social studies and find out how to motivate students to endure through difficult tasks while they think critically and engage with history. My desire is that students are engaged with their learning and also see how it connects to their lives outside of the classroom. Students should leave with skills and knowledge that will benefit them across content areas and as members of society. An added bonus, would be students leaving class thinking that history is fun.

Definitions

Literacy is not just the ability to read and write, but the ability to remember, reuse and gather meaning from information as well as to think critically and solve problems through reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing (Gaston & Martin, 2016). Literacy is not confined to reading text but includes understanding it.

Comprehension is acquiring knowledge and understanding through reading.

Visual Literacy "... includes people's ability to see, interpret and make meaning of images and other visual objects in the world around them" (Cruz & Ellerbrock, 2015, p.274).

Disciplinary Literacy is different in different content areas, with a focus on using texts particular to that content area and using literacy skills to gain a deeper level of understanding.

Historical Thinking is a strategy for thinking about historical documents and sources where the student/historian takes into consideration contextualization, sourcing, corroboration of sources, omissions from the text, etc. as they investigate an event. This is the way in which an active historian reads (Wineburg & Reisman, 2015).

Primary Sources - are first hand accounts of events. They can be photographs, diaries, video footage, among many types of artifacts from which historians can learn about the events of the past.

Best Practices are tried and true pre-existing strategies that have been tested, reflected on and proven to be effective

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is a review of literature regarding literacy skills required of students in the 21st century, and how those skills specifically relate to social studies. The research includes information from electronic journals accessed through the ERIC database as well as print books and educational websites. The research explores disciplinary literacy, comprehension, and visual and textual literacy in social studies. Student motivation is also examined, with a focus on motivating students to read and learn from text. Strategies for teaching literacy and increasing student motivation and engagement will be included in the final section. Key terms for finding this research include: visual literacy, literacy, comprehension, social studies, and historical thinking.

Literacy

The Institute of Museums and Library Services (2019) describes basic literacy as the ability to use language to read, write, listen, and speak. Goldman et al. (2016) describe 21st century literacy as something beyond basic literacy. It is an addition to the traditional acquisition process with a focus on integrating and evaluating content. Twenty-first century literacy requires students to take in multiple media forms and be able to analyze and critique their validity.

Students read on their own outside of the classroom. They read websites, emails, lyrics to songs, direct messages (dm's) within applications (apps), magazines, video games, novels and more. Students read at varying levels of difficulty on their own in their daily lives (Stockdill & Moje, 2013). Students however, often struggle with complex literacy tasks in school at the secondary level, especially when it concerns non-fiction material. As the challenge of the task increases, the literacy assistance students receive from educators often decreases (Stockdill &

Moje, 2013). This can lead to a lack of student perseverance through challenging tasks. In order for students to become strong content readers and writers, and improve their vocabulary, educators need to embed literacy practices into their content. This includes cultivating student motivation, increasing engagement, improving student understanding of content, and improving critical thinking skills. This will improve social studies achievement (Gaston, Martinez & Martin, 2016).

Common Core Standards

In the 1990's and early 2000's prior to the adoption of Common Core Standards, each state's Department of Education had autonomy over their own sets of standards and had their own definitions of proficiency, what states expected students to learn throughout the course of their education. In 2009, the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors Association for Best Practices (NGA Center) recognized the need for consistency of learning standards throughout the United States. Teachers, administrators, and other experts worked together to create a clear framework to guide educators. The standards are based on research and evidence, and written in alignment with college and career expectations. The standards were originally split into two categories: college-and-career-readiness and K-12 standards. The college and career readiness standards lay out expectations for student knowledge and understanding by the time they graduate from high school. The K-12 standards lay out expectations from elementary school through high school. College and career readiness standards were then incorporated into the K-12 standards to create the modern version of Common Core State Standards (CCSS).

The Common Core Standards have been adopted by 41 states as well as the District of Columbia and a few territories. Minnesota has adopted the English language arts standards through CCSS. In history and social studies classes, the 6-12 literacy standards have been adopted as well. These standards focus on literacy and reading skills and can be found in the Appendix.

Disciplinary Literacy

Literacy looks different across the content areas. According to Stockdill and Moje (2013), disciplinary literacy is more than reading and writing. It is "rooted in the problems of the discipline and structured so that students use texts and literacy practices as tools to explore disciplinary problems" (Bain 2006; Moje 2007; Stockdill, 2011) (p.39). According to Wineburg and Reisman (2015), "disciplinary literacy restores agency to the reader" (636). Disciplinary literacy varies from content area reading because content area reading has to do with helping students understand what they read, focusing on the vocabulary words, taking notes, and summarizing. Disciplinary literacy is not reading for the main idea or using context to define vocabulary words or write summaries of what they have read (Wineburg & Reisman 2015).

Disciplinary literacy in social studies focuses on analyzing multiple sources, contemplating the source, and using historical thinking skills (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2017). Shanahan and Shanahan (2017) found that in order for students to meaningfully study within a discipline that they must understand how literacy is used within that discipline. Students need to understand how they can create and critique knowledge in that discipline. Each content area has specialized texts and as part of disciplinary literacy, students' awareness should increase to the fact that they will encounter different kinds of texts and find different strategies useful depending

on which class they are in, whether it be in history, science, English, or auto mechanics. (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2017).

"When educators teach for historical literacy, they merge foundational literacy practice with engaging resources in content rich curriculum and students draw on thinking strategies as they read" (Goudvis & Harvey, 2012, p.53). A number of projects and programs have been created to help educators and students develop historical literacy skills.

Project READI (Reading, Evidence, Argumentation, Disciplinary, Instruction) is one method used in six through twelfth grade literature, science, and history courses. The goal of implementation of this project was to encourage close reading of historical primary, secondary, and tertiary sources. The READI strategy encompasses meta-comprehension and self-regulation of the learning process (Shanahan et al., 2016). This framework is used across disciplines. In history courses students synthesize and reason with and across historical resources using comparison, contrast, corroboration, contextualization, and sources as well as other historical inquiry processes (Shanahan et al., 2016).

Reading like a Historian

Disciplinary literacy in the area of history can be described as reading and writing like historians. The purpose of teaching students to read like historians is not to produce mini historians, but prepare students for the vocation of citizen (Wineburg & Reisman, 2015). The purpose is to prepare students for their lives outside of the classroom. Shanahan et al. (2016) reiterate Wineburg and Reisman's research stating that "teaching students to read and write like historians will improve their ability to learn history independently and think historically as well as participate in civil society and a rapidly changing world" (p.1). These researchers show

students who have the historical thinking skills at hand so that they can read and understand print and non-print sources will be far ahead of students who did not read or write in their history classes. Students utilizing historical thinking skills will be able to analyze sources and communicate their ideas about the sources verbally and in writing.

History does not consist of only facts, but it is a compilation of views. There is rarely one single correct answer to a historical question. When students learn to read like historians, they are not memorizing historical facts, but they are evaluating the trustworthiness of multiple perspectives on historical issues. Students use their learned skills to make historical claims backed by text or visual evidence (Stanford History Education Group, n.d.). According to Wineburg of the Stanford History Education Group (SHEG), thinking like a historian turns history into a series of questions rather than a series of answers (2019). Teachers model for students what good questions look like, and then students will start asking the questions and answering questions that guide them through the historical inquiry process.

As unskilled historians, students look at text as a bearer of information, but they do not interact with it. Wineburg and Reisman (2015) state that "for the novice reader, the available information begins and ends with the text, but for historical readers, the text becomes a portal to another time" (p.2). Students should not read a single textbook for historical answers, but rather interact with a wide range of historical sources. Students can take the information and construct their own meaning and interpretations of the past (Goudvis & Harvey, 2012; Manfra & Coven, 2011).

Cleary and Neuman (2009) found that students need to be exposed to a variety of types of documents that mimic the types of documents students may encounter in their everyday lives.

When students interact with these types of documents as part of historical inquiry in the classroom, they develop critical thinking skills and experience excitement. Cowgill and Waring's (2017) research reflects that of Cleary and Neumann. By allowing students to engage in the thoughtful analysis of historical documents, the result is a more complete understanding of historical events. Students have authentic opportunities to recall historical events and with more detail and specificity (Cowgill & Waring, 2017).

There are different approaches and frameworks for teaching students to think like historians. Shanahan et al., (2016) endorse the SOAPStone (Speaker, Occasion, Audience, Purpose, Subject, and Tone) approach. These perspectives lead students to source and contextualize the information they are presented with in order to better analyze the information. Teachers use graphic organizers and think alouds to teach students to use this method.

The SHEG created the *Read Like A Historian* curriculum, which can be found online. The site provides educators with primary source document inquiry lessons where students are guided through the historical thinking process. Lessons from the SHEG site have been downloaded over one million times since the website's inception in 2010. The skills presented by Wineburg and SHEG are meant to help students investigate historical questions by sourcing, contextualizing, corroborating, and close reading (Stanford History Education Group, n.d.). The lessons found on the SHEG website put students in an active role in their own learning. Students become investigators, using historical thinking skills to come to conclusions about the events of the past.

Sourcing forces students to investigate the author. "Sourcing rocks the foundation on which the school textbook rests: that its facts are unassailable and need not be questioned,

interrogated, or overturned" (Wineburg & Reisman, 2015, p.636). When students or historians source, they are able to take more control over their learning. They consider who created the document, what the purpose was, and consider any bias. Historians look at the trustworthiness of the sources (Shanahan, et al., 2016).

Contextualization means the students, as readers, question what was going on socially and politically at the time the source (text, image, or document) was created to gain better insight. Putting a document into a time and place gives the reader a foundation on which to better understand the source and how it fits into the time (Wineburg & Reisman, 2015).

Corroboration requires the reader to interact with multiple pieces of evidence. Similarities and differences in accounts are sought to find the strengths and weaknesses of each account. This helps the reader understand which source may be more truthful.

Close Reading directly correlates to CCSS in Reading 1-9 (Appendix). It is reading the text with purpose and intentionality, looking at the author's language and word choice (Reisman, 2012). Close reading helps students to answer text based questions. It requires re-reading the text multiple times, each time with a different purpose. The first reading should focus on what the text says. The second reading focuses on how the text works, and the third reading includes evaluation of the text. The purpose of close reading is to foster reader independance.

Primary Sources

"Despite reform efforts advocated by the National Council for the Social Studies and Pedagogical interventions, such as the Document Based History Project, the default experience of most students is to learn history through the reading of history textbooks" (Lee & Spratley,

2010, p.8). They go on to explain that research shows textbooks may be challenging for students to understand, especially when students lack background information.

Tally and Goldenberg's (2015) research clearly connects the use of primary sources with student learning and motivation. "When students have structured opportunities to construct meaning from primary materials, they critically examine those meanings, they feel more invested in the results. This suggests that as artifacts in multiple media enter into the classroom we may see shifts in learning and motivation associated with the rise of 'hands on' learning ..." (p.16).

Traditionally educators have used primary sources as research tools. When educators use images, tactile objects, and documents, they find that student excitement and enthusiasm rises and students are more motivated for the work to come (Fontichiaro, 2010). The internet has opened up the opportunity for educators to easily access primary sources at no cost (Milman & Bondie, 2012). A teacher does not need to have documents on hand, but can find them on multiple websites, such as sheg.stanford.edu or the Library of Congress website. Using these online primary sources is referred to as *digital history.* It is the "study of the past using a variety of electronically reproduced primary source texts, images, and artifacts as well as the constructed narratives, accounts, or presentations that result from digital historical inquiry" (Manfra & Coven, 2011, p.102).

A problem that is often encountered when using primary historical sources in teaching students, is that many of the documents are written at a challenging level. With students underperforming on their reading and literacy tests, without the proper guidance, document based lessons will be more of a challenge than a benefit. It is important to provide students with the scaffolding and tools to find success in their historical inquiries (Reisman, 2012).

Many teachers resist using primary source documents in their lessons because they say it is too difficult for students or it is too time consuming (Cleary & Neuman, 2009; Milman & Bondie, 2012; Cowgill &Waring, 2017). Students may struggle with reading primary sources, but with guidance, children as young as seven years old have the cognitive ability to engage with and analyze primary source documents and learn from them.

Other teachers mistakenly think that just by adding primary sources to their lessons, students will think like historians and find success and enthusiasm about their learning. Without guidance, students will look at primary sources in the same manner they look at a textbook. Teachers must also provide students with the tools to understand the significance of the documents and help students contextualize, walking through the historical thinking steps (Cleary and Neuman, 2009). The use of primary sources in lessons will not have a major impact on the social studies classroom until teachers make more active use of the sources themselves (Milman & Bondie, 2012).

Visual Literacy

Visual literacy is the reading of images. It is more than looking at an image at face value, but the ability to decode, comprehend, analyze, interpret, and evaluate various elements within an image (Callahan, 2015; Cruz & Ellerbrock, 2015; Baker, 2016). Traditionally, visual literacy has been found primarily in art classrooms, but now in the technological era, has spread across content areas. With the changing world, teachers must learn how to teach with and about images (Baker, 2016).

Fisher and Frey (2007) determined that the sense of sight - vision, trumps all of the other senses. Therefore, it is probably the best tool that humans have when it comes to learning.

Photographs are everywhere. They are possibly the most prevalent form of visual data humans encounter. Visuals are present in the physical world as well as the digital world. Photographs can be found on billboards and on desks, on school binders, and also through social media platforms such as Instagram, Pinterest, Snapchat, or Facebook (Callahan, 2015). "Researchers argue that because of this increased access (technology and television) many U.S. students are more likely to learn about history and the current state of the planet by engaging with film and web-based media outside of a classroom rather than reading books or conducting primary source research in one" (Harshman, 2017, p.69). Because images are everywhere, and humans sense of vision is so strong, Fisher and Frey (2007) came to the conclusion that there is a Pictorial Superiority Effect. In their research, they discovered that people could remember 2,500 images with up to 90% accuracy several days later. Some people even remembered images from decades earlier with a high level of accuracy.

Frey and Fisher (2010) found that pairing visual information with text is beneficial and educators should teach students to interpret visual stimulus. Researchers (Brown & Swope, 2010), found increased willingness for students to engage in closer reading when they were first introduced to images and then asked to read textual sources. Students were also more likely to participate in alternative assignments when first presented with images.

Images are found everywhere and are such a constant part of 21st century life, students likely need to be reminded that photographs must be interpreted (Callahan, 2015). Brown and Swope (2010) found that by using image analysis, students can contextualize information better. The images presented to students can weave context. If students struggle with phonetics and fluency, they can still read an image. Students who struggle with textual literacy can still find

success when reading and analyzing images (Brown & Swope, 2010). Those who find success with textual literacy, may find an increased understanding when visuals are paired with the text.

Comprehension

The human brain has been evolving for hundreds of thousands of years. Listening and speaking skills come to humans naturally. They are learned easily by observing and imitating. Written language on the other hand has been around for the last 6,000 years. Reading comprehension is a combination of knowledge, strategies, goals, and dispositions (Lee & Spratley, 2010). The ability to read and comprehend according to Fisher and Frey (2007), "takes intentional appropriation of existing structures within the brain" (p. 104). Reading and comprehension must be intentionally taught and learned.

According to Fisher, Lapp, and Frey (2011), there is nothing more important than comprehension, and in their definition, comprehension is reading. If one does not comprehend, they have not really read.

Fisher, Frey, and Hattie (2016) describe teaching comprehension:

> Teaching reading comprehension is not a singular phenomenon, but rather is achieved through the use of a host of instructional practices designed to equip students with the ability to organize and analyze knowledge; link it to information about the social, biological, and physical worlds; reflect upon it; and take action.

Reading is a multi step thinking activity built by combining multiple complex processes. The first steps are basic, noting print size, pictures, and headings. Then the reader uses five different kinds of knowledge to comprehend the text. The letters and sounds, words and word

forms, syntax, meanings, semantic relations, and the social use of language. As the reader reads, he/she uses a "metacognitive processes to monitor, control, and advance the search for meaning" (Fisher, Lapp, & Frey, 2011, para.8). Fisher, Lapp, and Frey describe the reader who does the following as a *competent comprehender*. The competent comprehender plans for understanding. Before reading, the competent comprehender previews the text, activates prior knowledge, and sets a purpose for reading. During the reading, he/she checks for understanding, monitors comprehension using context, integrates new concepts with existing knowledge, and obtains appropriate help. After reading, the competent comprehender summarizes, evaluates and applies the ideas of the text to broader perspectives. Comprehension is built of many smaller strategies and steps along the way.

Reading comprehension is foundational in student learning and enables students to move from surface level to deep knowledge (Fisher, Frey, & Hattie, 2016). During surface knowledge acquisition, summarizing is helpful for students to build an outline of information that they can later delve into at a deeper level. It also provides students with an opportunity to monitor their own understanding of the text. Vocabulary instruction falls within what Fisher et al., (2016) call surface acquisition, or surface level learning. Readers who have strong vocabulary knowledge have a higher level of comprehension, as vocabulary knowledge is a predictor for reading comprehension.

American students have not been reaching expected reading and college readiness benchmarks in English. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in 2009, 25% of eighth grade and 12th grade students performed below the *basic* level on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) exam in the subject of reading (Reisman,

2012). A study by Evans and Clark (2011) found that only 66% of high school graduates in the United States met the college readiness benchmarks in English. These findings led to the adoption of the Common Core State Standards and their infusion of literacy skills throughout discipline areas from English to history and math classes. It is no longer the job of only the English teachers to teach students literacy and comprehension.

In the state of Minnesota, a proficient score is the expectation but a basic score has been accepted as passing. The majority of U.S. eighth graders are leaving middle without reaching proficiency in reading on the NAEP (National achievement-level results, 2017). The expectation for eighth grade reading at the *Proficient* level on the NAEP is that students :

> ...should be able to provide relevant information and summarize main ideas and themes. They should be able to make and support inferences about a text, connect parts of a text, and analyze text features. Students performing at this level should also be able to fully substantiate judgements about content and presentation of content.

The expectation for eighth grade reading at the *Basic* level is that students:

> ...should be able to locate information; identify statements of main idea, theme, or author's purpose; and make simple inferences from texts. They should be able to interpret the meaning of a word as it is used in the text. Students performing at this level should also be able to state judgements and give some support about content and presentation of content.

In 2017, 76% of eighth grade students who took the NAEP achieved scores at or above a score of *Basic*. This is not significantly different than most of the other years within the last

decade. This exam is given every two years, out of the six times it was given from 2007 to 2017, the mean score was 76% with the lowest score in 2007 at 74% and an outlier year in 2013 achieving 78%. These scores are at the basic level. When looking at proficiency, the numbers are much lower. Thirty-six percent of eight grade students achieved a score of proficient or above in 2017. This has increased over the last decade from 31% in 2007 to the highest scores in 2013 and 2017 at 36% (National achievement-level results, 2017).

The demand for skilled laborers in the global market, specifically in areas of service, information, and technology has increased the need for students to be able to read and write proficiently. (Evans & Clark, 2011). Literacy skills are critical in the 21st century because "in a democracy, the ill-informed hold just as much power in the ballot box as the well informed" (Wineburg & Reisman, 2012 p.3). Today's students are tomorrow's workforce and decision makers.

Student Motivation

Reisman (2012) found that when asked to describe history in one word, students overwhelmingly chose the word *boring*. Students often deem social studies classes boring because they are filled with too many dates and people to remember. "Some students simply do not understand the importance of social studies content and cannot make connections between what has happened and how it has shaped what is happening on global, state, and local levels" (Gaston et al., 2016, p.75). There is a lack of connection from the topics learned in class to the current time and to students' lives. Stockdill and Moje (2013) found in their surveys, that students typically liked social studies classes the least of their core classes and found it the least useful.

Educators can force students to complete assigned tasks, but they cannot force students to care about what they are learning (Gaston et al., 2016). A pertinent question to be asked and answered is how do educators help students make connections and care about their learning? By using engaging practices students become more motivated, and higher motivation leads to greater achievement (Stockdill & Moje, 2013).

Educators have been using extrinsic motivation (rewards) to encourage students to work hard and complete tasks, but decades of scientific studies have proven that this is not the best form of motivation. In fact, extrinsic motivation can lead to worse performance (Pink, 2009). Pink states that in order for students to perform at a higher level, they need to be intrinsically motivated. In order to foster intrinsic motivation, three elements are crucial. Students must be given autonomy. This is the ability to make some decisions about their learning and the opportunity to think creatively. Teachers have some control over this element of intrinsic motivation. Desire to improve, or mastery is the second element of intrinsic motivation, and purpose is the third and final element. When students understand how what they are doing fits into the bigger picture and connects to previous learning and what is going on in the wider world, students are more motivated. Teachers can foster intrinsic motivation (Pink, 2009).

In 1975, Vygotsky recognized that learning is a relationship between cognition, social context, and cultural context. Teachers need to take students' lives and interests outside of the classroom into consideration when they are teaching. Students do better when they value the topic at hand (Stockdill & Moje, 2013).

Researchers (Stockdill & Moje, 2013; Harshman, 2017; Cleary & Neumann, 2009) note that it is important to include voices that often omitted from mainstream curriculum when

teaching history. The majority of people in the world are not famous, therefore students may connect the most with the lives and struggles of other ordinary people (Cleary & Neumann, 2009). Even when the identities and struggles students encounter when learning history do not exactly mirror their own, students are more drawn to texts that speak to their identities and struggles (Stockdill & Moje, 2013).

Conventional history lessons about World War II mention Blacks and Women and their domestic roles, but not in a way that helps students make connections with their own lives. A different approach needs to be taken. Lessons should be targeted toward looking at changing roles of these groups, women, Blacks, other minorities, in the workplace or thinking about the change in the racial status quo (Stockdill and Moje, 2013). According to Harshman (2017), educators need to consider global issues from multiple perspectives across the socio-economic spectrum. In order to give all students opportunities to connect with curriculum, educators should make an effort to include the voices that are not often presented in the classroom. By making personal connections to their learning, student motivation increases.

Milman and Bondie (2012), found that students were more engaged when participating in their learning as investigators of primary sources. Situating students as investigators in the classroom provides students with a more authentic learning experience and gives students ownership in their learning. Stockdill and Moje (2013) agree that putting students in the position of investigators, and connecting the social-science concepts to the students' lives increased engagement and motivation.

"Key, Bradley, and Bradley (2010) state that 'in order to stimulate students interest in social studies and promote literacy, students must be actively involved. They also affirmed the reciprocal nature of social studies and literacy by which motivation is linked to engagement (Key et al., 2010)'" (Gaston et al., 2016, p.74-5). Reciprocal teaching is a valuable tool that helps build literacy skills as well as increases motivation. Students teach each other in partners or in small groups (Allen, 2004).

Gaston, et al. (2016) conducted a study of eighth grade students in Georgia Studies class to determine the effectiveness of literacy instruction on achievement, motivation, and engagement. They compared the use of direct instruction, teachers teaching and students taking notes, to a group where the teachers implemented literacy strategies and students took a role in their learning. Before the implementation of literacy strategies, only half of the class thought learning was interesting and only a third of the students could relate to the topic. After the literacy intervention occurred, the whole class thought that learning was fun, relevant and they looked forward to learning more, and earning good grades.

Bloc and Mangiere (2009) noted that educators play an important role in student motivation, and found this most important at the secondary level. Teachers can take action and implement strategies to foster motivation. Bloc and Mangiere describe a teacher who develops student motivation as a teacher who moves about the room, providing guidance where needed and supporting students so they know the teacher will not let them fail. They describe how the motivational teacher should also "infuse rigor, relevance, and responsiveness into every lesson" (p.108). Teachers should be accommodating to student needs and take into consideration emotional and physical changes as students go through puberty. When it comes to student

engagement and motivation in reading text, the teacher must assess if the lack of interest stems from the topic or the inability to read the text independently, and determine how to move forward, whether grouping students, working through something as a class, or changing the lesson completely. By doing this, educators sustain motivation with the vast majority of their students (Bloc and Mangiere, 2009). The educator should use a variety of styles of instruction including hands on activities, use of visuals, and technology.

Learning Process

Throughout the process of learning, more cognitive space is needed for newer skills, but over time, and with practice, less space is needed and the skills become more automatic or more easily accessed. Levesque, Ng-A-Fook, and Corrigan (2014) Cruz and Ellerbrock (2015), and Cowgill and Waring (2017), agree that mere exposure to information does not equip students with skills necessary to interpret or analyze the information. Just because someone grows up in a digital society does not mean that he/she will automatically be knowledgeable in the use of technology, or be able to read and evaluate visual sources critically. "Students as young as seven years old have the cognitive ability to engage with and analyze primary source information" (Cowgill & Waring, 2017, p.117). Students of all ages can learn to understand, but they need guidance, they need a framework in which to learn the skills to make sense of things.

Students need to have their learning made visible to them. They also need to be taught resilience so that when the task is difficult, they persist, maintain grit (passion and perseverance to stick with it) and do not give up. In order to make this possible, students need someone to guide them. It is the teacher's job to help students see their learning, provide them with practice, and teach resilience (Fisher et al., 2016).

Goldman et al. (2016) suggest that the creation of learning frameworks not only benefit students, but benefit teachers as well. It makes instructional goals and targets more clear and defined. Many frameworks exist, but Goldman et al. use the C3 Framework for College, Career, and Civic Life. Wineburg developed the historical thinking framework which focuses on sourcing, contextualization, and corroboration when looking at historical documents. The University of California Irvine History Project developed the 6 C's which focus on content, citation, context, connections, communication, and conclusions, to guide students through the historical inquiry process (Cleary and Neumann, 2009). These frameworks are created so that students learn to engage in authentic practices of knowledge within the disciplines.

Asking questions is an important part of the learning process, and teachers can not assume that students will know how to ask thoughtful, useful questions. Teachers must instruct their students how to ask the kinds of questions that will take them deeper in their inquiry. In addition to teaching students questioning skills, the teacher must instruct on how to make inferences (Goudvis and Harvey, 2012).

Learning happens in a variety of ways. Students must be taught to look at images in order to learn from them. To find out how humans learn from images, studies are being conducted using eye tracking technology as a tool to understand how people take in and make use of visual information. Eye position, fixation, duration of gaze, interest, intensity, and focus of attention are being used to learn about how people take in visual information and to learn about the mental processing of visual information (Sungkur, Antoaroo, and Beeharry, 2016).

Levesque, Ng-Fook and Corrigan (2014) conducted a study of historians and students using eye-tracking technology to learn about the visual learning process. Findings revealed there

is no standard visual reading pattern for either students or historians. They also discovered that "visual knowledge acquisition takes place during longer, stable eye movements on objects of interest" (p.32). This means when a person takes more time to read an image, they can learn more from it. "Reading of visual texts implies a close inspection and decoding of the various parts of an image" (52). Educators need to teach students how to read images and the clues surrounding the images such as captions or headings. Many teachers think historical images are more accessible to students than written texts, but they are not, unless the students are provided with historical literacy skills and taught how to read the elements in the visual and generate inferences from them (Levesque, et al. 2014).

Learning Strategies

Providing students with strategies for thinking and learning helps students develop automaticity that allows them to become competent comprehenders (Fisher, Lapp, et al., 2011). Students may struggle with a variety of skills on the path to comprehension. Allen (2004) describes areas of knowledge and skills required for literacy. Students must have knowledge of special vocabulary and background knowledge. Students need to know how to study and techniques for memorization. Students need to be taught different strategies for different types of texts. By providing many strategies and much guidance, educators can lead their students on the path to literacy (Allen, 2004).

Harvard's Project zero has developed a guide to Visible Thinking. Visible Thinking provides short mini-strategies that can become a part of the everyday classroom in which students and teachers can see and hear the thinking process. It is meant to "cultivate students' thinking skills and dispositions, and… to deepen content area learning" (Visible Thinking,

2019). Students use thinking language out loud, and use it to communicate with one another. Using Visible Thinking strategies, students will have more interest and more commitment to their learning. By providing students with different thinking strategies, students can pick from those strategies in the future based on the question or problem at hand and they will be prepared to choose a strategy to help them through the inquiry.

Modeling is an important part of literacy instruction (Frey & Fisher, 2010). Teachers should model a task and gradually release the responsibility to the students. Small group instruction has shown to be most beneficial (Fisher and Frey, 2007). Modeling can be done easily and shows students not only how something should be done, but can also model the thinking process when the teacher does a think aloud while showing. Goudvis and Harvey (2012) suggest working through an activity at the start as a group, transition into partner work and then convene as small groups or full group for discussion. Milman and Bondie (2012) also found that small groups were the best for instruction and working through literacy strategies.

Fisher, Frey, and Williams' (2002) study had students consistently reporting that using graphic organizers is the most helpful literacy strategy that their teachers used. Graphic organizers can look different. Charts are also helpful for students to use because they help students visualize their learning. Graphic organizers can be charts, such as a *K-W-L (know, want to know, and learned)* to show student background knowledge and help with questioning (Fontichiaro, 2010).

Text Literacy Strategies

There is no lack of literacy strategies in the field of education, but teachers feel overwhelmed. It is the implementation of strategies and innovations by educators that is a problem (Fisher & Frey, 2007).

In order to create literacy rich classrooms, educators must provide instructional routines to guide students through pre-reading, post-reading and during reading. Using Literacy strategies benefits not only students, but staff as well. Student achievement has proven to go up with implementation of literacy strategies (Fisher et al., 2002). Teaching content knowledge and reading strategies in tandem benefits students with guided support as they are reading and gives students the responsibility to think and make sense of what they are reading (Lee & Spratley, 2010).

Students should interact with a variety of texts such as maps, documents, pictures, and artifacts, allowing them to gain multiple perspectives and use their prior knowledge along with clues from the text to construct meaning (Gaston, Martinez, & Martin, 2016). Not only does exposure to a variety of texts give students the chance to construct their own meaning, it helps them develop advanced literacy skills (Reisman, 2012). Giving students opportunities to choose topics or sources that interest them leads to more interest and higher student motivation (Goudvis & Harvey 2012).

According to Fisher (McGraw Hill PreK-12, 2012), close reading is a concentrated re-reading of a written text. Students spend time reading the text more than once to gain a better understanding of the text, and incorporate their own ideas into what they have read. Teachers present the students with text dependent questions to guide the reading. Each re-reading of the

text may have a different purpose. During the first reading students can focus on unpacking the meaning of the text. During the second reading, students will focus on how the text works. The third reading is where students get an opportunity to evaluate the text and make connections to other readings or connections to their lives (Shanahan, 2014).

Questioning is an important part of the learning process. Brown and Swope (2010), Goudvis and Harvey (2012), Cruz and Ellerbrock (2015) and Evans and Clark (2015) all present questioning strategies and note the importance of students developing questions as part of the historical thinking process. Teachers can model questioning by having essential questions prepared and show students different kinds of questions that have different purposes. Students can use graphic organizers, and charts that provide them with structure to help construct their questions and track their learning.

Anticipation guides are another strategy that help generate student interest and activate background knowledge about a topic that will be studied (Allen, 2004). Before students read a text, they complete an activity responding to statements that pertain to the text. The statements may be true-false or agree-disagree. After students have completed the work, they go back to the anticipation guide and re-examine or prove their answer with text evidence. This activity monitors student prediction, reaction, and encourages reevaluation. It also draws out students' prior knowledge (Evans &Clark, 2015).

Visual Literacy Strategies

Strategies that involve photographs can be used to build interest and curiosity among students. Using photographs allows students to show their background knowledge and develop questioning that will draw students further into learning (Fontichiaro, 2010). Baker (2016) and

Fontichiaro (2010) present strategies for photo analysis that include observing, inferring, and questioning. One strategy is called See, Think, Wonder. The teacher walks students through this strategy while looking at an image. Students can fill out a graphic organizer or make their own chart to fill in what they see in the image, what the image makes them think and any questions the students might wonder about an image.

Cruz and Ellerbrock (2015) present Yenawine's Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) approach. It is based on the work of Piaget and Vygotsky. It starts with a structured discussion which generates "observations, insights, and exchanges that spur not only thorough rigorous examination of works of art [visual images] but also significant skill development in individuals (Yenawine, 1999)" (p.276). When students share their comments with the group, whether a small group or whole class, the teacher as the facilitator paraphrases the responses without assessing or appraising the comments. The facilitator links the comments to create a larger, more collective framework from which to view the image. The fasilitator provides open ended questions to guide thinking. This strategy can be combined with a number of the other strategies listed.

Ritchhart, Church, and Morrison (2011), share a number of visual thinking strategies that educators can use while working with images in the classroom. The Explanation Game is a variation on the See-Think-Wonder strategy. This strategy focuses on parts of the image vs. looking at the whole image (Ritchhart et al., 2011). Students have to choose something they find in the image and explain what they think it is, what makes them think that, and explore any alternative options as to what it could be. Another strategy presented is called Zoom In. The teacher shows the class a portion of an image. Students walk through the see-think-wonder

process and share their inferences about what the full image may be. A little more of the image is revealed and students go through the process again. They reassess their inferences and make new guesses and then the whole image is revealed, followed by a group discussion. This strategy shows students to reevaluate their inferences as they learn more about the image. Chapter three contains additional, detailed explanations of learning strategies.

CHAPTER III: APPLICATION

Educators seek activities that build interest and curiosity, and that engage students with their learning. The review of literature has presented numerous best practices regarding comprehension and literacy instruction, primary source instruction and how to skillfully incorporate images into lessons to increase student comprehension, learning, and motivation. Student achievement has proven to increase with consistent implementation of a variety of literacy strategies (Fisher, Frey, & Williams, 2002).

This chapter will present a sample of strategies and a scope of practice for the first trimester of seventh grade U.S. Studies with intended implementation of these routines and strategies as well as the inclusion of Common Core Literacy Standards for reading and writing. There are many strategies to review; such strategies are divided into three categories, some strategies fitting into multiple categories. The three categories are: Visible Thinking Routines, Text Literacy Instruction, and Visual Literacy. Each strategy should start with teacher modeling (Frey & Fisher, 2010) followed by gradually releasing the responsibility to the students. Students have shown to be most successful in small group guided instruction (Fisher & Frey, 2007; Milman & Bondie, 2012), but completing activities in the different formats, such as small groups, pairs, and as a full group share has shown to be successful as well (Goudvis & Harvey, 2012).

Visible Thinking Routines

These routines and activities are meant to help students see their thinking by thinking out loud and tracking their thinking visually through the use of charts or documentation. Presenting these routines at the start of a year of study will set students up for success. Initially teachers

should model this thinking, and with practice and repetition, students will start to think about their thinking on their own.

Think-Pair-Share

This strategy promotes student participation, and encourages students to view and understand multiple perspectives. It can be used at any time during a lesson. The teacher poses a question, a statement or a topic and gives the students time to think or journal about the prompt on their own. The teacher initiates a pair share time where students share their thoughts, answers or questions with their partner. This can lead into small group or whole class share outs and partners or groups can summarize their ideas to share with the class (Project Zero, 2019).

I Used to Think...Now I Think….

This thinking routine encourages student reflection on learning as well, as a reflection of the topic of study and how their thinking has changed. Students write a response with these sentence starters "I used to think….But now, I think...". This can be done after completing a reading, at the end of a lesson, after watching a video clip, to wrap up a discussion or to end a unit. Initially, this activity should be done as a whole group, but as students get used to explaining their thinking, this can be done in smaller groups or pairs (Visible Thinking, 2019).

What makes you say that?

This routine can be used in regards to an object or concept, anything that can be described, for example historical artifacts or ideas such as democracy. The whole class can participate, or it can be a partner or small group activity. Simple questions are posed with a follow up question to get an explanation of the thinking. "What is going on?" followed by

"What do you see that makes you say that?" or "What do you know?" followed by "What do you see or know that makes you say that?. This routine promotes evidence based reasoning. The goal of this routine is that eventually, students will not need to be asked to justify their answers, they will automatically do it when answering questions.

Literacy Instruction

Teachers need to have instructional routines at hand to guide students pre, post, and during reading. While teaching literacy strategies, it is important to allow students to interact with a variety of texts, such as maps, documents, pictures, fiction and nonfiction texts. This enables students to view content from multiple perspectives, and draw on prior knowledge alongside textual clues in order to construct meaning (Gaston, Martinez, & Martin, 2016; Goudvis and Harvey, 2012).

Anticipation Guide

This is a pre-reading tool meant to activate background knowledge. One form of an anticipation guide consists of a few statements (3-10) that connect to the text that students can form opinions about without reading the text. After students answer, they can pair and share. The anticipation guide is followed by reading the text and then revisiting the original statements to determine if opinions have changed. Another form of anticipation guide called Prove It, looks similar, only it starts with true/false questions where students predict the answers. After reading, students use the text to correct and prove their answers using text evidence. In this case, the anticipation guide is also drawing on the close reading strategy (Allen, 2004; Evans & Clark 2015).

K-W-L

K-W-L (Know-Want to Know-Learned) is a strategy to draw on students' background knowledge. This strategy lets students take an active role in their learning by activating prior knowledge, letting students decide what they hope to learn from the text, then having students highlight what they learned from the text, or summarize what they have learned. This can be done as a class on the board, or students can easily draw a three column chart in their notebooks to track their learning as well (Fisher, Frey, & Williams, 2002; Allen, 2004).

Graphic Organizers

Students benefit from the use of graphic organizers, and students in middle and high school have consistently reported that graphic organizers are the most helpful literacy strategy/tool their teachers used (Fischer, Frey, & Williams, 2002). A graphic organizer can be used in a variety of ways. It can be a set of columns for a See Think Wonder, it can be a timeline of events, it can be a chart with guiding questions, a venn diagram, or it can be used with the historical thinking lessons from Stanford History Education Group.

Reciprocal Teaching

This is a comprehension strategy that teaches students to focus and monitor their reading in order to gain a higher level of comprehension. The key areas of guided practice are: predict, question, clarify, and summarize. The first step is the teacher modeling these skills while reading a short passage out loud, predicting what is going to happen, developing questions about the text, clarifying words, and summarizing the most important ideas. After the teacher models, students can work in partners teaching one another as they imitate this process, continuing the reading (Fisher, Frey, & Williams, 2002; Allen, 2004).

Close Reading

To answer text based questions, students participate in close reading. This is reading with purpose and intention and taking into regard how the author presents information. Close reading can be done to answer specific text based questions (Cowgill and Waring, 2017; SHEG, 2019; Reisman, 2012). There are typically three rounds of reading a text in a close reading exercise. Each reading has a separate goal. The teacher may assign the text in its entirety for the first reading followed by smaller sections for re-reading. The first reading focuses on what the text says. It may be followed with questions such as: What is the text about? What was ____ (person from the text) like? Or What was the theme? The second reading focuses on how the text works followed by questions such as: What does _______ (word from text) mean in this context? Or What is the author's purpose? The third reading is for analysis and can be followed by questions such as What reasons does the author give to support_____? Or What information do the illustrations add to the text? Close reading can be done as a whole class, in small groups or one-on-one (Shanahan, 2014)

Visual Literacy Instruction

The strategies in this section are meant to develop visual literacy skills as well as increase student motivation. The use of images prior to providing students with text sources to read has proven to increase students' willingness to engage in closer reading of text, and to participate in other assignments (Brown & Swope, 2010). When working with images, students access several different cognitive skills from basic identification to more complex skills such as analysis and interpretation. They also find personal meaning and connections to what they see (Cruz, Ellerbrock, 2015). Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) is an approach developed in the 1990's,

based on the research of Piaget and Vygotsky. They suggest structured group discussions that draw on observations and insights, and allows students to exchange ideas and examine visuals while developing skills individually (Cruz & Ellerbrock, 2015). Throughout the visual literacy instructional strategies, the teacher serves as a facilitator who does not appraise or assess the comments of the students, but paraphrases student comments to "weave a larger, collective frame for viewing the work" (p. 276). The facilitator asks open ended questions to provoke student thinking, such as: What is going on in the picture? What do you see that makes you say that? What more can you find?

See Think Wonder

This strategy can be combined with a number of other visible, visual literacy and historical thinking strategies. See-think-wonder is useful when using visuals, and is an activity that increases student motivation. It may be a great way to start a new topic of study or begin of a lesson to draw students in and heighten engagement. This activity can drive student learning as well, as students try to answer the questions they develop throughout the lesson or unit of study.

See Think Wonder is one of the most basic strategies for looking at and learning from images. Students can either draw a three column chart in their notes, or teacher can provide a graphic organizer. The first column is the *see* section. Students either alone, in small groups, or as a class, describe only what they see. This draws step draws on prior knowledge. The next column is the *think* section. Students share what the images makes them think. They synthesize what they see and make inferences about the image or event being depicted. The *wonder* column invites questioning and curiosity. Students should think about the questions the image raises in

their minds and what questions could be asked to learn more about the image (Baker, 2016; Project Zero, 2019; Fontichiaro, 2010).

Zoom - In

This strategy can be used with See Think Wonder, or done independently as a short activity. The teacher should expose to the students a small portion of an image. Students should make inferences about what they may see in the entire image. The teacher then reveals another portion of the image. This can be done by exposing more and more of the image, or revealing different areas of the image. After each new piece that is exposed, students make inferences. When the entire image is exposed, the class should discuss their thinking. How did thinking change? What made the students think it was something else from the first piece of the image that was revealed? This activity promotes student reflection on their learning and making inferences (Ritchhart, Church, & Morrison, 2011).

The Explanation Game

This is another variation on the See Think Wonder strategy. This activity focuses on parts of an image, rather than the whole image. Students should name something that they see in the image, maybe an object. The student then needs to explain what it could be and what it's role may be in the image. Students have to give reasons for their thinking, explaining what makes them say that. Students must then also think of alternatives, what else could it be? (Ritchhart, Church, & Morrison, 2011).

Plan for Implementation via Scope and Practice

In my Scope and Practice, I have included the skills, strategies and routines I intend to implement during the first trimester of seventh grade U.S. Studies. The scope and practice includes strategies presented in the literature review as well as school wide strategies used within the social studies department. The first trimester of study starts with basic classroom routines, as well as an introduction to thinking strategies and the historical thinking process. Unit one, which has been one of the students' least favorite, dryer units, is about the U.S. government. My goal is to implement more of the literacy strategies as well as bring in a primary source activity that draws students in to deeper their understanding of the Constitution, Bill of Rights, and how the government functions. These are topics we address throughout the course, so it is important that students understand.

U.S. Studies Grade 7 Scope and Practice

Unit Name	Pre-Unit
# of class days needed	5 Days
Standards and Benchmarks	No standards assessed
Essential Questions	What are primary sources and how can we learn from primary sources?
Unit Content Objectives	*Students will understand basic classroom routines. *Students will be able to follow visible thinking routines *Students will be able to come to conclusion using the historical inquiry process
Unit Language and Literacy Objectives	6.12.1.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources. 6.12.7.7 Integrate visual information (e.g., in charges, graphs, photos, videos, maps) with other information in print and digital text.
Unit Assessments:	Students will complete the Reading Like a Historian lunchroom fight

formatives and Summatives	activity. It will be used as a formative to gauge student understanding of the historical thinking process and areas that need more clarification.
Key Concepts	Historical Thinking, Sourcing, Corroboration, Contextualization
Resources and Texts	History Mystery: Primary Source Discovery of the Teacher SHEG Lunchroom Fight Practice Investigation
Literacy integration and strategies	Leading up to the first unit, students will learn basic thinking routines that will be used throughout the course. Students will read a variety of primary sources (documents, images, artifacts) and follow the historical thinking literacy strategy. Students will learn about their teacher and their class. Students will learn how to consider a source of a document. Historical thinking model, graphic organizers, think pair share,
Hattie's Strategies	Planning and prediction, teacher clarity, teacher credibility

Unit Name	Unit 1: U.S. Government
# of class days needed	12 Days
Standards and Benchmarks	Democratic government depends on informed and engaged citizens who exhibit civic skills and values, practice civic discourse, vote and participate in elections, apply inquiry and analysis skills and take action to solve problems and shape public policy. 7.1.1.1.1 Exhibit civic skills including participating in civic discussions on issues in the contemporary United States, demonstrating respect for the opinions of people or groups who have different perspectives, and reaching consensus. The United States is based on democratic values and principles that include liberty, individual rights, justice, equality, the rule of law, limited government, common good, popular sovereignty, majority rule and minority rights. 7.1.2.3.1 Identify examples of how principles expressed in the Declaration of Independence and Preamble to the Constitution have been applied throughout United States history, including how they have evolved (if applicable) over time. Citizenship and its rights and duties are established by law. 7.1.3.5.1 Describe the components of responsible citizenship including informed voting and decision making, developing and defending positions on public policy issues, and monitoring and influencing public decision making. 7.1.3.5.2 Compare and contrast the rights and responsibilities of citizens, non-citizens and dual citizens.

	The United States government has specific functions that are determined by the way that power is delegated and controlled among various bodies: the three levels (federal, state, local) and the three branches (legislative, executive, judicial) of government. 7.1.4.6.1 Describe historical applications of the principle of checks and balances within the United States government. The primary purposes of rules and laws within the United States constitutional government are to protect individual rights, promote the general welfare and provide order. 7.1.4.7.1 Analyze how the Constitution and the Bill of Rights limits the government and the governed, protecting individual rights, supports the principle of majority rule while protecting the rights of the minority, and promotes the general welfare. 7.1.4.7.2 Describe the amendment process and the impact of key constitutional amendments.
Essential Questions	How would life be different in the United States in rights were not protected? What makes the United States Constitution effective?
Unit Content Objectives	*Students will be able to explain the purpose of the constitution and how it can be changed through the amendment process. *Students will be able to explain why the government has three branches, what they do, who is a part of each one at the federal and local levels and how they balance one another. *Students will be able to recognize that citizens have many rights protected by the constitution and citizens and non-citizens have different rights.
Unit Literacy and Language Objectives	Reading 6.12.4.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies Writing 6.14.1.1 Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content 6.14.4.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to discipline, task, purpose, and audience. 6.14.9.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational text to support analysis, reflection and research 6.14.10.10 Write routinely over extended time frames and shorter time frames for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
Unit Assessments: formatives and Summatives	Formative 1: multiple choice- deciphering the preamble of the constitution matching the branches with their duties Formative 2: Venn Diagram of rights and responsibilities of citizens and non-citizens Literacy Higher Level Question Students must find evidence from a text and combine it with knowledge from class to answer a prompt Summative Assessment - multiple choice and matching exam with written

	response questions
Key Concepts	Constitution, Amendments, Separation of Powers, Ratify, Bill of Rights, Democracy
Resources and Texts	Unit Overview reading activity, Constitution Play, Bill of Rights, Harvard Bill of Rights activity, America the Story of US ep.2, Teach TCI Textbook
Literacy integration and strategies	We will use a variety of strategies such as t Unit overview - a guided reading with student tasks listed (text coding). Students must look for new or unknown terms and information, develop questions about the upcoming unit and create visuals to represent the topics in the reading.) Graphic Organizers - to work through the preamble and bill of rights to work on comprehension and engage in close reading of the text. Likert scale - used for students to rank rights in the order they choose and class discussion to follow. Historical Thinking Strategies K-W-L Think-Pair-Share. Close Reading Cornell Notes
John Hattie's Strategies - application	Strategy to integrate with prior knowledge

Unit Name	Unit 2: Growth and Expansion
# of class days needed	20 Days
Standards and Benchmarks	Democratic government depends on informed and engaged citizens who exhibit civic skills and values, practice civic discourse, vote and participate in elections, apply inquiry and analysis skills and take action to solve problems and shape public policy. 7.1.2.3.1 Identify examples of how principles expressed in the Declaration of Independence and Preamble to the Constitution have been applied throughout United States history, including how they have evolved (if applicable) over time. The United States establishes and maintains relationships and interacts with indigenous nations and other sovereign nations, and plays a key role in world affairs. 7.1.5.11.1 Describe diplomacy and other foreign policy tools; cite historical cases in which the United States government used these tools. People use geographic representations and geospatial technologies to acquire, process and report information within a spatial context. 7.3.1.1.1 Create and use various kinds of maps, including overlapping thematic maps, of places in the United States; incorporate the "TODALSS" map basics, as well as points, lines and colored areas to display spatial information. Historical inquiry is a process in which multiple sources and different kinds of historical evidence are analyzed to draw conclusions about how and why things happened in the past. 7.4.1.2.1 Pose questions about a topic in United States history, gather and organize a variety of primary and secondary sources related to the questions, analyze sources for credibility and bias; suggest possible answers and write a thesis statement; use sources to draw conclusions and support the thesis; present supported findings, and cite sources. The differences and similarities of cultures around the world are attributable to their diverse origins and histories, and interactions with other cultures throughout time. 7.4.2.4.1 Compare and contrast the distribution and political status of indigenous populations in the United States and Canada; describe how their status has evolved throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Economic expansion and the conquest of indigenous and Mexican territory spurred the agricultural and industrial growth of the United States; led to increasing regional, economic and ethnic divisions; and inspired multiple reform movements. 7.4.4.18.1 Describe the processes that led to the territorial expansion of the 7 United States, including the Louisiana Purchase and other land purchases, wars and treaties with foreign and indigenous nations, and annexation. 7.4.4.18.2 Identify new technologies and innovations that transformed the United States' economy and society; explain how they influenced political and regional development. 7.4.4.18.3 Identify causes and consequences of Antebellum reform movements including abolition and women's rights. Regional tensions around economic development, slavery, territorial expansion and governance resulted in a Civil War and a period of Reconstruction that led to the abolition of slavery, a more powerful federal government, a renewed push into indigenous nations' territory and continuing conflict over racial relations. 7.4.4.19.1 Cite the main ideas of the debate over slavery and states' rights; explain how they resulted in major political compromises and ultimately, war.
Essential Questions	How did the United States gain land during the 1880's? Who was the most impacted by Manifest Destiny?
Unit Content Objectives	*Students will be able to understand how the US gained land through conflicts, treaties, and purchases during the 1880's. *Students will be able to identify the causes and impact of the War of 1812 *Students will be able to explain how th eUS used foreign policy to become a world power. *Students will be able to identify the major trails used to migrate Westward. *Students will be able to be able to describe the impact of the first industrial revolution in the United States and how new technologies and industrial growth impacted the development of th eUnited States during the 1800's.
Unit Literacy	Reading

and Language Objectives	6.12.1.1 Cite specific textual, visual, or physical evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources. 6.12.2.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide and accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge. 6.12.4.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies. Writing 6.14.1.1 Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content 6.14.4.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to discipline, task, purpose, and audience. 6.14.9.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational text to support analysis, reflection and research 6.14.10.10 Write routinely over extended time frames and shorter time frames for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
Unit Assessments: formatives and Summatives	Formatives 1 & 2 multiple choice Google forms on learning targets 1 and 2 Formative 3 Mapping and open ended questions about the experiences people had traveling west and why they went west. F3 includes questions on the first industrial revolution and sectionalism as the country moves towards civil war. Literacy: Higher Level Question - Students combine text evidence and knowledge from class to answer a prompt Summative Assessment - multiple choice and matching with written response questions and a timeline
Key Concepts	Manifest Destiny, Foreign Policy, Land Acquisition, Indian Removal, Monroe Doctrine, Gold Rush, Sectionalism
Resources and Texts	Soft Rain (read aloud story book throughout unit about American Indian girl and her family being moved to a reservation), Lewis and Clark Prove It - anticipation and closer reading guide, Atlas, Kids Discover Magazine: Westward Close reading, Native American Primary Source History Mystery, Corps of Discovery Activity, America the Story of US Ep. 3, Teach TCI textbook
Literacy integration and strategies	We always start the unit with a written overview of the whole unit to come. Students walk through the steps of reading and re-reading with specific tasks (text coding). The students listen to the teacher read a book out loud and students journal and respond in writing and verbally to prompts. Each unit has a mapping target, we work on map reading skills and look at change of maps over time. In this unit we introduce the Prove It activity with the anticipation guide and close reading activities. Our primary source exploration is based on the trail of tears and incorporates documents, paintings, maps and infographics for students to explore as they walk through the historical thinking process.

	Students will learn how the US gained power and expanded and what happened to the Native Americans. See-think-wonder with primary sources and paintings from the trail of tears. Think-Pair-Share Small group work on history mystery with historical thinking process Graphic organizer to work guide exploration of documents to answer a specific question X Word Summaries Reciprocal Teaching Read Alouds Close Reading Text Coding
John Hattie's Strategies - application	Classroom discussion

Unit Name	Unit 2.5: Pivotal Moments Research Project
# of class days needed	12 Days
Standards and Benchmarks	The United States is based on democratic values and principles that include liberty, individual rights, justice, equality, the rule of law, limited government, common good, popular sovereignty, majority rule and minority rights. 7.1.2.3.1 Identify examples of how principles expressed in the Declaration of Independence and preamble to the constitution are applied throughout United States history, including how they have evolved. Historical Inquiry is a process in which multiple sources and different kinds of historical evidence are analyzed to draw conclusions about how and why things happened in the past. 7.4.1.2.1 Pose questions about a topic in United States history, gather and organize a variety of primary and secondary sources related to the questions, analyze sources for . credibility and bias; suggest possible answers and write a thesis statement; use sources to draw conclusions, support the thesis; present supported findings, and cite sources
Essential Questions	How do we conduct research using a database? How did the chosen event shape the United States?
Unit Content Objectives	Students will be able to define the values and principles of American democracy: liberty, individual rights, justice, equality, rule of law, limited government, common good, popular sovereignty, majority rule, and minority rights. Students will demonstrate understanding researching and creating a one page presentation that showcases a decisive event in American history that has shaped America today. Students will be able to apply one of the values or principles to their event and justify how the image portrays their chosen principle.

Unit Literacy and Language Objectives	Reading 6.12.1.1 Cite specific textual, visual or physical evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources 6.12.2.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions. 6.12.7.7 Integrate visual information (e.g., charts, grahs, photos, videos, maps) with other information in print and digital text. 6.12.8.8 Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgement in a text. 6.12.9.9 Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic. Writing 6.14.2.2 Write informative/explanatory texts, as they apply to each discipline and reporting format, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or descriptions of technical process. 6.14.4.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to discipline, task, purpose, and audience. 6.14.5.5 With some guidance and support from peers and adults, use a writing process to develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, drafting, revising, editing, reediting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose, discipline, and audience have been addressed. 6.14.6.6 Use technology, including but not limited to the internet, to produce and publish writing and multimedia texts, and present the relationships between information and ideas clearly and efficiently. 6.12.7.7 Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues for exploration. 6.14.8.8 Gather relevant information from multiple data, print, physical, and digital sources, using search terms effectively, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation. 6.14.9.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational text to support analysis, reflection, and research.
Unit Assessments : formatives and Summatives	There are checkpoints along the way throughout the project. The checkpoints are for students to monitor where they are at in the process and for the teacher to assess who may need extra guidance, with vocabulary of values and principles, assigning values to their image, research, or creation of the one page presentation. Summative assessment is the students' final one page project with their image, other images that connect to their topic and complete information about their event connecting it to one of the values or principles. Each student will have a different image.

Key Concepts	liberty, individual rights, justice, equality, rule of law, limited government, common good, popular sovereignty, majority rule, minority rights, Big 6 research process
Resources and Texts	Image Placards, student research packets, Smithsonian video, library specialist, libguides, Big 6 search from NMS library, textbook, any outside books with information on student topics
Literacy integration and strategies	This project is built around literacy and research. Students will be reading texts specific to their topic, organizing and synthesizing information to write a concise explanation of the event. Students will also connect their event to a value or principle of American democracy, and students will need to justify this connection. Students will be learning about different topics, but they will all learn how to conduct academic research using primary and secondary sources. I notice, I wonder (shortened See-Think-Wonder) The explanation game Graphic Organizers I used to think... now I think Historical Thinking Process Close Reading
John Hattie's Strategies - application	Self Reported Grades, evaluation and reflection, scaffolding

CHAPTER IV: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of the literature review was to determine how comprehension and literacy of text and visual sources connect to student motivation and engagement in social studies classes. Through the research, I found that the use of relatable primary sources (sources that come from voices often left out of history, sources that look, sound, or feel like real life experience students interact with within their own lives) and the integration of literacy strategies led to higher student motivation in social studies. There were three research questions answered in the literature review

How can educators encourage/increase student motivation and engagement in social studies?

The findings of this literature review revealed that the teacher's active involvement in a class, as well as the use of perspectives often left out of history classes can lead to a higher level of student motivation and engagement. Teachers can force students to complete tasks, but the teacher can not force students to care about the learning. Research shows (Bloc & Mangiere, 2009) that the teacher plays an active role in fostering student motivation. A motivation inducing educator moves around the room, giving each student the necessary assistance to be successful. Students are more motivated to learn when they know their teacher will not let them fail.

The teacher is also responsible with providing a toolbox of skills for students to use when encountering different challenges (Reisman, 2012). By equipping students for educational challenges, and walking through them together, by implementing the gradual release of

responsibility to the students, the teacher eases students into the task and students are more likely to not feel overwhelmed and give up, but persevere and learn.

Students benefit from the use of materials that connect to their lives. Primary sources come in many forms, and students benefit from encountering a variety of formats that reflect the types of sources students may encounter outside of the classroom (Cleary and Neuman, 2009). When studying history, students connected more with investigations of average people, people who had encountered similar struggles as the students. Connecting historical people and events with the present increased student motivation because students were able to see how history applies to today. There are many voices that have been repeatedly left out of history textbooks and lessons, by bringing in those voices and stories, more students have an opportunity to connect with history on a deeper level and maintain a higher level of engagement (Stockdill & Moje, 2013; Harshman, 2017; Cleary & Neumann, 2009). This is especially true for females, students of color, and students from different socio-economic backgrounds.

Within my own classroom, I have had female students ask, "When are we ever going to talk about any girls in history?" as we made our way from the creation of the U.S. Constitution through the Industrial Revolution. The few exceptions being Sacagawea and Harriet Tubman. It may take more teacher effort, but intentionally seeking out materials that my students can connect to is an important part of my practice.

When my seventh grade U.S. Studies class started our study of World War II by doing a See-Think-Wonder and quotation matching activity with images of women during the war, students were very excited to see the African American female battalion and code breakers and the Kyrgistani women running the collective farms. Students were able to connect with the

stories they encountered. After completing our activity, students wanted to know more, had more questions, and an excitement about their future learning in the class. Students who hadn't had the opportunity previously were given a change to make a personal connection to the past. My goal is to seek out sources with which my students will be able to connect while also integrating literacy strategies at the same time.

What are best practices in integrating multiple literacy skills into the middle school Social Studies classroom?

Literacy is a critical skill in school throughout the content areas, and is vital to life as an engaged and active citizen in society. Literacy skills must be taught in all discipline areas within schools because literacy looks different in different contexts. Teachers can implement strategies to help students learn how to engage with content specific materials at a deep level and improve their literacy skills. In social studies, students do not read textbooks exclusively, but a variety of sources in different media forms. The focus is teaching students to analyze multiple sources using historical thinking strategies (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2017). By being aware of content area literacy, and the types of materials and sources found in social studies classes, teachers can effectively instruct students through the use of multiple literacy strategies that will increase literacy, knowledge and motivation simultaneously.

The best strategies for teaching students literacy include regular use of Visual Thinking Routines (Visual Thinking, n.d.) to get students thinking about their learning and providing students with a variety of literacy strategies, such as close reading, see-think-wonder, graphic organizers, or any of the others listed in chapter three. These literacy strategies can be used with a variety of sources from textbooks, to primary source documents and images.

Literacy - reading, seeing and thinking like a historian

The literature review makes it clear that literacy skills are vital to student success across content areas. In social studies, students need basic comprehension skills, but in addition to that, students need the disciplinary literacy skills unique to social studies, the ability to think like historians. Students who can read and write like historians will not only improve their ability to learn about history, but will become prepared to participate in civil society (Shanahan, Bolz, & Crib, 2016).

Images are a valuable tool in the classroom. People can remember what they see with significant detail for days to years after they initially see an image. This should be taken into consideration when teaching. While visuals should be used in the classroom, educators must first teach students how to read visual images (Levesque, Ng-A-Fook, Corrigan, 2014). Students are more likely to engage in literacy and comprehension activities when they are introduced to an image beforehand (Brown & Swope, 2010).

What are the pillars in reading comprehension?

The research of this literature review finds that current American middle and high school students are not meeting basic reading benchmarks. With the high importance of reading, reading comprehension and literacy skills must be taught not only in English class, but in each of the discipline areas. By implementing reading comprehension and literacy strategies and making thinking visible for students, teachers can help students become better prepared readers (Fisher, Frey, Hattie, 2016).

Comprehension

Comprehension is a fundamental skill that is necessary as students work through the historical thinking process. Before they can read for deeper meaning, students must be proficient at the five pillars of comprehension: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluencey, vocabulary, and comprehension. Readers who have strong vocabulary knowledge have a higher level of comprehension, as vocabulary knowledge is a predictor for reading comprehension. Once students utilize reading skills, they can integrate new concepts and ideas with prior knowledge (phonemic awareness) (Fisher, Lapp, and Frey, 2011). Students can be taught to be competent comprehenders. By intentionally practicing reading skills, vocabulary and comprehension strategies become an innate part of how students read.

My goal is to continue integrating comprehension strategies in my classroom. Allen (2004) provides great research on this matter, as well as many simple strategies that can be applied to many different lessons. Comprehension is not an area I have focused on in the past, but moving forward as an educator, I plan to frequently adopt comprehension practice with intentionality and also teach my students visible thinking routines. Visible Thinking (nd) has done years of research regarding the way children think and learn. This research provides teachers with usable visible thinking routines that will move students toward a deeper understanding of content, increase motivation for their learning, and raise awareness of their own thinking.

Professional Application

As I move into my third year teaching seventh grade social studies, I will be using the findings of my research to improve my teaching and improve the quality of education my

students will receive. My school already has the beginnings of a literacy initiative in place. I have seen the benefit of the activities we have already tried, but I think that by incorporating strategies found through my research, and incorporating images into the literacy activities, that my students will be more likely to find success in literacy and content knowledge.

Students who struggle with reading may find more motivation to continue trying when they first encounter an activity that they can not only have fun doing, but find success and achieve deeper thinking while doing. I want to increase student motivation that will grow student grit and stamina as they persevere through challenging tasks.

Limitations of Research

In my review of literature, I found few quantitative studies on the implementation and success of literacy and motivational strategies. Most of the studies were from more than a decade ago. As more schools are implementing literacy initiatives, more data should be available for future studies on this matter. I also struggled to find a vast array of information about digital and visual literacy, specifically in social studies. Much of the digital literacy literature was directed at art and video media.

Implications for Future Research

Literacy initiatives and use of literacy strategies have proven to increase students skills and test scores (Fisher, Frey, & Williams, 2002). Some problems remain. There is no shortage of strategies to teach literacy, but teacher collaboration and teacher instruction in the use of the strategies is necessary and currently lacking in many areas. Student test scores are still low in reading and comprehension, but they are slowly going up. Further research will need to look

into professional development for teachers and team collaborations to create better systems for implementing literacy strategies into the curriculum.

Conclusion

In my classroom, I have seen students disengage from their learning because of perceived challenge of the task at hand, usually involving some form of reading. I wanted to discover a way to increase student motivation while simultaneously increasing their reading comprehension and literacy skills. Rather than setting their heads on their desks in frustration, I want students to have a set of skills and the knowledge of how to use them in order to learn. My research has shown that the use of visuals can draw students into a lesson and create motivation that will give students the endurance to push through a more difficult task. The implementation of literacy strategies has also proven to increase motivation and build skills in the secondary social studies classroom. By making thinking visible to students, students are set up for success. Using the visible thinking, literacy, visual literacy, and historical thinking strategies, based on my research, I believe my students will be more engaged and motivated. They will learn about history and develop literacy skills that will help them far beyond the classroom. Eventually my seventh grade students will be adults who can participate in civic life. As an educator, I want my students to be prepared for life in the real world, knowing the past and present of America, and having the skills to make informed decisions.

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APPENDIX

Reading Benchmarks: Literacy in History/Social Studies 6-8

Key Ideas and Details [What does the text SAY?]	
6.12.1.1	Cite specific textual, visual, or physical evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
6.12.2.2	Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
6.12.3.3	Identify key steps in a text's description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes a law, how geography influences history).

Craft and Structure [How does the text WORK?]	
6.12.4.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
6.12.5.5	Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).
6.12.6.6	Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's or creator's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of facts or ideas, formatting).

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas [What does the text MEAN?]	
6.12.7.7	Integrate visual information (e.g., in charges, graphs, photos, videos, maps) with other information in print and digital text.
6.12.8.8	Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.
6.12.9.9	Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

Range of Reading Level of Text Complexity	
6.12.10.10	By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 6-8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Writing Benchmarks: Literacy in History/Social Studies 6-8

	Types and Purposes
6.14.1.1	Write arguments focused on *discipline-specific content*. a. Introduce claim(s) about a topic or issue, acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically. b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant, accurate data and credible evidence that demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text, using credible sources. c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence. d. Establish and maintain a formal style. e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.
6.14.2.2	Write informative/explanatory texts, as they apply to each discipline and reporting format, including the narration of historical events, of scientific procedures/experiments, or description of technical process. a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts and information into broader categories as appropriate to achieving purpose; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables, and multimedia) when useful to aiding comprehension. b. Develop the topic with relevant, credible, and sufficient and well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples. c. Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts. d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. e. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone. f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.

	Writing Process
6.14.4.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to discipline, task, purpose, and audience.
6.14.5.5	With some guidance and support from peers and adults, use a writing process to develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, drafting, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose, discipline, and audience have been addressed.

6.14.6.6	Use technology, including, but not limited to the internet, to produce and publish writing and multimedia texts, and present the relationships between information and ideas clearly and efficiently.

	Research to Build and Present Knowledge
6.14.7.7	Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.
6.14.8.8	Gather relevant information from multiple data, print, physical (e.g., artifacts, objects, images), and digital sources, using search terms effectively, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
6.14.9.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational text to support analysis, reflection and research.

	Range of Writing
6.14.10.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

(National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, 2010)