

STUDENTS AS HISTORIANS: THE HISTORICAL NARRATIVE INQUIRY MODEL'S  
IMPACT ON HISTORICAL THINKING AND HISTORICAL EMPATHY

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The dissertation explores middle-school students' abilities to engage in historical thinking. I dispute the Hallam-Piaget model, which discourages analytical thinking through the assumption that children lack skills to think critically about history. My historical narrative inquiry model (1) teaches procedural knowledge (the process of "doing" history); (2) enhances interpretative skills; (3) cultivates historical perspectives based upon evidentiary history; and (4) encourages student authorship of historical narratives. In the fall semester of 2006, with a classroom of twenty-five seventh-graders, I initiated a research study designed to explore the impact of the historical narrative inquiry model through a sequence of thirty-two lessons. The lessons involved small- and large-group activities, including oral presentations, discussions about primary documents, and consideration of the relation between narratology and the creation of written history. Students generated their own historical narratives in order to articulate their perspectives. Eight students having varied reading-level proficiency served as primary participants in the study. Each of these students received pre- and post-intervention interviews. Outcomes reflected the enhancement of pedagogy intended to facilitate historical thinking and historical empathy in the classroom.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Classrooms stand to be energized by the power of history to foster inquiry, stimulate the analytic mind, shape perception, and deepen students' understandings of the past, themselves, and the contemporary world. Too often, though, the history classroom falls short of its potential when students do not think critically about history and its communicative texts (see Colby, Appendix A; Gabella, 1994; Goodlad, 1984; Levstik & Barton, 2001). My dissertation suggests that the integration of primary documents into the curriculum offers resuscitative prospects for the teaching of history through authentic accounts of historical events and through the teaching of history as an intellectual process—one characterized by inquiry, contextual reading, resource gathering, document analysis, historical reconstruction, and argument formation.

I have developed an instructional model based upon my interpretation of several concepts, including historical thinking (the nature of cognition in history), historical empathy (the ability to perceive history from the perspectives of those in the past), disciplined inquiry (the nature of historical investigation and the historian's craft), and historical narrative theory (the acceptance and recognition of narrative—with its linguistic, literary, stylistic, and structural influences—as the communicator of past events) and have called the model the *historical narrative*

*inquiry model* (Figure 1). The model's primary goals for student achievement include advancements in: (a) a renewed interest in and attention to the past; (b) the development of procedural knowledge (or the process of doing history); (c) the development of the ability to analyze and critique authentic historical documents; (d) the acquisition of interpretative skills for historical narratives (content, truthfulness, argument, language, and structure); (e) the formation of historical perspectives based upon evidentiary history; and (f) the articulation of those perspectives through student-authored historical narratives and argumentative essays.

Examining the relationship between historical thinking, empathy, and narrative, the instructional model goes beyond the assumption that historical empathy enables students merely to think critically. Students instead discover historical narratives, generate probing questions, conduct secondary and primary research, and formulate historical viewpoints that combine existing perceptions with their own powers of interpretation. Historical narrative inquiry stresses the power of narrative to enable students to develop rich generative—as opposed to passive--historical understandings.

Although recent scholarship focuses on historical thinking and historical empathy (VanSledright 2002; Lee & Ashby 2001; Levstik & Barton 2001), the processes and means by which students achieve these aims beg further research. In social studies research to historical thinking (the cognitive, reasoning process specific to history as a discipline), the connection between

narrative and historical empathy primarily centers on the role of historical fiction and trade books in facilitating historical understanding (Brophy & VanSledright, 1997; Levstik, 2001). Moving well beyond those assumptions, I propose that understanding the fundamental relationship of narrative to history--as the inherent communicative structure of historical rendering--opens new possibilities for generating empathetic response and historical thinking. Indeed, the vital link among inquiry, primary document research, and historical narrative still lacks sufficient exploration, and those gaps of knowledge are among the issues addressed in my dissertation. The inescapable role of the historical narrative as a vehicular communicator and the impact of historical narrative on students' perceptions of the past merits consideration and will also receive significant attention in my dissertation.

#### Background for Study: Historical Thinking, Empathy, and Narrative

By definition, historical empathy is the ability to enter the foreign world of the past—to the extent that retrieval is possible--and to demonstrate in-depth understandings of its realities. That empathy arises through modes of narrative inquiry that encourage students to assume the role of historian--inquisitor, investigator, formulator, and philosopher; the history classroom thereby comes alive with theoretical discourse. If successful in implementation, students will come to appreciate the complexities of historical people, events, and time periods. Such an endeavor requires a student to participate actively in the research process by delving through a wide array of secondary and primary

sources. Empathy functions as a subcomponent of historical thinking, or the cognitive processes of historical inquiry and the focus on procedural knowledge. The primary purpose of historical empathy is to enable students to transcend the boundaries of presentism by developing rich understandings of the past from multiple viewpoints, particularly those of the historical agents. In so doing, students achieve multi-layered, evolving perspectives (Davis, 2001; Lee, 1983; Yeager & Foster, 2001).

Although history educators traditionally have incorporated storytelling into their presentations, the power of narrative as a facilitator of historical thinking and empathy lacks research verification. Bage (1999), Levstik (1995), and Levstik and Barton (2001) defend energized narratives, that is, vibrant texts such as historical fiction, trade books as viable means for providing motivational, meaningful frameworks for understanding. To their credit, those scholars deliver creative uses such as artwork, historical fiction, historical reenactments, journal writing, music, and oral history (Bage, 1999; Levstik & Barton, 1996a, 1996b). Although valuable instructional strategies, the significant link among inquiry, primary document research, and historical narrative deserves exploration. Recent scholarship by Levstik and Barton (2001) recognize the need for historical realism—or energized texts of improved historical accuracy—texts mostly absent in elementary and middle education. Not surprisingly, the inescapable role of the historical narrative as a vehicular communicator of the past and its impact on students' perceptions merits consideration relative to the

cognitive process of disciplined inquiry. My dissertation provides fresh insights regarding the appropriate means of achievement.

### Historical Narrative Inquiry

Because inquiry forms the basis for scholarship in history (Levstik & Barton 2001; Lee 1983; White 1984), historical understandings begin with a desire to discover historical phenomena, to challenge accepted viewpoints, to uncover historical truths, and to evaluate individuals and societies. Inquiry encourages possibility thinking over content-dominated pedagogy by introducing students in the process of doing history. For classroom use, my historical narrative inquiry method centers on knowledge development, the posing of meaningful questions, the scrutiny of secondary and primary sources, and the organization of historical material into a narrative framework (Levstik & Barton, 2001; VanSledright, 2001; Yeager & Foster, 2001). In the inquiring classroom, students engage in in-depth, philosophical dialogue regarding historical issues (Levstik & Barton, 2001; Lee, 1983) as advanced by my dissertation.

Historical narrative inquiry is a cyclical process involving inquiry, investigation, and interpretation--that is, the restructuring of existing narratives and the organizing of new accounts. My historical narrative inquiry model includes a revolving six-stage process: contextual beginnings, in-depth questioning, secondary source analysis, primary document analysis, student authorship, philosophical/ argumentative reflection. That model is represented in

circular form to illustrate the frequent necessity of revisiting the various stages throughout the process. (Figure 1).

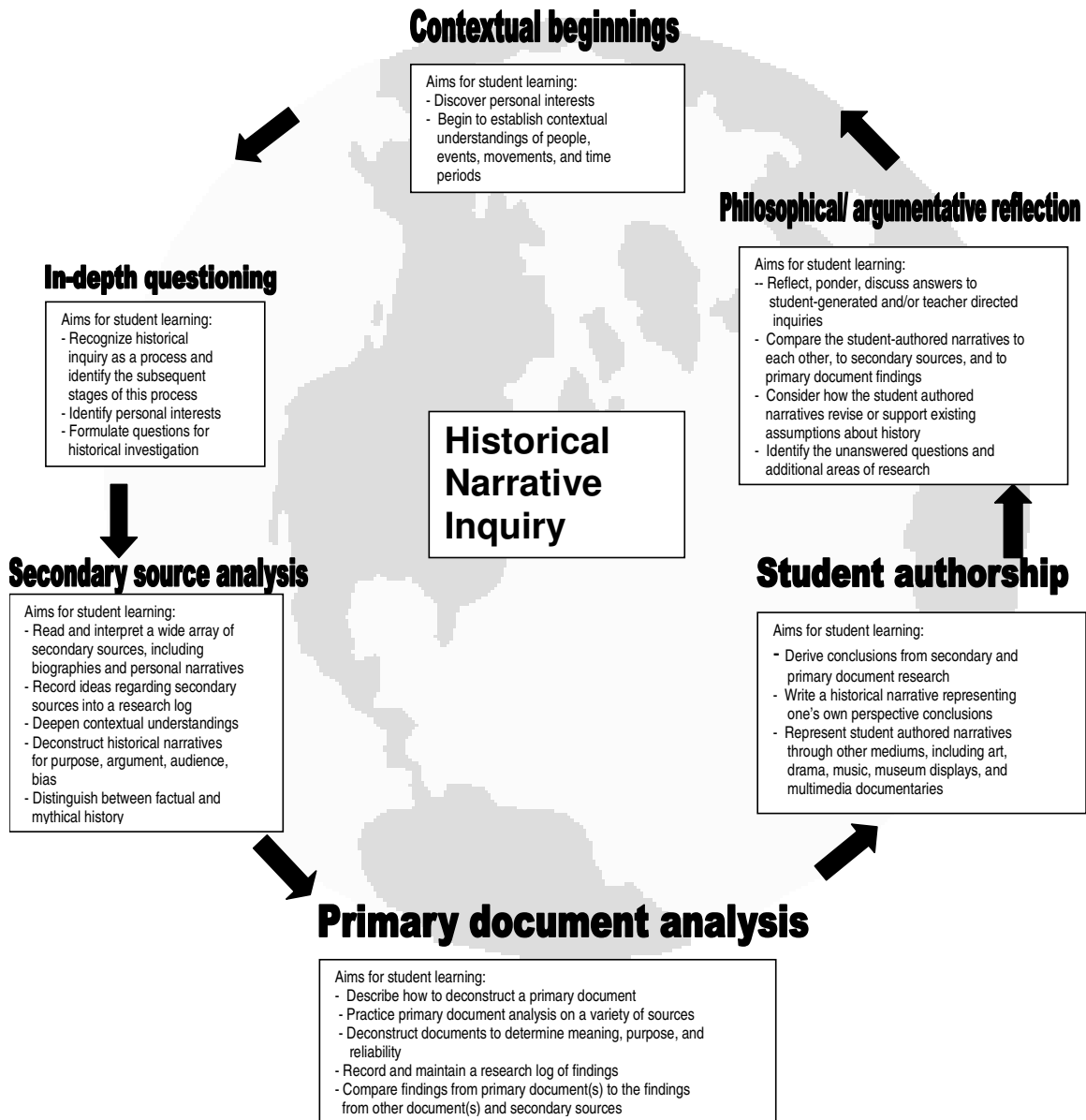


Figure 1. The historical narrative inquiry model.

## Need for the Study

I take as one of my points of departure the valid observations of Booth (1980), VanSledright (2001), and Wineburg (2001) that students reach deeper levels of historical understanding through the examination of primary documents. My research study specifies a unique adaptation of historical thinking and empathy through the inclusion of narratology (Abbott, 2002) into existing paradigms. The National Standards for History (National Center for History in the Schools, 1996), the National Council for Social Studies (1994), and the updated Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) content standards (Texas Education Agency, 2003) advocate the incorporation of primary documents into the history classroom in the elementary, middle, and high school grades. Though limited in scope, the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills test (TAKS) also measures students' abilities to recognize and comprehend primary documents (Texas Education Agency, 2004).

Despite the emphasis on higher-ordered thinking, lower-, middle-, and upper- grade curricula typically lack attention to primary documents and historical interpretative skills. Yeager and Davis (1995) attribute this reality to the inability of secondary student teachers to interpret primary documents; consequently entry level teachers doubt their students' abilities as well. Similar findings exist among elementary social studies teachers (Brophy & VanSledright, 1997), and Yeager and Davis (1996) conclude that practicing teachers need to strengthen their interpretative abilities as well. Also Hallam's (1978) interpretation of Piaget's



theory of the stages of development states that children below the age of fifteen lacked the cognitive skills to think critically in history. Such an assumption limits attempts to embed primary documents in the history curriculum for elementary and middle school students.

I argue that pedagogy grounded in historical thinking and historical empathy will have optimal impact on students. Recent scholarship on historical thinking by Lee (1983), Levistik and Barton (2001) Riley (2002), Wineburg (2001), VanSledright (2002), Yeager and Doppen (2001) criticizes traditional passive teaching and instead advocates historical empathy as a noteworthy goal. These scholars contribute to the limited studies currently available in historical thinking and empathy by challenging the Hallam-Piaget (Hallam, 1978) theory, which contends that children fourteen years and younger lack the cognitive capacity to engage in historical thinking. Like the aforementioned scholars, I also negate the Hallam-Piaget theory; thus, my dissertation seeks to uncover how and in what ways middle school students think historically.

Educational researchers Levstik and Barton (2001) defend the power of narrative to captivate student interest and create more personal, meaningful understandings of historical people and events; however, the power of historical narrative inquiry to facilitate historical thinking and empathy remains untapped in educational research. I shall provide needed research regarding a viable approach to achieving these aims; indeed, history teachers ought to encourage students to question and analyze historical topics from multiple angles accessible

through a joint emphasis on the facts and the narration of those facts by past and present historians. The research questions and research design of this study sought to uncover new phenomena regarding the relationship between historical narrative inquiry, historical thinking, and empathy.

#### Previous Research and Historical Narrative Inquiry

In spring 2005, I conducted a pilot study (Appendix A) with eight students (4 female/ 4 male) from Cottonwood Middle School (a pseudonym). Of the eight students (2 Indian-American females, 1 Pakistani-American female, and one Iranian-American female, 2 Anglo-American males, 1 Latino-American male, and 1 Chinese-American male) six were selected from a regular Texas history class and 2 from an honors history course, and all of the eight students earned A's and B's in most of their classes. Those students encountered the historical narrative inquiry model through a series of seven lessons that were recorded using audio and visual equipment. In each session, the students generated varied pictorial and written texts and maintained an audio-recorded diary. I also interviewed the students individually at the onset and conclusion of the study. The students studied World War II relative to Texans' contributions and specifically with the Texas 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, the soldiers of the Lost Battalion from the U.S.S. Houston, and the Women's Air Force Service Pilot (WASP) training program at various in-state military facilities.

The results of the study related a favorable student response to the instructional model. The success, in part, depended upon the students' prior

knowledge in history. The model encouraged the students to select their own topics for investigation; thus, the opportunity to direct their inquiries improved students' interests and motivations. The students specified the first-hand witnesses contained within the primary documents as the most valuable aspect of their learning experience: they gained new insights about the power of the individual to alter history. The approach augmented the students' understandings as they identified more personally with ordinary individuals.

The students communicated their newly acquired historical viewpoints by using figurative language and comparative analogies. By reading personal narratives and primary documents, the students asked probing questions and proposed possibilities. In particular, the photographic images and oral histories deepened the students' contextual and empathetic understandings. At times, the students interjected their biases and romantic perceptions but failed to defend their assertions using historical evidence, and the students' possessed a proclivity for the emotional and action-oriented aspects of the war, such as gender discrimination, conditions for the POW's, and war tactics.

The students demonstrated the ability to reason about historical possibilities, draw historical analogies, and formulate probable historical inferences using primary source materials. They struggled, however, to develop more conclusive perspectives and to place their ideas within the grand scheme of history. The limited amount of time for the research project perhaps hindered their full development.

## Statement of Problem

History teachers currently need sound, reliable methods to engage students in historical thinking and to help students develop rich, historical understandings. The achievement of historical empathy requires students to conduct historical research by examining secondary and primary sources. The cognitive skills implied by such activities demand expertise and direction from the teacher.

The historical narrative inquiry model employs methods intended to captivate interest, stimulate questioning, and facilitate higher ordered thinking. *Narrative* instruction involves the use of narrative texts (or those that articulate a story). Such texts include but are not limited to art, biographies, diaries, letters, music, personal narratives, and poetry. The model emphasizes the historical narrative as a distinct genre and teaches students to author their own narratives, or their own secondary accounts based on evidence. In this dissertation study, I seek to discover additional insights regarding the relationship of historical narrative inquiry to historical thinking and empathy, as well as to provide additional information about students' experiences with primary sources. This project aims to answer the following two guiding questions. How do seventh grade history students think historically when they experience the process of historical narrative inquiry? As an aspect of their engagement with the historical narrative inquiry model, how do seventh grade students articulate empathetic understanding?

## Supporting Research Questions

The supporting questions listed below specifically correlate (although not directly stated) with the phases of the historical narrative inquiry model (contextual beginnings, in-depth questioning, secondary source analysis, primary document analysis, student authorship, philosophical/ argumentative reflection). The model should provide general structure and may necessitate adaptation as needed. The supporting questions are patterned after the general structure of the model and are subsumed as subcomponents of the overarching guiding questions:

- (a) How do students formulate and articulate historical questions for inquiry?
- (b) How do historical narratives contribute to students' *contextual and empathetic* understandings?
- (c) How do students interpret primary documents as a part of their experience with historical narrative inquiry?
- (d) As an element of historical narrative inquiry, how do students articulate their perspectives through written historical narratives?
- (e) How do students express their argumentative and philosophic viewpoints through their experience with the historical narrative inquiry model?

## Methodology

In the fall of 2006, I used the historical narrative inquiry model with seventh graders in a Texas history classroom in a suburban north Texas middle school. Those students experienced the progressive stages of the historical narrative inquiry model: contextual beginnings, in-depth questioning, secondary account analysis, primary document analysis, student authorship, philosophical/

argumentative reflection. I delivered instruction to the entire class, and I evaluated all of the students' written work for data analysis. Eight students (4 female/ 4 male) of varied reading level were randomly selected to serve as primary participants in the study. Pre- and post-intervention interviews were conducted with each of these eight students. At the close of the study, the eight primary participants engaged in a think-aloud activity, in which they spoke out loud their impressions while reading of a primary document. In addition, the entire class participated in post-intervention focus interviews.

I commenced the study by administering an open-ended survey (Appendix E) of students' values and perceptions relative to history as a discipline, historical knowledge, and history teaching. In the course of this presentation, I inquired about the students' historical interests and background knowledge. As the students progressed through the various stages of the instructional model, they generated questions for research, explored secondary and primary materials, wrote their own historical narratives, and presented their newfound perspectives through an artistic venue. At each stage, students interacted with visual images and primary documents in a variety of settings, including as individuals, in small groups, or in large-class discussions. They also maintained a research log to record how they process and reflect upon historical data. The capstone event and crowning purpose of the model occurred when students articulated their own argumentative/ philosophical viewpoints and published those viewpoints through written and/or artistic media.

The methodological approach for each research question is specified.

(a) How do seventh-grade history students think historically when they experience the process of historical narrative inquiry? For assessment purposes, students prepared a research log and a journal. They also wrote a historical narrative, prepared an oral presentation (using an artistic representation of their historical perspective), generated a reflective essay, and concluded with an oral discussion of their experiences. I gathered data using a variety of sources, including field notes, video/audio recordings, and students' work. I grouped qualitative data emerging from my observations into thematic categories, evaluating the apparent connections among categories. In addition, the pre- and post-intervention open-ended surveys revealed changes in students' dispositions.

(b) As an aspect of their engagement with the historical narrative inquiry model, how do seventh-grade students articulate empathetic understanding? The primary and secondary sources represented the multiple viewpoints of the agents under discussion and the divergent perspectives of historians. Those sources challenged the students to consider historical texts from alternative angles. I examined students' perceptions of historical events and people through observations and analysis of students' discourse, written work, and presentations. The students' research logs, journals, historical narratives, artistic representations, oral presentations, and reflective essays helped me ascertain

how well the students developed empathetic understandings toward the historical agents.

(c) How do students formulate and articulate historical questions for inquiry? As part of my instruction, I provided the students with graphic organizers (Appendix B) designed to aid students in formulating historical questions. These graphic organizers constituted a portion of their research logs, which were used as data. Class discussion and grouping activities provided opportunities for students to express their interests and articulate historical questions.

(d) How do historical narratives contribute to students' contextual and empathetic understandings? I ascertained the students' prior skill levels through grade point average (GPA), faculty feedback, and informal observation. The students' written essays and discourse helped me determine their views of the historical agents. I also inquired, in the pre- and post-intervention interviews, about the primary participants' personal strength and weaknesses and the specific strategies that improved their comprehension, thought-process, and historical analysis.

(e) How do students interpret primary documents as a part of their experience with historical narrative inquiry? Using Wineburg's (1994) model of the cognitive representation of historical texts, I analyzed the students' oral and written responses to the primary documents. I also employed the Wineburg model in evaluating the think-alouds. The small- and large-group discussions,



along with the analytic essay and oral presentation, also provided data relative to historical thinking. The information obtained from the open-ended survey, the pre- and post-intervention interviews, and the final large-group discussion yielded additional findings.

(f) As an element of historical narrative inquiry, how do students articulate their perspectives through written historical narratives? After examining a variety of secondary and primary documents, the students wrote their own historical narrative, which they assembled into a class book. The oral presentation and artistic representation provided students alternative, creative avenues for historical authorship. I analyzed the students' written narratives by considering Wineburg's model (1994) as applied to the articulation of a historical viewpoint.

(g) How do students express their argumentative and philosophic viewpoints through their experience with the historical narrative inquiry model? The study concluded with the generation of a historical narrative, an art piece, and an oral presentation. The students' written and artistic work, the oral presentation, and small- and large-group discussions helped me ascertain their ideas. In particular, the post-intervention focus group interviews offered an opportunity to posit their argumentative/philosophic views.

#### Significance of Study

The study offers a unique application of historical narrative inquiry and procedural knowledge to investigate the areas of historical thinking and empathy.

Previous research on historical empathy failed to garner the analytic, interpretative power of narrative and ignores narrative as the primary, operative mode of historical rendering. Through the involvement of seventh graders, the study challenges the Piaget-Hallam tradition (Hallam, 1978) by examining the ability of students to demonstrate advanced levels of historical thinking. I emphasize procedural knowledge (or the process of researching and writing historical accounts) as applied to the creation of original historical narratives.

#### Definition of Terms

*Historical thinking:* Historical cognition as specified by as the process by which students employ procedural knowledge and disciplined inquiry.

*Historical empathy:* A level of rich, historical insight achieved by careful examination of multiple secondary and primary sources. Students who achieve historical empathy possess the ability to comprehend and understand multiple viewpoints, especially those of the historical agents. Historical empathy does not involve a one-time achievement but rather a continuous process of philosophical questioning and formulation.

*Historical understanding:* Developed by Dickinson and Lee in the 1978 publication, *Historical Teaching and Understanding*, the term functions as a precursor to historical empathy and is often used interchangeably. I employ the

term to refer to students' abilities to understand the perspectives and historical context of the historical agents.

*Positionality:* Developed by VanSledright (2001), the term refers to one's own biases and perspectives relative to historical topics.

*Historical narrative theory:* A theory that accepts the historical narrative as the essential genre through which historians write about the past.

*Historical narratives:* Oral or written accounts of historical incidents, events, time periods, or people. These accounts include secondary non-fiction readings, biographies, and analyses. Autobiographies and personal narratives, often considered primary documents, also constitute historical narratives. Other storied accounts, such as diaries, journals, letters, and so forth may narrate but are distinctly different from the historical narrative as genre.

*Procedural knowledge:* Refers to the process of developing historical arguments, narratives, and philosophic viewpoints through inquiry, secondary and primary document research, examination and cross-examination of resources, the revision of historical theories, and historical narrative reconstruction.

*Disciplined inquiry:* The formal investigation of historical truths through a community of learners, and by using the accepted principles of historical procedural knowledge.

*Historical narrative inquiry:* The integration of historical narratives and the constructs of those narratives into procedural knowledge and disciplined inquiry. Historical narrative inquiry is intended to promote the inclusion of historical narrative theory as fundamental to disciplined inquiry.

*Historical narrative inquiry model:* My historical narrative inquiry model includes a revolving six-stage process: contextual beginnings, in-depth questioning, secondary source analysis, primary document analysis, student authorship, philosophical/ argumentative reflection.

*Contextual beginnings:* In this phase, the students begin to establish contextual understandings of people, events, movements, and time periods. The instructor seeks to discover the students' personal research interests.

*In-depth questioning:* This phase of the models facilitates the construction of questions for historical investigation. Depending upon the students' skills, the questions may be solely student authored or teacher prompted. The instructor helps the students recognize and understand the process of historical inquiry.

*Secondary source analysis:* In this phase, the students read and interpret a wide array of secondary sources, including biographies and personal narratives. The students record their ideas into their journal and research logs. The secondary source analysis deepens students' contextual understandings. In addition, the students should identify the historical narrative as a distinct genre and should learn to distinguish the genre from other forms of fiction and non-fiction.

*Primary document analysis:* The students analyze and deconstruct primary documents to uncover the underlying meanings. Questions of reliability and authorship relative to the documents are considered. The students compare their findings to other primary documents and secondary sources.

*Student authorship:* In this phase, the students formulate their perspectives about the historical topic studied. They write original historical narratives articulating these perspectives. The students are encouraged to represent their historical narratives through artistic mediums, such as drama, poetry, visual art, museum displays, multimedia presentations, and performed storytelling.

*Philosophical/ argumentative Analysis:* In this phase, the students reflect, ponder, and discuss their answers to their inquiries. The students also compare their conclusions with those of their peers and with the conclusions of historians.

The students also identify the unanswered questions and consider additional areas for further investigation.

### Scope and Delimitations of Study

The study involved one classroom of eighth-grade students in suburban community of Coppell, Texas. The school demographics included male and female students of varied ethnicities, with the majority of the population consisting of Caucasian and Asian students from middle- and upper-middle-class families. The study remained centered within this domain.

The research approach employed in the study focuses on an in-depth analysis of the experiences of one classroom of students, with a more careful examination of eight primary participants. The qualitative research methods used intended to uncover rich, detailed phenomena regarding the impact of the historical narrative inquiry model rather than offer generalized conclusions.

### Overview of Chapters

The organization of the dissertation follows the standards outlined in the *APA Manual of Style* (5<sup>th</sup> edition). Chapter 2 delineates the theoretical underpinnings of the historical narrative inquiry model through a review of the relevant literature. At the end of the chapter, I present the model, with a discussion of the subcomponents. Chapter 3 describes the research methodology. In Chapter 4, I explicate the findings derived from the data collected in the fall of 2006. Chapter 5 offers reflections on the pertinent themes and suggestions for further research. The appendices at the end of the chapter

include my findings from the pilot study (Appendix A), my curriculum for the dissertation study (Appendix B), the primary participants' think-alouds (Appendix C), and the students' historical narratives (Appendix D).

## CHAPTER 2

### THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS OF HISTORICAL NARRATIVE INQUIRY

In 1931, Carl Becker (1935), President of the American Historical Association, addressed an audience of professional historians. Becker's famous speech entitled "Every Man His Own Historian" described how Mr. Everyman (who represents everyone) knows something about history and how he attempts to understand his world by reconstructing his everyday events. To illustrate, Becker's (1935) uses the anecdote of Mr. Everyman, "an ordinary citizen without excess knowledge" (p. 236), who wakes up one morning to discover the record of an old coal bill of 20 tons, priced at \$1017.20. Instantly, a series of historical events flashes through Mr. Everyman's mind. He imagines himself ordering the coal last summer from a Mr. Smith, who arrived with the wagons of coal to deliver to Mr. Everyman's cellar.

Later, at the hour of 4 o'clock Mr. Everyman visits Mr. Smith to pay his coal bill, but when he arrives at Mr. Smith's office he learns that Mr. Smith was not the man who sold him the coal. After reviewing his business records, Mr. Smith announces: "You don't own me any money, Mr. Everyman. You ordered coal here all right, but I didn't have the kind of coal you wanted, and so turned over the order to Mr. Brown. It was Brown who delivered your coal: he's the man you owe" (Becker, 1935, p. 238). In response, Mr. Everyman visits Mr. Brown, who examining the records of the Private Coal Office, confirms Mr.



Smith's testimony that Mr. Brown did indeed sell and deliver the coal. Mr. Everyman then pays his bill, and then upon returning home he scours his own documents and finds Mr. Brown's bill, for twenty tons of stove coal, priced at \$1017.20.

In the story of Mr. Everyman and his coal bill, the records of the coal purchase (Mr. Everyman's bill and Mr. Smith's and Mr. Brown's office ledgers) helped solve the question of the unknown coal delivery. Two conflicting records, however, existed: first, the record of Mr. Smith's sale of 20 tons of coal and second, the record of Mr. Brown's delivery of the coal instead. The unaided memory would have rendered Mr. Everyman useless in attempting to determine the actuality of what occurred. The essential comparison between Mr. Smith's and Mr. Brown's business ledgers resolved the conundrum. Upon answering this question, Mr. Everyman then begins a form of mental reconstruction, in which he recreates the historical event:

Mr. Everyman is ready for the final operation—the formation in his mind, by artificial extension of memory, of a picture, a definitive picture let us hope, of a selected series of historical events—of himself ordering coal from Smith, of Smith turning the order over to Brown, and of Brown delivering the coal to his house...If Mr. Everyman had undertaken these researches in order to write a book instead of paying a bill, no one else would think of denying that he is an historian. (Becker, 1935, p. 239)

Becker's story demonstrates how Mr. Everyman attempted to recount the events by researching the records. Without the investigation of written documents, Mr. Everyman would have relied exclusively on the "memory any ideal series of events struck his fancy, and thus create a world of semblance quite in accord

with his heart's desire (Becker, 1935, p. 243). By reducing history to its simplest terms, Becker affirms the charge of historians--to safeguard the process of historical research and of historical reconstruction. The challenge for professional historians becomes first, the upholding high standards for research and for writing and second, the creative delivery of historical knowledge to Mr. Everyman. The artificial memory of a people depends largely on how and in what ways historians seek to represent the past.

In their own unique ways, young students act as Mr. Everyman by attempting to construct their own narratives of local and of distant happenings. Their perceptions impact their beliefs about themselves, their ancestors, their neighbors, and their world. Without proper guidance, students may create their histories—as learned by Mr. Everyman--by relying on fancy, on artificial memory, and on their hearts' desires. Regardless of whether or not students ultimately choose to become professional historians becomes less of an impasse to *doing* history when one understands the significance of enabling students to think historically.

In this chapter, I first establish the theoretical ideas of historical empathy and historical narrative theory. In my discussion, I define and explicate how these terms originated. The chapter concludes with the application of historical thinking, empathy, and historical narrative theory to the creation of my instructional model.

## Historical Empathy and Historical Thinking

Historical analysis enhances perspective through the interpretation of evidence. Historical empathy inherently maintains the power to correct misunderstandings and overcome indifference. Operating within the historical method, historical empathy shapes perception and historical understanding. Historical empathy is the development of a holistic, complete view of the historical agents, including the historical events, the historical time period, and the agents' actions relative to their unique circumstances, to the extent that we can retrieve or reconstruct those chains of events and circumstances. When envisioned within a narrative framework, historical empathy produces insight and philosophical positioning for debate and discourse (Yeager & Foster 2001).

Encouraging change, historical empathy promises much for the future of history education. For instance, historical empathy challenges Hallam's application of Piaget's theory of the stages of development to historical thinking. Under that scheme, children were deemed incapable of engaging in historical thinking until their middle teens (Brophy & VanSledright, 1997; Husbands, 1996). In the late 1970s and early 1980s, British researchers began questioning the Hallam-Piaget theory. In the Schools Council Project *History 13-16*, Shemilt demonstrated children's capacity to empathize with people in the past and to engage in complex thought (Brophy & VanSledright, 1997). Dickinson and Lee (1978) furthered Shemilt's claims by emphasizing the need for rich, historical understandings relative to empathy. Through their research with early

adolescents, they concluded that historical empathy necessitated a complete understanding of the interrelated factors that affected the historical agents operating within the historical context. Their studies relied on Bruner's (1960) theory--namely, that the central concepts of any discipline could be taught in some form regardless of level or age.

Historical empathy does not require a sympathetic view toward historical figures; indeed, empathy moves beyond "walking in another's shoes." Mere identification with the agent cannot facilitate the probing questions and in-depth investigation required for perspective building. When understood within the context of the Schools History Project (conducted in England in the 1970s), the term *historical empathy* preserves its proper definition—a rigorous, intellectual process (Lee & Ashby, 2001).

Through historical empathy, one comes to understand what the agent could have known and what the agent could not know. The agent's intentions, accomplishments, and failures become cast in the theater of his or her own stage, and modern witnesses withhold their judgments until the complete play unveils the story's complexity. Indeed, hindsight affords the contemporary analyst the advantage of retrospection, with its attendant vantage point. The scrutiny of the multiple dynamics surrounding the agent's performance becomes the enabler of rich, complex understandings (Lee & Ashby, 2001; Lee, 1983).

Historical empathy is a high, scholarly attainment that requires persistence and patience (Davis, 2001; Lee & Ashby, 2001). As Bruce VanSledright (2001)

accurately indicates, empathy as an achievement provides students the thinking skills necessary to function in a democratic society:

It [historical empathy] makes possible the reconstructions of past events in a way that helps us appreciate the significant differences between the present world and the world being described...it makes us less quick to judge them [our ancestors] as short-sighted dimwits with idiotic beliefs and stupid customs. By extension we therefore would be less quick to judge those in the contemporary world who do not share our sentiments and sensibilities. In this idealized form, one could say that historical empathy is essential to the health of pluralistic democracies. (p. 57)

An empathetic approach potentially deepens students' understandings of their own national past. By formalizing a framework for examination, students are taught to apply their empathetic considerations to every aspect of democratic life. As VanSledright (2001) enumerates, historical empathy requires the participant to avoid presentism: first, developing an awareness of one's own positionality, second, using inquiry to breach mental confines, and finally, expanding his or her critical sensitivity to the primary source authors' and the agents' positionalities.

The doing history movement necessitates autobiographical considerations. Before undertaking a study of past figures, serious historians must consider and evaluate their own lives, relative to their attitudes, biases, and modern influences (VanSledright, 2001). In so doing, the historian moves beyond empathetic regard to a rich level of historical understanding. As VanSledright (2001) indicates, doing history deepens one's autobiographical awareness:

Accepting empathetic regard as an act of sorcery forces us, I think, to continually re-examine the illusions we project on our ancestors and their actions and intentions. Such re-examinations push us to look at how we work with historical evidence and attempt the contextualization process. In turn, this pursuit demands that we understand ourselves more fully. (p. 66)

The self-understanding developed through historical investigation parallels Pinar's (1995) notion of *currere*: by working from within, the student delves into the past only to discover an inward realization of his or her own existence.

Historical empathy demands considerable effort and time from the teacher and students. Curricula that focus on coverage rather than thinking stymie empathetic pursuits. As Lee (2001) suggests, in-depth historical studies avoid brief coverage of time periods. Historical studies should include three essential elements to augment the growth of empathetic responses: the investigation of a wide array of sources, the exposure to multiple perspectives, and sufficient time for exploration (Lee, 1983). Although the concept of historical empathy is still burgeoning, the principle offers promise to the future of history education. To become a cogent catalyst for change, historical empathy must assume prominent pedagogical recognition by challenging the facts-based history classroom.

#### Historical Thinking and Historical Empathy: A Discussion of Origins

The terms historical thinking and historical empathy emerged as a result of the breadth of research conducted in both England and in North America during the 1970s and 1980s. In tracing the origins of these two concepts, I address the threads of ideas that ultimately meshed to form distinct terminologies. Certainly,

my history does not address the full scope of possibilities on this topic; however, I seek to offer the most pertinent considerations.

*Early Traces of Historical Thinking (or the Historical Method)*

As defined by Furay and Salevouris (2000), modern historiography enumerates the origination and the development of historical writing. Historical thinking naturally then involves the mental processes associated with this sort of historical writing. The high standards associated with modern historiography differed from earlier forms. To illustrate, the Greek historians firmly grounded their narratives in Homer and in his epic tales of the *Illiad* and the *Odyssey*; thus, myth and history became fused together without attention to credulous evidentiary details (Cameron, 1989; Grant, 1995; Southgate, 2001). The power of the Homeric tradition often prevented Greek historians from quibbling over the nuances between history and epic poetry. For the Greeks, the reliance on memory and oral tradition (instead of written documentary sources) typified their historiography. When faced with alternatives, Greek historians often preferred the most probable account.

In comparison to modern historiography, the Greek historians committed gross errors of validity: their belief in inevitability (fate determines destiny), their deference to oral political speeches (often pronouncements of political and social importance), their tendency to digress into descriptive details (of the countryside and people), their attention to cyclical chronology (reflecting mystical beliefs), their respect for divine intervention (attributing historical events to their mythical

gods), and their love of story (as expressed through retellings of exciting, poetic tales; Collingwood, 1962; Grant, 1995). Early historians separated history from poetry by writing their historical accounts in prose, which depicted a chronological sequence. The hazy lines between history and superior genres (philosophy, poetry, and rhetoric, or the art of persuasion) personified Greek historiography. Herodotus, from whose name the term history derives (Bury, 1958; Finley, 1971; Grant, 1995), produced the first surviving, recorded historical prose containing a chronological account of the Persian Wars, but his artful anecdotes and mythical details diverge into questionable degrees of historical truthfulness. This type of history characterized the breadth of Greek and Roman historiography, with few writers attempting to produce accurate, documented histories (Berkhofer, 1995; Grant, 1995; Lottinville, 1976; Mink, 1980; Southgate, 2001).

In the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C., the Greek historian Thucydides emerged as the first ancient writer demonstrating incipient forms of the modern historian's craft. Although Thucydides first included the Homeric record in his early writings of ancient Greece, he later questioned the authenticity of the record (Grant, 1995; Southgate, 2001). Despite his use of epic poetry, Thucydides offers the first, known Western claims of scientific history, an idea he patterned after the Hippocratic school's medical scholars, with their emphasis on careful observation, on the maintenance of records, and on the generation of an accurate prognosis (or prediction about the future). He specifically distinguished



himself from the chroniclers and from the romantic poets through his careful, scientific approach representing his belief in the attainability of historic truth (a belief mostly overlooked during the middle ages and early modern periods, Southgate, 2001).

In the 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C., Polybius furthered Thucydides' work through his attention to the historical method. His *Histories* depicted greater historical accuracy, by focusing on the language of officialdom, on the decrees and dispatches, and on the technical treatises on philosophy and science. Polybius, thus, became the first ancient historian to produce a world history in a systematic, factual manner (Bury, 1958; Grant, 1995). His technical chronicling differed from the more artful genres.

Throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, historical writing centered on the church or political leaders. For the Christian monks of the Middle Ages, history centered on the church and on the dynasties of local rulers. Later, Renaissance history became more focused on the heritage of the nation states (Breisach, 1994; Lottinville, 1976). In the nineteenth century, Leopold von Ranke challenged the authenticity of the histories of nation states and contended that historians defer to *primaries* (i.e. in modern terms, primary documents) as the guiding source of historical truth. Thus, Ranke, whose writing demonstrated early forms of documentation and authenticity, emerged as the father of the modern historical method (Breissach, 1994; Lottinville, 1976).

### *The Historical Method: Early Twentieth-Century Developments*

With the arrival of large numbers of immigrant groups at the turn of the twentieth century, the advance of industry, and the expansion of the United States' global economy, progressivism (a term describing a multitude of compounding, albeit sometimes conflicting, efforts of social, economic, and political improvements in the United States) prevailed and directed educational development. Responding to Dewey's (1916) ideas of the "social needs of the child" and "the improvement of social welfare through humane controls," the National Education Association Committee on Social Studies of 1916 organized for the purpose of introducing the "social science" disciplines (a new concept furthered by the committee that included political science, history, geography, and economics) into schools for the purpose of preparing the citizenry and augmenting "social efficiency" (Brophy & VanSledright, 1997; Saxe, 1992). Despite the disputes of traditionally-minded historians (who wanted history to maintain its disciplinary autonomy), the committee fused history with democratic instruction. As a result, citizenship education became adopted as a guiding curricular focus.

The commercial-business interests dramatically impacted educational efforts intended to further America's economic progress. Expert efficiency and the principles of scientific management drove educational efforts toward the improvements in administrative procedures and in curriculum. When viewed from the historical context of the early twentieth-century—with the ubiquitous

influence of Taylorism and his cult of efficiency--history education became subsumed under an organized umbrella defining the nature of history, with its core elements and its attendant objectives (Callahan, 1962; Wineburg, 2001). Thus, the history was regarded for its social-democratic, business-pragmatic benefits.

Despite prevailing norms, a few early thinkers, such as Lucy Salmon, R. G. Collingwood, and Michael Oakeshott, philosophically pondered questions on the nature of history, the process of historical research and writing, and the collective body of historiography. In so doing, they prompted future ideas of historical thinking and historical empathy. A brief summary of their ideas and contributions is highlighted.

*Lucy Maynard Salmon (1853-1927)*

A progressive educator and historian, Lucy Maynard Salmon taught history for nearly 40 years at Vassar College, served in various leadership roles in the American Historical Association (as one of the first and few female members), founded the Association of History Teachers of the Middle States and Maryland (the oldest extant council devoted to history education), and worked on the executive council of the American Association of University Professors. Rarely mentioned in the field of history education, Salmon provided valuable contributions to the field as one the first known American educators who advocated the historical method. At Vassar College, she taught numerous courses in world and American history, and in these courses, she brought her

students to the original documents of history (i.e. the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, church records, municipal records, etc.). By encouraging familiarity with, analysis of, and utilization of these documents, she furthered their understanding of history. For example, her exams did not involve the recitation of memorized facts; rather, she asked the students to write essays about primary sources and what these sources revealed about a particular historical topic. She also advocated the new social history and scoffed at attempts to reconstruct history in a purely factual manner--thus drawing tremendous criticism from historians who sought to qualify history according to the laws of science (Bohan, 2004).

Her published books, *The Newspaper and the Historian* (1923) and *The Newspaper and Authority* (1923), articulated her philosophy of history—namely, that the artifacts of daily life, the local newspapers, and the local community constituted historical material. By going to the sources (i.e. photographs, newspapers, community artifacts, original source documents), students could participate in history through the gathering of material, the organizing of information, and the writing of historical accounts.

Going to the sources became the cornerstone of her career as a history teacher. She manifested this approach through her unfinished manuscript (uncompleted due to her untimely death), *Historical Material*, which explained the vast forms of historical records available to the history. Tracing the extent of her impact proves difficult; however, Bohan (2004) claims that she spoke at

numerous collegiate and community affairs, taught a vast number of students, and provided valuable university and local leadership. Her advancement of the historical method—though not fully appreciated at the time—signifies early leadership in favor of doing history (Bohan, 2004).

*R.G. Collingwood (1889-1943)*

Considered the foremost twentieth-century philosopher of history, R.G. Collingwood was born in 1889 to W.G. Collingwood (an art student, friend, and biographer of Ruskin), whose own career as an artist and philosopher dramatically impacted his son. From his father and Ruskin, R. G. Collingwood developed an appreciation for the principle of the artistic reproduction of living realities and the dependence of the artist's representation on his ability to understand his subject intuitively. Ruskin's (1872) publication of *The Eagle's Nest* outlined Ruskin's views of the importance of understanding historical leaders' intentions (versus what they actually did) through the recapturing of the imagination and purpose of the historical actor (Johnson, 1967).

R.G. Collingwood's philosophy of historical imagination and historical re-enactment patterns Ruskin's approach to art. According to Collingwood (1942/1962), history exists outside the mind and thus requires the powers of imagination to recapture the past through evidentiary representation. Collingwood proved instrumental in reaffirming the artistic nature of historical writing: historiography served as the canvas for the dramatic reconstruction of

the past. He maintained, however, rigid standards for research and writing; the re-enactment of history should be founded on historical evidence:

When a man thinks historically, he has before him certain documents or relics of the past. His business is to discover what the past was which has left those relics behind it. For example, the relics are certain words; and in that case he has to discover what the person who wrote those words meant by them...To discover what this thought was, the historian must think for himself. (pp. 282-283).

Thus, the process of historical re-enactment invokes the imagination by actually placing oneself in the historical agent's position. This type of historical re-enactment demands the best use of historical knowledge and imaginative interpretation; and unlike Ruskin, this re-enactment should parallel as closely as possible the lived reality (Collingwood, 1946/ 1962; Hughes-Warrington, 2003; Johnson, 1967).

Collingwood also drew extensively on the work of a contemporary idealist philosopher named Croce, and his philosophical writings of Giambattista Vico. It was Vico who introduced the concept of 'historical imagination' into eighteenth-century historiography. In the 1744 edition of *The New Science*, Vico equated *fantasia* (imagination) as the means by which one comes to understand past civilizations. Collingwood's idea of the historical imagination constitutes a transformation of Vico's *fantasia*. As did Vico, Collingwood viewed history as a human artifact that the historian seeks to understand and discover (Hughes-Warrington, 2003; Johnson, 1967).

Collingwood defined history as a mode of experience—a concept largely expressed by Croce, and derived from Hegel (of whom Collingwood was well-versed). Collingwood applied *the experience of modes* to his own philosophy, in which he identified five—art, religion, science, history, and philosophy—and the characteristics of each (Collingwood, 1946/1962; Johnson, 1967). Written in his own words, a portion of Collingwood’s mode of history (its definition, purpose, and constructs) is included. In this section, Collingwood outlines his principles of historical thought (definition, object, action, and purpose):

(a) *The definition of history.* Every historian would agree, I think, that history is a kind of research or inquiry...The point is that generically it belongs to what we call the sciences: that is forms of thought whereby we ask questions and try to answer them...

(b) *The object of history...*What kinds of things does history find out? I answer, *res gestae*: actions of human beings that have been done in the past...

(c) *How does history proceed?* History proceeds by the interpretation of evidence: where evidence is a collective name for things which singly are called documents, and a document is a thing existing here and now, of such a kind that the historian, by thinking about it, can get answers to the questions he asks about past events...

(d) Lastly, *what is history for?*...My answer is that history is ‘for’ human self-knowledge. It is generally thought to be of importance to a man than he should know himself...The value of history, then, is that it teaches us what man has done and thus what man is. (pp. 8-10)

Though Collingwood outlines the historical method, his unique emphasis on people, understanding, and the imagination foreshadowed Shemilt’s concept of historical empathy (a term never used by Collingwood in his writings) and his work with the Schools Council History Project. Through “the interpretation of

evidence” and “the historical imagination,” one discovers “the actions of human beings that have been done in the past” (pp. 8-10).

The term *empathy*—and specifically, *empathetic understanding* as applied to the humanistic and social studies (Wiener, 1974)—actually originated from Wilhelm Dilthey (1977) and Max Weber (Kivisto & Swatos, 1988), along with other German philosophers, who applied *verstehen* (empathy) to the study of human life. For these thinkers, *verstehen* found root in Kant’s (1914) belief in beauty as inherent in the art form itself, or the Hegelian idea of beauty as the bearer of an idea, and not in the Herbartarians’ emphasis on mathematical equations. The term *empathetic understanding* also paralleled Giambattista Vico’s (1744/ 1948) assumption that true artistic representation requires an understanding of the object and its reflection of local history, art, language, and customs. Thus, the modern use of empathetic understanding, now called *historical empathy*, by history educators stems from a philosophic belief in the aesthetic knowing (in-depth perceptions of remote peoples and places).

The search for historical truth is found by going to the sources, by continually rediscovering the new history, and by enlivening the living history.

*Jerome Bruner and the New Social Studies: Inquiry and the Structure of the Discipline*

Benjamin Bloom’s *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives* (1956), in part, inspired new directions towards social studies teaching in the 1960s. Bloom’s cognitive levels of thinking (knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis,



synthesis, and evaluation) provided pedagogical support for Jerome Bruner's educational theories (Fitzgerald, 1983). In his classic work *The Process of Education* (1965), Bruner introduced three core principles, which dramatically impacted the New Social Studies movement, as well as subsequent efforts toward historical thinking (L. Levstik, personal communication, October 24, 2005). First, Bruner emphasized disciplinary structure as the cognitive framework for thinking. Instruction should pattern the natural structure of the discipline through the *spiral curriculum*, or the early establishment of disciplinary building blocks and the gradual return (through review and the addition of new knowledge) to these foundational elements. Second, this spiral curriculum assumes disciplinary content can be presented in some respectable form to children of any age, given sufficient time and structured learning. Third, inquiry functions as an essential component of creative thinking and developmental learning (Bruner, 1963, 1965).

Bruner's focus on disciplinary structure built upon earlier discussions such as Dewey's considerations regarding the nature of subject matter (found in *Democracy and Education*, 1916) and Joseph J. Schwab's work on the structure of the disciplines. In the 1962 publication in the *Educational Record*, Schwab advocated disciplinary structure as essential for organizing the frameworks of curriculum planning, specifically relative to knowledge *and experimental techniques*. Although Schwab focused primarily on the sciences, the idea of

experimental techniques equated to the Brunerian concept of inquiry, which later found application to the social sciences.

The National Defense Education Act of 1958 ,which responded to the Russian launching of *Sputnik* in 1957 and the subsequent educational concerns spawned by this event, resulted in \$500 million (spent throughout the next two decades) in funding by the National Science Foundation (NSF) toward curriculum projects. Bruner and Peter Dow (education professor from Harvard) developed a new innovative sixth-grades curriculum, *Man: A Course of Study* (MACOS). The curriculum subsumed the social science disciplines (i.e. history, geography, political science, anthropology, sociology, economics) under a study of what it means to be human. The curriculum did emphasize the inquiry as a fundamental approach to learning in the social sciences for children (Bruner, 1969; Fitzgerald, 1983; Symcox, 2002).

The development and introduction of MACOS later led to the 1967 seminal publication *The New Social Studies*, which represented the collaborative efforts of Edwin Fenton and Bruner. The Bruner-Fenton new social studies of the 1960s embraced the broader field of social studies through three overarching objectives: the development of inquiry skills, the development of attitudes and values, and the acquisition of knowledge (Fenton, 1967; Fitzgerald, 1983). The curriculum approach advocated the use of primary document resources and artifacts as appropriate materials for inquiry lessons in the social sciences (Allen, 1969; Bowes, 1969; Rogers, 1969; Schneider, 1969).

By the mid-1970s, however, the efforts of the new social studies became stymied due to public concerns over poverty, racism, and the Vietnam War and due to increased attacks from conservative political and social groups (Gardner, 2001). Regrettably, the September 1975 report of the Committee on the Status of History in Schools, comprised of representatives from the Organization of American Historians (*OAH*) and the American Historical Association (*AHA*), declared the loss of interest and confidence in history (occurring in only a few short years by students, teachers, administrators, and politicians) as a problem steeped in presentism, or the lack of a historical orientation to the past (Kirkendall, 1975). Ineffective teaching furthered the cessation between the student and remote peoples; specifically, teachers and students both suffered from “textbook orientation, straight chronological treatment, emphasis on dates, unimaginative presentation eschewing meaningful innovation and rational experimentation” (Kirkendall, 1975, p. 562-563). The “historical isolation” (Fitzgerald, 1983; Kirkendall, 1975) bemoaned by the Committee on the Status of History in Schools advocated a need for enlightened hindsight:

It seems unlikely that historians can destroy the influence of presentism, but they can reduce the anti-historical consequences of it by demonstrating the value of historical perspective and historical comparisons and the importance of a sense of time and space. (Kirkendall, 1975, p. 570)

The need to demonstrate the value of historical perspective through an emphasis on the importance of a sense of time and space typifies the purposes of historical

empathy—as originated by the *SHP*—through the acceptance and understanding of remote time periods and peoples from the context of their *own time and space*.

Later, Fenton (1975) and Bruner (1986, 1990), reflected on the shortcomings of the new social studies movement—specifically, the failure to integrate social concerns; to address systemic economic, political, and social inequalities; and to account for the learner’s personal psychology (Gardner, 2001). Thus, in 1975, Fenton designed his new objectives for social studies—positive attitudes, self-esteem, learning/inquiry skills, knowledge acquisition, and valuing—after Bloom’s (1956) *affective* and *cognitive* domains. As a result of their foundational work, Bruner and Fenton recognized the need for an instructional theory, embodying the dual aspects of *disciplinary structure* and *the learner as a communal, social, psychological being* (Bruner, 1983, 1986, 1990, 2002; Fenton, 1975; Fitzgerald, 1983).

The need for revision of the new social studies prompted Sleeper (1975) to argue in behalf of a curricula acknowledging the psychological dispositions of adolescents—meaning the nature of the interaction between the student and the past (Fitzgerald, 1983). Sleeper advocated the creation of a new developmental framework, representing the “stages of historical thinking” as “connected to the broader stages of cognitive and psychological development” (p. 105). Research efforts embodying both learning theory and history’s disciplinary structure, however, did not come to fruition in 1975, despite encouragements by Bruner, Fenton, Sleeper, and the Committee on the Status of History in the Schools.

*Teaching and Learning of History in Great Britain: The Schools Council History Project 13-16*

In England in the late 1960s, the teaching and learning of history reached a standstill; critics argued against boring teaching practices, which focused primarily on British/ European political history. The landmark publication *Schools Council Enquiry One* (1968) affirmed these complaints through deliberation of the overwhelming public opinion that history teaching lacked usefulness and interest for students and their parents (Lee, 1995). The growing dissatisfaction stemmed from three contributing factors: (a) British nationalism became suspect during the post-World War II years; (b) British historians began eschewing broad diplomatic, political, or military narratives and deferred to other social disciplines (which was a response to the *Annales* school in France and the advocating of total history); and (c) the launching of Sputnik in 1957 turned attention toward science and technical education (Booth, 1994).

Response to this crisis began from the bottom up, with individual teachers without a unifying center, attempting to adopt new approaches. Criticisms of the dominance of British political history in the curriculum heightened fears among conservative politicians of an iconoclast neglect of British history teaching (Lee, 1995). The crisis prompted new reforms; thus, educational leaders began calling for a new history adapted to the needs of a modern school (Ballard, 1970).

Existing empirical research in England in history education rested upon a significant body of investigations attempting to apply Piaget's developmental

framework, which includes: (a) sensorimotor phase (physical, sensory development occurring from 0-2 years of age); (b) pre-operational phase (linguistic, verbal, moral, and crude logical development occurring from 2-7 years of age); (c) concrete operational phase (logical thought pattern development characterized by grouping and organization occurring from 7-11 years); (d) formal operational (abstract logical development including systemic thinking occurring from ages 11-15 years) (see Booth, 1987 for further discussion).

Leading this research was E. A. Peel, a former president of the British Psychological Society and distinguished educational psychology professor at the University of Birmingham. Acknowledging the believed conceptual and inferential difficulties experienced by students of history, Peel (1967a, 1967b, 1972) attempted to extend Piaget's theory, which possessed a direct application to science and math to children's textual reasoning in English and history (Booth, 1987; Wineburg, 2001). The thrust of research, however, came from Peel's student Roy N. Hallam and his research with one-hundred British high school students. This research strengthened the foundational body of pro-Piagetian scholarship, which in turn led to further acceptance and application of Piaget's developmental theory to history (Booth, 1994; Wineburg, 2001).

Hallam gave the 100 students (ages 11 to 17) three textbook passages from British history and asked them a series of questions on each. He then categorized the students' responses according to Piaget's categories of intellectual development—primarily, pre-operational, concrete operational, and

formal operational. Because only two of the students provided consistent responses characterizing the formal operational phase, Hallam determined that formal operational reasoning in history occurred much later than in math and in science. For example, first he deemed the age as 16.5 but later reduced the age to 14 (Hallam, 1967, 1970, 1971, 1978; Wineburg, 2001). Notably, Hallam's research may have lacked validity on the following counts: (a) the questions asked of the students failed to connect with the material studied in class; (b) the students expressed confusion over the meaning of the questions; and (c) Hallam's questions involved historical, moral, and religious considerations (Hallam, 1967; Lee, 1998; Shemilt, 1980; Wineburg, 2001). The wide promulgation of Hallam's research, however, produced a depressing effect in the late 1960s (Booth, 1994; Dickinson & Lee, 1978), which compounded the United Kingdom's history teaching crisis.

In response, the *Schools Council History Project 13-16 (SHP)* established in 1972) arose from the growing dissatisfaction among teachers regarding traditional teaching practices in history and the obvious erosion of the discipline in the general curriculum (Shemilt, 1980). The reform project received its inspiration from Benjamin Bloom's *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives* (1956), from Jerome Bruner's *The Process of Education* (1965), and from the new social studies movement in the United States. Coltham and Fines's 1971 publication of *Educational Objectives for the Study of History: A Suggested Framework*, transferred Bloom's higher levels of cognitive thinking to objectives of history

education. Thus, *SHP* built their pedagogical philosophy upon three main criteria: (a) the need for teaching practices to elicit Bloom's higher levels of cognition instead of lower-ordered recall; (b) the need for Brunerian disciplinary structure to improve historical understanding; and (c) the need to teach—as Bruner advocated—disciplinary content in some reasonable form at all ages (Booth, 1994; L. Levstik, personal communication, October 24, 2005). The leaders of *SHP* also drew upon parallel British scholars, such as Paul Hirst's (1975), who advocated disciplinary teaching; and other historians, such as G.S.R. Kitson Clark (1967), J.H. Hextor (1971), G.R. Elton (1968), whose primers of the historical method provided content grounding. In particular, Collingwood's (1962) theory of historical re-enactment received theoretical application to the project and later resurfaced in new terminology--*empathetic reconstruction* and eventually *historical empathy* (P. Lee, personal communication, September 14, 2005; Shemilt, 1980, 1984).

Led by Denis Shemilt and his project team, *SHP* leaders first sought to explore the *sort* of history most appropriate for adolescents in the UK and as a result determined two fundamental purposes for their rationale: first, relevance to the personal and social needs of adolescents, and second, grounding in *reason*, or the logic and methods of the discipline. They justified history as a subject through five useful purposes for adolescents:

- (a) as a means of acquiring and developing such cognitive skills as those of analysis, synthesis, and judgment;
- (b) as a source of leisure interests;



(c) as a vehicle for analyzing the contemporary world and their place within it;

(d) as a means for developing understanding of the forces underlying social change and evolution;

(e) as an avenue to self-knowledge and awareness of what it means to be human. (Shemilt, 1980; p. 2)

Concerned over the lack of cognitive skills developed through rote learning in history and the textbook heavy emphasis, the project concluded that current teaching practices failed to aid in the achievement of cognitive historical skills, of understandings relative to social change, and in an awareness of human-ness. Lackluster instructional approaches could not stimulate adolescents' leisure interests nor prepare them for life in the contemporary world. Consequently, the Project decided to undertake a new effort focused on historical skills and cognitive development. The result was a 3 year program with five segments: *What is history?* (procedural knowledge in history), *History Around Us* (local history), *Enquiry in Depth* (historical inquiry/ British and U.S. history), *Modern World Studies* (historical inquiry/world history and contemporary issues), *Study in Development* (history of medicine) (Shemilt, 1980).

The *SHP* curriculum rested upon Bruner's (1960) assumption of the structure of the discipline, in which *all* children can acquire disciplinary knowledge and skills given appropriate structure, instruction, and time. The project denounced the misapplication of Piaget's theory of cognitive development, which centered on scientific rather than historical thinking. Viewed

as a curriculum innovation project, the *SHP* curriculum established 3 underlying premises regarding history:

- (a) as a form of knowledge, having its own logic, methods, and perspectives;
- (b) as a model for enquiry-based, problem solving pedagogy;
- (c) as a humane study concerned with *people*, their *actions*, and *perceptions of events*. (Shemilt, 1980, p. 5)

Consequently, the pupil becomes acquainted with the reconstruction of evidence, with the reality of different sorts of evidence, and with the problems of reconstruction. According to Peter Lee (personal communication, September 14, 2005), the *SHP* brought recognition in the UK of the term historical empathy, which functioned as the foundational purpose of their program, and which required students to “evaluate evidence and empathize with their forebears” (Shemilt, 1980, p. 6).

The experimental trials of the Schools Council History Project *History 13-16* conducted from 1973-1976 produced favorable outcomes relative to students’ historical understanding and cognitive development. First and foremost, the *SHP* illustrated the beginning abilities of adolescents to appreciate and interpret history when taught the “logic, methods, and perspectives” (Shemilt, 1980, p. 5) of history. The project team also found significant gains in students’ perceptions and understandings of history as a discipline, as well as improvements in their cognitive ability to practice historical inquiry. In contrast to the control group students, the students in the experimental trials found history more meaningful

and purposeful because it dealt with *ordinary* people similar to themselves. This finding was an unexpected outcome for the administrators of *SHP*; nevertheless, the importance of personal relevance for adolescents proved essential to the success of the program. I found similar results in my pilot study (Appendix A) conducted with seventh-graders, who attributed their personal benefits to the opportunity to learn about everyday individuals “just like me.” For those seventh-graders, studying the everyday historical actors profoundly shaped their impressions of the impact of individuals on event-making.

Regarding historical conceptualization, *SHP* measured students’ perceptions of causal explanation, motivated action, and change. As a result, *SHP* found partial gains, which shed new light on the cognitive thought processes of adolescents. For the students of the experimental groups, causal explanation proved reasonably understandable, as associated with the interacting elements within an antecedent situation. Upon recent evaluation of the *SHP* data, Shemilt (2000) determined that the experimental students lacked a contextual understanding of historical events, which resulted from narrowly focused studies not set in historical context, and he recommended the integration of narrative frameworks into conceptual teaching. Regarding motivated action, experimental students tended to view event making as always dependent on fate, on unfortunate circumstances, or on unintended consequences rather than on human decision making. Students also expressed confusions over change: first, in identifying precisely what it is that changes, and second, the assumed

belief that changes simply happen (Shemilt, 1980). The cognitive perceptual difficulty in understanding the role of individuals and change in history proved mind-boggling. Shemilt (1980) speculated that these deficiencies stemmed, in part, from the inability of adolescents to relate to the experiences of adults.

The *SHP* helped formulate new understandings of historical cognition by challenging Piaget's theories. By examining the thought patterns of the experimental students, Shemilt (1980) determined that the maturation of the formal operations did not preclude development in historical understanding. To review Piaget's three characteristics of formal operational thinking, a mature understanding of history would entail connections:

- (a) the freeing of ideation from the constraints imposed by observed reality (actuality treated as a case of possibility);
- (b) the ability to systematically generate and test hypotheses (hypothetico-deductive reasoning); and
- (c) the capacity to think in purely propositional terms (the ability to see the validity of an argument is independent of the truth of the terms or existence of the objects with which the argument deals). (Shemilt, 1980, p. 44)

By denying students the opportunity to practice more sophisticated skills, Shemilt contended that educators limited early developments in historical thinking. The structural differences between history and natural science proved problematic in translating Piaget's theories, *which were based upon scientific thinking*, to historical cognition. To illustrate, "the scientist postulates a single and coherent universe in which laws operating in one part also operate in all other parts, both

observed and unobserved,” but “the historian assumes the contrary” (Shemilt, 1980, p. 44). Thus, the historian “posits *actuality as a special case of possibility*” and by evaluating and reconstructing evidence considers “*logically possible worlds*” (Shemilt, 1980, p. 44). Adolescents, therefore, must undergo a process of *possibility reasoning* as a vital step in their reconstruction of the most logical, probable historical reality.

The following reconstructed table (Shemilt, 1980, p. 39) illustrates the cognitive accomplishments and limitations of the experimental and control groups of *SHP*:

Table 1

*Stereotypical Comparisons of Control and Experimental Groups  
in the Schools Council History Project*

<b>Aspect of History</b>	<b>Ability Level</b>	<b>Established Courses</b>	<b>History 13-16 Courses</b>
Construction Of Historical Knowledge	Average Ability ----- High Ability	Historical facts are known in the same way and with the same certainty as scientific facts. ----- - Historical knowledge an attenuated or qualified version of natural scientific knowledge.	Historical knowledge a qualified variant upon scientific knowledge. Differs in degree of certainty but not of kind. ----- --- Historical knowledge beginning to be seen as a distinct 'form of knowledge' making different sorts of statements than natural science.
Construction Of Historical Narrative	Average Ability ----- High Ability	History an ad hoc sequence of events. Each event possibly inevitable, but no clear idea of connections between events. ----- An iron bond of causal necessity connects events into a chain extending back into time.	An iron bond of causal necessity connects events into a chain extending back into time. ----- --- Events seen as connected without being bonded together. Not all events linked. Continuity and change still poorly understood.
Construction of Historical Explanation	Average Ability ----- High Ability	Explanation seen as necessary OR Explanation and fact undifferentiated. ----- - All explanation determinate. Belief in Fate, preordination, or mechanical necessity.	All explanation determinate. Belief in Fate, preordination, or mechanical necessity. ----- --- Explanation in terms of necessary conditions and the elucidation of motive and perspective.
Construction of Historical Methodology	Average Ability ----- High Ability	No concept of methodology. Unable to distinguish facts and evidence, narrative and source. ----- --- An implicit awareness of evidence Some understanding of the difficulties of studying history e.g. the impossibility of experimentation.	Importance of evidence stressed. No clear idea of how it should be used but <i>beginning</i> to grapple with the problem. ----- --- Some fairly sophisticated methods using evidence and solving problems of explanation and interpretation. Empathetic reconstruction offered as an historical complement to experimental re-enactment.

Careful examination of the table reveals distinguishable differences between the control and experimental groups and between average and high ability within those groups. Notably, a degree of similarity was manifested between the high ability control group and the average ability experimental group in all four measured levels. The findings in the table above remained fairly uniform with students independent of gender and socioeconomic level. Surprisingly, *SHP* reported general success with below average ability students, who often performed similarly to students of average ability. Reading level did pose a definite hindrance to success with inquiry teaching, and teachers working with struggling students often found themselves teaching basic reading and comprehension skills instead of exploring the historical material (Shemilt, 1980).

The major downfall of the experimental groups occurred with the construction of historical narrative, in which the high ability control group and the average ability experimental group demonstrated more sound understandings than those of the experimental high group. In his recent reevaluation of the *SHP* data, Shemilt (2000) recognized the inability of the pedagogical program to provide needed contextual understandings through historical narratives. This particular shortcoming is noteworthy relative to the need to integrate an understanding of the genre of historical narrative into the curriculum.

The Schools Council History Project dramatically impacted curriculum theory in history education through the emphasis on history as a form of knowledge and inquiry for students. The project challenged the Piagetian notion

that adolescents lacked the cognitive maturity to exhibit the formal operations in history and encouraged teachers to emphasize historical thinking skills. British educational practitioner John Fines (1980) enumerated the accomplishments of Denis Shemilt and *SHP* and the way in which they revolutionized historical teaching in the UK:

(1) he has shown us...that if we look carefully at what children are doing when they think about History, then they seem to be performing more hopefully than the Piagetians first thought.

(2) he has shown us that less able children can make measurable and indeed marked progress in thinking, and enjoy doing so; but when we are measuring steps toward the target, not achievement of goals in one mighty bound.

(3) he shows us how badly we underestimate children as thinkers and learners, and the results of such underestimates do not need underlining.

(4) he brings us once more to the beginning of good teaching by showing us that learning is essentially an active process.

(5) by his own brilliant interviewing he shows us that if we ask good questions and really listen, we can hear children actually thinking and learning.

(6) he has cast new light upon the nature of discipline in school, clarifying the meaning in terms of History as enquiry, History as time and History as motive.

(7) he elucidates (as no-one has before...) the meaning of conceptual learning in History and provides a pedagogical, rather than philosophical guide through this minefield... (Shemilt, 1980, Forward)

As mentioned by Fines, the Schools Council History Project proved particularly instrumental in illuminating the gross underestimations of adolescents, the development of advanced cognitive skills, and the need for active, disciplinary-focused instructional strategies.



The Schools Council History Project, however, did suffer from glaring limitations. Specifically, the project centered their educational objectives on disciplinary structural concepts (such as change, development, and causal explanation) rather than on the nature of children's understandings. This approach, aligned with the extensive body of scholarly writing from the previous four decades, attempted to define history's constructs according to scientific laws (Wright, 1971). SHP, in part, took their lead from Bruner's theory of the disciplines and cognitive structure *without* considering the psychological, social, and developmental influences impacting student learning (Sleeper, 1975), and *without* enjoying the foreknowledge of Bruner's revision of his own theories (Booth, 1993; Wineburg, 2001). Bruner later attributed the shortcomings of the new social studies movement to the curriculum designers' neglect of considerations beyond the *sole* interaction between the mind and disciplinary material (1983, 1986, 1990; Gardner, 2001). The failure resulted from the neglect of the learner as a social being operating within social realities (and the affective causes of these realities).

As a result, contemporary researchers acknowledge the impact of SHP but often choose not to highlight the project as extensively as I have done here. In reality, the project immensely influenced teaching in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, and by 1994, approximately 30 percent of all secondary schools in grades 10 and 11 followed the SHP curriculum (Booth, 1994). The 1988 Educational Reform Act in the U.K. introduced the National History

Curriculum for England, which advocated doing history as a viable strategy. Regrettably, the resulting mechanistic curriculum and the emphasis on standardized testing squelched the true meaning and spirit of the theory (Booth, 1994; Lee, 1995).

In addition, Denis Shemilt's adoption of historical empathy as the purpose of SHP and the direction for history education spawned a flurry of confusion over the precise meaning and implication of the term (for further discussion, see Lee & Ashby, 2001; Stockley, 1983). This backlash to SHP and the transformation of theoretical purpose by political interests may explain the limited attention given by scholars. In my view, the project, with its apparent limitations, fit into the intellectual context of the early 1970s and signified a dramatic break from the existing practices in the United Kingdom. I attribute SHP's valuable contributions to history education to include (a) the illumination of new cognitive and developmental possibilities for adolescents (which currently is being extended to the elementary grades, see Brophy & VanSledright, 1997; Levstik & Barton, 2001; and VanSledright, 2001); (b) the acknowledgment of history as a form of knowledge (through the teaching of the historian's craft); (c) the encouragement of the active teaching of history; (d) the adoption of historical empathy (the careful consideration of an historical view of the past *from the perspective of the agents involved*) as a noteworthy aim; (e) the fueling of research on the nature of historical understandings of students; and (f) the lucid highlighting a pragmatic

(yet philosophically based) theory of teaching and learning in history (thus, functioning as a predecessor to the idea of historical thinking).

*Historical Thinking in North America (1980s-present)*

In the early 1980s, North American researchers began responding to British initiatives by exploring historical empathy (Stockley, 1983), procedural knowledge, and disciplined inquiry (Fitzgerald, 1983). Influenced by the spirit and direction of Benjamin Bloom's *The Taxonomy of Educational Objectives* (1956), Bruner's *The Process of Education* (1965), Edwin Fenton's *Teaching the New Social Studies in Schools: An Inductive Approach* (1966), North American researchers, as their British contemporaries, responded to the cognitive revolution by adopting inquiry and the structure of the discipline as foundational underpinnings for teaching and learning in history.

The work by Howard Gardner on thinking, cognition, and multiple intelligences and his leading publications *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (1983) and *The Mind's New Science: A History of the Cognitive Revolution* (1985) energized researchers and practitioners toward new considerations of the mind and thinking (S. Wineburg, personal communication, October 24, 2005). In this intellectual environment, the 1983 special issue on the philosophy of history teaching in *History and Theory* (published at Wesleyan University), which outlined Peter Lee and Denis Shemilt's theory of historical empathy and the associated efforts of the Schools Council History Project, emerged at a fruitful time. The publication helped spawn a wave of research—

slowly building in the 1980s and increasing in the 1990s—relative to disciplined inquiry, learning theory, and procedural knowledge in history. The issue included contributions from British scholars Denis Shemilt (of the *SHP*), Peter Lee, Martin Booth, and Francis Blow; Australian researcher James Fitzgerald; and U.S. contributor Kieran Egan. Although the exact pond crossing from Great Britain to the United States remains unclear (L. Levstik, personal communication, October 24, 2005), the issue proved influential in generating a new group of North American researchers, including Sam Wineburg (personal communication, October 24, 2005), and by directing the attention on thinking and cognition toward a *specific focus on disciplinary history*.

During the 1980s and early 1990s, North American scholars (O.L. Davis, Jr., M.T. Downey, Linda Levstik, Peter Seixas, Suzanne Wilson, and Sam Wineburg, and others) and British researchers (Rosalyn Ashby, Martin Booth, Peter Lee, and Peter Stearns, and others) began exploring notions of historical thinking and historical empathy—namely, the impact on students’ developmental, cognitive, and social existences, and the practicality of such implementation. This research primarily led by the aforementioned scholars continued to surge in the late 1990s until the present, with additional research efforts by Jere Brophy and Bruce VanSledright from the United States, and Grant Bage from England. This research base, spanning from the early 1980s to the present, accepts certain collective conclusions regarding teaching and learning in history. A summary of those conclusions is encapsulated in the subsequent text.

1. *The Piaget-Hallam model, which concludes students (ages 14 and younger) lack formal operational reasoning abilities in the study of history, underestimates students' cognitive abilities; thus, Jerome Bruner's philosophy (that children of any age, given proper time and structure, can learn subject matter in a simplified, intellectually respectable form) should underpin wise teaching practice.* Piaget's (& Inhelder, 1958) developmental theory, as misapplied by Peel (1972) and Hallam (1967, 1970, 1971, 1978), is viewed as inappropriate to teaching and learning in history (Booth, 1983, 1987; Brophy & VanSledright, 1997; Dickinson & Lee, 1978, 1984; Downey & Levstik, 1991; Egan, 1983; Knight, 1996; Lee, 1983; Levstik & Pappas, 1992; Rogers, 1984a, 1984b; Shemilt, 1980; VanSledright, 2002; Wineburg, 2001). A brief review of Piaget's theory helps clarify the accepted position. Piaget's psychology primarily is concerned with logical, interrelated thinking patterns (known as *operations*) stressing problem solving; the development of these thinking patterns results from the interaction of the child with the environment. When the child encounters new experiences, the child then reacts in one of three ways: (a) assimilating these thoughts into existing patterns (when an immediate fit was available), (b) abandoning these thoughts (when no immediate fit was available); or (c) extending his or her schemes to accommodate the new thoughts (to reconcile the incongruous fit). Although the environment and behavior influences children's thinking, Piaget stresses the neural and physiological constraints limiting thinking according to

developmental phases and age. These phases (mentioned earlier in the chapter)—sensorimotor, pre-operational, concrete operations, formal operations—are governed by age limitations (Booth, 1983, 1987).

Piaget's framework, however, was based upon his research with children thinking about mathematical, scientific ideas. The rational, deductive thought extrapolated by Piaget's theory misrepresents thinking in history (and the unique thought processes inherent to teaching and learning in history) and ignores symbolic systems (language) and the impact of those systems on cognition (Booth, 1983, 1987). Since historical thinking is still a relatively new concept, researchers still are trying to determine exactly what historical thinking is and what it involves; nevertheless, Piaget's theory still is rejected for its underestimation of children's abilities as related to historical thinking.

The Brunerian framework for history teaching opens new possibilities for teaching and learning in history. During the last several decades, researchers have begun to verify students' ability to think historically, particularly in grades 5 through 12 (Dickinson & Lee, 1978, 1984; Lee & Ashby, 2001; Levstik & Barton, 2001; Levstik & Smith, 1996; Riley, 2001; Shemilt, 1980; VanSledright, 2002; Wineburg, 2001; Yeager & Doppen, 2001; Yeager & Foster, 2001), but the full cognitive leaps envisioned by proponents of historical thinking still has not been realized. Research by Levstik and Barton (1996a, 1996b) demonstrated the abilities of children in grades K-4 to think chronologically, with children in grades 3 and 4 able to comprehend and associate differences between chronological

time periods. In addition, elementary children of all ages (K-5) linked history to sociocultural issues such as race and gender.

*2. Effective teaching in history first accepts history as a “form of knowledge”; as such, historical inquiry (i.e. the process of historical investigation using secondary and primary sources) accepts and encourages evidentiary-based perspective formation as a noteworthy aim.* The idea of history as a “form of knowledge” is rooted in earlier scholars, such as Bruner (1965), Hirst (1975), Schwab (1962), who explored the content and structure of the disciplines, and who sought to realign curricula with the identified content and structure. Early disciplinary historians, such as Beard (1934, 1935), Becker (1935, 1955), and Carr (1961), helped define the content and structure of the discipline through an analysis of the nature of history, historical research, and historical writing; thus, the acceptance of history as a form of knowledge stems from earlier work in defining the historical method. Louis Gottschalk’s (1965), G. Kitson Clark’s (1967), and J. H. Hexter’s (1971) primers of the historical method provided structural frameworks for doing history.

Collingwood’s theory (1946/1962) of historical re-enactment proved particularly influential in the development of historical empathy as a concept. British historical philosophers (Perry, 1967; Thompson, 1967; Walsh, 1967) of the mid nineteenth century, who attempted to define and specify history’s nature and constructs, referred to Collingwood and his idea of history. Collingwood’s

ideas later impacted other historical philosophers, such as Dray (1957, 1964, 1980, 1995) and Mink (1980, 1987), who argued for the probable nature of historical truth. Their work reiterated Carr's definition of history as the interaction between the historian and the past. Their work, along with the contributions of post-modernist historical philosophers such as Lowenthal (1985, 1996), Novick (1988), and White (1978, 1980, 1984), reminded scholars of the need for primary source material in the teaching of history. The aforementioned list of names does not cover the entire breadth of contributors to the field but does highlight some of the most influential thinkers. From this scholarly base, the development of historical perspective through disciplined inquiry now is adopted as the noteworthy aim of history teaching (Brophy, 1996; Davis, 2001).

*3. Historical inquiry requires sufficient time, adequate resources, and prepared teachers (in both historical content and appropriate pedagogy) for successful implementation.* Achievement in historical thinking and historical empathy demands considerable time and attention from both the teacher and the pupils (Davis, 2001; Dickinson & Lee, 1984; Levstik & Barton, 2001; Shemilt, 1980; VanSledright, 2002; Wineburg, 2001). For theories of historical thinking and empathy to transfer into the classroom, efforts toward practical implementation need to occur (Davis, 2001; Shulman, 2004). High-stakes testing often negates wise practice by directing educational leaders' concerns towards accountability



expectations, emphasizing mastery and content coverage instead of historical thinking (Yeager & Davis, 2005).

Elementary and secondary teachers often lack historical thinking skills; thus, their limited abilities in analyzing primary documents and articulating evidentiary-based historical interpretations hinders their ability to transfer these skills into classroom practice (Davis & Yeager, 1995; VanSledright, 1996; Wilson & Wineburg, 1993; Wineburg, 1991b, 2001; Yeager & Davis, 1996). This trend especially is manifest among entry level teachers (with only a bachelor's degree in elementary education and a social science discipline) who have witnessed minimal (if any) teaching of the historical method. Because historical research and writing often is reserved for history students at the graduate level, teachers without graduate experience in history lack opportunities to develop essential historical thinking skills (Seixas, 1998). At the elementary level, VanSledright (2001) found teachers' lack of historical knowledge hindered their own historical empathy for the people of the past; conversely, VanSledright (1996) also found high school teachers (earning bachelor and graduate degrees in history without completing any courses in educational pedagogy) were more likely to view history as interpretative but often failed to apply the teaching of historical interpretation to their students and often underestimated their students' capabilities.

4. *Research in the teaching and learning of history needs increased attention to the ways in which students (of a variety of ages) comprehend historical context, assimilate and interpret secondary and primary resources, and communicate historical viewpoints; thus, appropriate pedagogy should mirror these research findings.* The field of teaching and learning in history is beginning to uncover phenomena about the ways in which students interact and process historical information, but the field still possesses a high degree of unknowns (Wineburg, 2001). Procedural knowledge teaching, as an enabler of perspective formation, as a catalyst for Bloom's higher-ordered thinking, and as a provider of enriched contextual understandings, is accepted as the preferred means of instruction. Historical concepts, such as causation, change, and continuity, are strengthened through this approach (Brophy, 1996). In recent years, Shemilt (2000) has acknowledged as a fundamental weakness of the SHP curriculum, the overly localized perspective created by narrow, in-depth historical investigations. Thus, he reminds history educators to place narrow topic studies within the context of the larger historical narrative.

Without question, symbolic processing (language) and historical writing prove the most difficult tasks for students of all ages (Greene, 1994; Leinhardt, 2000; Levstik & Barton, 1996a, 1996b); however, VanSledright (2002) found fifth-graders could articulate historical perspectives through written narratives (which he collected and published in a class book) when directed through organized student research teams. The recent emphasis on narrative (Bage, 1999, 2000;

Levstik, 1993, 1995, 2001b; Levstik & Pappas, 1987, 1992; Shemilt, 2000), in part, attempts to charter the difficult terrain of reading and writing in history. Historical narrative as genre provides the much needed contextual grounding for students by offering the grand picture of historical events and time periods. Concerns about the overuse of narratives (especially those delivering romantic, simplistic tales) and the oversimplification of history merit consideration; thus, their use requires wise intervention to move students beyond fanciful elaborations of the past (Barton, 1996; Brophy & VanSledright, 1997; VanSledright & Brophy, 1992).

Levstik and Barton (1996a, 1996b) found intertexts (i.e. visual images, artifacts, field trips, simulations, and period costumes) extremely useful in aiding student comprehension in the elementary grades, particularly in grades K-3. British scholars, including Rogers (1984a) and Dickinson, Gard, and Lee (1978), recommend introducing visual primary documents first before proceeding to more difficult sources; they find the visual images improve students' abilities to interpret other symbolic texts. Younger children relate more easily to social history (Levstik & Barton, 1996a, 1996b). Wineburg's (2001) research with elementary students indicated a predilection among female students for social history; conversely, male students appeared more inclined to political and military history. Wineburg concluded that the exclusion of social history from the curriculum alienates female students. In general, proponents of historical thinking and historical empathy value social history for its ability to connect

students to the living realities of remote peoples, thereby strengthening historical understandings (Brophy & VanSledright, & Brephin, 1992; Knight, 1996; Lee, 1984a, 1984b; Wineburg, 2001). People are at the heart of historical empathy teaching; by understanding historical actors (from their viewpoints), students may improve their understandings of themselves (VanSledright, 2001).

Knight (1996) published a list of principles for the teaching of school history in the UK, but his recommendations provide a cohesive synthesis of core beliefs held generally by proponents of historical thinking and historical empathy. These principles embrace the Brunerian stance mentioned earlier regarding school subjects and children's abilities; the principles reflect the pragmatic application of ideological views of how and in what ways children learn best. A summary of the most significant recommendations (primarily from his own words) are highlighted:

- (a) History involves trying to understand the thoughts, states, and actions of people. The quality of school history may be judged by the quality of engagement of such skills;
- (b) The quality of school history teaching should be judged according to whether there is engagement in history's pervasive concerns;
- (c) History promotes skills of enquiry that may not be distinctive but are seen as intellectually valuable. The quality of school history may be judged by the quality of engagement with such skills;
- (d) The quality ought not to be judged on the basis of the learners' grasp of historical fact and detail...The quality of engagement is to be judged by understanding, not by knowledge of trivia;
- (e) broad notions of what life was like should take priority over a concern for detail;

(f) children should build up such pictures through the engagement with primary sources, which will often take the form of artifacts, pictures, photographs and film, as well as edited extracts from written sources;

(g) social history is important to historical understanding;

(h) a variety of methods should be used to encourage children to put themselves in the shoes of people in the past, which is sometimes called empathizing;

(i) story is important, and should raise issues about its plausibility and about different points of view;

(j) work should not be rushed, on the grounds that it is better to spend weeks trying to get to grips with the topic than to dash through it in an hour, since active learning and understanding are at the risk of the rapid rush approach;

(i) history learning needs to be planned in terms of a varied sequence of activities such as a term. (Knight, 1996, pp. 22-23; 27-28)

Knight (1996) also suggests the systematic teaching of time allowing for the contrast between the general features of eras. Through focused structure, teachers should highlight a restricted set of topics representing meaningful people and events.

*5. Wise teaching practice in history embraces John Dewey's notion of the active, learning community; thus, historical inquiry facilitates such communities, which in turn foster students' historical perspectives, personal interests, and intrinsic motivations.* Social learning communities facilitate learning through historical inquiry (Levstik & Barton, 2001; Levstik & Smith, 1996). The social, interactive environment facilitates historical inquiry by providing a social context to share and think through ideas; researchers employing this method have found that

students prefer the interactive environment (Davis, 2005; Levstik & Barton, 2001; Shemilt, 1980; VanSledright, 2002). Providing a learning community helps mediate the difficulties of symbolic (language) processing and adds the active element missing from excessively, passive teaching (Goodlad, 1984). The dominance of the textbook and the teacher as the absolute authorities on historical topics may be negated, through inquiry activities with the primary sources of evidence (Downey & Levstik, 1991; Klages, 1999; Rogers, 1979; Wineburg, 2001). In history, bringing students into the conversation of historical inquiry (Gabella, 1994) directs them beyond blind recitations of factual information and into the philosophical, the ideological, and the perspective aspects of history (Lee, 1983). Community learning strengthens contextual knowledge and historical understandings.

#### Narrative and Historical Thinking

Recent attention to narrative by historical philosophers (Mink, 1987; Ricoeur, 1984; White, 1980) emphasizes narrative as the primary mode of historical representation. Within this context, these philosophers defend the needful acceptance of narrative and history's interdependency, thereby prompting new pedagogical and cognitive considerations. These claims may find support in the recent work of Jerome Bruner (1986, 1990, 2002) who views narrative as fundamental to language acquisition, social acculturation, autobiographical perceptions, and mental processing. Mink (1987) characterizes narrative as an instrument of cognitive function. If Mink and Bruner are indeed

correct, then the coalescence of historical narrative (as genre) to historical thinking deserves increased attention.

Historians Cronan (1992) and Bailyn (Bailyn & Lathem, 1994) argue that histories present conflicting historical narratives, thereby necessitating a return to the disciplinary values of inquiry, examination, and revision. History educator Holt (1995) recognizes narrative's potential to communicate the historian's point-of-view, and thus encourages teachers to emphasize the tenuous nature of historical knowledge. Levstik and Barton (2001) encourage student-generated historical narratives, and VanSledright (2001) and Wineburg (2001) also attest to the value of student authorship in historical writing.

Through their work with elementary and middle school students, Levstik (1986, 1993, 1995, 2001) and Barton (Levstik & Barton, 1996a, 1996b, 2001; Levstik & Pappas, 1987) provide a pedagogical framework for history and narrative through the use of historical fiction and trade books. Levstik's research (1986, 1995, 2001; Levstik & Barton, 1996a, 1996b, 2001; Levstik and Pappas, 1987) revealed—in contrast to the textbook--the increased benefits of reading narrative accounts of history: supporting imaginative entry, providing moral weight to analysis, emphasizing ethical dilemmas, stimulating interest, and formulating judgments. This approach, however, proved problematic because the children rarely questioned the authenticity of narrative texts, confused fact and fiction, and relied on emotionally charged responses to formulate judgments.

In their research, VanSledright and Brophy (1993; VanSledright, 2001) found similar shortcomings with elementary students, who after reading children's books, vocalized unfounded romantic notions about history. These scholars resist inflated heritage-based, community-centered curricula. They perceive narrative as a two-edged sword: children's history books encourage imagination and offer coherent structures, yet also encourage the conflation of unrelated details and naïve, fanciful elaborations. The storytelling tradition in elementary schools often promotes conservative ideologies through simple linear narrations. As Barton (1996) discovered, this distorts children's understandings of social, political, and economic change.

These concerns pose valid challenges to the integration of the historical narrative as part of the instruction of disciplinary procedural knowledge. Notably, the concerns stem, in part, from the void of an early elementary, critical social studies curriculum; instead, curricula centers on the self, the family, and the community. Heritage acculturation overrides historically-grounded instruction, as indicated by the mythical narratives often depicting famous people (Brophy & VanSledright, 1997). This vacuum of historical knowledge causes structural cognitive challenges later for upper elementary and middle school students, who consequently lack experience with historical topics (VanSledright & Brophy, 1993).

Questions regarding the historical narrative's ability to function as verisimilar to reality have caused critics to attempt to dismiss the genre as simply



too problematic (Bage, 1999; Ricoeur, 1980, 1984). Such efforts fail to acknowledge narrative's inherent role as the historian's communicative medium, possessing potentially complex, interpretive structures (Ricoeur, 1980, 1984). Recently, Levstik and Barton (2001) acknowledged the lack of historical realism in children's literature and suggested that well-grounded historical narratives may prove beneficial to learning.

Similarly, I attempt to channel the positive aspects of the historical narrative into a more rigorous, evidentiary approach to instruction, and I accept the historical narrative as a powerful genre for communicating. My research does not explore the role of historical fiction in the development of historical thinking, however advantageous this approach may or may not be. My primary goal, instead, is to explore the functionality of the historical narrative as a cognitive tool for historical empathy and for perspective garnering and as part of the teaching of procedural knowledge.

Within this paradigm, historical narratives facilitate inquiry and operate as the catalysts by maintaining credibility through worthy scholarship—the examination of multiple resources, the weighing of evidence, and the formulation and reformulation of viewpoints. This approach assumes historical knowledge as probable, investigates the influence of point-of-view, and considers the rhetorical aspects primary and secondary sources. Primary documents (whether or not in narrative form) reflect narrative qualities as they contribute to historical renditions

and as they represent episodic events surrounding their creation. To restate, a primary document *functions both as a narrator and possesses a narrative past*.

The purpose of my research, in part, is to develop a pedagogical approach to facilitate historical empathy through the inclusion of the concept of the historical narrative.

### Historical Narrative Theory

Though the perspective-forming power of narrative still remains largely untapped in the area of history education, it offers a valuable component to the improvement of historical empathy. Because history educators view narrative mainly as a form of passive delivery rather than as medium for inquiry (Levstik & Barton, 2001), they fail to harness its interpretative nature. Although scholars may seek to divorce history from the storytelling tradition, the narrative form provides an operating medium for discourse that conveys historical fact (Ricoeur, 1981). Such alternative forms as chronicles and annals lack the ability to illustrate history's complexities, including characterization, human action, and conflict innate to the historical plot (White, 1984). Narrative, on the other hand, embeds the multiple layers of causation and human action, maintaining the ability to present information in linear form while still preserving the overlapping aspects of the plot (Ricoeur, 1981). One can hardly divorce consideration of narrative from the teaching of history.

Narrative embeds the multiple layers of causation and human action within one uniform framework. Narrative maintains the ability to present information in

linear form while still preserving the overlapping aspects of the plot. Ricoeur states (1981), "Turning to narrative activity...the time of the simplest story escapes the ordinary notion of time conceived as a series of instances succeeding one another along an abstract line" (p. 170). The ensemble of human relationships, actions, and dynamics unravels through narrative delivery. Ricoeur explains:

A story describes a series of actions and actions made by a number of characters...these characters are represented either in situations that change or as they relate to changes to which they then react. These changes, in turn, reveal the hidden aspects of the situation and of the characters and engender a new predicament that calls for thinking, action, or both. (p.170)

When properly represented, historical narratives possess an untapped, multi-linear potential through the interweaving of human action, motives, social constructs, group dynamics, disruptions, and deviations. Referring to Aristotle's concept of *di'allela*, or "the one results from the other," Ricoeur (1984) claims that to narrate is to explain, but historical explanation often stems from multiple factors. One then must assess the available evidence in order to formulate a justification for historical occurrences and outcomes. Narrative combines the multifaceted elements of history--circumstances, actions, obstacles, aids, and result—to facilitate both the scrutiny of parts and the evaluation of the whole (Ricoeur 1984).

The multiple layers of the historical narrative facilitate modes of analytical thinking through the principle of repetition. Within the single and grand narrative

of history, patterns of repeated experiences, events, and movements unfold. Alterations and deviations within patterns, or as reactions to patterns, also become apparent. Paradoxes and ironies emerge when relayed in storied form (Ricoeur 1981; Bruner, 1990). According to Bruner (1990), the dual nature of narrative facilitates opportunities for intricate investigation: narrative poses two interpretative modes, the narrative structure and the narrative's constituents. History's ability to imprint patterns within the human memory suggests deep implications for the development of historical understanding.

In the historical narrative, time is shared by society. The notion of public time establishes a sense of community between the reader and the agents described. Ricoeur (1980) defines narrative's role as the enactor of *within-timeness*, meaning the connection between "being in time" and "telling about it" (Ricoeur, 1980; Bruner, 1990). To clarify, narrative draws a natural kinship between the historical present and the historical past. Through narrative, one may come to realize the heroes, the symbols, the structure, and the climate of a time period. Regarding narrative time, Ricoeur explains, "The art of storytelling retains this public character of time, while keeping it from falling into anonymity. It does so, first, at time common to actors, as time woven in common by their interaction" (p. 171).

Narrative's energy transcends contemporary realizations by transporting the thinker, via the text, into a past realm. Change agents, within the constraints of public time, act in a foreign world--a world shared by the agents'

contemporaries and the modern observers. The agents' actions "produce meanings by their consequences, whether foreseen and intended or unforeseen and unintended, which become embodied in the institutions and conventions of given social formations" (White, 1984, pp. 26-27). By highlighting human action, historical narrative often fosters judgments through the recounting of human behavior. This poses powerful implications for the development of historical empathy, especially in consideration of the motives, aims, and actions of human beings.

The power to invoke inquiry, analysis, and judgment is found in the unique vantage point afforded by narrative. For example, the reader may move backward or forward, or return to different points along the linear sequence. The reader also may dissect and scrutinize specific parts or choose to examine the story as a whole, thereby producing gestalt-like (that is, the psychological concept referring to the mental sum of the parts as greater than the whole) understanding in which the analysis of the parts become more meaningful when viewed in their totality (King, 2005). Narrative also employs both the advantage of within-timeness to overcome the modern mind's distance, by bridging the remote elements of time into one public whole. Thus, the thinker can develop empathetic understandings from a dual angle—the mode of the past and the present—and consequently, agents may be viewed as both the cause and as the product of a historical movement (Ricoeur, 1984; White, 1991). The ensuing

depth of historical understanding afforded by narrative presents strong inferences for perspective building.

Narrative may move historical studies from the level of rote memory to *fruitful* interpretation. Students also conceptualize storied elements, such as human intentions and motives, more easily than they do historical concepts and terms. Well-written and well-researched narratives, through the deconstruction and reconstruction of their elements, can produce this enlightenment of mind. The evaluation and comparison of multiple narratives, such as competing narratives, micro narratives, private narratives (i.e. autobiographies, biographies, personal narratives), and grand narratives (or the universally accepted history of a people), may engender a more striking gestalt afforded through the mental process of restructuring and of reordering historical information (Holt, 1995; King, 2005; Mink, 1978).

To ensure authenticity, historical narratives must be steeped in evidence. The well-known historian Charles Beard's articles (1934, 1935), "Written History as an Act of Faith" and "That Noble Dream," published in the *American Historical Review* in the 1930s, challenged the assumption that one can know and understand the past perfectly. Beard's notion of historical relativism distinguishes between history-as-actuality (what actually occurred), history-as-record (what records exist of what occurred), and history-as-thought (what historians reconstruct about what occurred). The inescapable difficulty of historical scholarship involves the means of remedying history-as-thought with

history-as-actuality through the use of history-as-record, all the while recognizing the interpretative limitations of the latter (Danto, 1965).

Beard's (1935; Dray, 1980) eleven propositions of historical relativism can be synthesized into four complex claims. First, the historian's knowledge of his or her subject remains indirect and beyond the scope of his or her own time; consequently, "the historian must see the 'actuality' of history through the medium of documentation" (Beard, 1935, p. 82). Second, history-as-record retains only a portion of lived history. More specifically, "the documents (including monuments and other relics) which the historian must work covers [sic] only a part of the events and personalities that make up history" (Beard, 1935, p.83). Third, the historian's account of the past becomes filtered through new structures, meaning the newly formulated perspective or hypothesis functions as a transcendent form of interpretation. Fourth, historical accounts are value-laden due to the inquiring perspective of the historian. To restate, "in the selection of topics, the choice and arrangement of material, the specific historian's 'me' will enter," (Beard, 1935, p.83) and despite attempts at objectivity, the historian "remains human, a creature of time, place, circumstance, interest, predilection, culture" (Beard, 1935, p. 83).

As Beard (1934, 1935) outlines and Danto (1965) and Dray (1980) reaffirm, the fundamental stumbling blocks of historical scholarship stem from the inevitable challenges associated with objective analysis. To borrow a phrase from David Lowenthal (1985), "the past is a foreign country" that can only be

partially reclaimed through the available (or the for-some-reason-existing) records of another time and dimension. Referring to Collingwood's (1962; Dray, 1995) theory of historical re-enactment, historical narratives then function as retrospective standpoints of re-enactive history, with the former and the later altering back-and-forth between one another. Because history constitutes the reconceptualization of one's *perception* of the past, a true, unbiased rendition of history does not exist. The challenges inherent within historical narratives stem from the cumbersome problems of historical scholarship itself (Berkhofer, 1995). To the best of the historian's ability, historical narrative, then, should provide a fair, well-researched rendition of past events (Bruner, 1990).

The rhetorical elements of historical narrative become the vehicles by which history's limitations are communicated. The push for objectivity in historical scholarship and return of narrative merits a discussion of the relationship between history and fiction and the impact of scholars' views on this relationship. As Mink (1987) explains, the historical narrative maintains a distinct autonomy while still borrowing fictional elements. Literary scholars have sought to bring definition to the structure of narrative through plot, characterization, figurative devices, imagery, symbolism, and the like. In history, authors adopt basic narrative structures, but these narrative constructs are not clearly specified (perhaps due to the rules of historical research and reconstruction). Acknowledging this claim, historians have not sought to teach the construction of narrative as fundamental to their craft, and yet narrative, by default, retains its



subjectivity to the historians' imaginative reconstruction and to the discipline's accepted truth claims. Unlike fiction, as Ricoeur (1991) notes, historians do not invent stories rather they discover them. The difference lies in the wording rather than the working. Thus, the role of imagination in historical narrative formation poses a unique dilemma, by bringing narrative history closer to narrative fiction, and yet, these truth-claims create their distinguishable orientation (Mink, 1987).

The interweaving of narrative history and narrative fiction stems from a long tradition of colligation. Until the late eighteenth century, history was subsumed under the branch of literature and thus retained its classical rhetorical features (Gossman, 1978; Martin, 1986; Stone, 1987). The Western historical narrative tradition began with the Greeks who used folk memory and collective stories (i.e. Homer's *Illiad* and *Odyssey* and other tales) to tell the stories of the past. When compared to modern historiography, the ancient Greek and Roman historians displayed their expert skill more through their eloquent orations and poetic storytelling than through documented, historical prose. Amid this storytelling tradition, two historians—Xenophon of the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. and Plutarch of the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D.—pioneered the biographical genre through their writings of the life histories of authors and politicians. Herodotus and Thucydides emphasized dominate Greek figures, but their fanciful, elaborate descriptions lacked a historical tenaciousness for accuracy (Grant, 1995).

Philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle employed poetic narrative history to test fictional truth through comparisons to philosophy and other historical

narrations. Aristotle distinguished poetry as the superior conversant of philosophic truth from history as an inferior crude record of past events; thus, historians, or scientists, those who investigate the causes of phenomena, fail to speculate deeply about truths and the grand meaning of the universe (Southgate, 2001).

During the medieval and Renaissance periods, Germanic and Latin historians preferred narrative forms steeped in literary devices and comparative philosophy. Harkening to the ancient and modern narrative traditions, Lottinville (1976) qualified all successful narratives as containing six essential components: the setting and time of historical action, the economic development of time (through unremitting attention to the actors in a historical narration), the well-established narrative conventions (i.e. viewpoint, setting, characterization, devices of continuity, maintenance of suspense), the unfolding of chronology, the use of indirect discourse (which replaces the novelist's dialogue), and the recreation of the past (as impacting the present). During the aforementioned periods, narrative history communicated movement and perspective and functioned as the vehicle for action in time.

Aside from Von Ranke, history as rendered through classical narratives remained paramount, until the late nineteenth-century when the new emphasis on quantitative knowledge encouraged historians to question the underlying assumptions of narrative history. The push for scientific history culminated in the 1940s with the work of Carl Hempel and the *Annales* school in France (Martin,

1986). Social science history, particularly in Great Britain and the United States, focused on the laws of history as reflective of generalized explanation and precise causal modeling of phenomena. Simultaneously in the *Annales* school, French historiography concentrated quantifiable knowledge such as the long-term trends of demography and environment while ignoring the importance of events and individuals (Berkhofer, 1995). By attempting to classify and organize history according to scientific laws, the *Annales* school rejected narrative for its lack of truthful representation, social scientific modeling, and objectivity.

This trend continued for several decades until recent historical philosophers, Hayden White, Louis Mink, and at the forefront Paul Ricoeur, challenged scientific historical models for the fabrication of the discipline and the loss of narrative's essential characteristic benefits. Specifically, these scholars contended that history, by nature, cannot follow a scientific method and thus remains concomitant to the narrative modes (Mink, 1987). As a result, historical philosophy experienced a fissure of intellectual thinkers—first, the structuralists, who defend argumentative modes as superior forms of historical writing, versus the narrators, who instead defend narrative representations (Burke, 1992). This separation largely still exists and impacts the acceptance or non-acceptance of narrative, but my purpose, however, is not to perpetuate this intellectual divide. I instead intend to invoke the historical narrative to garner *analytical* and *philosophical* thinking.

The revival of narrative to historical disciplinary thought, in part, encouraged the new emphasis on specific types of historical narratives: the micro narrative (the story of ordinary people in a smaller region or locale), the backward narrative (an experimental approach in reverse time narration), the private narratives (often biographies focusing on history via the individual), and the public/private narratives (stories blending public history with biographies by moving back and forth between the public and private world) (Burke, 1992). These new narratives of historical discourse constitute the burgeoning structures currently driving contemporary historical research and, as such, offer alternate perspectives and focal points for study. They borrow literary elements to relate their stories and, as history itself, are subject to the same advantages and disadvantages of narrative history.

Amid emerging forms of narrative history, the grand narrative, the “Great Story” of the “Great Past” (Berkhofer, 1995), functions as the memorialized, incumbent rendition of the Great Past. The meta-narratives (i.e. partial representations of the Great Past), as derived through meta-sources (i.e. primary documents), collectively constitute the Great Story, which accept only certain actualities of the meta-past and its cumulative story (Berkhofer, 1995). As Appleby, Hunt, and Jacob (1994) explain, nation states possess grand histories stemming from written accounts, which are impacted by the state’s collective memory. The imposition of collective memory on the grand history functions leads to the formation of a national identity, with its attendant ideologies. For

example, the grand history of the United States contains notions such as our natural rights and our frontier heritage. For example, Fredrick Jackson Turner's (1920/ 1976) memorable thesis on the rise of industry and the closing of the frontier espouses ideas of capitalism, individual will, and the American dream. Conversely, Beard's *An Economic Interpretation of the U.S. Constitution* (1935) and works of other progressive historians (i.e. Perry Miller and the pilgrims) opened new doors for historiography—doors which continue to unfold through new social approaches (Appleby, Hunt, & Jacob, 1994).

The role of the grand narrative and its impact on students' interpretative lenses underpins efforts to teach procedural knowledge. As Levstik (2001) discovered working with New Zealand adolescents, the grand narrative with its mythic offshoots pose intellectual difficulties for students who often default to their presupposed views. As Levstik discovered, the study of history beyond national borders proved less problematic due to the removal of personal, more highly charged settings, but such efforts failed to alleviate predilections for students' preconceived national assumptions. Thus, students' exposure to competing histories both *within* and *without* the grand narrative merits continued attention and research in the development of a pedagogical approach.

Historical narratives, whether of a micro or grand nature, remain subject to the culturally figurative, dominant language of the contemporary period in which the historian writes. Historical imagination then presupposes formal analysis, as the historian reconstructs his or her topic through chosen conceptual structures

and rhetorical forms. This constitutes what White (1978; Hughes-Warrington, 2003) calls linguistic determinism. Borrowing from the literary elements of plot, characterization, and the like, historical narratives impose a symbolic reality through the coherent structure uniquely owned by stories. White (1978) explains, “A historical narrative is not only a *reproduction* of the events reported in it, but also a *complex of symbols* which gives new directions for finding an *icon* of the structures of those events in our literary tradition” (p. 88). Thus, the historian, despite his or her objective efforts, communicates his or her historical reconstructions through contemporary language, and as such, remains subservient to his or her own linguistic determinism, as expressed vis-a-vie modern linguistic acculturation. This actually imbues a unique understanding to the nature of narrative history, which functions as a selectively chosen and as a selectively placed sequencing of chronological events, subject to first, the interpretative filters of the historian’s imaginative mind, to second, the symbolic linguistic structures of representation, and to finally, the imaginative translations of the reading audience. This triad of imposed constructs impacts the authenticity and representative meaning of the past.

Historical narratives by nature cannot escape the human interjections germane to historical scholarship. As White (1978) explains, historical narratives necessarily operate, in part, as extended metaphors:

As a symbolic structure, the historical narrative does not *reproduce* the events it describes; it tells us in what direction to think about the events and charges our thought about the events with different emotional valences. The historical narrative does not *imagine* the things it indicates; it *calls to mind* images of things it indicates, in the same way a metaphor does. (p. 91)

The power of the extended metaphor then exists in the symbolic, mental representations produced through the elucidation of familiar cultural ideas (White, 1978).

As mentioned previously, the purposes of historical scholarship—with its attendant challenges—exists of the historian's chosen communicative mode. Referencing McGee (1989), histories complete four operative functions: the recounting of history, the explanation of history, the truth-claims (relative to the recounting and the explanation) of history, and the interpretation of history. The historian as partial product of the present naturally imbues his or her own perceived constructions of past realities into the object of his or her writing. Mink (1987) provides a helpful qualification of historical scholarship as he outlines the foundational assumptions of historiography:

(1) Historians generally claim that they can give at least partial explanations of past events; but they do not ordinarily undertake to predict the future... (p. 68)

(2) Historians may often prove false a "hypothesis" about an historical event or period without concluding that it is false in any other case or such... (p. 72)

(3) Historians very often testify that they find it useful or necessary to "relive" or "recreate" in imagination the events with they investigate... (p. 75)

(4) Historians generally do not adopt one another's significant conclusions unless convinced by their own through inspection of the argument... (p. 77)

(5) Historians generally agree that there are resemblances among complex events (e.g. revolutions) but also insist that no two such events are identical... (p. 81)

(6) Historians generally assume that they have a potentially universal audience, especially for the "comprehensive synthesis" at which they aim... (p. 85)

The historical narrative performs the structural, linguistic task of representing the historical phenomena, explaining partial causation, and offering an interpretative translation of historical data.

Returning to the SHP, Shemilt (2000) re-examined the project to consider the impact of narrative on children's historical understandings. As a result of his re-visitation, two main problems surfaced. First, the repeated emphasis on the mastery of facts and concepts proved problematic because the student acquired only isolated bits of information. Their learning experience could be compared to watching a series of 10 second movie clips without viewing the entire production. As a result, the history curriculum failed to create for them interconnected meanings.

Second, the partial inclusion of narrative history often constituted a monolithic, mono-linear narrative that resulted in the students' confusion over the relationship to and the difference between focused micro histories and the grand linear story. Shemilt (2000) found the inability of students to place small scale constructions in the context of large scale narratives noteworthy of consideration.



This apparent gap handicapped students' ability to either postulate any probable causation for event-making or to coach causation in terms of *imaginative* rather than *logical* possibilities. To compound the problem, students often accepted narratives as natural, truthful renditions rather than interpretative viewpoints.

Shemilt (2000) developed, reminiscent of Piaget's stages of development, four levels for the teaching of historical narratives:

*Level 1: A Chronically Ordered Past.* History is taught through the sequential ordering of timelines.

*Level 2: Coherent Historical Narratives.* The "map" of the past incurs new dimensions and layers through the rendering of storied forms intended to provide understandings relative to "what happened" and "what is going on."

*Level 3: Multidimensional Narratives.* The multiple dimensions of history become interwoven to provide a more complex narration embodying "the means of production and population of history (economics, technology, and people); forms of social organization (social structures, institutions, and politics); cultural and intellectual history (commonsense, religion, and institutionalized knowledge). (p. 97)

*Level 4: Polythetic Narrative Frameworks.* Much like physicists who strive to formulate a GUT—A Grand Theory of Everything, historians undergo an extensive process of inquiry, research, evaluation, comparing, re-examination, and reconstruction to formulate a GUN—a grand unified narrative. This type of narrative history attempts to construe the whole as the *most probable* explicative answer about the past. In this framework, accepted narratives represent polythetic explanations; comparative narratives are recognized; historical relativism is valued. (pp.93-98).

Closer examinations of historical events or periods should emphasize the difference between description and explanation and should allow students to highlight material essential to the re-articulation of the newly constituted grand narrative. Shemilt (2000) also suggests that teachers avoid a singular,

chronological advancement through time by breaking down history into chronologies, 20 years, 100 years, 600 years, and so forth. Success in these endeavors would require the implementation of Bruner's spiral curriculum for history, with the foundational elements beginning in the early grades and returning in greater detail each subsequent year.

### Narrative and Language Acquisition

Educational psychologists and researchers attest to the impact of narrative thinking on children's intellectual development. Piaget's early work with the stages of development encouraged psychologists to pay attention to the difference between abstract and concrete thinking (Bruner, 1983). Piaget's idea of egocentrism (claiming that young children are too me-centered to understand multiple viewpoints and the relationship of those viewpoints to one another) did not explain children's abilities to comprehend and master language at early ages. Chomsky (1957) proposed a solution to this dilemma, by arguing that children possess a language acquisition device, or LAD, that functioned like a mental box located in the central nervous system. This box naturally attuned to the features of human language and enabled the mind to comprehend complex, linguistic structures (Bruner, 1983; Donaldson, 1978). This breakthrough of thought ushered in new studies, including Bruner's work with language, narrative, and culture, that were relative to linguistic development and the connection to abstract thought.

As mentioned previously, Piaget's work primarily centered on the scientific modes of cognition, and as such, failed to properly address the social sciences and language arts. Bruner (1986) clarifies this problem by dividing cognition into two primary modes of thought—scientific and symbolic, of which narrative and history belong. Child development researchers of the latter half of the twentieth-century to the present have challenged the Piaget's work on three levels: the egocentric nature of young minds, the limited ability of children to reason deductively, and the isolation of language skills from other aspects of cognitive growth (Donaldson, 1978). These challenges offer fresh viewpoints for teaching and learning in general and across multiple disciplines. My focus, however, remains centered on Piaget and the new perspectives related to children and historical thinking.

Building on Chomsky's work, scholars attempted to explain the nature and the impetus of language acquisition in infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. A contemporary scholar of Chomsky, Wier (1962) analyzed private speech of a young boy named Anthony, as recorded by audio-tape underneath his crib. Wier (1962) concluded that the supposed "nonsense" of Anthony's speech actually constituted reproduced dialogue of others, through re-enacted question and answer sessions and through personal monologues. Donaldson (1978) later qualified "baby-talk" as possessing situational meaning as evidenced by the talk's recreation of specific occurrences. In his early work with children and linguistic development, Bruner (1983) characterized "child talk" as a form of context

construction: children through their play children dramatize happenings by attending to paradoxes, to ironies, to sudden changes, and to surprises. For example, the game of peek-a-boo involves situational recreations to events and their unexpected surprises.

The 1989 publication *Narratives from the Crib* provides valuable insight into the relationship between narrative and language development. Engineered by Katherine Nelson, the project included the private recording of a child named Emmy. Using a tape recorder placed under her bed, her speech was recorded during the time that Emmy was 21 to 36 months old. Following the gathering and transcription of the data, the New York Language Acquisition Group (NYLAG), which included scholars such as Katherine Nelson, Jerome Bruner, Carol Feldman, and others, invested two years analyzing Emmy's speech patterns to determine the objectives and the functions of the child's spoken language. The study resulted in three major developments relative to language development: first, the role of narrative in language acquisition, the patterns and processes of linguistic function, and the autobiographical and psychoanalytical role of early speech. For the purposes of this study, the discussion will center on the first and third (as it relates to narrative) of these developments.

Regarding narrative speech, Nelson (1989) revealed that Emmy's speech predominately centered on personal monologues, or the sequencing and ordering of past, probable future, and everyday events, which Nelson labeled memory, anticipation, and routine, respectively. Emmy's monologues constituted

her narrative reconstructions of her world and her proposed interventions into her perceived reality. By the age of 32 months, everyday occurrences predominately marked her monologues, and she began demonstrating the narrative trends of temporality, causality, truth, value, and certainty, (Bruner & Lucariello, 1989). By twenty-eight to thirty-three months, Emmy demonstrated significant cognitive advances in her narrative speech—namely greater sophistication of sequenced representations (i.e. conjunctivity, temporality, causality), variances in canonicity (accepted social norms), and perspective voice (the mimicking of others, especially her parents) in event making.

Although temporal, event-sequencing narratives dominated Emmy's monologues, Feldman (1989) discovered within her monologues the beginnings of problem-solving narratives, as evidenced by her to mediate current or probable challenges. In the early phases of recording, her monologues focused on the mundane, but later, she began to display what Bruner called *timeless narration*, or the entry into the imaginary world of play. As a result, Feldman (1989) contended that the telling of stories provided the mechanism for first, reflective analysis and second, fantastical, creative intervention. Bruner and Lucareillo's notion of timeless monologues and Feldman's discovery of imaginative entry illustrates the integral roles of creativity, narrative, and reflective thought. These elements may facilitate early forms of analytic thinking and of problem solving. Unfortunately, children struggle to separate fact from

fiction, and such muddy perceptions bear obvious implications for teaching youngsters the difference between realism and fantasy.

Kieran Egan (1986) encourages teachers to access young children's inherent understandings through the power of story. As Egan confirms, young children enter school with a foundational understanding of narrative structure: binary opposites (good and evil), causality, characterization, and conflict. Within this structure, children first learn to grasp abstract concepts. Conversely, Donaldson (1978) explains how the stories used with young children usually consist of the simple sharing of exterior words, without thoughtful consideration of the narrative's meaning or structure. As a result, children's often process the *external* rather than the *internal* information. Therefore, she argues that stories cannot advance students into abstract thinking, unless facilitated through questioning, through reflective dialogue, and through content engagement.

The aforementioned research offers helpful considerations for history instruction. According to Dickinson and Lee (1986), students conceptualize storied elements, such as human intentions and motives, more easily than they do historical concepts and terms; thus, historical narratives provide familiar, natural introductions to history. Certainly, the simple integration of stories into the history classroom does not constitute effective instruction. As Donaldson (1978) notes, the facilitation of abstract thought via narrative only occurs when prompted; thus, educators must implement measures intended to access narrative's cognitive possibilities.

### *Narrative, Acculturation, and Historical Consciousness*

Historians and educators cannot ignore the impact of popular culture and of socio-cultural influences on students' historical perceptions, nor can they ignore the role of popular narratives in those perceptions. As Wertsch (1998) affirms, historical narratives, whether by direct or indirect means, operate as acculturating devices, in particular for the lay population. Seixas (2004) argues for the further development of what he calls *historical consciousness*. Derived from the work of German scholars such as Jörn Rüsen, historical consciousness embodies an appreciation for the complex interplay of culture and historians' writings on students' interpretations of the past. Historical consciousness accepts, as an essential component of historical inquiry, the collective memory, meaning the memories and the meanings that individuals or groups of people impose upon their collective past. These memories often become masked as heritage and, despite their probable fictional nature, find expression in the film industry, the news media, the marketplace, and the oral traditions of contemporary peoples (Lowenthal, 1996; Seixas, 2004).

My purpose relative to collective memory and historical consciousness is to acknowledge the role of cultural perceptions, to which scholars (Lorenz, 2004; Lowenthal, 1985, 1996; Rüsen, 2004; Seixas, 2004) claim derivation from the assimilation of narrative constructs, and their impact on students' interpretative processes. The socio-cultural narrative impositions of the human mind must be reconciled with the foreign realities (Lowenthal, 1985) of the past. Thus, I employ

VanSledright's (2001) concept of positionality to refer to the socio-cultural consciousness of the individual(s) who engage in some form of historical inquiry.

Returning to NYLAG and the work with Emmy, researcher Stern (1989) discovered that Emmy's narrative attempts helped formulate her psychoanalytical make-up. This discovery is not surprising when viewed in light of the current, accepted practices in psychoanalysis of co-construction, in which the patient recreates his or her narrative (or life story) for the analyst. What Stern (1989) determined was that Emmy's psychoanalytical narrations found expression in the form of life events that represented significant themes that, at times, became translated into ritualistic practice. For example, theme of nightly separation resulting from the ceremonial practice of bed-time embodied both negative and positive experiences. Thus, Emmy's narrative monologues, in part, helped formulate a verbal sense of self that became more apparent by ages 15-18 months.

Children's cognitive operations do not exist in isolated mental vacuums, separate and uninterrupted by the outside world. Using Brunerian language, a child's entry into meaning occurs through the mental harnessing of the social symbolic systems of language, with its attendant *signs* (or interpretants standing for relationships). These signs invoke the narrating of life history through four features: human action, chronology, canonicity and non-canoncity, and narrative voice (Bruner, 1990). For Bruner, the acquisition of the aforementioned features signifies an accomplished level of cognition:



The method of negotiating and renegotiating meanings by the mediation of narrative interpretation, as it seems to me, one of the crowning achievements of human development in the ontogenetic, cultural, and phylogenetic senses of that expression. Culturally, it is enormously aided, of course by a community's stored narrative resources and its equally precious tool kit of interpretative techniques: its myths, its typology of human plights, but also its traditions for locating and resolving divergent narratives. (p. 68)

If children enter into meaning by enacting narrative skills (i.e. understanding human action, chronology, canonicity/ noncanonicity, and narrative voice), then teaching students to understand the structure, purpose, and influences of historical narratives merit consideration. Similarly, students' narrative perceptions of themselves and their world will influence how students interpret history. As VanSledright (2001) and Wineburg (2001) affirm, history first teaches students about the past and consequently expands their understandings of themselves.

#### The Historical Narrative Inquiry Model

Inquiry, when centered on students' interests and concerns, inspires investigation into the past. Dewey (1916, 1938) advocates communities of inquiry, consisting of learners who provide educational experiences for one another. Clandinin and Connelly (2000), Levstik and Barton (2001), and Seixas (1993) affirm the Deweyian principles of inquiry as existing in social contexts (Vygotsky, 1987). In history, inquiry underlies the purposes for the teaching of procedural knowledge by enabling students in a collaborative setting to decenter (Piaget's entry into abstract thinking from the concrete) by assuming the role of historical contextualist. This type of rigorous inquiry, with its intellectual

stretching and mental aerobics, requires teacher intervention (Donaldson, 1978, 1996). In working with third-graders, Levstik and Smith (1996) discovered that disciplined inquiry requires teacher scaffolding and sufficient time for mastery. The benefits of such efforts, however, can be far reaching, as attested by British researchers of the Nuffield History Project, Fines and Nichols (1997), who discovered that open-ended questions and student inquiries fueled investigative research by challenging learners “to persist, to speculate, to make connections, to debate issues, to understand the past from the inside” (p. vii; Bage, 2000, p. 35).

My historical narrative inquiry model is patterned after the efforts of the Schools Council History Project (Shemilt, 1980), Bruce VanSledright’s (2002) project with Baltimore fifth-graders, Sam Wineburg’s (2001) *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts*, the collaborative research efforts of scholars encompassed in O. L. Davis, Jr.’s (2001) *Historical Empathy and Perspective Taking in the Social Studies*, Levstik and Barton’s (2001) *Doing History*, and a host of British researchers, Peter Lee, Alaric Dickinson, and Rosalyn Ashby, as referenced (with other scholars) in *History Teaching and Historical Understanding* (1978) and *The History Curriculum for Teachers* (1987). Regarding the role of narrative in historical teaching, I relied heavily on the work of historical philosophers Paul Ricoeur (1980, 1984), Hayden White (1978, 1980, 1984), and Louis Mink (1978, 1987), as well on cognitive psychologist Jerome

Bruner, whose theories of narrative, ontogenetic development, and pedagogical structure underpin the research base.

My model builds upon these traditions by offering a pedagogical approach that combines historical narrative theory with procedural knowledge and by encouraging both the examination of history from the *context of the historical agents* and from the *impact of events and periods on the grand narrative*. The goals of the model include advances in historical thinking and empathy—namely the ability to exercise disciplined narrative inquiry, to contextually analyze secondary and primary sources, to formulate historical perspectives, and to articulate those perspectives in original historical narratives. The historical narrative inquiry model includes a revolving six-stage process: contextual beginnings, in-depth questioning, secondary source analysis, primary source analysis, student authorship, and philosophical/ argumentative reflection. The various phases of the model are not intended to act as once-and-forever events but rather are designed to provide general structure for practice. Figure 1 (Chapter 1) contains a diagram of the model, with a description of each phase.

### *Contextual Beginnings*

Narrative serves to capture attention, stimulate interest, and provide a clear, meaningful presentation. The first stage, contextual beginnings, offers the hook intended to draw students into historical studies. Storytelling draws upon an ancient historical tradition still present in modern day schools, and if well used, inspires students by accessing the affective domain (Bage, 1999;

Husbands, 1996; Egan, 1989). As Bruner (1990) notes, narrative serves as a more comfortable, attractive form of discourse differing from alternate scientific versions. Stories provide a human element, which serves two purposes: first, they offer greater motivational appeal and second, they stand as powerful revelators of social phenomenon. As Paul Ricoeur (1983) revealed, "Time becomes human to the extent that it is articulated through a narrative mode, and narrative attains its full meaning when it becomes a condition of temporal existence" (p. 52).

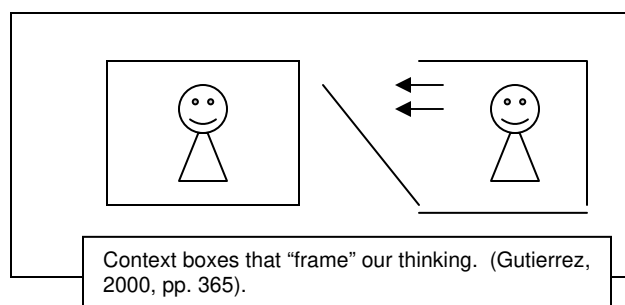
The contextual beginnings phase should also begin with an introduction to the value of studying history and should introduce students to the historical method (Stearns, 2000). The Schools Council History Project (Shemilt, 1980) introduced history through a year long course entitled *What is history?*, which focused on the purposes of history, the nature of historical knowledge, procedural knowledge (i.e. examination of secondary and primary resources, checking and cross-checking resources, formulation of historical perspective). Harkening back to the SHP (Shemilt, 1980), history's overarching purposes include:

- (a) what it means to be human;
- (b) the roots and origins of the contemporary world and one's own place in that world;
- (c) the evolution of societies and social change;
- (d) a deeper understanding of one's own ancestral past;
- (e) historical cognitive skills;

(f) and encouraging leisure pursuits in history.

These purposes become more meaningful when placed in the context of the structural component of history as a discipline: the conditions, the times, the places, the cultures, the communities, and the ideologies impacting individuals and social groups (Gutierrez, 2000). The discussion of history's purposes as well as the introduction of historical narratives assumes the teaching of these structural components.

As affirmed by VanSledright (2001) and Wineburg (2000), historical studies ultimately deepen students' autobiographical consciousnesses (Gutierrez, 2000). Effective historical scholarship requires an understanding of one's own positionality; thus, the students should be taught to consider their backgrounds, attitudes, and perceptions and how these factors potentially impacting their historical interpretations. Probable teaching strategies may include the discussion of Gutierrez's context boxes (see Figure 2).



*Figure 2.* Reproduction of Gutierrez's context frames.

In addition, a simple exercise in personal narrative writing and gathering (Levstik & Barton, 2001) will provide a concrete, easily accessible means for teaching historical inquiry, authorship, and bias. For example, students may research their own lives through the collection of documents (both written and verbal interviews) and then produce written narratives of their discoveries. Simplified personal narrative exercises will encourage students to consider their own story as influenced by their own biases.

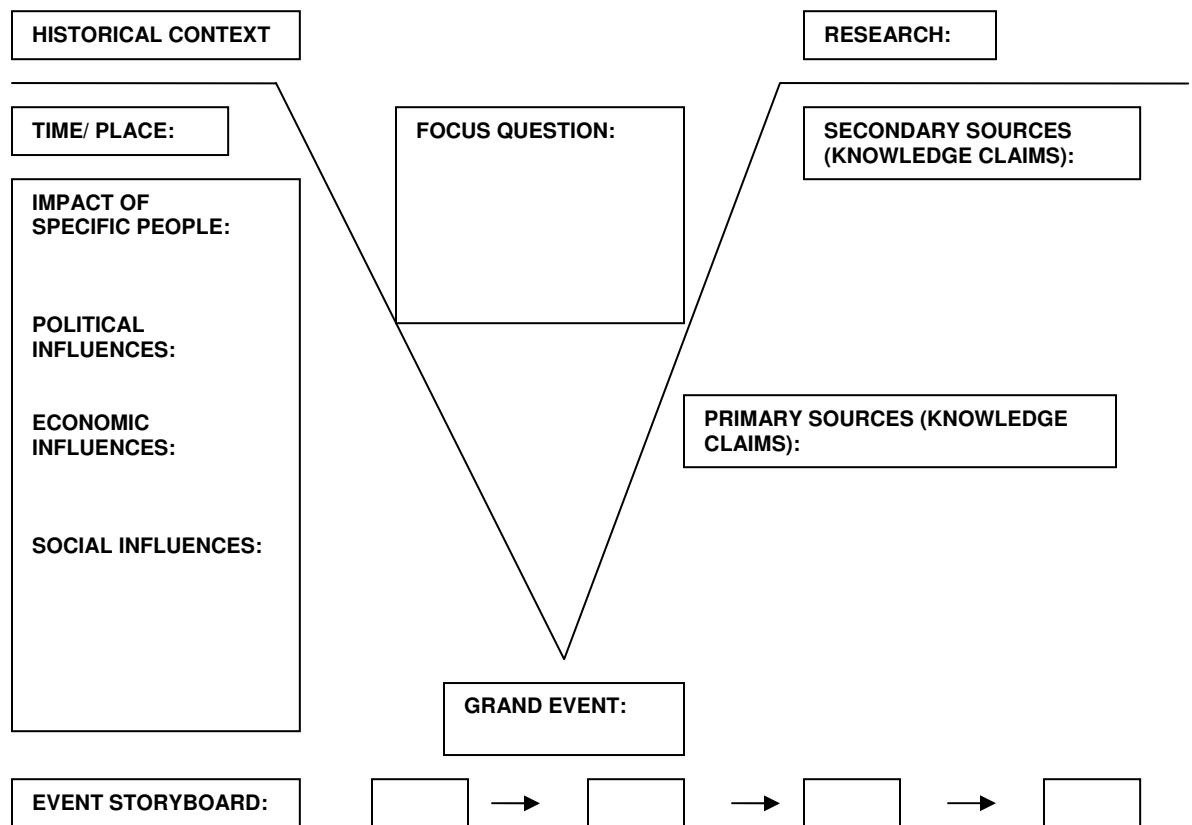
In the introductory phase, historical narratives should be selected that capture student interest and improve contextual understanding. McKoewn and Beck (1994) found that the lack of student engagement in history textbooks primarily stemmed from the lifeless presentation of historical material. In contrast, *energized* textual accounts of history improved the motivation towards and the comprehension and retention of historical background material. Student comprehension is also improved through the use of graphic organizers designed to illicit pertinent information through event sequencing and through causal-temporal reasoning of historical narratives. The visual, logical illustrations employed by graphic organizers and other mind mapping strategies hearkens to Bruner's (1965) notion of iconic representation and Dewey's mental map of ideas (Novak & Gowin, 1984). This phase attempts to excite students about history, to provide introductory contextual knowledge, and to establish foundational skills in procedural knowledge and historical narrative analysis.

### *In-Depth Questioning*

In evaluating historical narratives, students should offer additional interpretations, test the story's authenticity, pose questions, examine the story's representation of events and people, and compare the account to first hand evidence (Husbands, 1996). The ability to know and understanding how to ask probing questions constitutes a form of advanced learning, requiring practice and formative structure (Bruner, 1965; Caine & Caine, 1991). The British students of the Nuffield History Project, the Schools Council History Project, and other British initiatives (Bage, 2001; Levstik & Smith, 1996; Shemilt, 1980) found independent questioning difficult and therefore benefited from teacher inventions designed to illicit student interest. I found similar results in my work with seventh-graders and World War II (Appendix A). Swedish researcher Ola Hallden (1994) demonstrated, through his experiments with upper secondary students, the proclivity of young pupils to ask questions regarding people, especially pertaining to others' intentions, actions, and motivations.

The following criteria designed by Good and Brophy (2003, p. 380) serve as guidelines for helping students formulate questions which are: (a) clear, (b) purposeful, (c) brief, (d) natural and adapted to the level of the class, (e) sequenced, and (f) thought-provoking. I also recommend that students consider the untold or unanswered aspects of historical narratives. Through my own experience with seventh-graders (see Appendix A), I affirmed Shemilt's (1980) discovery that the most fruitful, engaging questions originated from the students'

own frameworks, but these questions may be expressed more in terms of students' interests instead of in thoughtfully prepared prompts. To provide organization and structure to the process of historical inquiry, I adapted the Vee diagram (designed for scientific thinking) as a heuristic for history (Novak & Gowin, 1984). Introduced at this phase of the model, *Figure 3* is intended to function as a working development in subsequent phases.



*Figure 3.* Historical inquiry heuristic.



### *Secondary Source Analysis*

Secondary source analysis improves comprehension, builds a knowledge base, and facilitates inquiry. Research by Britt, Rouet, Georgi, and Perfetti (1994) with elementary children in grades four through six indicated children's predilection for narrative histories instead of primary documents. After listening to or reading from historical narratives, the children exhibited increased conceptualizations and speculations about primary source material. The students were taught to recognize the components of a historical argument: the author's main claim, the supporting points, and the foundational evidence. Consequently, the students developed comprehension, questioning, and analysis skills simultaneously.

Students also need exposure to a wide array of sources depicting multiple perspectives (Lee, 1983; Yeager & Foster, 2001; Vansledright, 2001; Davis, 2001; Riley, 2001). For example, a teacher introducing the Cold War may consider sharing both the United States and the Soviet perspective. Also, the teacher is not limited to traditional secondary historical narratives. As recommended by British history educator and researcher Bage (1999), the storied genre includes the following forms:

#### *Some Common Storied Genres Linking Information and Imagination*

- autobiographies
- biographies
- court proceedings and cases
- descriptions
- diaries
- educational and performance drama

- essays or elements of them
- explanations of events
- film
- folklore and folktales
- games and simulations
- legends
- letters
- life stories
- media reports and representations
- memories
- monologues
- museum displays
- myth
- narrative visual art forms—e.g. some paintings, tapestries, murals, etc.
- oral histories and presentations
- personal anecdotes
- poetry
- procedural descriptions
- recounts of events in the past
- reminiscences
- sayings
- songs
- television—especially in news, investigative and documentary programs
- titles, terms, and pronouns
- written fiction—stories and novels. (p. 37)

The use of more artistic, mythic, and/or persuasive media within the storied genres should not replace sound, factual secondary historical accounts. Storied genres involving broader interpretative elements (i.e. art, fiction, or biases accounts) can be analyzed according to authenticity, impact, and cultural representations (Bage, 1999; Husbands, 1996). The deconstruction of narrative texts may involve the following considerations:

- (1) Who are the intended audiences for the historical narrative?
- (2) What is the purpose of the narrative account?

- (3) What does the account demonstrate?
- (4) What is missing from the account? Why?
- (5) How probable does the narrative account appear to be?
- (6) What might be the impact of this account on its audience?
- (7) How does this account compare with my view of the topic?

The questions may be pondered in reflective writing exercises or be integrated into small- or large-group discussions. With practice, students can become more adept at recognizing bias and distinguishing between mythical and factual history.

Secondary accounts, biographies, and personal narratives offer a variety of perspectives by enabling students to examine historical topics from multiple lenses. As an ongoing component of their research experiences, students should keep and maintain a research log of important findings, thoughts, and perspectives (VanSledright, 2002). To aid reading comprehension and to support contextual understandings, historical narratives need to be dissected, analyzed, and then reconstructed in meaningful, organizational formats. Graphic organizers can be used to depict plot lines, historical actors, social institutions, economic factors, and political controls. Numerous graphic formats exist including concept mapping (illustrating relationships) and modified Vee diagrams (Britt, Rouet, Georgi, & Perfetti, 1994; Novak & Gowin, 1984). Britt, Rouet, Georgi, and Perfetti encourage the integration of step-by-step processing through graphic organizers intended to illicit temporal-causal understandings from

students. Simple concept mapping as demonstrated in Figure 4 serves as an effective means of representing relationships between historical movements, concepts, events, and the actions of historical actors. In this graphic, the concept map begins with a narrative theme, traces the associated historic events, and offers multiple avenues for exploration. *Thus, the purpose of the historical narrative inquiry model is not to encourage simplistic, linear thinking; instead, the model facilitates thinking—argument, causal, deconstructive, multi-linear, and philosophic—through the exploration of issues and themes such as freedom and democracy, which address change, continuity, social life, political/ economic institutions and practices, ideological impact, and the human-ness of mankind.*

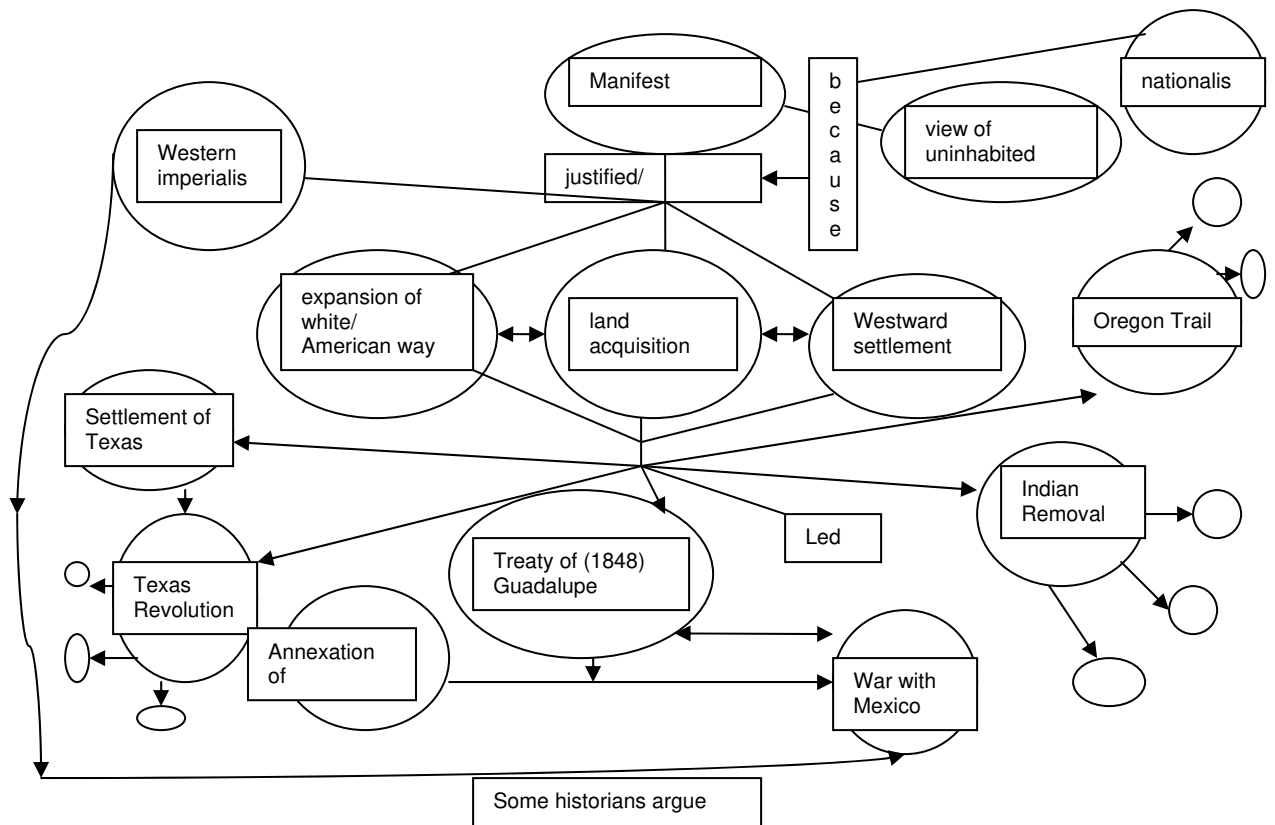


Figure 4. Concept map of ideas associated with Western expansion.

The graphic organizers and active/artistic representations mentioned above can be used as platforms for small- and large-group dialogues.

### *Primary Source Analysis*

As historical detectives, students can dissect primary documents to find answers to their questions. The storied genre of primary sources offers a wealth of critical thinking opportunities and may include autobiographies, biographies, court proceedings and cases, diaries, letters, museum displays, murals, oral histories, reports of events, and personal memoirs. The exposure to varied sources serves to provide interest, motivation, multiple viewpoints, and in-depth analysis (Bage, 1999).

Recent scholarship by VanSledright (2002) with elementary school solidified existing research (Davis, 2001; Lee, 2001; Lee & Ashby, 2001; Yeager & Foster, 2001) relative to the conditions necessary for students' success with primary document analysis: an understanding of historical context, the exposure to multiple secondary and primary sources, and sufficient time for development. In VanSledright's (2002) study, his fifth graders' early attempts at primary document interpretation demonstrated a dependence on comprehensive generalizations and on summarizations of textual material. After his fourth attempt (occurring several months after the first incident), the students began to vocalize advanced, specialized intertextual interpretations of the documents. At times, they veered into improbable, imaginative conclusions, but by the end of

five months, the students displayed more advanced historical understandings, but their inabilities to formulate connections between primary sources remained problematic.

A structural approach, as Bruner (1965) taught, to disciplinary instruction improves cognitive processing by offering a step-by-step approach. Lee (1978) offers his recommendations relative to the effective integration of primary documents:

- (a) Begin with visual representations or artifacts providing a window to the past. Newspaper clippings also serve as comfortable, introductory material.
- (b) Select documents illustrating an historical interpretation, such as the Emancipation Proclamation, with consideration for the associated, varied meanings and the purposes of the document.
- (c) Offer additional documents encouraging students to develop and to support their inferences using specific, textual references. For example, students may consider whether the document adds new information about Abraham Lincoln's view of slavery and whether the document is a reliable resource.
- (d) Document analysis includes the comparison of multiple documents, the checking and cross-checking of interpretations against documentary evidence, and the formation of conclusions as measured against accepted historical narratives.

Grouping strategies may aid struggling students, increase cooperation, and create a discussion forum.

Wineburg (1991, 1994, 2001), Levstik (2001), and Yeager and Doppen (2001) have used think-alouds to facilitate analytic processing during primary document analysis. By definition, a think-aloud is the active process of verbally

speaking out loud one's thoughts while engaging in some sort of intellectual activity (Ericcson & Simon, 1993). Afflerbach and Pressley (1995) have adapted the work by Ericcson and Simon (1993) as a means of facilitating student vocalizations during reading activities. According to Ericcson and Simon (1993), think-alouds primarily elucidate the thoughts held in short-term versus long-term memory; consequently, they function effectively as delineators of interpretative descriptions and generalizations. Think-alouds may be introspective, concurrent, or retrospective (Afflerbach & Pressley, 1995), and as such, may aid students' reflective thinking at various phases of the model. A few guidelines regarding think-alouds are merited useful, and I have added commentary regarding the application of these guidelines to primary document research:

- (a) Think-aloud data should reflect exactly what is being thought about.
- (b) As people learn new procedures and become facile with these procedures, the processing becomes progressively automatic. Students become more comfortable with primary document analysis over time; thus, the ease, frequency, and quality of their vocalizations should improve. Think-aloud vocalizations become more automatic when one is simply repeating a familiar story rather than originating new narrative material (Ericcson & Simon, 1993). Thus, the development of new historical viewpoints requires advanced skills.
- (c) Directions to think-aloud can be rather open-ended, or they can direct participants to self-report a specific type of information. Primary document analysis may remain open-ended, but as Donaldson (1978, 1996) affirms, teacher prompting can have a dramatic, positive impact on cognitive processing. Consequently, teachers may choose to provide open-ended guiding questions intended to direct students toward pertinent ideas.

(d) Think-aloud participants often struggle to vocalize the nature of their own processing. Thus, think-alouds are most effective in soliciting immediate information about the document being studied (Afflerbach & Pressley, 1995; Ericsson & Simon, 1993).

The think-aloud is an effective instrument in facilitating cognitive processing by providing a consistent, interactive approach to improve reading comprehension and contextual interpretations. By activating the natural, spatial memory and by embedding procedural skills and facts into this memory, the think-aloud functions as a powerful learning experience (Caine & Caine, 1991). On occasion, students may enjoy conducting think-alouds independently by talking into an audio recording device. For group settings, I capture the *spirit* of the think-aloud by using a talking stick that students pass from person to person. The learning community employs social interaction to enhance students' internal processes (Caine & Caine, 1991; Dewey, 1933; Levstik & Barton, 2001; Schunk, 2003; Vygotsky, 1978).

Wineburg (1991b, 1994) conducted a seminal study on historical cognition by conducting a series of think-alouds with six historians who interpreted primary documents from the American Revolution. Wineburg's claim that the successful teaching of procedural knowledge and the augmentation of historical thinking requires a working knowledge of mental processes of experienced, professional historians merits consideration. Based upon the historians' responses during the think-alouds, Wineburg (1994) developed a cognitive model of historical texts representing the nature of this type of thinking. I have chosen to translate these



concepts into a series of guiding questions as possible student prompts (Figure 5).

Prompts for Primary Document Analysis	
1.	What resources, attitudes, and views do you (the practicing historian) bring to your interpretation of the document?
2.	What is the overall meaning of the text? Why?
3.	What specific passages or phrases reveal pertinent information? Why?
4.	How do those specific passages and phrases impact the general meaning of the text?
5.	What does the document tell about the visible aspects of the event—or those things that could be heard and seen by an eye-witness?
6.	What does the document tell about the inside aspects of the event, such as meaning the hidden emotions, the private thoughts, or the personal intentions of the people involved in the event?
7.	How is the document an event in itself, that is how and in what way was the document recorded?
8.	What might be the intentions, hidden emotions, and purposes of the person(s) who created the document?
9.	What type of language is used in this document? Why does this language reveal? For example, document recorders may carefully select certain words over others to emphasize specific points? Which words or phrases seem purposely selected? Why?
10.	How does this document compare to the other documents studied? What possible historical truths are supported or rejected by the document?
11.	How does the document change or support your view of the event?
12.	If you were to tell the story of the event after reading this document, what story would you tell? Why?

*Figure 5.* Prompts for primary document analysis.

In addition, the Vee diagrams (Figure 3) are designed to assist students in working and reworking their ideas and should direct students toward perspective conclusions.

### *Student Authorship*

In this phase, students place compare their discoveries to secondary accounts and the grand narrative. Depending upon their analyses, students may choose to add to existing historical narratives or to emphasize discrepancies. Students may create historical narratives describing single events, individuals, or individuals within an event. Perspective narrative development affords students the holistic, contextual view of history, by processing of parts and wholes simultaneously through storied patterns (Caine & Caine, 1991; Sternberg, 2005). In addition to single narratives, students may construct larger narratives to reflect the grand picture or global view of history. As Ricoeur (1980, 1984) emphasized, narrative simulates both the internal and external vision by examining the impact of historical agents and events on time periods, movements, and social change. Referring to what historians Bailyn and Latham (1994) call the “seeds” of history, event-making and the subsequent impact on future generations are worth considering by deepening their understandings of remote peoples and of themselves (VanSledright, 2001).

The historical narratives should reflect the students’ newly acquired perspectives as supported by evidentiary material. Historical writing can prove challenging, especially for struggling students; thus, grouping strategies, peer

mentoring, and individual writing conferences (one-on-one discussion with teacher) are recommended interventions (Carroll & Wilson, 1993). Teachers may consider multiple genres for the representation of student narratives such as: art work, dramatic performances, illustrated children's books, monologues, multimedia presentations using PowerPoint or film development software, museum displays, musical scores, oral storytelling, pictorial illustrations, and website development.

### *Philosophical/ Argumentative Analysis*

The process of historical narrative inquiry inevitably should lead to philosophical reflections and discussions. Lee (1983) characterizes historical inquiry by stating that "the questions raised are ultimately philosophical" (p. 47). A final reflection period enables students to revisit and reformulate their notions of the past. In addition, students can plan for future inquiries.

Student authorship functions as a vehicle of student voice, by in developing improved proficiency skills, and by operating as a cognitive aim in itself (Carroll & Wilson, 1993; Greene, 1994; Romano, 1987). In particular, publication opportunities provide students with a sense of accomplishment by offering new avenues for sharing. A variety of publication opportunities for historical narratives, such as handmade illustrated books, desktop publishing, electronic publications on the Internet, PowerPoint demonstrations, website creations, large murals on classroom walls, video taped performances, photographic images, visual displays, and artwork abound.

The student inquiries generated at the onset of research may be used as question prompts for argumentative or reflective essays. Also, the heuristic devices provided may serve as brainstorming and/or pre-writing blueprints for writing. Students may benefit from organizational frameworks (i.e. genres of historical writing with format examples) intended to guide rather than to prescribe the students' essays. Teacher intervention often proves crucial to students' success in communicating perspectives through writing (Zarnowski, 1996). Notably, argumentative, narrative, and reflective essays do not constitute the sole means of student authorship; students may express their viewpoints through theatrical performances, film, music, art, puppetry, news broadcasts, and other creative outlets. Regardless of the representational form, student-generated work offers powerful platforms for classroom discussion and for evaluation.

The role of dialogue in the argumentative/ philosophical phase enables students to participate in a learning community by reflecting upon their new perspectives, by considering the value of their learning experience, and by sharing their views in small- and large-group settings. In particular, students benefit from attempting to answer history's probing questions, the charged issues, and the questions and interests they expressed throughout the research experience (Colby, Appendix A; Levstik & Barton, 2001). Referring back to Gutierrez's (2000) content boxes of mental framing (Figure 3), the opportunity for students to reflect upon how their perspectives changed through the historical

inquiry process, and the boxes may be used as prompts for reflective essays or for class discussions.

The development of rich understandings about the past naturally enables students to begin to understand themselves, their neighbors, and their world (VanSledright, 2001). Historical philosopher Mink (1970) appreciates the benefits of such an enterprise in his discussion of historical comprehension and understanding:

It [historical comprehension] is operative at every level of consciousness, reflection, and inquiry. At the lowest level, it is the grasping together of data of sensation, memory and imagination and issues in perception and recognition of objects. At an intermediate level, it is the grasping together of a set of objects, and issues in classification and generalization. At the highest level, it is the attempt to order together our knowledge into a single system—to comprehend the world as totality. Of course this is an unattainable goal, but it is significant as an ideal aim against which partial comprehension can be judged. (p. 549)

Historical narrative construction provides the means for comprehending the “world as totality”—to the degree one is able.

### Concluding Remarks

Recognizing empathy as “a power, an achievement, a process, a disposition” (Lee, 1983, p. 35) places high expectations on students; however, the benefits of exercises in empathy and historical thinking are compelling. The historical narrative inquiry model goes beyond existing scholarship by imparting structural organization through historical narrative frameworks. Unlike existing paradigms of historical empathy, my model recognizes the inseparable, fundamental role of narrative in historical rendering and augments and facilitates

improved proficiency in procedural knowledge and historical empathy. The goal of the model is to deepen the affective, the mental, and the value-forming impressions of history teaching's aims through the inherent power of narrative, especially as that is related to innovative pedagogy and the highly generative powers of historical thinking and historical empathy.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

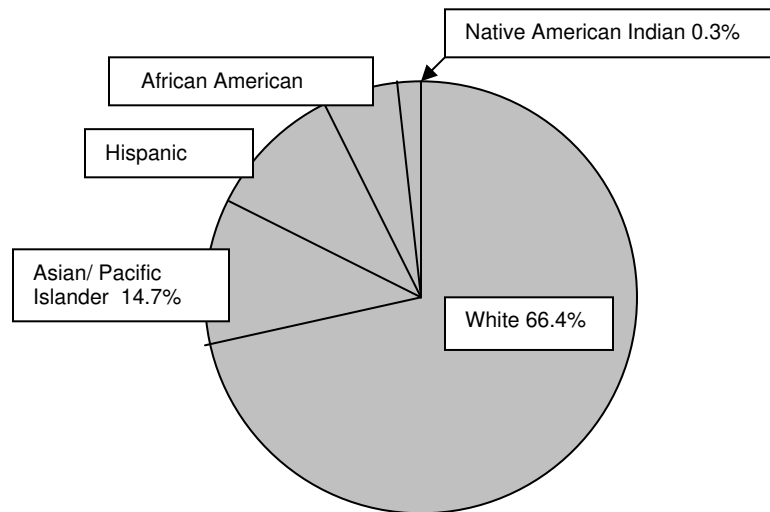
This chapter contains a description of the middle school and the city in which this study was undertaken. The curriculum and instructional components of the historical narrative inquiry model are presented. I offer an overview of the data generating and data analysis procedures to be used.

Research Site: Cottonwood Middle School (a pseudonym)

This research study investigated the impact of the author-generated historical narrative inquiry model on seventh-grade history students' learning experiences. The purpose of the model is to improve students' historical thinking and to aid in their achievement of historical empathy (the adoption of historical perspectives grounded in evidentiary history). This project aimed to answer the following two guiding questions. How do seventh grade history students think historically when they experience the process of historical narrative inquiry? As an aspect of their engagement with the historical narrative inquiry model, how do seventh grade students articulate empathetic understanding? Additional supporting questions included (a) How do students formulate and articulate historical questions for inquiry? (b) How do historical narratives contribute to students' *contextual and empathetic* understandings? (c) How do students interpret primary documents as a part of their experience with historical narrative inquiry? (d) As an element of historical narrative inquiry, how do students articulate their perspectives

through written historical narratives? (e) How do students express their argumentative and philosophic viewpoints through their experience with the historical narrative inquiry model?

One seventh-grade history classroom was selected from Mr. Sim's (a pseudonym) classes. I requested of Mr. Sims to select his most academically and most ethnically diverse class possible. Although data collection occurred during the 2006-2007 school year, the most recent demographical data (taken from the 2005-2006 school year, Cottonwood Middle School East, 2006) presents a profile of the school. (Figure 6).



*Figure 6.* Demographics of Cottonwood Middle School (a pseudonym). Total enrollment 737 students. The ratio of teachers to students is 15.4 to 1. The average number of years of experience of the teachers is 8.8.

According to the 2005-2006 Texas Education Agency accountability report card, both Cottonwood ISD and Cottonwood Middle School earned an exemplary rating. Of the seventh- and eighth-grade students, Cottonwood Middle School's



dropout rate is 0 percent. This school maintains an attendance rate of 97 percent, with marginal differences in attendance according to ethnicity and socioeconomic status. The school benefits from high achievement scores on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) in reading, writing, math, and social studies. The data (Texas Education Agency, 2005) below include specific details about the TAKS scores.

Table 2

*Texas Education Accountability Report Card for Cottonwood Middle School (a pseudonym)*

Demographic group	Passing percentage
<b>Reading scores</b>	
All Students	98%
African American	97%
Hispanic	97%
White	98%
Econ Disadv	98%
<b>Writing</b>	
All Students	99%
African American	99%
White	99%
Econ Disadv	99%
<b>Social Studies</b>	
All Students	99%
African American	90%
Hispanic	99%
White	99%
Econ Disadv	80%
<b>Mathematics</b>	
All Students	97%
African American	81%
Hispanic	95%
White	99%
Econ Disadv	95%

The City: Cottonwood, Texas (a pseudonym)

Cottonwood Middle School is one of three public middle schools in Cottonwood, Texas, a small suburban city in the northern section of the Dallas/ Ft. Worth metroplex. As of November 2006, the population of Cottonwood was approximately 39, 203; of that population, 80.37 percent are Caucasian; 3.86 percent are black; 10.89 percent Asian or Pacific Islander; .36 percent Native American Indian, and 4.54 percent of another race/ or two or more races. The median age for the city was 33.9 years old, with 34.72 percent of the population under the age of eighteen. Of the population ages 15 and older, 18.5 percent of the population had never married; 70.1 percent were married, and 11.5 percent of the population was separated, divorced, or widowed.

Cottonwood is one of the more affluent cities in Dallas/ Ft. Worth; thus, a large majority of the residents enjoy fairly comfortable lifestyles. The occupational profile of the civilian labor force is represented:

Table 3

*Occupational Profile of Residents of Cottonwood (a pseudonym)*

Type of employment	Number employed
Transportation, trade, comm., utilities	7,537
Executive, administrative, managerial	5,307
Administrative and clerical	3,461
Professional specialty	3,412
Manufacturing	2,994
Sale occupations	2,849
Finance, insurance, real estate	2,108
Service occupations	1,713
Precision, production, craft, and repair	1,612
Construction	1,263
Technicians and related support	1,136
Government	334
Handlers, helpers, cleaners, and laborers	289
Farming, forestry, and fishing	79

Research Participants

The research participants constituted one seventh-grade history classroom. Parent and student consent forms were sent home, and data collected only from those individuals willing to participate. Of Mr. Sim's twenty-six students, twenty-four students elected to join the study. Two students were omitted from the data due to excessive absences; thus, the final participants in the study numbered twenty-two. To ease data collection, eight students of diverse reading ability were selected (using a stratified random sample) to serve as primary participants in the study. I conducted pre- and post-intervention interviews with the 8 primary participants. I specifically engaged the primary participants in think-aloud protocols (Wineburg, 1991a) with primary document

material. The entire class aided in data collection (via their verbal comments, their written work, their oral presentations, and their artistic representations).

### Overview of Research Procedure

The seventh grade social studies curriculum centered on Texas history, and the unit of study for this research project focused on the events of the Texas Revolution. I commenced the study by conducting interviews with the eight primary participants. With the exception of the interviews, the instructional and research procedures remained the same for the primary participants as well as the entire class. Using the historical narrative inquiry model, I administered instruction to the class by proceeding through each phase (contextual beginnings, in-depth questioning, secondary source analysis, primary document analysis, student authorship, philosophical/ argumentative reflection). Throughout their instructional experience, the students kept a research log, a journal, and a folder of their work. Graphic organizers, designed to facilitate student comprehension and historical reasoning, were used as platforms for inquiry. I also maintained an audio and video recorded log of the instructional sessions, and I conducted numerous informal interviews with students throughout the study.

A detailed copy of the curriculum unit is included in Appendix B; however, I shall provide a brief discussion of the instructional sessions. During the contextual beginnings phase, I provided students with a background of the Texas Revolution by focusing on the military history and significant people. Motivational

and colorful stories were shared to garner student interest. The opening phase taught students the process of historical inquiry, which involved:

- (a) developing a contextual orientation to the historical topic;
- (b) identifying interest topics for further investigation;
- (c) collecting, reading, examining the bibliographic canon on the topic of interest;
- (d) asking historical questions by identifying areas either of interest and/ or needing research;
- (e) thorough investigation of primary materials;
- (f) checking, cross-checking, and examining materials to develop conclusions and to validate and/or refute existing historical assumptions;
- (g) organization of historical material representing new viewpoints;
- (h) writing of historical narratives and/or argumentative essays illustrating new viewpoints;
- (i) analytical and philosophical dialogue and reflection of written texts and perspectives. (Britt, Georgi, & Perfetti, 1994; Dickinson & Lee, 1978; Lee, 1983; Riley, 2001; Shemilt, 1980, 2000; Sterns, 2000; VanSledright, 2001, 2002; Wineburg, 2001; Yeager & Doppen, 2001).

During the in-depth questioning phase, I continued to establish students' contextual understandings. In addition, the students completed Vee diagrams of historical inquiry (Figure 3, chapter 2). The focus question on the Vee diagram is designed to facilitate inquiry. As mentioned in Chapter 2, students need practice and experience in learning to ask powerful questions; thus, I taught students about effective questioning (using the criteria specified by Good and Brophy, 2003), by providing examples of powerful questions, and helped direct students' interests into written question prompts.

During the secondary source analysis phase, I exposed the students to meaningful historical accounts, including written excerpts from biographies and secondary accounts of historical events. I also supplemented the written accounts with pictorial images (paintings and other art work)—*with careful attention to the difference between factual history and interpretative art.* Students interacted with those pieces individually and in groups, in which they represented their ideas in pictorial, written, and graphic form.

In the fourth phase, the students read and interpreted primary documents. I began with pictorial images and authentic maps before introducing students to more complicated documents. To help generate students' thinking, I glued the primary documents to large sheets of butcher paper. The students first wrote their responses in the margins, and then transferred their ideas to their Vee diagrams (Appendix B) and daily journals. Also, students participated in small-group discussions (followed by a large group reflective discussion) employing the primary document question prompts delineated in Chapter 2.

During the student authorship phase, students expanded their Vee diagrams to create new graphic organizers of: (a) the local events and people studied in the primary accounts; (b) the placement of their findings into the larger narrative of the Texas Revolution; and (c) the students' unique perspective on their chosen topic. The graphic organizers, in addition to the Vee diagrams and research logs, served as outlines for students to then write their own written narratives. The students then transferred these ideas into a written narrative with

an illustration. The final products were assembled into a class book. To ease symbolic processing, I encouraged the students to produce an artistic representation of their narratives via multiple artistic genres. In addition, each of the research groups conducted an oral presentation of their project. The nature of this presentation and display varied according to the needs and interests of the students; the students chose to prepare PowerPoint presentations, monologues, 3-D replicas of the Alamo, and dramatic plays. During the philosophical/argumentative phase, I asked the students to reflect upon their new historical understandings. Students wrote individual reflections about their experience, and I conducted focus interviews to explore further their thoughts.

#### Types of Data Generation

The types of data generated included:

- (a) Students completed the pre-intervention survey and post-intervention reflection.
- (b) The eight primary participants engaged in individual pre- and post-intervention interviews.
- (c) Students kept a folder of their work, which included graphic organizers, a weekly journal, and research logs.
- (d) Students participated in ongoing, audio and video taped large-class and small-group discussions.
- (e) Small groups recorded written and pictorial representations of their ideas regarding secondary and primary sources onto large posters.
- (f) Students produced an individual written narrative and assembled their narratives into class books.
- (g) Small groups produced an accompanying art piece for their narratives

and prepared an oral presentation and display of their new historical perceptions.

- (h) The entire class participated in focus interviews about their experience.
- (i) The eight primary participants engaged individually in a think-aloud, in which they interpreted a primary document.

### Data Analysis

As noted earlier, data analysis was qualitative in nature; thus, researcher observation and the data generated by the students constituted acceptable research evidence, outlined by Miles and Huberman (1994). In my evaluation of the data, I employed the coding procedures prescribed by Strauss and Corbin (1990), by coding data according to similar ideas and concepts. The data underwent several analyses from which the following themes emerged:

- (a) Value of student choice;
- (b) Identification with and predilection for studying people;
- (c) Role of visuals in improving historical context;
- (d) Contextual readings of primary documents;
- (e) Questioning of historical truth;
- (f) Perspective formation (as represented in students' historical narratives, artistic displays, journals, focus interviews, and informal interviews);
- (g) Degree of enjoyment (as determined by active learning, group dynamics, degree of work, and reading/ writing difficulties).

In addition, I used Wineburg's (1994) cognitive model of historical texts to evaluate the eight primary participants' think-alouds, in which the students spoke



out loud their impressions while reading a primary document. The model (Table 4) was used to categorize students' analyses of primary documents into components of historical thinking, which include:

- (a) Representation of the text;
- (b) Representation of the event: outside of event, inside of event, document as event;
- (c) Representation of subtext: text as rhetorical artifact, and text as human artifact;
- (d) Event model. (Wineburg, 1994, p. 90)

A more detailed discussion of the emergent themes and the students' think-alouds ensues in Chapter 4.

### Summary

Within this chapter, I outline the methodology of this investigation. Attention to the research site, surrounding city, the participating students, research procedure, sources of data collection, and means of data analysis constitute the chapter's content. The research methodology follows the historical narrative inquiry model and seeks to uncover phenomena relative to the nature of students' historical thinking.

## CHAPTER 4

### ANALYSIS OF SEVENTH-GRADERS' EXPERIENCES

Transporting oneself into the distant past necessitates careful navigation between the familiar and the unfamiliar. As Wineburg (2001) aptly states, the tension between the knowing present and unknowing past functions as “an unnatural act” (p. 3) that stretches our minds to conceptualize foreign people, places, and societies. Historical empathy demands a form of mental acrobatics, or quick-change artistry in which one assumes a livery far removed from his own. As Ricouer (1980, 1984) clarifies, however, exploring the past solely on its own terms may limit one’s ability to perceive the full impact of events, people, and movements over long periods of time. The process of historical narrative inquiry then should enable one to mediate back and forth between the past and present, to understand the past from two angles—from the introspective view of the historical agents *and* from the retrospective lens of the objective historian. This type of historical thinking helps one forge original historical narratives, designed to communicate the well-researched perspectives of historical actors, and yet still remain empathetic to those actors’ realities.

Although the development of mature historical thinking requires planning, persistence, and effort on the part of both the teacher and the students, the endeavor exists as a noteworthy achievement (Davis, 2001). I designed the historical narrative inquiry model as a pragmatic means of putting theory into

action. In fall 2006, I introduced myself to a class of twenty-five seventh-graders, who appeared inquisitive, excitable, and chatty. Naturally, I wondered how to balance the dual role of researcher and teacher and how to simulate a normal classroom environment. As Schram (2003) and Miles and Huberman (1994) explain, participant observation strategies permit the researcher to gain a unique inside view of the phenomenon and to explicate how people in particular settings interplay with and understand their environment. As the author of the historical narrative inquiry model, I needed to create the desired setting; thus, I sought to navigate the difficult terrain by acting as both a participant and as a researcher.

In this chapter, I explicate my experiences in implementing my historical narrative inquiry model with a group of seventh-graders. The research findings reflect the students' reactions and responses to one instructional unit on the Texas Revolution. The chapter is divided into two sections. The first part of the chapter provides an in-depth look into the eight primary participants: their pre- and post-intervention attitudes and their contextual readings from the think-aloud protocols. The second part of the chapter focuses on the entire class and highlights the main themes emerging from the data. The chapter ends with a discussion of the research questions and the conclusions.

### Meeting the Research Participants

In Texas, the formal history curriculum in grades 5 through 8 is organized as follows: fourth-grade (Texas history), fifth-grade (U.S. history), sixth-grade (geography and world studies), seventh-grade (Texas history), and eighth-grade

(U.S. history). Thus, the seventh-grade students I encountered had a limited experience in history education. At the onset of the study, I asked the students to write about what they already knew about the Texas Revolution and where they gained this knowledge. A large majority of the students indicated that remembered a few historical facts from elementary school, movies, and family vacations. Their knowledge of the Texas Revolution and of history primarily stemmed from their seventh-grade history class.

When I entered the classroom, the students were learning about the settling of Texas and the outbreak of the Texas Revolution. As indicated in their pre-intervention interviews and journals, the students did not have any prior exposure to the types of activities used in historical inquiry, such as primary document analysis. Their history teacher, Mr. Sims (a pseudonym), indicated to me that the district wanted to improve their scores on the state mandated eighth-grade TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills Test); thus, the district had initiated quarterly benchmark exams to test the students' knowledge of Texas history. As a result, Mr. Sims felt obligated to emphasize the mastery of important historical facts. When I encountered the students in the fall semester of 2006, the students had just completed their first benchmark exam.

Through my interviews with the students and through my personal observations, I perceived Mr. Sim's classroom to be a quiet, still place, where students worked independently on tasks. These tasks included copying notes from the overhead, writing journal entries, answering questions from the

textbook, taking multiple choice exams, and watching historical films. To generate data in Mr. Sim's classroom, I arrived with video cameras and audio recording equipment and asked the students to perform interpretive tasks in groups and in alternate locations. Together we worked in the library, in the computer lab, and in the hallways. The excitement of an outside researcher interrupting their usual classroom environment seemed to invoke both excitable enthusiasm and disruptive silliness from the students. In my view, the students needed to adapt not only to the protocol of historical inquiry but to the practice of active learning and to the intrusion of an outside researcher—both variables worth accounting for in the final analysis.

After a few weeks, the students began to acclimate, and the disruptive behavior calmed down. Naturally, normal interruptions, such as holidays, pep rallies, and peer relations, impacted the attentiveness of the students throughout the study. I learned to adapt to the ups and downs associated with working with young adolescents. The students acted unusually shy around the video and audio equipment. As a result, I adapted by recording the data through less intrusive means, such as informal interviews. Because the majority of the students cooperated with the assigned tasks, I believe their contributions provided a fair and reasonable representation of their interactions with the intervention; however, I also attributed, in part, the students' limitations throughout the study to their inattentive behavior.

At the onset of the study, I grouped the students according to mixed ability level, but due to peer conflicts, I allowed the students to arrange themselves into their own groups. The benefits of this decision, however, proved to far outweigh the drawbacks. In their post-intervention interviews, the students viewed the group dynamics as both helpful and hindering to their productivity. In general, they believed that they learned more from working with their chosen peers, participating in activities, and studying history more in-depth, even though they sometimes “goofed off” because “the researcher could not give them a detention.” The intervention dramatically altered their usual classroom environment, including their perception of my authority as their teacher and as their researcher.

In discussing the primary participants, I assume a healthy degree of what Schram (2003) terms *intersubjectivity*. As a qualitative researcher, I recognize that I share my subjectivities (meaning those subjectivities that influence the course of the research) with the study’s participants. Thus, I shall represent their views in close replication of their own words. I shall provide a description of each of the participants accompanied by a discussion of how the intervention impacted their attitudes regarding history and history instruction.

#### *Olivia*

Olivia (a pseudonym) has lived in Cottonwood (a pseudonym) her entire life. She typically earns A’s and B’s in school and demonstrates high achievement in reading. She especially enjoys her Pre-AP (honors) English

class and participates actively in drama and student council. She struggles with her parents' divorce and the conflict that she experiences at home. Olivia found history, especially Texas history, to be a boring subject and wishes that she could learn more about the world. She expresses some interest in the Alamo and the final days of the battle.

*Tim*

In 2001, Tim (a pseudonym) emigrated from South Korea to Cottonwood, where he has lived for five years. His extended family still lives in Korea, and he wants to return to visit them. He prefers his life in Texas because he claims he had more fun. In general, he enjoys school because the teachers encourage the students to have a good time while learning. In his spare time, Tim likes to draw and especially enjoys art class, where he earns high marks. His other two favorite subjects are history and physical education, because he believes that he excels in these subjects. He struggles in math, and he dislikes language arts because the difficulties of learning English as a second language. Regarding his proficiency with the English language, Tim speaks very well, but he possesses greater limitations in reading and in writing. Tim earns mostly B's and C's in school.

*Karen*

Karen (a pseudonym) emigrated to the United States from India at the age of four and lived in Ohio, Boston, and Cottonwood. Before moving to Cottonwood, her family returned to India for her entire fourth-grade year, and she

has lived in Cottonwood since that time. She hopes to return to India and to live there again someday. For now, she prefers living in Texas with her parents. She especially appreciates Texas for the weather, the friendly people, and the less restrictive schools. Karen highly values her Texas education, her teachers (who work hard to help her succeed), her campus (for its big libraries and technology), and her freedoms (regardless of her sex and her race).

Karen earns consistently high marks in all of her classes and demonstrates an advanced reading level for her age. She wants to learn everything she can about history, but she prefers to learn more about her native land. She believes that she needs to learn American history in order to become a better American, but she does not understand how Texas history will help her become a better citizen. Her favorite topics in Texas history include the Native American Indians, the settling of the region, and the formation of the government of the Republic of Texas.

### *Gary*

Although Gary (a pseudonym) was born in California, he has lived most of his life in Cottonwood with his parents and younger sister. In his spare time, he plays board and video games, soccer, and other sports. As he said, he likes school “for the wrong reasons,” meaning he would rather “talk to his friends.” He especially enjoys living in a place where he can socialize and have a good time. In school, Gary puts forth only enough effort to pass his classes, and he earns mostly C’s in middle school.



### *Kelsey*

Although Kelsey (a pseudonym) has lived in Cottonwood for two years, she misses her country home in North Dakota. She enjoys playing the flute. Kelsey detests the boredom of the school routine. In history, she dislikes studying wars and would rather have learned more about the cultures of the United States and the world. She does want to know more about her ancestry from Norway and Sweden. She prefers history over other subjects because she believes she excels more. She does appreciate learning about the life history of people, such as Anne Frank. Kelsey struggles with reading and writing and receives helpful assistance from the school's content mastery tutors.

### *John*

Outside of school, John (a pseudonym) spends the majority of his time playing football, watching television, and socializing with friends. He was born in Dallas and has lived in various suburbs throughout the North Texas area. He moved to Cottonwood for four years ago and describes life in Cottonwood as "only okay." Due to family conflicts, he resides with his father and wished to return to his estranged mother. He misses his deceased brother and spends time with his surviving brother and step-siblings. On difficult days, he reads his Bible for moral support.

John attends school to make new friends, and he hopes someday to become a famous movie star. He loves sports and acting and thus maintains a strong presence in his middle school's drama and athletic programs. He

struggles in history because he finds the reading difficult to comprehend. He indicates that he needs a teacher who could explicate challenging material. Regarding his interests in Texas history, he wants to study “power hungry leaders,” such as Santa Anna (President of Mexico during the Texas Revolution). John earns moderate grades in most of his courses.

*Amy*

In the fourth grade, Amy (a pseudonym) moved from Dallas to Cottonwood with her mom, her older brother, and her dog. Amy especially enjoys volleyball and invests her free time in participating in the sport. In school, Amy performs moderately well in school and indicates she excelled more in sports than in academics. In history, she dislikes note taking and struggles with the memorization of factual information. She appreciates teachers who review the facts and who encourage her to look up the answers in the textbook. She is not certain as to whether not she liked history, but she is interested in the Texas Revolution and in the Alamo.

*Chad*

Chad (a pseudonym) hopes someday to become a professional baseball player and participates actively in his middle school’s athletic programs. He has lived in Cottonwood his entire life with both of his parents. Although Chad generally dislikes school, he demonstrates high achievement when he exerts enough effort. History is the only subject that Chad looked forward to, and he finds Texas history to be a fascinating subject. His family roots extend deep into

Texas, Mississippi, and the other southern states. He expresses a strong interest in Houston (who served as military commander of the Texan forces during the Texas Revolution and with whom Chad claims ancestral relations from his mother's family line) and the military history of the Texas Revolution.

### Interview Findings

In the pre- and post-intervention interviews, I asked the primary participants to respond to a series of questions regarding their perceptions of history as a subject. During the instructional sessions, I provided a basic overview of the process of historical inquiry. Due to time constraints, I did not spend a full year on the nature of history as a discipline (as was done in the Schools Council History Project, SHP). I patterned the questions after the research of Brophy, VanSledright, and Bredin (1992), who, after teaching to fifth-graders a curriculum unit on history as a discipline, inquired about students' perceptions of what history is. In my research, the interview responses, instead, reveal how the students' views of history were altered through a unit focused on the *application* of historical inquiry to a topic of study.

The high achievers (Karen, Chad, and Olivia) provided more detailed, lengthy answers to the interview questions. In contrast, the low achievers (Kelsey and Gary) tended to be less verbose; however, their answers, albeit more economical, still offered meaningful insights. The middle to middle/low achievers (Tim, Amy, and John) varied in their responses. Tim acted especially shy around the recording equipment and spoke briefly in soft tones. Amy, in her

pre-intervention interview, expressed embarrassment regarding her lack of historical knowledge, but in her post-intervention interview she provided direct, succinct answers to the questions. John, in his pre-intervention interview, attempted to answer the questions with histrionic flare but then became frustrated by the difficulty of the questions. At the close of the interview, he admitted that he did not know the answers. His post-intervention interview patterned his previous interview, with the exception that he more readily abandoned his theatrics and confessed his puzzlement at the questions.

#### *Self-Report on What Was Learned*

Post-question #1: After completing the research study, how do you view Texas history/ and or your selected research topic?

The students referred to the insights they gained about the historical people they studied. Karen, Amy, and Olivia appreciated learning about women and children—an underrepresented group—and discovered the impact of these individuals on the Texas Revolution. For Amy, the dramatic experience of surviving the Alamo attack impacted her emotionally. Prior to the study, she accepted the Alamo story as truth, and now she questioned the Texas Revolution's mythic elements—the heroic inevitability of the Texan's victory--and the probability of alternative outcomes. Her new conception of the Alamo and of the war enabled her to appreciate more accurately “those who lost their lives just for us.” Olivia noted how the women and children who survived the Alamo

presented differing accounts; thus, Olivia realized the fallibility of historical knowledge when she stated, “History is true depending on who said it.”

Tim, Gary, John, and Chad realized that they gained a more in-depth knowledge of Sam Houston and of Santa Anna. Tim and Gary viewed Santa Anna as more barbaric and cruel than they previously supposed. They remarked on his deception and spoke of uncovering “the real Santa Anna,” a fire-crazy man who burned buildings and towns. Although their response represented a pro-Texas (rather than a pro-Mexican) perspective, they justified their answers by citing the specific violations Santa Anna committed.

John enjoyed the human interest appeal of Sam Houston, who “was an interesting, powerful man with a purpose.” Chad especially valued reading about Sam Houston from his own words, and he gained an increased appreciation for Houston’s tenacity:

*Chad:* I realized that he wasn’t gonna [attack Santa Anna]...It was the best idea, and that’s what he was going to go with. People didn’t like the idea of retreat, but it was his idea, and he was going to stick with it until the end.

In his statement, Chad referred to the criticism of de facto Texas government officials, who charged Sam Houston with cowardice for retreating to east and for failing to advance an early attack against Santa Anna’s army. Houston’s soldiers itched for the opportunity to avenge the Alamo, but Houston refused to place his men in harm’s way and instead waited for a more opportune time to attack (he eventually did attack at San Jacinto, thus securing the Texas army’s victory).

Chad had viewed daguerreotypes of Houston, had examined maps of the Battle

of San Jacinto, had read selections from Houston's autobiography and printed account of the Battle of San Jacinto. From these documents, Chad concluded that Houston stood by his actions because he did not "care about what other people do, or what others say about him." Chad noted that he gained more of an idea of Sam Houston from "what he actually said for himself."

The students' responses to Post-question #1 reveal their ability to consider the viewpoints of the historical agents. After reading Houston's own writings, Chad adopted Houston's perspectives as his own. Certainly, the comprehension, articulation, and understanding of the historical agents' mindset functions as a fundamental step in the building of historical empathy. Whether students choose to agree with the attitudes of the historical agents does not indicate their degree of empathetic understanding; however, their ability to judge the decisions of the historical agents on their own terms—and in this case, Chad's recognition of Houston's decision to retreat—formed the processing of history's complexities.

For Olivia, Amy, and Karen, their extrapolation of the women and children's experiences—witnessing the horrific fall of the Alamo and afterwards fleeing with the terrified Texans to the east—revealed their ability to assimilate the historical agents' emotions. The girls expressed the what-it-was-like-to-actually-be-there sentiments revealed how they transported mentally into the historical agents' living realities. Olivia and Amy advanced more sophisticated

conceptions through their willingness to reject mythic versions of history and to consider the plausibility of written accounts.

The fledgling students (Amy, Olivia, and Chad) demonstrated incipient forms of advanced historical thinking. In the cases of Karen, Tim, and Gary improved relative to their contextual understandings of Santa Anna, Sam Houston, and the women and children of the Alamo. Tim and Gary expressed a simplistic—albeit supported—view of Santa Anna. For John, the racy, dramatic aspects of Houston’s life caught his attention, but he did develop a new awareness of Houston’s role in the Texas Revolution. In her response to Post-question #1, Kelsey at first stated she did not acquire any new ideas but then later indicated that she learned more about Davy Crockett’s life. Crockett became widely known for his published stories of his adventures on the wild frontier in Tennessee, and after his defeat in a congressional election, he joined the forces at the Alamo. For these students, the opportunity to interpret history *at all* presented a dramatic change from their previous educational experience, but they needed more time to practice thinking historically from multifaceted perspectives.

Post-interview question #2: After completing the research study, do you view history as a challenging subject?

Six out of eight of the students (except Amy and Olivia) saw history as an easy subject. The seven students held this view prior to entering the study, and they maintained this same view at the conclusion. John, Chad, and Olivia

actually thought instructional approach reduced any difficulty associated with studying history. Chad appreciated knowing where to look and how to find answers to his historical questions. Because he studied history from the point-of-view of a person (Sam Houston), John found improvements in his comprehension. The projects helped Kelsey to process the information.

The six students answered Post-question #2 by considering their personal achievement or ease in learning history. Only Amy and Karen considered the question in terms of the interpretive nature of history as a discipline. Karen tried to describe the thinking associated with reading primary documents, but she struggled to articulate her answer. In contrast, Amy described the advanced cognitive skills needed for historical inquiry:

*Amy:* I think it's kind of hard because you have to find documents, and then you have to go back and find if it's right. And then you have to share it with others, and then you have to go back again, and again, and again. And if it's not right, you still have to check.

Unlike her peers, Amy demonstrated an advanced, mature understanding of the process of historical inquiry. She assimilated historical research as the acts of locating the essential documents, of checking (and cross-checking) conclusions, and of sharing these conclusions with others.

### *Questions About History and Historians*

Pre-question #1: What is history?



Seven of the eight students tersely called history “the past events.” John, referred to history “as the happenings of the world.” Chad and Gary extended the idea of the past to include those events that “explain where it all comes from” and that “teach us about ourselves.” Olivia saw the past as including both preceding and current events. Karen also regarded history as “the past events that occurred in a state, a city, or even a family,” and the events that “create governments and republics.” Prior to the study, John, Amy, and Kelsey lacked a precise understanding of history. Only Chad, Gary, Olivia, and Karen recognized history as an explanation of how the past evolved into the present.

Post-question #1: What is history?

Kelsey, Tim, Chad, and Gary simply restated the same answer that they offered in the pre-question. Kelsey and Tim still viewed history as simply “the past events.” Although Kelsey and Tim’s answers remained unchanged, they shared a reasonable, albeit simple, idea of history. John moved beyond the idea of world happenings to include the “events that happened before I was thought of.” Chad and Gary still referred to history as an explanation of our ancestral and societal existence. Although they held this idea previous to the study, their answers parallel VanSledright’s (2001) assertion: as students develop historical empathy for their ancestors, they ultimately return to a deeper awareness of themselves.

Olivia and Karen extended their previous answers to include biography as an acceptable part of historical studies. Their answers extended from the

emphasis on life history and biography in the instructional unit. Amy offered a profound answer as history “artifacts or documents” revealing “some things that happened in the past.” Amy, who prior to the study possessed a vague knowledge of history, now understood historical knowledge as dependent upon the interpretation of available primary sources.

Pre-question #2: Why should we study history?

Kelsey, Tim, and Olivia believed in the adage that “if you don’t know history, you are doomed to repeat it.” John simply stated that we should study history to educate ourselves and our children. As stated earlier, Gary and Chad viewed history as essential to understanding our ancestry. Chad extended this idea further by stating, “To go forward, you have to know where you have been.” As did Chad, Amy saw history as indicative of where we came from and said, “History got us here.”

Post-question #2: Why should we study history?

In the post-intervention interviews, the same students (Olivia and Kelsey) and additional students (Amy, Karen, and Chad) reinforced the idea that history prevents us from repeating the mistakes of the past. Chad repeated his same answer from the pre-question but added the phrase “in order to prevent mistakes.” Gary provided a vague answer about putting historical ideas together, and John stated history to him was Jesus. The answers to Post-question #2 displayed disappointing reactions because the students failed to communicate new insights about the value of historical studies.

Pre-question #3: What do historians do?

The students appeared uncertain about their answers to Pre-question #3. Amy, Gary, and John said, "I don't know." Karen saw historians as oral storytellers, who share the memories of the ancestors, and who uncover these memories through archeology. Kelsey and Olivia stated that historians study and tell about the past. To their credit, Tim and Chad did articulate the idea that historians collect data about the past.

Post-question #3: What do historians do?

Seven of the students (except Karen and John, who still remained uncertain) referred to historians as seeking to dig up the unknown, specific details. Karen abandoned her earlier view of the historian as an archeological storyteller and instead said, "I don't know." Gary recognized that historians gather facts and "put them together in one big essay thing, like a textbook." Amy, Kelsey, and Chad demonstrated a more advanced understanding of procedural knowledge in history.

*Kelsey:* They study the past. They research the documents from the people.

*Amy:* Get artifacts, documents, diaries, anything that will tell about the past, and read them, and try to see if they are correct or not.

*Chad:* Well, they study history, and then they go back in time, and get the facts, and they sum it up to the best point of what is true and what is not.

During the instructional sessions, the students read primary documents and then used their findings to write their own secondary accounts. From this process, Gary acquired the idea that historians represent their findings by writing

large essays. Chad and Amy developed the notion that historians must seek to distinguish between truth and fiction before “sum[ming] it up to the best point.” Although six out of the eight students recognized that historians go back in time to discover the past, only two of the students (Amy and Kelsey) stated that historians use primary documents to accomplish this task. The students’ responses to Post-question #3 displayed an overall improvement in the students’ awareness, but greater gains would have been preferred for Karen and for John.

Pre-question #4: How do historians collect information about history?

The students’ responses to Pre-question #4 varied. Olivia and John stated that historians conduct research using encyclopedias or the Internet. Karen said that she did not know. Chad thought that historians read books, looked at pictures, and visited old battle sites. Tim used circular reasoning by restating the question in the form of an answer—they collect information by collecting data. Amy speculated that historians looked at journals and notebooks, but she failed to identify what those journals or notebooks actually were. Kelly remembered reading the *Diary of Anne Frank* in elementary school and assumed that historians used similar diaries. Gary indicated that he remembered Mr. Sims informing the class that historians look at old journals. As mentioned previously, Mr. Sims did teach the class the concept of primary documents (in preparation for the school’s benchmark exam, which occurred shortly before the onset of the study). Despite this instruction, the students still held vague notions about how historians collect information.

Post-question #4: How do historians collect information about history?

Five of the eight students (except Olivia, Tim, and John) answered Post-question #4 by stating that historians collect information using primary documents, such as journals, diaries, and other artifacts. Chad's response paralleled his peers' answers:

*Chad:* By getting documents that people back then wrote, if they wrote any. And trying to figure out...and going back to the times in which these people lived, and what not. So figure out, and dig up, and found out information on just what happened.

Through his statement "if they wrote any," Chad recognized that historians must depend upon the available resources to uncover historical truths. As Chad indicated, the digging, the searching, and the figuring out embodies the process of historical inquiry.

Olivia still held her previous assumption that historians used encyclopedias and the Internet. John appeared very puzzled by the question and referred to the use of technology to dig up old dinosaur bones. Tim demonstrated a closer awareness by saying, "They look through dead people's stuff," but he could not identify what "stuff" he was referring to.

Only Amy stated that historians use primary documents to publish in secondary accounts. For Gary, historians summarized their findings into "one big essay thing" like a textbook, but he struggled to articulate additional details. Kelsey speculated that historians shared their findings by creating movies and

television shows. Olivia thought that historians used their Internet finds to create radio programs and television documentaries. The responses to Post-question #4 demonstrate considerable improvements relative to the use of primary documents for data collection but communicated inconclusive answers about the creation of secondary accounts. The students failed, however, to link the notion of written secondary accounts to the work of gathering and interpreting.

Pre-question #5: Is history true? Explain.

All but two of the students (Chad and Olivia) answered an emphatic “yes” to Pre-question #5. Kelsey clarified her answer by stating that someone on occasion could lie. For Karen, historians double-check their ideas by referring to the Internet. Gary defended his answer by saying, “Because we have stuff to prove it, like journals.” Olivia, instead, argued in behalf of multiple perspectives, meaning the Texans would share a different version of the Texas Revolution than would the Mexicans. Chad stated the disadvantage of lost time prevents historians from knowing 100% of everything, especially the specific details of events.

Post-question #5: Is history true? Explain.

Gary and John affirmed their belief in historical truth and provided minimal information to support their assertion. Tim and Kelsey referred to historical truth in terms of truth and lies. According to Tim, history is true, but some people may choose not to believe it. For Kelsey, the true parts of history are the facts, and the lies are the “story parts.” Karen categorized historical truth as dependant

upon one's own opinion, meaning different people hold varying ideas about historical events and people. For Chad, logic helped one distinguish "what is not true" from "what is true," but most of history probably is true. Olivia repeated her same answer about the possibility of varying perspectives. Amy offered the most profound answer:

*Amy:* It can be sometimes if they didn't research it long enough. They might find something that might be wrong with it.

Her statement, "if they didn't research it long enough," aptly articulated the need for continual investigation to achieve historical accuracy. To their credit, Karen and Olivia recognized the possibility of various interpretations of historical information.

Tim and Kelsey's assumption of truth and lies, however, demonstrated an immature notion of historical scholarship. In his research, VanSledright (2002) found that upper elementary students, when confronted with the notion of plausible history, tended to perceive history as full of either truth or lies. As VanSledright (2002) explains, Lee (in his research with high school students in England) discovered similar reactions from students who argued that historians who present varying accounts must be liars.

The responses to Post-question #5 revealed the challenge associated with teaching interpretative history to inexperienced students. The students professed varied ideas regarding historical truth:

(1) history is absolutely true (John and Gary);

- (2) history is mostly true, except the lies (Tim and Kelsey);
- (3) history is mostly true, but has a few distinguishable falsehoods (Chad);
- (4) history is true depending on the interpreter's perspective (Olivia and Karen);
- (5) historical truth is dependent upon the accuracy of the research (Amy).

Olivia, Karen, and Amy demonstrated the most sophisticated understandings of historical truth. John, Gary, Tim, and Kelsey still possessed inaccurate views.

Pre-question #6: Do you view history as a story? Explain.

Tim and Karen emphatically stated that history consists of a collection of facts. For Chad, history should remain factual, but unfortunately, people like to add "falsehoods to the story." Olivia and Kelsey provided an uncertain answer. Gary, John, and Amanda viewed history as a story that provides them with a picture in their minds.

Post-question #6: Do you view history as a story? Explain.

Olivia, Gary, and Chad referred to the layout of history as "like a story," which shows how one event impacts another. John viewed history as a "big anthology." According to Amy, life history could be categorized as a story. For Kelsey, Tim, and Karen history differed from story because, as Tim declared, "the story parts are the lies." Karen provided a confusing answer about primary documents as stories and history as facts:



*Karen:* I really don't. A story is different from just facts. It's pretty much like a diary entry or a journal. It's all put together like a story, but it doesn't really go along with a story. It's just like facts listed everywhere. And then reading them, it's just like the facts in one big textbook.

Certainly, Karen distinguished the differences journals and her textbook, but she lacked the ability to categorize the different types of historical material. The responses to Post-question #6 revealed that half of the students (Chad, Olivia, Gary, and Chad), professed an incipient awareness of the concept of historical narrative as a genre. Amy identified life history as another type of historical narrative writing. Kelsey, Tim, and Karen only comprehended stories as fictional tales.

#### *Questions About History Instruction*

Pre-question #1: If you were the history teacher, how would you teach the class?

The students expressed dissatisfaction with note taking and memorization. Kelsey, Tim, and Amy indicated that they would use more projects to motivate students and to help them learn. Olivia emphasized the need to help the visual learners by using more pictures. Gary preferred stories and pictures that helped him visualize history. John and Chad remained uncertain about the question and said they would follow the example of the history teacher.

Post-question #1: If you were the history teacher, how would you teach the class?

Olivia, Amy, Tim, Kelsey, Gary, and John responded favorably to the activities used in the study, and they recommended more hands-on, collaborative lessons. Five out of the eight students (except Karen, John, and Kelsey) expressed strong predilections for visuals, especially old photographs and maps. Tim especially appreciated the ability to draw and create his own artwork. Kelsey expressed her distaste for reading historical texts, and Karen complained about the in-depth focus, which prevented her from learning all of the material, and which kept her behind Mr. Sim's other classes. As with any group of students, they each possessed different interests that influenced their attitudes towards effective history instruction. Overall, the students appreciated active learning and the integration of authentic visuals.

The data from the pre- and post-intervention interviews revealed some positive gains. Overall, the students became more aware of the role of primary documents in historical research, and they more readily questioned historical truth. The students expressed strong predilections for studying people and appreciated learning history from first-hand perspectives. Gary and Tim were drawn to the dark sides of Santa Anna, and John and Chad enjoyed learning about Sam Houston's boldness, leadership, and adventure seeking. The experiences of the women and children in the Alamo powerfully impacted Amy, who envisioned the realities of surviving such a horrific event. Karen and Olivia appreciated the opportunity to learn about women and children, but they expressed disappointment over the back-stage roles women people appeared to

play in the war. The students confirmed Bage's (1999) assertion that emotions do matter in history, and students naturally are drawn to narratives depicting the experiences of human beings.

Although the students developed an improved awareness of procedural knowledge, they struggled to make the connection between historians' work and the historical research we did in class. Amy, however, articulated an adept understanding of the historians' craft, the process of historical inquiry, and the dangers of mythic history. For Karen, the in-depth focus frustrated what she viewed as her personal achievement goal—the opportunity to learn all of the facts and to keep up with the classes not participating in the study. The students' views about what history is and why one studies history remained virtually the same.

Six out of the eight students (except Olivia and Kelsey) believed that their experiences positively contributed to their personal interests, motivations, and learning in history. Throughout the study, Olivia provided conflicted answers to the questions. At the end of the study, she told me that her personal concerns (i.e. home life and health) contributed to her incongruous responses. The lowest level reader, Kelsey, seemed the least impacted by the study, but she did indicate in her post-intervention interview that she struggled with comprehension.

## Contextual Readings of Primary Documents

Part of the mental acrobatics performed through historical thinking involves the careful reading and analysis of primary documents. Thinking “in time” necessitates the cognitive leap from the present into the past. The deciphering of antiquated texts necessitates a host of skills that appearing as impossible circus tricks—only attainable by the daring few. Historical reasoning often is referred to as *adductive*, meaning the process of adducing answers until the most probable fit is obtained (Wineburg, 2001). The contextual skills employed during primary document analysis require a delicate balance of rehearsed performance and experimentation. In other words, the historian’s bag of tricks, which include an array of textual decoding devices, assist the historian in primary document analysis, but the adductive nature of the task demands continual checking and cross-checking to achieve the most plausible interpretation.

At the close of the study, the eight primary participants conducted a private think-aloud with a primary document. I selected a document that correlated with their chosen topic. In a think-aloud, the student reads a primary document and then speaks aloud the immediate ideas entering his or her mind. Used by Wineburg (2001), VanSledright (2002), and Yeager and Doppen (2001), the think-aloud protocol enables the researcher to observe the student’s contextual reasoning *in process*. The protocols revealed in-depth insights into

the dissertation's supporting question, How do students interpret primary documents as a part of their experience with historical narrative inquiry?

To evaluate the students' think-alouds, I used Wineburg's (1994) model of the cognitive representation of historical texts (see Chapter 2). Wineburg's model represents how historians' think through a primary document. My discussion elucidates the students' thinking according to matching patterns. I shall briefly explain the subcomponents of Wineburg's model as a means of delineating the categories used in my analysis. As part of my assessment of the students' think-alouds, I created *Table 4* to illustrate how I applied Wineburg's model.

Table 4

*Analysis of Students' Think-Aloud Protocols*

Contextual Representation	Application to Think-Aloud Analysis
Representation of text [rT]	The student comprehends the literal meaning of the text.
Local representation	The student comprehends the literal meanings of words, phrases, and sentences.
Global representation	The student comprehends the literal meanings of sentences, paragraphs, and whole texts.
Representation of event [rE]	The student constructs a narrative account of what occurred based upon a literal understanding of the text.
Outside the event	The student constructs the observable events described in the text.
Inside the event	The student infers about the thoughts, feelings, motives, and beliefs of the historical agents.
Document as event	The student considers when, where, why, and how the document was created.
Representation of subtext [rSB]	The student understands the underlying argument communicated through the language and symbols within the text.
Text as rhetorical artifact	The student infers the author's purpose as communicated through language.
Text as human artifact	The student infers what the rhetoric discloses about the author's features (character, biases, hopes, fears, etc.)

The representation of the text [rt] refers to the linguistic comprehension of words and phrases. This type of comprehension operates on both a local and a global level: local representations include the meanings of words, phrases and sentences, and the global representations include sentences, paragraphs, and whole texts. The representation of the event[rE] explains how the historian applies the literal meaning of the text to the construction of the event. In determining what occurred at a given place in time, the historian examines the document in three ways:

- (1) outside the event, or the observable occurrences that can be captured through the senses (i.e. How many Texans fought in the battle?);
- (2) inside the event, or the internal motivations, intentions, thoughts, and beliefs of the historical agents;
- (3) document as event, or the creation of the document as an event in itself (i.e. When, where, how, and for what reasons was this document recorded?).

The representation of subtext [rSB] demarcates how the language communicates the underlying argument or theme. In translating the core meaning of the text, the historian interprets the document from two angles:

- (1) text as rhetorical artifact, or the local and global meaning of the language;
- (2) text as human artifact, or what the language reveals about the author's features (character, biases, hopes, fears, assumptions).

After analyzing the primary document, the historian compares the findings to other texts. Through this process, he or she then formulates an event model, often reconstructed in narrative form.

Olivia and Amy read John E. Elgin's report of his interview (*Figure 7*) with Susanna Dickinson, who survived the Alamo invasion. Because Dickinson was illiterate, she did not keep journals or nor write letters about her experience. To historians' knowledge, the interviews that were conducted with Dickinson occurred later in her life, and the Elgin interview, dated 1876, and transpired 40 years after the fall of the Alamo. In her interview, Dickinson describes her final words with her husband (who died in the battle), her witnessing of the attack, and her meeting with Santa Anna.



REMINISCENCES OF THE STORY OF THE ALAMO  
By Captain John E. Elgin.

...She said she could tell me nothing of the fighting at the time of the assault, as she was huddled with her babe in one of the north rooms of the Church and could see nothing of the main conflict, but that she heard the din of the battle, the shrieks of the wounded and dying which were terrifying and paralyzing.

She also told me of Lieutenant Dickinson jumping down off the rocks in the church and rushing into the room and embracing and kissing her and the babe "goodbye" saying: "The Mexicans have broken into the patio, I must go and help the boys." She never saw him again.

As the firing ceased, some Mexicans soldiers rushed into her room, she said, snatched off the blanket with which she had covered herself and the babe, and seeing no men hidden there, rushed out again. After a few minutes other men, with officers, entered, and found her, and led her out of the Fort.

Later, Santa Anna himself, she told me, mounted her on a horse with all the politeness of a French dancing master, and sent her to Gonzalez with the babe. He gave the child a bright Mexican silver dollar...

*Source:* Eglin, John E. September 23, 1936. "Reminiscences of the Story of the Alamo." Typed manuscript, autographed and notarized, in De Zavala (Adina Emila) Papers, Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin. Reprinted in *The Alamo Reader*.

Figure 7. Susanna Hannag (Dickinson, or Dickerson), interview, 1876.

Table 5

*Olivia's Interpretation of Dickinsen's interview*

Text	Protocol
<p><i>She said she could tell me nothing of the fighting at the time of the assault, as she was huddled with her babe in one of the north rooms of the Church and could see nothing of the main conflict</i></p>	<p>Maybe, this is Susanna Dickinson, right. So, she's like rushing because they're like attacking now. She's rushing with her child. They call them babes.</p>
<p><i>The Mexicans have broken into the patio, I must go and help the boys." She never saw him again.</i></p>	

*As the firing ceased, some Mexican soldiers rushed into her room, she said, snatched off the blanket with which she had covered herself and the babe, and seeing no men hidden there, rushed out again.*

*Later, Santa Anna himself, she told me, mounted her on a horse with all the politeness of a French dancing master, and sent her to Gonzalez with the babe. He gave the child a bright Mexican silver dollar.*

So, like how she's concerned that he died, and just the thought that she never saw him again. Just how sad that would be. How she held up the battle and everything.

So, like the Mexican soldiers came in looking for the men. And they didn't want to kill the women. They weren't even bothering with them.

Just how, she's taking about what happened in the Alamo, and how it all came into play. How the Mexican soldiers were looking for men and didn't even bother with the women. And how terrifying it was for her to just be hiding. And the feeling inside I could die at any moment. And then, but thankfully she didn't. How nice Santa Anna was to just get her out of the Alamo.

---

Part of Olivia's focus during the protocol was to establish textual coherence, to reiterate the surface meaning of the words and phrases. The representation of the text [rT], while rudimentary, functions as an essential component of document analysis. Olivia summarizes sentences and paragraphs in attempt to comprehend the text's overall meaning; thus, she appears more concerned with the global rather than the local meaning. Olivia's comments,

however, also reveal her attempt to represent the event [rE], both from outside and from inside the event. For example, she reconstructs happenings, such as Dickinson's efforts to hide from the Mexicans, and the Mexicans' storming of the Alamo.

Olivia heavily emphasizes her perception of the inside events, particularly Dickinson's emotions. Olivia references powerful events for Dickinson: the sorrow over a lost husband, the terror of the attack, and the rescue of herself and her child. Olivia captures the inside event in her description of Dickinson's feelings, "And how terrifying it was just to be hiding. And the feeling inside that I could die at any moment. And then, but thankfully, she didn't." Olivia also directs her attention to the intentions of the Mexicans, "who didn't want to kill the women," because "they weren't even bothering with them." Clearly, Olivia aptly recognizes that the Mexican soldiers did not prize the slaughter of civilian women and children. What Olivia fails to consider, however, was Santa Anna's inside events, namely his thoughts, his intentions, and his assumptions about the Texans and the surviving Dickinson and her babe.

Scrutiny of Olivia's protocol reveals her inattention to pertinent considerations. First, she ignores the document as event, thus neglecting several essential facts: first, John E. Elgin's rewrote Dickinson's story in his own words; second, the interview occurred in 1876, forty years after the attack; and third, the interview later was reprinted in 1936, at the time of the 100th year anniversary of the Alamo. Questions of Dickinson's reliability remain

unaddressed. In her representation of the event [rE], Olivia describes the global rather than local meaning of words and phrases. Olivia completely neglects the representation of subtext [rSB], with the attendant contemplations regarding Elgin's purposes in writing Dickinson's account and regarding what Elgin's text reveals about Dickinson as a person.

Table 6

*Amy's Interpretation of Dickinson's interview*

Text	Protocol
<i>She could tell me nothing of the fighting at the time of the assault...</i>	She thought she had blur. She was really, really scared.
<i>She was huddled with her babe...</i>	What does the babe mean? Like baby?
<i>...and she could see nothing of the main conflict, but she heard the din of the battle.</i>	Was she in the room with all of the knives?
<i>The shrieks of the wounded and dying which were terrifying and paralyzing.</i>	Like she was really, really scared.
<i>She also told me of Lieutenant Dickinson jumping down off the rocks in the church and rushing into the room and embracing and kissing her and the babe "goodbye"</i>	Was that like her husband or something? Maybe he knew he was gonna die?
<i>"The Mexicans have broken into the patio, I must go and help the boys." She never saw him again.</i>	He died.
<i>As the firing ceased, some Mexicans soldiers rushed into her room, she said, snatched off</i>	

*the blanket with which she had covered herself and the babe*

She covered the baby, so it wouldn't get hit, or something.

*After a few minutes other men, with officers, entered, and found her, and led her out of the Fort.*

They saved her sort of.

*Later, Santa Anna himself, she told me, mounted her on a horse with all the politeness of a French dancing master*

I don't really get that.

*and sent her to Gonzalez with the babe*

The sent her out, and they wanted to pay her, so Santa Anna could save her baby.

*He gave the child a bright Mexican silver dollar*

Kind of like buying the baby and making the baby happy to save her.

Think-Aloud Interviewer: Is there anything else about this passage that you would like to say?

Um, how her and the baby were like in the place, like in a room, and her husband, came in and kissed her goodbye, which she probably knew that he was gonna die, and then Santa Anna came in, and then he helped her, and then they rode off. (pause)

Santa Anna saved her from dying. (pause)

This might be an accurate account. I don't have all of the information on it. Susanna Dickinson was really, really old when she did this.

---

Amy primarily directs her comments towards comprehending the text, both locally and globally. Although Amy does not summarize the entire document, she deduces the denotation of words and phrases and, when uncertain, asks questions for clarification. As had Olivia, Amy aims at representing the text [rT] and representing the event [rE], in particular the outside occurrences described by Dickinson. She alludes to the inside events but points her thoughts primarily

to Dickinson (i.e. her fears during the attack and the premonition that she will lose her husband) instead of the Mexicans or Lt. Dickinson. Amy suggests that Santa Anna may have given the babe a silver dollar in order to spare her life, but she leaves any further possibilities regarding Santa Anna's assumptions, intentions, or thoughts unanswered.

Unlike Olivia, Amy contemplates the document as event by questioning Dickinson as a reliable resource. Amy ponders the tenuous nature of the aged mind when she says, "This might be an accurate account. I don't have all of the information. Dickinson was really, really old when she did this." To her credit, Amy recognizes the value of withholding judgments of a document's accuracy. As did Olivia, Amy overlooks the representation of the subtext [rSB], specifically, the text as both a rhetorical and a human artifact.

I presented Chad with an excerpt from Sam Houston's autobiography, which was written near the end of his life, and where Houston outlined the most pertinent events of military and political career. Despite the difficulty of the language, Chad expressed a willingness to attempt the think-aloud. I selected a portion from the description of the Battle of San Jacinto, where Houston and his Texian army attacked Santa Anna, and thus secured Texas Independence.

*Figure 8* and Chad's think-aloud (*Table 7*) are represented below.

*Life of General Sam Houston: A Short Autobiography.*

...The moment had at last come, the charge was ordered, and the war cry, *Remember the Alamo*, resounded from all sides with a terrific shout, while the two six-pounders opened a well-directed fire of grape and canister. At that instant, Deaf Smith, swinging an axe over his head, rode up and communicated with the General, who immediately dashed along the lines and announced the destruction of Vince's bridge. "Now fight for your lives, boys, and remember the Alamo!" exclaimed the General, in a clear distinct voice. The effect of this intelligence was electric, and the whole column of seven hundred, swayed and animated the strength and fury of ten times seven hundred men, rushed forward, with Houston at their head, right into the teeth of their foe. The Mexicans were drawn up in perfect order, and reserved their fire till the Texans were within sixty yards, but the mass of their storm of lead went over the heads of their assailants.

One ball shattered Houston's ankle, and several struck his horse in the breast, but heeding nothing of these things, the General spurred his charger on with redoubled speed, closely followed by the whole column at an increased and fearful pace. The Texans reserved their fire till within pistol shot, when every ball told with dreadful effect on the Mexican lines, and before the latter could reload, they were engaged hand to hand with their infuriated foes, who, on their side, not stopping to reload their rifles, broke them over the heads of the invaders, discharged their pistols and the work of slaughter with their huge bowie knives, by absolutely hewing their way through the dense masses of living flesh. The right and left wing of the enemy had been routed, but his centre remained firm, and at one moment, repelling the desperate charge of the Texans, he was preparing with a division of more than five-hundred men to fall upon the battalion of Texan infantry, when Houston, seeing the movement, putting himself at the head of his comrades, and calling on them to follow him, gave the order to fire. There seemed to be but one explosion, so instantaneous was the fire, and the enemy's charging force was literally mowed down as with a scythe—only thirty two out of five hundred remaining in their shoes as prisoners of war. This movement decided the fate of the day, and the next instant the Mexicans were flying in every direction before the pursuers, who continued to *remember the Alamo*, and executed fearful vengeance on their barbarous foe. The enemy left in his entrenchments, amongst the dead and wounded, nearly four hundred are supposed to have been slaughtered. Towards the close of the day, Houston's horse fell beneath him, pierced no less than seven balls, and in falling brought his master another horse, he remounted, rode slowly across the field cheered by his comrades. As he moved along he spied two large ravens hovering over the spot where the enemy's artillery had been posted, with their heads towards the west. In a moment, several muskets were seized by the men standing near, to bring them down, but Houston ordered them to desist, remarking that the omen was a good one, that it denoted the march of the empire westward. Arriving shortly afterwards at the oak under which he had slept the previous night, he received Almonte as a prisoner of war from the hands of Gen. Rusk, and exhausted by the loss of blood, fainted and fell from his saddle.

Source: Houston, Sam. *Life of General Sam Houston: A Short Autobiography*. Austin: Pemberton Press, 1964.

Figure 8. Sam Houston's description of the Battle of San Jacinto.

Table 7

*Chad's Interpretation of Houston's autobiography*

Text	Protocol
<p><i>At that instant, Deaf Smith, swinging an axe over his head, rode up and communicated with the General, who immediately dashed along the lines and announced the destruction of Vince's bridge.</i></p>	<p>I think that right there, my first thought would be that they would be trying to get all of the time they have to slow down, whoever is coming after them, the Mexicans, so they can have more time to gain ground away from them.</p>
<p><i>The Texans reserved their fire till within pistol shot, when every ball told with dreadful effect on the Mexican lines, and before the latter could reload, they were engaged hand to hand with their infuriated foes, who, on their side, not stopping to reload their rifles, broke them over the heads of the invaders</i></p>	<p>I think right there, they're talking about, they're just trying to take 'em out as soon as possible. They don't really, they're just trying to reload, and take 'em out as soon as possible, because they want it to be over with.</p>
<p><i>Arriving shortly afterwards at the oak under which he had slept the previous night, he received Almonte as a prisoner of war from the hands of Gen. Rusk, and exhausted by the loss of blood, fainted and fell from his saddle.</i></p>	<p>I think it's interesting how that the end of his, the end of the army, where 400 men were just slaughtered and just killed, just terribly, and they didn't have much to do. And finally after his horse had just fallen, he got another one, but he still, the loss of blood, and he fell from his saddle. That's just different. Because you got shot so many times, and you just lose all of that blood. It's kind of crazy how much, how far he could go.</p>



Chad appears to move beyond the representation of the text by directing his comments to the inside event. By placing himself in Houston's position, Chad alludes to the general's and to the soldiers' thoughts and feelings during the battle. Using the phrase, "my first thought would be," Chad describes how he would want to slow down the Mexicans, so "they [the Texians] could have more time to gain ground away from them [the Mexicans]." Chad explains the difficulty of loading a rifle amid the resurgence of Mexican fire when he stated, "They're just trying to reload and take 'em out as soon as possible, because they want it to be over with." Chad's comments center on the urgency of action and on the incessant desire to end the violence.

Chad explores the text as human artifact in his description of Houston's dogged determination of mind and of body. Referring to the wounds Houston incurred in the battle, Chad indicates "And finally after his horse had just fallen, he got another one, but he still, the loss of blood, and he fell from his saddle...Because you got shot so many times, and you just lose all of that blood. It's kind of crazy how much, how far he could go." Chad's conception of Houston as audacious and resolute echoes biographers Campbell (2007) and Haley (2002), who hold similar views of Houston as a military officer, and Chad's assertion seems reasonable, given the text. What Chad misperceives, however, is a consciousness of Houston's vainglory narration of the vanquishing of a formidable enemy.

An analysis of the text as rhetorical artifact might have prompted Chad to consider Houston's overly romantic language, including the implications of divine providence and of intrepid heroism. Chad fails to recognize the writing an autobiography as a purposeful act, thereby ignoring Houston's probable intent in the representation of his military and his political life. Questions regarding the document as event, such as when, why, and for what purpose did Houston write his autobiography, remain untouched. Given the difficulty of the text, Chad displays his advanced ability to comprehend the literal meaning, but he struggles to ascertain the rhetorical elements.

Tim and John requested to read one of Santa Anna's public proclamations (*Figure 9*), written shortly after he seized the Alamo. Santa Anna's proclamation, sent with Mrs. Dickinson to General Houston, was calculated to intimidate the Texans to acquiescence. The following think-alouds (*Tables 8, 9*) illustrate the students' wrestling with Santa Anna's intentions and rhetoric.

Background of document: Shortly after the taking of the Alamo, Santa Anna sent with Mrs. Dickinson several proclamations.

**ARMY OF OPERATIONS**

*The General-in-Chief of the Army of Operations of the Mexican Republic,  
To the Inhabitants of Texas:*

...Bexarians! Return to your homes and dedicate yourselves to your domestic duties. Your city and the fortress of the Alamo are already in possession of the Mexican army, composed of your own fellow citizens; and rest assured that no mass of foreigners will ever interrupt your repose, and much less, attack your lives and plunder your property. The supreme government has taken you under its protection, and will seek for your good.

Inhabitants of Texas! I have related to you the orders that the army of operations I have the honor to command comes to execute; and therefore the *good* will have nothing to fear. Fulfill always your duties as Mexican citizens, and you may expect the protection and benefit of the laws; and rest assured that you will never have reason to report yourselves of having observed such conduct, for I pledge you in the name of the supreme authorities of the nation, as your fellow citizen and friend, that what has been promised you will be faithfully performed.

**ANTONIO LOPEZ DE SANTA ANNA.**

Head-Quarters, Bexar, March 7, 1836.

*Source: Telegraph and Texas Register. October 11, 1836, San Felipe, Texas. Reprinted in The Alamo Reader.*

*Figure 9. Santa Anna, public proclamation, March 7, 1836.*

Table 8

Tim's Interpretation of Santa Anna's proclamation

Text	Protocol
<i>Your city and the fortress of the Alamo are already in possession of the Mexican army</i>	I think if I was Texas Independence that would make me mad. Because this is our property, and you can't take it away.
<i>rest assured that no mass of foreigners will ever interrupt your repose, and much less, attack your lives and plunder your property</i>	Well, that sounds okay.
<i>The supreme government has taken you under its protection, and will seek for your good.</i>	That sounds like it's not Santa Anna speaking. He's not that kind of nice man. He's mean.
<i>Inhabitants of Texas! I have related to you the orders that the army of operations I have the honor to command comes to execute; and therefore the good will have nothing to fear.</i>	Sounds like he just wants to put everything on hold if he wants to.
<i>I pledge you in the name of the supreme authorities of the nation, as your fellow citizen and friend, that what has been promised you will be faithfully performed.</i>	Um, it sounds like somebody else wrote that. Why would he say that? (pause)
	Well, just because he's being a friend doesn't mean it changes the meaning. He's just changing the words. It doesn't change anything.

One of the challenges with interpreting Tim's think-aloud stems from his shy brevity. From his comments, Tim appears to comprehend the literal meaning of the proclamation, but he does not invest time in representing the event. Instead, Tim chooses to focus on the emotional aspects, as indicated by his statement, "Well if I was Texas Independence that would make me mad." Tim identifies with the angry response of the Texans', who discovered Santa Anna's capture of the Alamo. What Tim fails to ascertain, however, is Santa Anna's motives in writing the proclamation. In response to Santa Anna's statement, "rest assured no mass of foreigners...will attack your lives and plunder your property," Tim reacts, "Well, that sounds okay." Tim immediately accepts Santa Anna's claims of protection without considering the dictator's true intentions.

When, later in Tim's reading, he recognizes a conflict between Santa Anna's words and his character, Tim struggles with the representation of the subtext [rSB], and specifically, the text as a rhetorical artifact. In his text, Santa Anna informs the Texans, "The supreme government has taken you under its protection and will seek for your good," and Tim responded, "That sounds like it's not Santa Anna speaking. He's not that kind of nice man. He's mean." The discrepancy between Santa Anna's language and what Tim already knows about Santa Anna's character lead Tim to propose the possibility of a different author. Tim later returned to this same conclusion at the end of his reading, "Um, it sounds like somebody else wrote that. Why would he say that?"

Interpreting the rhetoric of the document involves deciphering the author's purposes as communicated via language. Tim successfully distinguishes between the literal meaning of the proclamation and Santa Anna's intentions to subdue the Texans, but Tim cannot not conceive how written language potentially can be used as a military tactic to invoke fear and to force the Texan's submission to the Mexican government. For Tim, the words cannot denote an alternative meaning; someone else wrote the proclamation or Santa Anna's words must be true—because, as Tim states, “just because he's [Santa Anna] being a friend doesn't mean it changes anything.”

*Table 9*

John's Interpretation of Santa Anna's proclamation

Text	Protocol
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*The supreme government has taken you under its protection, and will seek for your good.*

Is he saying like, (pause) what's that I'm looking for. (pause). Persuade. Is he trying to persuade these people? Yes, he is. *The supreme government has taken you under your protection and will seek for your good!?!*

*I have related to you the orders that the army of operations I have the honor to command comes to execute; and therefore the good will have nothing to fear. Fulfill always your duties as Mexican citizens, and you may expect the protection and benefit of the laws; and rest assured that you will never have reason to report yourselves of having observed such conduct, for I pledge you in the name of the supreme authorities of the nation, as your fellow citizen and friend, that what has been promised*

*you will be faithfully performed.*

Interviewer: Do you have anything else you would like to say?

All I can say is he has a lot of run-on sentences.

Apparently, he wrote this because he's trying to persuade these people, but I mean he's not really a good guy. And he's telling these people everything is going to be all good for them, but it doesn't. (pause)

Interviewer: Why do you say that?

So, they can come to his place, and he can have more power. This one right here, "*The supreme government has taken you under its protection, and will seek for your good.*" Yeah, right. "*I have I have the honor to command comes to execute; and therefore the good will have nothing to fear.*" They have everything to fear.

"*That what has been promised you will be faithfully performed.*" No!?! Pretty much the whole passage about like him. It's just no.

Interviewer: Is there anything else you would like to say?

I have a hard time reading. It's difficult.

---

When I presented John with an excerpt from Houston's autobiography, John declared that he found the text incomprehensible; instead, he requested to read an easier selection. Unlike Tim, John decodes Santa Anna's rhetoric by concluding that Santa Anna intended to persuade the Texans to surrender.

John reiterates several phrases revealing Santa Anna's deception:

- (1) The supreme government has taken you under its protection and will seek for your good;
- (2) I have the honor to command comes to execute; and therefore, the good will have nothing to fear;

(3) That which has been promised will be faithfully performed.

By focusing on specific lines within the document, John demonstrates his ability to represent the subtext [rSB], specifically the text as a rhetorical artifact. John states his interpretation of Santa Anna's statements, "Apparently he wrote this because he's trying to persuade these people, but he's not really a good guy." As John reveals, "by telling these people everything is going to be all good for them," Santa Anna encouraged the Texans "to come to his place, so he can have more power." John deftly uncovers the rhetorical meaning of the document by pinpointing specific passages. In so doing, John explains what the document reveals about Santa Anna's character.

The students' think-alouds varied according to the chosen emphasis. For Karen, Amy, and Olivia, their comments primarily centered on the representation of the event [rE], through their descriptions of the outside and the inside events. Susanna Dickinson's description of her experience, may have, in part promoted this type of analysis. Amy did advance a sophisticated remark, when she challenged the Dickinson's reliability. Chad directed his attention towards the text as a human artifact, namely Sam Houston's tenacity and courage. Chad's interpretation is not surprising since Houston, in his autobiography, portrayed a purposeful depiction of himself.

Santa Anna's proclamation proved thorny for Tim, who refused to accept the possibility that written words mean something other than the literal. In his pre- and post-intervention interview, Tim stated that history teachers would never



teach lies “because there would be no point if it was fake.” His elementary focus on truth versus lies limited his understanding of the rhetorical layers of meaning. John, in contrast, unraveled Santa Anna’s actual motives and aptly interpreted the text as both a rhetorical and human artifact. The apparent difference between Santa Anna’s character and his language facilitated John’s advanced understandings.

The students’ think-alouds illustrate the difficulty of interpreting the subtext of a document. In particular, the inherent rhetorical devices proved the most problematic for all of the students except John. In addition, the students could have considered the document’s reliability more carefully; only Amy questioned the Dickinson’s credibility (resulting from Dickinson’s old age). I chose not to include the think-alouds for Gary and Kelsey (the lowest level readers), who struggled with basic comprehension. Because the students’ conducted independent think-alouds, Gary and Kelsey did not benefit from the aid of their peers.

The other six students (Amy, Olivia, Karen, Chad, Tim, and John) presented comments on at least one area of Wineburg’s model, and Amy and John (the middle level readers) articulated more advanced considerations. The think-alouds showed that students can examine primary documents from at least one angle; however, the direct teaching of the analytic components of the Wineburg model (see Chapter 2) and increased practice with primary document analysis may have yielded more complex, interpretive comments. Struggling

readers, such as Gary and Kelsey, needed greater assistance with reading comprehension.

### The Emergent Themes

I turn to an analysis of the entire class and their contributions to the study. In evaluating the data, I classify the findings under eight emergent themes: the value of student choice, perspective formation (as represented in students' historical narratives, artistic displays, journals, focus interviews, and informal interviews), the identification with and predilection for studying people, the role of visuals, the contextual readings of the primary documents, the questioning of historical truth, and the degree of enjoyment (as determined by active learning, group dynamics, degree of work, and reading/ writing difficulties). I discuss each theme in detail by providing examples from the students' conversations, focus interviews, written work, and oral presentations.

#### *Value of Student Choice*

At the beginning of the study, I tried to ascertain the students' interests relative to the Texas Revolution. In Mr. Sim's class, the students had learned the basic overview of the Texas Revolution, but they had not spent much time delving into specific topics. As a result, the students needed more exposure in order to determine their particular interests. The first few instructional sessions enabled the students to hone in on specific areas. I allowed the students to organize themselves into groups and requested that each group select a topic for further research. I intentionally avoided intervening in this process; instead, I

simply suggested that they consider significant people (leading figures, such as Stephen F. Austin or Sam Houston, or groups, such as Tejanos or women) or events (such as the Alamo, the Goliad Massacre, and the Battle of San Jacinto). The students enthusiastically selected significant people in the Texas Revolution—Davy Crockett (2 groups selected), Sam Houston (1 group selected), Santa Anna (1 group selected), and women and children (2 groups selected).

After presenting adaptation of the Vee diagram (Appendix B, *Figure 15*), I instructed the students to formulate an inquiry question. The Vee diagram served to organize the students' ideas and impressions from their inquiries. Using the suggestions from Good and Brophy (2003), I presented the students with the criteria of effective questioning. As with the seventh-graders in the pilot study (Appendix A), these students struggled to articulate a question to direct their research interests; thus, I decided to present a sample of a well-written question. As a result, the students successfully coined their own questions, patterned after my germane example.

Researchers (Bage, 2001; Levstik & Smith, 1996; Shemilt, 1980) attest to the need for teacher modeling for students' first embarkation into inquiry. Their findings echo social cognitivist Albert Bandura (Sternberg, 2005), whose work emphasized modeling as an essential component of learning. The observation and replication advocated by Bandura (1986) proves more amenable when governed by students' own values. For the seventh-graders, the opportunity to

dictate their own inquiries improved their attentiveness and their enjoyment. As stated in their focus interviews, their written reflections, and their journal entries, the students overwhelmingly deemed themselves as more tractable from a self-directed experience. For example, students often commented on the privilege to choose by saying, “It’s easier to learn because you’re more interested in it, so it’s fun to learn,” or “If you had just handed out topics...then I wouldn’t have been as interested. And it wouldn’t have made as much sense.” The students’ interests and decisions attributed to their perceptions of their intrinsic motivations and degree of enjoyment. The essential role of student choice critically enhanced the students’ attention and appreciation.

### *Perspective Formation*

To ascertain how the students formulated perspectives from their inquiries, I asked them first to write an original historical narrative and second to create an artistic piece. Prior to these activities, the students conducted a brainstorming session in which they dialogued about their different points-of-view. The students then used their brainstorming materials to work independently on their own written narrative. About half of the students chose to illustrate their narratives, and then each group assembled the narratives into a small book (reprinted in Appendix D).

Each of the groups articulated a perspective, although simple in nature, and attempted to represent this perspective in their presentation. In general, the students’ conclusions resulted in assessments of a historical figure’s character or

an individual's contributions to the Texas Revolution. Regarding Sam Houston, the students delivered an in-costume monologue of Houston's life and his military leadership. One of the groups who studied women and children performed a play (with props and costumes) and retold the stories of the Alamo survivors and women of the Runaway Scrape. In both instances, the students focused on the challenges faced by Sam Houston or the women and cited examples of how these individuals overcame difficult odds.

The second group that studied women and children chose instead to draw a poster (Appendix D) depicting the impact of the women on the war. As did their peers, this group centered on how the women (Susanna Dickinson and Dilue Rose Harris, survivor of Runaway Scrape) dealt with tragedy, but this group offered more specific details about how each woman contributed to the cause. For example, the girls noted that Dickinson "(a) spread word of the Alamo; (b) cooked, nursed, and fought for the Alamo; (c) and gave us the most info of one of the Alamo's survivors." Harris assisted in that she "gave us information as a survivor of the Runaway Scrape" and that she "took care of her family while her mother was sick." By emphasizing individual contributions, the students expressed their view that women (a) performed meaningful services and (b) acted as event-makers within their sphere of influence. Interestingly enough, Karen, who participated in this group, stated in her post-intervention interview that she struggled to find value in the women's roles. As the foremost leader of

her team, Karen's collaborative project reflected her efforts to appreciate the women in the war.

Regarding Santa Anna, the students created a poster of the documents and images from Santa Anna's life. They drew fire around the documents to symbolize Santa Anna as a fire-crazy dictator, whose destructive path (which included the burning of the bodies at the Alamo and the town of Harrisburg) led to his eventual demise (his defeat at San Jacinto). Their story invokes a moralistic tone implying that evil-doers never prosper.

Both of the Crockett groups addressed the notion of Davy Crockett as a legendary hero and sought to bring understanding to this larger-than-life human being. One of the groups created a 3-D replica (Appendix D) of the Alamo and explored numerous possibilities regarding Crockett's death. The other group prepared a PowerPoint presentation using historical artifacts and paintings and narrated Crockett's life history. The students focused on differences between Crockett as a mythical icon and Crockett as an ordinary mortal. Through this comparison, the students concluded that Crockett did contribute positively to the battle at the Alamo, thus explaining the legendary saga.

Each of the groups sought to communicate their unique perspective about their historical figure(s) and their impact on the Texas Revolution. With the exception of one of the Crockett groups, the presentations primarily constituted a rendition of historical facts accompanied by a statement of a unified conclusion. Most of the groups attempted to incorporate the primary documents (both textual

and visual) into their presentations, and although the groups' opinions reflected their interpretations of the documents, the students failed to mention *specifically* how the documents influenced their points-of-view. For example, the students who explored Crockett as a mythic hero versus the real Davy Crockett demonstrated a sophisticated historical conclusion, but the students struggled to articulate exactly what details from the primary and secondary accounts led them to see the difference between Crockett as a hero and Crockett as an icon.

In other words, the students remembered a plethora of historical facts from both the secondary and primary accounts, and they even developed incipient opinions based upon their readings. The connection, however, between their newly acquired historical evidence and their conclusions remained unstated. When prompted through spontaneous interviews, the students could explain partially how, where, and why they derived their conclusions, but even then, their ideas remained incomplete. As a result, I concluded that the students needed greater assistance in learning how to articulate their viewpoints using historical evidence. The incoherence stemmed not from inability formulate an opinion but from the difficulty in communicating ideas effectively, especially in written form.

The historical narratives varied according to the skill and the effort put forth by the student. All of the narratives contained a list of biographical information, a statement of the author's opinion about the historical figure, or a combination of both. Unlike the artistic presentations, more of the students defended their interpretations with historical facts. The narratives summarized or

listed what the students learned from the documents (without specifying to which documents they were referring).

In analyzing the historical narratives, I wish to highlight a selection of the students' work. Prior to delving into the topic, I must mention a few points. First, the narratives on women and children primarily consisted of discombobulated, fragmented listings of the historical facts. The students who chose this topic studied a group of people rather than one individual; consequently, they struggled to bring their ideas into one or more cohesive themes. Second, I shall not emphasize the Davy Crockett narratives (exploring the probable causes of Crockett's death), because I cover this topic later in the chapter. Instead, I shall emphasize how the narratives of Sam Houston, Santa Anna, and women and children (despite their fractured organization) dealt with decision making. I must mention that I did not direct the students toward a particular thematic emphasis; however, most of the historical narratives pattern one another. The primary questions driving the historical narratives can be simply restated—What did the historical agents do with the choices placed before them? The more advanced essays also considered--How did these choices impact either themselves and/ or the Texas Revolution?

Each of the historical agents (Sam Houston, Santa Anna, Dilue Rose Harris) played different roles that affected the outcomes. For example, after Santa Anna abolished the Alamo, he began his terrible march to the east, and the civilians of Texas fled in fear. Sam Houston did not dare send his



outnumbered, unruly army into an open blood slaughter enacted by Santa Anna and his soldiers; instead, Sam Houston retreated to the east in hopes of meeting Santa Anna on equal ground. Houston's men and the de facto government of Texas harshly criticized him for running from the enemy as a coward. Despite mounting pressure, Houston held firm in his resolve. Of this decision, Chad wrote:

Sam Houston made some risky decisions to win the Texas Revolution... I could name one decision of his that people thought weren't so bright but he thought otherwise. When Houston decides to retreat some of his men agreed with him, but after a while his men thought Houston should step forward and fight instead of backing away and retreating. But Houston thought he was doing the right thing by retreating. This very decision basically won him the revolution.

As Chad explained, Houston chose to continue his retreat because "he thought he was doing the right thing," and "this very decision basically won him the revolution." According to Chad, Houston was faced with the option of "step[ping] forward and fight[ing] instead of backing away and retreating." By choosing the "right thing," Sam Houston secured the Texans' victory at San Jacinto and ultimately independence from Mexico.

In her historical narrative, Mandy discussed how Dilue Rose Harris and Susanna Dickinson endured hardships. I shall quote from the Mandy's description of her reading of the diary of Mrs. Harris:

She [Dilue Rose Harris] wrote a diary on her expeiriances being a child in the Revolution. She described packing very few things and heading along journey. She told of how she went on a boat of an eight man crew, and how many were left behind. She then talked about crossing rivers and blowing up bridges behind them, causing the deaths of many animals and

humans...She was very grateful to be a survivor. As you can see, if it weren't for the women with their bravery, support, passion, courage, and desire to be free, the Alamo and the Texas Revolution would have been a lot harder, where we might not have even gotten our freedom.

For Mandy, Harris chose to persevere despite escalating obstacles, and her choices proved fruitful. Mandy added her own interpretation when she stated, "As you can see, if it weren't for the women with their bravery, support, courage, and desire to be free...we might not have even gotten our freedom." Certainly, Mandy invoked a sense of patriotism and heroism in her narrative, which may or may not reflect Harris's sentiments. For instance, did Harris run from Santa Anna simply as an act of self-preservation? Or was Harris—as Mandy suggested--moved by a deeper commitment to an ideal? Whether or not Texas gained independence from Mexico may not have been determined necessarily by the possibility of Santa Anna capturing Harris and her family. To her credit, Mandy chose to recognize the contributions of women to the Texas Revolution, and her narrative reflected this energy. Perhaps improved direction and increased practice would have enabled Mandy to explicate how the historical evidence supported her conclusions.

In his historical narrative, James recounted how Santa Anna's poor choices eventually led to his demise. For instance, in his introduction James painted a picture of Santa Anna as the man who had it all:

Santa Anna was a leader who wanted power, glory, and wealth. He started to want these at age 12. When Santa Anna became 12 years of age, his parents decided to put him in the Mexican Armed Forces. He

soon became a great fighter. His ranks went up at a steady pace. It was if he was born to fight. Everything was going his way.

According to James, Santa Anna's vainglory ambitions ultimately led to his own self-destruction. As James stated, "Soon battles were everywhere, just because he believed he would get rich and famous." Santa Anna's desire to "get rich and famous" led to a series of violent decisions, including the Alamo and the Goliad Massacre. James explained how Santa Anna's selfishness and lies caused "everything to go downhill." He concluded his narrative by invoking a didactic tone:

At San Jacinto he lost. His soldiers were tired and hungry. No one fought, but they ran for the only way out. The Texans won. Santa Anna no longer had glory. He barely had any power. He had almost no money. He was powerful, he had money, and he had glory. No one thought he was great anymore.

James' rendition of Santa Anna's life and his loss in the Texas Revolution ended much like a moralistic fable, in which the evil dictator got what he deserved. Perhaps there is some truth to James' story; certainly, Santa Anna's choices angered the Texans and, at times, even his own men (as indicated in the documents in Appendix A). Modern historians from both camps—Texan and Mexican—have described Santa Anna in less than favorable terms (Hardin, 1996; Krause, 1997). James added, nevertheless, his own moral slant by suggesting to his readers not to repeat Santa Anna's mistakes.

Gary also described Santa Anna in similar terms, as a man who craved glory and power, but who eventually lost due to an error in judgment. Of Santa Anna, Gary wrote:

Santa Anna was a hispanic leader who loved a lot of power. The power I am talking about is the power that everyone bows down to him, and respects and follows his every command. He loved that kind of power so he could be like no one else. He wanted to be a powerful leader, a leader that would make history. He wanted to be a individual, a special, special person.

In his interviews, Gary explicated how he wanted to know what drove Santa Anna to his cruelty. His narrative revealed his attempt to at psychoanalysis--by understanding that "he [Santa Anna] loved that kind of power so he could be like no one else." As Gary often noted, Santa Anna's titles, such as "El Presidente" and "Your Excellency," enabled the leader to rise as a larger than life figure, who commanded and who controlled all.

As evidenced by Chad, Mandy, James, and Gary, students approach history from different angles, which ultimately influence their final assumptions. The attention to who human beings actually were, what circumstances they faced, and how they chose to act within a particular sphere of influence dominated the historical narratives written by the represented students (and the rest of the class). Clearly, the students connected with the historical agents through the idea of what it means to be human. Within this realm, the historical agents became more than lifeless names written in a textbook about a remote time.

### *Identification With and Predilection for Studying People*

As noted earlier, the students elected to study people rather than events. Their interest in people surfaced early in the study, and especially evidenced by their fascination with Sam Houston's biography. As part of our study of Houston, I asked the students to create a biographical map representing Houston's attributes, his life history, and his contributions to the Texas Revolution (Appendix B, *Figure 13*). In their mid-point interviews, all eight of the primary participants expressed an interest in Houston's life. The majority of the class supported these claims in their written journals.

The students expressed the same energy for their chosen topics through their secondary readings, examination of visual images, and analysis of primary documents from the Texas revolutionary period. In particular, the students sought to discover the personalities, the attributes, the colorful facts, and the dramatic experiences of peoples' lives. The students' primary document logs, Vee diagrams, and journal entries listed numerous details, including biographical facts and assessments of character. To unearth the cruelty of Santa Anna, to discover the truth about Davy Crockett, to appreciate Sam Houston's leadership, or to relive the Alamo survivors' terror—these life narratives catalyzed the students' investigations. In their written reflections, the students' expressed their points-of-view about the character and roles of the people they studied:

*James:* Every battle [in the Texas Revolution] was fought against a former "friend" of the nation. Santa Anna wasn't always bad. Then in the final battle he made a big mistake.

*Margie:* I never knew that women had such a big role in the Texas Rev. It turns out that without their support, things might be completely different.

*Katy:* I learned that Davy Crockett was more than just a man that fought in the Alamo. I learned that Davy Crockett was a good man...I wish I would know how Davy Crockett died. It was a very good experience, and I learned a lot more about Davy Crockett, but I still have a lot of questions still that haven't been answered yet.

James, Margie, and Katie encountered history from people, no longer remote and unfamiliar, but rather, individuals with real lives and real experiences. For example, James was struck by Santa Anna's former "friendship" with the Texans as an advocate of the Mexican republic, his rise as dictator, and his uncalculated mistake that cost him the war. Margie appreciated the often overlooked contributions of women. For Katy, Davy Crockett embodied more than just a phrase in a textbook; he was an actual person, whose true life remained partially unknown.

The biographical focus of the students' inquiry brought them beyond the textbook and into the past. Previous researchers, VanSledright (2002) and Dickinson and Lee (1978), revealed a similar proclivity for studying people among students engaged in historical inquiry. My pilot study (Appendix A) confirmed these same results with seventh-graders studying everyday Texans in World War II. In developing historical empathy, students need to relate to individuals from foreign places and periods, and their penchant for people transported them into more—albeit incipient--empathetic considerations.

### *Role of Visuals in Improving Historical Context*

In their post-intervention interviews and reflections, the students overwhelmingly attributed the visual images with improving their historical knowledge. As Gary stated, “I learned it better visually with actual pictures and stuff” because “I can think of a picture” in my mind. In particular, they referred to the movement of the armies, the clothing, the transformation of the land, and the physical description of people. The photographs and paintings of people furthered the students burgeoning understandings of the primary documents. For example, Amy indicated that the pictures of the Alamo survivors assisted her because “I [she] had a visual in my mind reading his account [of Enrique Esparza, Alamo survivor]...looking at the pictures helped a lot.” Matt cited that the pictures of Santa Anna “showed me what he looked like and told me what he did.” A number of students expressed their renewed awareness of the emotions, experiences, and personalities of the people they studied. As Sasha revealed, “You could see how their [the participants] feelings were during the Revolution.” According to the students, the visuals increased their memory retention and their understandings of the culture of the period.

From viewing the first daguerreotypes of the Alamo (taken in 1849, Appendix B), James and Riley developed a more accurate awareness of the building’s history. Specifically, the pictures of “the wreckage of the Alamo” “put it [Alamo] in a different perspective from what we read in textbooks.” For James and Riley, the “different perspective,” meaning perceiving the Alamo as more

than an honored memorial but to an appreciation the building's shifting purposes. In 1847, the Alamo became occupied by the U.S. government (through a lease with the Catholic Church) for use as a quartermaster and commissary depot. In 1848, assistant quartermaster Captain James Ralstan converted the Alamo into a Masonic Lodge for the new government residents (Nelson, 1998). James and Riley were surprised to see in the images "that people were still there just messing [loitering] around"—a depiction far removed from James and Riley's previous assumptions of the Alamo as an early nineteenth-century monument.

The Alamo daguerreotypes tempered the challenges of presentism by enabling visual access and by bringing the students closer to the past. Their dialogue regarding the Alamo's utility illustrates their ability to consider possibilities from a remote rather than contemporary vantage point:

*Jake:* Why didn't they tear it [Alamo] down? I mean it's an old war torn building. What's the purpose of keeping it?

*Chad:* It's historical. It has history.

*Jake:* It wasn't exactly historical at the time. That's like comparing it to something today. It would be like comparing it to a modern day building that's been abandoned or something. If you compare it to today, they would have knocked it down after it had been used or something.

Immediately after the war, the Alamo was abandoned for a time and stood as a vivid symbol of the grim battle; thus, Jake's comment that "it would be like comparing it to a modern building that's been abandoned or something" bears validity. Jake's peers, however, offered diverging perspectives about the Alamo:

*Walter:* Weren't we still in the middle of the war [War with Mexico, 1846-1848] Couldn't it be used as a fort?



*Amy:* They fought for it, so why would they knock it down.

*Jake:* Yeah, they may have fought for it, but that's sort of like a bad reminder for them. It's sort of like if you had a broken arm, and they had to do surgery on it, and you have a scar from it. You probably don't want to have that scar to remind yourself that you have a broken arm...

*Meredith:* The Alamo is like really remembered because it was a really big fight. Even though we did lose, it had a really big impact on other wars on like giving them bravery and stuff like that. So, I don't think it was completely useless.

*Sasha:* They probably don't want to knock it down since they were in the middle of a war.

Primary document analysis assumes a process of advancing possibilities, weighing those possibilities against evidence, and then cross-checking resulting conclusions. Walter and Sasha's suggestion that the Alamo was preserved for use during the War with Mexico 1848-1849 (a war resulting in part from the annexation of Texas as a state) seemed reasonable (although the daguerreotype was dated one year later 1849). Meredith's notion of the Alamo as endowing bravery may have tapped what the building meant to Texans during the second war against Santa Anna. Amy's recommendation also appeared plausible. Regardless of the cause, the students voiced rational conjectures through open dialogue. Certainly, the students needed more time to settle their ideas, but the preceding examples illustrate their ability to reason about possibilities. In addition, viewing the authentic Alamo images facilitated a greater sense of *within-time-ness* (as Ricoeur, 1980, aptly labeled), or being in the actual historical place and time.

A few students did admit that they preferred the visuals because they found it easier to analyze pictorial rather than print documents. As evidenced in their research logs, the students often struggled to know what to say about the visual images; thus, they frequently resorted to obvious descriptions about the people and objects in the daguerreotypes and the paintings. The students needed more direct teacher intervention to assist them in knowing what to look for and how to apply their observations. Despite the apparent limitations, the visuals proved invaluable in providing an improved sense of historical context and in offering an enhanced awareness of historical agents. The positive role of visual images in preparing students for textual primary document analysis was also confirmed in my pilot study (Appendix A).

#### *Contextual Readings of the Primary Documents*

Returning to Wineburg's model of the cognitive representation of historical texts (*Table 4*) the contextual readings of the primary documents revealed the students' tendencies to focus on people's experiences. The majority of the students' analyses involved the summation of the text through the representation of the outside event [rE]. A few of the documents, such as Sam Houston's autobiography, proved difficult for the students to comprehend. Overall, they centered their thoughts on reconstructing the events and on understanding the internal emotions of the historical agents (or the inside event).

For instance, after reading the "Reminiscences of Mrs. Dilue Rose Harris" (reprinted in Appendix B), one group commented on the hardships Mrs. Harris

and her fellow travelers faced during the Runaway Scrape (the eastward flight of the Texans' to escape Santa Anna's pursuing army). Mrs. Harris's diary records how she fled with her family and others to eastern Texas after Santa Anna demolished the Alamo forces. In *Figure 10* below, a group of girls illustrated Mrs. Harris's description of her company's challenges when crossing the Trinity River.



*Figure 10.* Seventh-grade students' pictorial representation of Mrs. Dilue Rose Harris's account of the Runaway Scrape.

As depicted in *Figure 10*, the girls drew images representing the breaking of the bridge, the illnesses such as whooping cough and measles, and the burying of the dead. The girls also noted the cumbersome nature of transporting young children and babies across the river. Mrs. Harris's account explains the aid

provided by the Negros, and the girls noted their presence among the moving party.

As evidenced by *Figure 7*, the girls attended to the powerfully moving aspects—the humanizing elements of Harris’s experience. The girls explained their interpretation by discussing the courage of those in the Runaway Scrape:

*Mandy:* I just imagined the Runaway Scrape that people were just like heading South. I never knew that there were so many obstacles and how they had to cross so many rivers and everything.

*Interviewer:* Why is this important to you?

*Mandy:* Because it says how much people had to get through just to get away and to be free.

*Olivia:* They had a lot of trouble like getting through. It seems like they went through so much, to take only what you could right now and with everything that they had, they had to just leave it. That would be really hard for me. If we had to just leave Cottonwood that would be really hard. We would have to choose what to bring along and that would be really hard.

Mandy explained how she “never knew that there were so many obstacles.” Without reading about the Runaway Scrape from the perspective of one who lived it, Mandy would have continued to view the Runaway Scrape simply as a remote event discussed briefly in a textbook. Mrs. Harris’s narrative brought Mandy to a story of survival, of cooperation, and of the gruesome realities of war.

As Collingwood (1946/ 1962) asserts, historical reasoning involves the imaginative reenactment of past events and the reconstruction of those events from documentary analysis. The vicarious experiencing of the historical agents’ realities then catalytically prompts the development of historical empathy in

students. Olivia placed herself in Mrs. Harris's place by relating Mrs. Harris's flight to the possibility of a dramatic move from Cottonwood. Despite the obvious differences between the Runaway Scrape and life in modern Cottonwood, Olivia found common ground by considering what she would have felt if faced with the possibility of abandoning her home, leaving her belongings behind. Mrs. Harris' stirring survival narrative enabled Olivia to connect the familiar (what it means to be human) with the strange (a nineteenth-century event occurring on the Texas frontier).

After reading about the Alamo and Runaway Scrape survivors, the students often commented on the courage required to endure tragedy. For example, one group described Susanna Dickinson as "brave" and "heroic." Mandy commented on the sacrifices of those who fled during the Runaway Scrape when she said, "If Santa Anna had gotten through and destroyed all of those towns, then we wouldn't have gotten our freedom." An appreciation for liberty and for those who struggled to preserve it proved a desirable outcome for supportive Texans, but Mandy needed to dig deeper to understand more precisely how Mrs. Harris and others felt about their liberties. The Texan's narrative of fighting for independence also merited balancing with considerations for the Negro slaves accompanying the Runaway Scrape and with Santa Anna's (despite his tyranny) charges against the Texans.

The students also attended to the document as event (subsumed under representation of event [rE]) by asking questions of when, how, and why the

interviews were conducted. The Susanna Dickinson interviews were recorded during or near the year 1876, approximately forty years after the fall of the Alamo, and were written as newspaper articles. Because Dickinson could not read or write, our knowledge of her experience in the Alamo depended upon outside interviewers and recorders. Regarding these interviews, Sasha, Karen, and Amy noticed how Dickinson's narrative included impressive details, such as the number of guns on the wall. Amy commented, "Because she is old, she is exaggerating. She probably lost her memory." Karen and Sasha questioned Dickinson's precise numbers, and Karen added, "There is no proof." The girls attended to the document as event through their recognition of the late recording of the interviews (1874 and 1876) and of Mrs. Dickinson's aged mind.

As with the primary participants, the representation of the subtext [rSB], especially the text as rhetorical artifact, proved especially difficult. For instance, the students failed to confront the overtly romantic language of the Dickinson and the Esparza interviews and of Sam Houston's autobiography. The students, however, articulated views about what the primary documents revealed about people or the text as human artifact.

This became particularly evident in their analyses of the documents written by or about Santa Anna. The students first read Santa Anna's battle plans for the attack of the Alamo and then compared their findings to a Mexican soldier's account of the eastward march and the Battle of San Jacinto (both documents reprinted in Appendix A). After reading the first document, James

referred to Santa Anna as “very calculating and crafty” because of his cunning battle strategy:

‘Cuz there were specific times when certain people attacked. And it happened around the whole Alamo. That way if one person failed the others would come in.

As James noted, the document revealed Santa Anna’s ability to plan and implement a military attack designed to overwhelm the enemy. Matt also recognized that Santa Anna “thinks things through,” and Riley pointed to Santa Anna’s precise “attention as to how they [Mexican soldiers] would advance.” For James, Matt, and Riley, Santa Anna’s battle plans served as a human artifact, exhibiting Santa Anna’s scheming nature and wily skill as a military leader.

After reading a Mexican soldier’s account of the eastward march and the Battle of San Jacinto (reprinted in Appendix B), James, Matt, Riley, Tim, and Gary commented on Santa Anna’s cruelty, especially the sacking of property and the burning of the town of Harrisburg. For these boys, Santa Anna appeared more ruthless than they had previously supposed, and they listed his human rights abuses, including the destruction of the Alamo and the shooting of prisoners of war at Goliad. In response to the Mexican soldier’s account, the boys wrote describing Santa Anna and his experience, such as “fire crazy,” “heartless,” “self-centered,” “no mercy,” “humiliating defeat,” and “yummy power.”

At the bottom of the page, the boys summarized their conclusions:

Santa Anna making his way to San Jacinto didn’t share food with his troops, gave only leftovers. In the last battle, he suffered a humiliating defeat because the soldiers were too tired.

The Mexican soldier's rhetoric communicated differences in the power relationship between Santa Anna and his men, and the students noticed the how Santa Anna unfairly treated his troops.

I also presented the students with Santa Anna's printed defense of the Texas Revolution, 1837 (reprinted in Appendix B), and this account strengthened the boys' opinion of Santa Anna as a despotic leader. Referring to this document, James voiced his perspective of Santa Anna's character, "He blames his failure on his soldiers. Thousands of people died because of him. He lied about his accomplishments." James and his peers detected what the documents displayed about Santa Anna's character, his leadership, and his military style. By deciphering the text as a human artifact, the boys gained an increased awareness of what they saw as Santa Anna's darker side—a perspective shared by the revolutionary Texans' during and after the war.

### *Questioning of Historical Truth*

Historical inquiry involves challenging assumptions of historical truth. Prior to the study, the open-ended surveys and pre-intervention interviews revealed the students' acceptance of history as written in their textbooks, in encyclopedias, or on internet sites. Two of the six research teams chose to study Davy Crockett's life and his role in the Alamo, and these two groups read accounts from Alamo survivors (such as Susanna Dickinson and Enrique Esparza) and from Lt. Col. José Enrique de la Peña (Mexican officer who served under Santa Anna). The unknown cause of Davy Crockett's death prompted the



students to consider multiple interpretations and to formulate probable conclusions. For instance, after reading selections from these documents (reprinted in Appendix B), the students commented on the different narratives of Davy Crockett's death:

*Peter:* One [document] listed how he died near the chapel. Others thought that he died fighting off a bunch of Mexicans.

*Walter:* One of them said he was tortured before he died.

*Peter:* Another said that he was like shooting...We don't really know what happened at the Alamo. We only know about the battle, but we don't really know.

By acknowledging how the documents present conflicting stories of Davy Crockett's death, the students affirmed the fallibility of assumed historical truths.

Most of the students found impetus in the idea of an unsolved mystery; two of the students (Mark and Katy), however, found the lack of conclusive evidence frustrating. Approximately half of the students who chose to study Davy Crockett postulated a theory about his death based upon evidence. Jake challenged the mythic portrayals of Crockett: the valiant hero who fearlessly fought against overwhelming odds. In his historical narrative, he writes:

Davy Crocket, His death is leaving Historyans in a frenzy. No one knows how he died. Some say he died fighting, some say He died instantly, but I think otherwise. I might belive the storys if they weren't so distorted. I might of belived that he fought bravely, but killing 30 Mexicans before dieing that unbaliveable. Anyways my openion is that he committed suside under the presher.

The distorted stories Jake referred to can be found in popular film, in Crockett's own autobiography, and in the words of a few individuals who survived the

invasion. The account of the Alamo in Crockett's autobiography and the testimony of Madame Candelaria (supposed Alamo survivor) are both of questionable origin (Hansen, 2003). Also, Jake's concern that "killing 30 Mexicans before dieing" is "unbaliveable" bears validity in light of the glamorization of the Davy Crockett story. Jake, however, did not derive his unique theory "that he [Crockett] committed suside under the presher" from any of the accounts studied; instead, he based his conclusion on what he saw as the gross exaggeration of a human being's capabilities. Although his theory may have been plausible, the recording of Crockett's suicide did not appear in the document selections.

Jake's suicide theory prompted the other students to propose new possibilities and to articulate their own views. For instance, in their art display, Jake and his peers created a 3-D reproduction of the Alamo out of cardboard (*Figure 9*), and the purpose of the model was to represent the group members' varying opinions about Davy Crockett's death. Accompanying the model, the following caption restated their differing postulations:

### **Davy Crockett in the Alamo**

Davy Crockett was a good hunter. He hunted a lot of different animals, and had a good experience with fire arms. One of the opinions is: He went to Texas knowing he had to fight for the Alamo so he died fighting for Texas. Another opinion is: He went to Texas from Tennessee to buy to land or get a job, he joined the Alamo because everyone thought he had so much courage and bravery that gave impact to join, but some of us think he might have been a coward, and shot himself or stepped into the line of fire. Most opinions were that he fought and died bravely.

The question of whether or not Crockett acted bravely or cowardly dominated the students' interests and reflected their preoccupation with assessments of character. The documents presented conflicting views of Crockett's behavior: a few Alamo survivors portrayed Crockett fighting heroically to the death whereas the Mexican account by de la Peña alluded to the shame of his execution by Santa Anna. As evidenced in their written statement, the students based their assumptions on both the documents and on their own personal beliefs.

Naturally, a few students (including Jared) adopted the view of Crockett as the martyr. In his essay, Jared describes Crockett's formidable strength:

Davy Crockett was surrounded by Mex. Solders he killed most of them by himself. Other opinions are that because of the poblicty he shot himself or purpously stepped into the line of fire, but I think he died fighting for TEXAS!!!

Jared's apparent pride in his state and in the heroes of the past is not surprising given the legends about Crockett and his life. Madame Candelaria recounted a stirring, gallant story of Crockett fighting in the Alamo, but as mentioned previously, historians question the validity of her tale. Jared may even be correct that Crockett did fight fearlessly in defense of the Alamo, but he needed more

practice in checking and cross-checking his assumptions against the other documents.

Kelsey articulated her view of Crockett's courage, but she used Crockett's life history and Susanna Dickinson's testimony to justify her claim of Crockett as a brave fighter:

Next he was elected to the U.S. Congress. When his time was up he ran for the Congress again. He wasn't voted on. So he went to the Texas Revolution. I think he went there for a job. Instead he started fighting. He impacted the revolution because in one of his other jobs he used a gun this helped him in the war. Finally in the end he died by a church with Mexicans surrounding him. I think he died fighting because all that he went through with the Hickory stick, him running away, having so many wives and having two that left him, and losing his political career. So, I don't think he was a wimp. I think he was a true fighter.

According to Kelsey, Crockett "was a true fighter," because of his tenacious character. First, he traveled to Texas after his defeat in a congressional election, and second, he had "so many wives and having two that left him." (Kelsey misrepresented Crockett's marital woes. His first wife died an unexpected death, and his second wife remained with him till his death. Kelsey, however, believed Crockett's marriages revealed something about his strength of character). In addition, Crockett endured the hickory stick, which his father used to switch him for ill behavior, after which Crockett retaliated by running away from home. Kelsey justified her conclusion of Crockett as "a true fighter" on the merits of his previous behavior. Furthermore, Kelsey's statement "in the end he died by a church with Mexicans surrounding him" supported Susanna Dickinson's testimony (reprinted Appendix B):

I recognized Col. Crockett lying dead and mutilated between the church and the two story barrack building, and even remember seeing the peculiar cap lying by his side. (Hansen, 2003, p.46)

Kelsey's reference to the Dickinson account shows her deference to a legitimate historical record. Historians consider Dickinson's testimony of Crockett lying near the chapel as a one the most valid and compelling possibilities (Hansen, 2003).

Notably, only one student (Walter) alluded to the claims by de la Peña, who served as an officer under Santa Anna during the Alamo attack. In his narrative, de la Peña explains how Davy Crockett was one of seven men to survive the Alamo and how he was brought before Santa Anna for execution. Although the execution narrative lacks the romantic bravado of other tales, such as Madame Candelaria's or even Enrique Esparza's, de la Peña's account also is considered highly plausible (Crisp, 2005). In his essay, Walter referenced the differing historical accounts and then voiced his leaning toward de la Peña's narrative:

Davy Crockett died at the battle of the Alamo, but there are so many different ideas of how he died that nobody really knows. All we know is that he was one of the last people to die. Some people think he was a coward, and begged for money. Others say he fought hard, and was found dead next to a pile of Mexican soldiers. I think Davy Crockett was the last person fighting at the Alamo, and was respected by most Mexican officers. Except Santa Anna, of course.

Walter acknowledged the uncertainties about Crockett's death and the diverging explanations by informants such as Susanna Dickinson and Enrique Esparza.

Walter references de la Peña when he said, "I think Davy Crockett was the last

person fighting at the Alamo, and was respected by most Mexican officers.

Except Santa Anna, of course.” Regarding Crockett’s death, de la Peña wrote:

Among them [the seven Alamo survivors] was one of great stature, well-proportioned, with regular features, in whose face was the imprint of adversity, but in whom one also noticed a degree of resignation and nobility that did him honor. He was the naturalist Davy Crockett, well known in North America for his unusual adventures...Santa Anna answered Gen. Castrillion’s intervention [attempt to save Crockett’s life] with a gesture of indignation, and addressing himself to the sappers, the troops closest to him ordered his execution. The commanders and officers were outraged at this action and did not support the order, hoping at once the fury of the moment had blown over these men would be spared. (Hansen, 2000, p. 427)

De la Peña continues to explain how a few officers closest to Santa Anna attempted to impress their commander by rushing on the seven men with their swords, which resulted in their sudden deaths. By comparing Walter’s essay to de la Peña, three consistencies emerged in both narratives: (a) Davy Crockett was one of the last to die; (b) Crockett was highly respected by other Mexican officers (including de la Peña); and (c) Santa Anna did not respect Crockett. What Walter failed to include was a direct rather than an inferred statement that Crockett did presumably die by execution as ordered by Santa Anna. Walter, however, demonstrated his deference to an eye-witnessed account.

The mystery of Davy Crockett’s death prompted the more compelling discussions from the students. By examining multifarious testimonies, the students debated possibilities and formulated conclusions. In so doing, the students experienced the power of a community of historical inquiry. As Levstik and Barton (2001) affirms, communities of inquiry challenge prior historical

knowledge. In this instance, the students questioned how Davy Crockett died and delved into primary document resources to determine the answer. The community of historical inquiry created an environment where students could share, explore, and learn from one another.

### *Degree of Enjoyment*

The students' journals and post-intervention interviews reflected an overwhelmingly favorable response to their experiences. The students referred to the opportunity to work with their peers and to participate in a more hands-on approach as significant motivators. Without question, the students enjoyed the diversions from their usual routine, such as visiting the computer lab and working on large posters in the hall. I also used costume and dramatic monologues to introduce the students to the historical agents, and the students reacted enthusiastically to this form of entertainment. A few of the students complained about the difficulties associated with primary document analysis and with the writing of historical narratives. The visual documents certainly possessed a natural appeal, but about half of the class still valued the details they learned from the readings.

In considering the model's impact on the students' motivation for learning history, I mention the contribution active learning played in this regard. In their post-intervention interviews and personal journals, the students, however, did offer insights as to how they thought the model improved their own learning. I grouped their responses into four main categories (which I rephrased without

degrading the students' intents or meanings). Thus, the historical-narrative inquiry model stimulated the students

- (1) by encouraging them to direct their own learning;
- (2) by transporting them into a remote time (through authentic images and, to some extent, through textual primary documents);
- (3) by connecting them more personally to the people of the past;
- (4) and by enabling them to express their own viewpoints.

Because seventh-graders believed their understanding of the Texas Revolution advanced in the aforementioned ways, the model positively impacted the students and their perception of their own learning experiences.

#### Major Findings

In reviewing the data, I wish to highlight the major findings of my study. I present here the findings related to each of the research questions.

(a) How do seventh grade history students think historically when they experience the process of historical narrative inquiry? The seventh-graders in the study demonstrated various aspects of historical thinking. For example, a small research team of about six students would typically consist of two students voicing more sophisticated ideas, two students appearing confused, and two students attempting to understand. The primary gains in historical thinking included their challenging of historical truth, the questioning of a document's reliability, and the considering of the historical agents' realities. Regarding procedural knowledge, about half of the primary participants revealed improved understandings of the process of historical inquiry. The students articulated their



own incipient opinions about their topics and voiced these opinions in small group-discussions, in class presentations, and in writing. The quality of their discourse and written work varied widely; however, they verified that twelve and thirteen-year old adolescents can *begin* to think historically when given sufficient time and direction. Additional practice and teacher modeling may have improved the complexity of their thinking.

(b) As an aspect of their engagement with the historical narrative inquiry model, how do seventh grade students articulate empathetic understanding? The seventh-grade students articulated more empathetic understandings through studying the lives of people. By connecting to the experiences of human beings, the students began to place themselves in the shoes of the historical agents. Biography brought personal meaning to the students by transporting them into a distant time. The students did not reach the advanced, complexities of historical empathy, but the human element proved especially powerful in helping students relate to the historical agents.

(c) How do students formulate and articulate historical questions for inquiry? The students' interests fueled their attentiveness to the content and to the instructional lessons. They struggled to formulate written questions, but with teacher modeling, they articulated their interests in question form. The opportunity to select their research topics improved motivation.

(d) How do historical narratives contribute to students' contextual and empathetic understandings? Historical narratives focusing on people and their contributions to history dramatically improved the students' memory retention and contextual understandings. Specifically, they attended to the historical agents' choices--as influenced by the agents' character, values, trials, options, and social realities. The historical narratives situated the students in time from the standpoint of what human beings did and how they influenced history.

(e) How do students interpret primary documents as a part of their experience with historical narrative inquiry? The seventh-graders approached the primary documents from a variety of lenses. Often, a student would focus on one or two components of primary document analysis. In the think-alouds, the primary participants voiced ideas about the outside and inside events, document reliability, and the document as artifact (Table 4). Interpreting subtext proved especially difficult; however, a few students challenged Santa Anna's rhetoric by seeking to divulge the commander's true intentions. Students who struggled with reading comprehension failed to interpret the documents at all.

Differing historical accounts encouraged the students to compare the documents against one another. Rarely, the students practiced the extensive checking and cross-checking required for intensive primary document analysis. Certainly, the nature of the document appeared to prompt a variety of responses. For example, Dickinson's old age stimulated questions of an eye-witnesses' reliability. Variances in the narratives of the Alamo survivors, including the tales

of Crockett's death, helped the students realize the tenuous nature of historical truth. Santa Anna's persuasive tactics appeared to advance from the students questions as to what the document revealed about Santa Anna's character.

(f) As an element of historical narrative inquiry, how do students articulate their perspectives through written historical narratives? The majority of the historical narratives included a statement of the author's opinion about the historical agent. The sophistication of those statements varied widely; however, the students did demonstrate that they could articulate developing perspectives. A few students supported their ideas with historical facts and inferences to the primary documents. The organizational structure, textual referencing, and elaboration proved especially flawed.

(g) How do students express their argumentative and philosophic viewpoints through their experience with the historical narrative inquiry model? Without question, the students communicated their ideas more clearly through speech rather than writing. The brevity of their ideas signaled how much they struggled to explain the reason for their conclusions. When prompted through in-depth questioning, the students usually explicated more thoroughly how they justified their conclusions. The artistic venue provided the students with a creative outlet, but they still struggled to represent a philosophical or argumentative theme. In short, the students demonstrated the ability to formulate incipient historical perspectives, but the articulation of their perspectives proved extremely difficult.

In considering the research questions, I shall summarize the conclusions into eight main points. The conclusions include:

1. Choice functions as a motivational aspect of historical inquiry. When students are encouraged to select their own topics, they often attend to their research with improved focus and interest. Teacher modeling appears to be essential in helping students formulate questions for inquiry. Sophisticated question construction requires time and practice.
2. The exposure to an of authentic visual images improves students' understandings of historical context and of the textual primary documents.
3. In primary document analysis, students can evaluate a primary document in some form, but they often attend to different ideas communicated through the text. For example, one student may focus on the outside events (what is occurring) while another may direct to the inside events (the thoughts and emotions of the participants). Other students may consider what the document reveals about its author or on the document's reliability. The interpretation of a document's subtext proves extremely challenging. The nature of the document may influence the nature of students' interpretations.
4. Students procedural knowledge can be but is not necessarily attained through the process of doing history. Direct instructional strategies improve students' consciousness of the process and of the purposes of historical inquiry.
5. Historical empathy is achieved foremost for students through an emphasis on historical narratives focusing on the lives and the experiences of people.
6. Students can challenge historical truths when presented with direct instruction on probable history and with exposure to conflicting primary accounts on a subject.
7. Students can formulate perspectives (of varying degrees of sophistication) based upon their analyses of secondary and primary sources. Supporting their ideas, however, with evidentiary history proves more problematic. Students can write and prepare simple historical narratives, but they need greater assistance in developing and in articulating complex ideas.

8. Communities of historical inquiry improve students' interest by enabling them to draw upon the expertise of their peers. Positive student models of historical thinking aid struggling students and create a forum for the collaboration of ideas.

### Closing Remarks

The research study demonstrates the gains and the challenges associated with historical narrative inquiry. The students had not previously encountered any instructional methods relative to historical thinking or to historical inquiry. In a short time, the students expressed incipient forms of historical thinking and empathy through their analyses of the primary documents and through the articulation of their perspectives in writing and in art. The most advanced ideas presented by the students centered on questions of historical truth (i.e. Davy Crockett's death), on a document's reliability (i.e. Susanna Dickinson's interviews), and on the personal experiences of people (i.e. Sam Houston, Susanna Dickinson, and Davy Crockett). Regrettably, the students found the interpretation of a document's subtext and the writing of advanced historical narratives the most challenging. For the majority of students, the historical narrative inquiry approach proved refreshing, stimulating, and enjoyable.

## CHAPTER 5

### ADDITIONAL INSIGHTS AND BROADER APPLICATIONS

The overarching purpose of this dissertation involves how students construct historical thinking and historical empathy through the process of historical narrative inquiry. By reading and interpreting secondary narratives and primary documents, students undertake to formulate their original narratives representing their derived perspectives. The goal, therefore, is to deepen students' historical understandings of historical people, events, and time periods through in-depth analyses. In this chapter, I offer insights as to how my own views transformed as a result of my research experience. In addition, I present the pertinent applications for classroom practice.

#### Historical Thinking

In considering historical thinking as process, we must first ask why we should even care about whether or not students can think historically? As Carl Becker (1935) aptly purports, every person is a historian, whether he or she knows it or not. Through everyday encounters, individuals recount events as they occurred, and in so doing, seek to reveal the importance of these events in the larger scheme. Such events may include simplicities such as paying a water bill, traveling to work, or studying for an exam. Becker's description of Mr. Everyman (Chapter 2), who attempts to understand an error with his coal bill,

demonstrates how Mr. Everyman seeks to understand truth through his own research. Mr. Everyman recounts history on different terms from the professional historian:

Mr. Everyman works with something of the freedom of a creative artist; the history which he imaginatively recreates as an artificial extension of his personal experience will inevitably be an engaging blend of fact and fancy, a mythical adaptation of that which actually happened. In part it will be true, in part false... Not that Mr. Everyman wishes or intends to deceive himself or others. Mr. Everyman has a wholesome respect for cold, hard facts, never suspecting how malleable they are, how easy it is to coax and cajole them... (p. 245).

On a larger scale, Mr. Everyman knows something about history—thereby interpreting his immediate world and his personal identity according to his believed historical assumptions. These assumptions impact how he responds to daily concerns and perhaps even local, national, or global issues.

Why then should educators care if students can think historically?

Wineburg (2001) appositely answers this question by referring to what history teaches students about they are and how history situates them in time. Clearly, the humanizing aspects of history drove the students' inquiries in this dissertation study. They sought to discover and understand who people really were—their hopes, their dreams, their oddities, and their challenges. The visuals and the colorful stories brought a human interest appeal that transported the students into a remote time.

In working with these students, I attempted to balance the unsteady equilibrium between researcher and teacher; consequently, I taught the students the fundamentals of historical inquiry but held my desires for more direct

intervention in reserve. As a result, I discovered that about half of the primary participants articulated a healthy understanding of the process of historical inquiry, whereas the other half of the participants appeared confused and lost. In primary document research, the students developed improved insights over time through repeated exposure and practice, and they did communicate perspectives with varying degrees of sophistication.

In reflecting upon the students' interactions with the source material, I now conclude that students need more scaffolding, more direction, and more teacher intervention than previously supposed. The more advanced students in the class provided models for their peers that proved invaluable in assisting them in primary document analyses and perspective formation. I am drawn then to Donaldson's (1978) assumption that students need a map in order to effectively accomplish prescribed tasks effectively. To achieve the complex forms of thinking demanded by historical inquiry, students require the target areas of primary document analysis to be broken down into specific constructs. Wineburg's model of the cognitive representation of historical texts (Table 4) may offer assistance in this respect. Thus, the direct teaching of these constructs (the representation of event and the representation of subtext) and their subsumed components may offer improved gains. In addition, the students need to see effective models (Donaldson, 1978; Schunk, 2004) of historical thinking in order to gain a correct picture of how to think historically.



## Historical Empathy

In addressing the confusion over the term historical empathy, Barton and Levstik (2004) divide historical empathy into both a cognitive and an affective endeavor. Cognitively, students seek to know and understand the perspectives and realities of remote peoples; affectively, students learn “to care with and about people in the past, to be concerned with what happened to them and how they experienced their lives” (Barton & Levstik, 2004, pp. 207-208). The later form of empathy invokes a sort of shared normalcy that bridges time and creates a sense of what Ricoeur (1980) calls *within-timeness*. By placing historical empathy in the affective domain, historical empathy then affirms Bage’s (1999) claim that emotions do matter in history.

For the students in the dissertation study, within-timeness became expressed through the humanizing narratives. For example, students sought to discover the real Santa Anna, to identify with Dickinson’s haunting memories of the Alamo, to uncover the truth of Davy Crockett’s final hours, to appreciate the moral fortitude of General Houston’s military decisions. Historical empathy was best achieved from the lens of the human experience; indeed, the students came to recognize the historical agents as real people rather than isolated names in a textbook.

Historical empathy, therefore, should create a natural kinship by channeling the passageways between the present and the past. By studying history through people’s lives, young adolescents can relate more personally to

individuals whose experiences might otherwise remain foreign and incomprehensible. Wineburg (2001) confirms that these bridges require students to anchor their footings on common ground:

The familiar past entices us with the promise that we can locate our own place in the stream of time and solidify our identity in the present. By tying our own stories to those who have come before us, the past becomes a useful resource in our everyday life, an endless storehouse of raw materials to be shaped or bent to meet our present needs. Situating ourselves in time is a basic human need. (pp. 5-6)

The basic need to situate ourselves in time proves fundamental to our efforts to achieve empathy. Questions of who we are versus who they were naturally surface. During the identity seeking years of young adolescents, these sorts of questions seem intertwined with how students make sense of history. Thus, the human element proves vital to students' successes in historical empathy.

#### Historical Narrative and Perspective Formation

The articulation of perspective is organically tied to the construction of historical narratives. Even argumentative essays often challenge or expound upon existing historical narratives. Thus, the historical narrative functions as the primary genre for communicating historical facts and ideas. As Ricoeur (1980) asserts, the complexities of the historical narrative (i.e. the paradoxes, the ironies, the multifaceted causes, the intricacies of human choice) have long been misunderstood. Unfortunately, school curricula (especially at the elementary levels) emphasizing historical narratives often consist in overly romantic, simplistic moral tales (VanSledright & Brophy, 1992). This approach often results in fanciful elaborations and mythical perceptions of the past. The need for

literature depicting realistic, multilayered renditions remains long overdue (Levstik & Barton, 2001).

I presented the seventh-graders in the study with a variety of secondary narratives and autobiographical accounts relative to the experiences of people in the Texas Revolution. The culminating activity involved the students' writing of their own historical narratives as well as the representation of those narratives in an artistic, creative format. In general, the students understood the nature and purpose of the assignment and responded by creating biographical sketches of the people they chose to investigate. When prompted, the majority of the students could articulate a historical perspective—albeit often simple—about their historical figure. Their written essays displayed varying degrees of sophistication, depending upon the students' reading and writing abilities.

Recognizing and understanding what a historical narrative is proved the most problematic. As mentioned in Chapter 4, several of the primary participants associated the concept of narrative with false stories or fiction; other participants appeared confused by the concept of narrative as it related to history. An improved consciousness of the historical narrative *as genre* may have improved the overall quality of the students' essays. Furthermore, the characteristics of the historical narrative (especially as they differ from fiction and other narrative texts) may have alleviated the students' misunderstandings.

History educators still have much to do in improving students' reading and writing skills, specifically as they relate to disciplinary history. To me, success in

historical inquiry necessitates an urgent focus on contextual reading strategies, on thesis/ argument formation, and on written expression. In my personal experience, I have yet to encounter a concentrated emphasis (in classroom practice, in history curricula, or in history educators' research) on the historical narrative as a genre, with its identifying constructs and features. After working with the seventh-graders in the study, I gained a deeper awareness for the need to integrate genre into the history curriculum. For example, students should understand the differences between nonfiction and fiction. The multiple forms of historical writing, such as biographies, autobiographies, argumentative essays, macro historical narratives, and micro historical narratives) deserve explication.

The subject matter, purposes, scope, and audience intended in the writing of historical narratives need further attention. An amplified emphasis on the historical narrative as a distinct, viable genre would facilitate instruction in historical writing. Students ought to comprehend what a historical narrative is and how it differs from other forms of writing if expected to produce quality work. Furthermore, how to articulate and how to support a historical perspective using evidence from the primary documents require more direct, specific instructional strategies than previously supposed.

As a researcher, I veered away from excessive intervention to avoid influencing the students' opinions; however, the essential components of the historical narrative required further explanation. Attempting to create distance between the researcher and the participants is not wholly uncommon in

qualitative research (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Schram, 2003); however, in retrospect, I realize the value of a more direct approach to aid development of students' awareness of procedural knowledge and historical narrative writing.

An additional point merits consideration. One of the challenges Shemilt (2000) found in reviewing the data from the Schools Council History Project (Chapter 2) was the tendency for students engrossed in local historical inquiries to lose sight of the purpose of their research. For example, students could analyze a primary document but would fail to understand how their findings influenced the broader historical picture. In designing my instructional model, I sought to address this issue by introducing students to the overarching historical narrative and to encourage the placement of smaller narratives within this grand scheme. At the beginning of the study, I outlined the foundational narrative of the Texas Revolution, and this background (also was facilitated by Mr. Sim's instruction on the Texas Revolution) proved invaluable in aiding students' inquiries.

As we neared the end of the study, I noticed that some of the students struggled to remember the basics of the Texas Revolution; consequently, their perception of the Texas Revolution and their topic became altered by the most recent ideas discussed or studied. As a result, I am reminded of how process learning does not necessarily occur in firmly established stages. As Shemilt (2001) discovered, students must frequently return to an acknowledgement of the underlying purposes of their inquiries. In addition, I recommend frequent reviews

of the foundational narrative in order to refresh students with an understanding of how their research influences the big picture.

### Implications for Teaching and Learning

Efforts in historical inquiry demand rigor from both the instructor and from the student. This research offers suggestions to improve classroom practice in this regard:

1. Teachers must model and teach students the process of historical inquiry, with specific attention to textual analysis, to perspective formation, and to the writing of historical narratives. In addition, students will improve with repeated practice in the aforementioned areas.
2. Teachers should seek to discover students' historical interests and should help students formulate questions for inquiry based upon those interests.
3. Teachers should introduce authentic visual images to help strengthen students' contextual knowledge and to help prepare students for textual primary document analysis.
4. Teachers should create small- and large-group forums for students to dialogue about their views. This enables students to model historical thinking for and to assist one another.
5. By focusing on the lives and experiences of people, teachers bridge the gap between the foreign past and the familiar present. Teachers should employ humanizing narratives to help students build personal connections and in-depth understandings.
6. By presenting students with conflicting historical accounts, teachers can encourage them to question historical truth and to formulate their own perspectives.

### Toward Further Research

After completing the research study, I still find the historical narrative inquiry model a compelling approach to instruction. In the future, I believe

research should investigate the impact of direct instructional approaches in procedural knowledge, historical narrative as genre, and essay writing. In addition, I would like to use the components of Wineburg's model (Table 4), such as the representation of event (with the subsumed constructs) and the representation of subtext (with the subsumed constructs) to provide specific instruction on how to analyze a primary document. In short, I believe more detailed, step-by-step instruction is needed to help students successfully accomplish the aims of historical thinking and empathy.

#### Concluding Remarks

Efforts toward achievement in historical thinking and empathy require increased attention from both researchers and practitioners. Students need more opportunities to direct their own inquiries and to weigh the evidence. The formation of sophisticated historical perspectives remains an arduous, yet worthy undertaking. In Becker's (1935) anecdote of Mr. Everyman, "Mr. Everyman would be astonished to learn that he is a historian," and yet unintended, in daily life, "he performed [s] all of the essential operations involved in historical research" (p. 235). All people know and reason about history in some way; therefore, improving how students think about and how they communicate their ideas of history remains a noteworthy consideration.

APPENDIX A  
ANALYSIS OF PILOT STUDY



The perspectival nature of historical inquiry necessitates an understanding of the historical process with its emphasis on probing questions, evidence analysis, and reconstructive assessment. The means by which historians develop insight into the past should serve as a model for the development of historical cognitive skills in students. An emerging body of research defends historical empathy—namely, the ability to understand the world from the viewpoints of those of a remote historical period—as an essential, noteworthy cognitive achievement (Davis, 2001).

The achievement of historical empathy involves a rigorous process of historical investigation: the examination of secondary and primary documents, the discovery or reaffirmation of historical truths, the rendering and understanding of multiple historical perspectives (as represented by varying historical agents and as represented by differing historians), and philosophical consideration (Lee, 1983; Yeager & Foster, 2001). Empathy does not function as the process but rather the accomplishment attained from through the reconstruction of history derived from evidence analysis. To clarify, empathy does not equate to sympathy (and the implication of a casual or pitying relationship between the historian and the historical agents), over identification (potentially the personal identification with undesired historical figures, such as Stalin), or excesses of imagination (often subject to false assumptions lacking evidential support) (Yeager & Foster, 2001). Specifically, empathy refers to the

development of rich historical understandings relative to the historical agent's social, political, mental, and emotional realities.

This high level of thinking demanded by empathetic achievement necessitates practical pedagogical consideration for pupils (Ashby & Lee, 1984; Lee, 1983), yet limited research exists regarding the *means* by which students demonstrate historical empathy. My research study involves the application of an author-generated teaching model intended to generate empathetic response from seventh-grade history students. I present the theoretical model and its application in the following pages.

#### Historical Empathy and Historical Narrative Theory

The enabling power of narrative as a facilitator of empathetic response needs additional consideration. As historical philosopher Paul Ricoeur (1980) advocates, scholars, who attempt to divorce history from narrative or fail to recognize narrative's potential catalytic faculties, also neglect its complex, interpretative structure. Such alternative forms as chronicles and annals lack the ability to illustrate history's complexities, including characterization, human action, and conflict innate to the historical plot (White, 1984). Narrative inherently possesses multiple layers of causation and explanation: overlapping plot structures, repetition of plot or character realities, behavior and societal patterns, alterations and deviations from expected course patterns, anomalies of character and/ or event, paradoxes and irony, symbolism, and human characterization. By communicating the multifaceted elements of history--circumstances, actions,

obstacles, aids, and results, narrative allows for both the scrutiny of parts and the evaluation of the whole; thus, to narrate is to practice Aristotle's explanatory concept *di'allela*, meaning "the one results from the other" (Ricoeur 1984).

The historical actors within a period or event share a sense of historical time and may operate simultaneously within the plot structure. The historian enjoys a unique vantage point as expressed through the ability to examine the narrative from an *inward* and *outward* lens by both sharing and examining the historical time of the historical agents (Ricoeur, 1984). Narrative then affords a sophisticated level of historical reasoning: through empathetic understandings of the agents' historical time and personal realities, the historian can place the historical event, person, or period within the grand scheme of history. Historical empathy—when exercised with the narrative capabilities of historical examination—facilitates Ricoeur's (1984) *with-in-time-ness*, or the plausible, experiential approximation of historical time as communicated by the historian. The concept also enables the historian to view historical agents, events, and time periods as players operating within a larger, unknown arena. The inability of historical agents to view time both forward and backward does limit their perspective; thus, historical reconstructions deserve both *inward* and *outward* considerations. Narrative provides the analytic structure for both types of historical rendering.

In referring to narrative, I wish to identify the historical narrative as the primary genre for writing in history. Unlike fiction, the historical narrative seeks

for authentic, realistic representations of people and events. The historical narrative should not be confused with storytelling (which, unlike the historical narrative, may possess mythic, moralistic elements), and while historical stories often help increase interest and motivate students (Bage, 1999), the historical narrative *should* attempt to communicate a well-researched—albeit plausible—rendition of past occurrences. Unfortunately, the type of children’s literature, which presents history in politically conservation, mythical, or overtly singular formats, abounds in schools and fails to promote mature historical understandings (Brophy & VanSledright, 1997). The paucity of historical realism in elementary and middle school literature poses difficulties for teachers (Levstik & Barton, 2001), and yet, this dearth signals the teaching of the historical narrative to even greater importance.

I instead intend to focus on the analytic aspects of the historical narrative, especially the complexity of storied modes. In my model, students consider the characteristics of historical narratives and how authors communicate their views. My model also emphasizes life history and the role that individuals play in shaping historical events.

#### Historical Narrative Inquiry Model

I developed the historical narrative inquiry model in order to provide—as Shulman (2004) advocates—as a means of putting theory into practice. The model applies disciplined inquiry—the emphasis on student questioning and in-depth exploration via traditional historical modes—to the foundational framework

of historical writing (Levstik & Barton, 2001). Thus, the historical narrative inquiry model (see Figure 1) consists of an interwoven, cyclical process: contextual beginnings, in-depth questioning, secondary source analysis, primary source analysis, student authorship, and philosophical/ argumentative reflection. The model encourages student exposure to a wide array of resources and perspectives on a historical topic.

In the contextual beginnings phase, the instructor establishes content knowledge and seeks to learn the students' interests regarding the topic. The in-depth questioning phase enables students to decide their topics of interest and to formulate their questions for research. The secondary source analysis phase strengthens students' contextual moorings through the exposure to historiography and includes applicable biographies and personal narratives. The students keep journals, research logs and dialogue about their impressions with their peers. The primary document analysis phase extends the students' investigation to a wide array of materials, such as government documents, diaries, journals, letters, newspaper clippings, and photographs. I recommend that the instructor introduce the students to primary documents by first using old photographs and images before embarking on more complicated sources.

In the student authorship phase, the students organize their findings into graphic organizers, storyboards, or outlines, which represent probable conclusions. The students work both collaboratively and independently to write an original historical narrative and students may elect to represent their

narratives through art, such as drama, performed storytelling, visual art, music, and multimedia presentations. The final phase, philosophical/ argumentative reflection, encourages the sharing of the historical narratives and artwork. In addition, the students consider the unanswered questions, the possible areas for research, and the diverging opinions on the topic.

### Study Overview and Methodology

The study involved eight seventh-graders, four males and four females, from an upper-middle class, suburban middle school (Cottonwood Middle School, a pseudonym) in the north Texas area. Six of the eight students were selected from a regular history classroom and two from an honors class. All of the students typically earn mostly A's in their courses and most were in at least one honors course. The eight students consisted of two Indian (India) American females, one Iranian American female, one Pakistani American female, one Latino male, one Chinese American male, and two Anglo American males. Five out of the eight students immigrated to the United States from their home lands during their early childhood.

The students encountered the historical narrative inquiry model through seven instructional sessions (about an hour and a half each) held in the library during their regular history hour. As part of the negotiated agreement with the students' teacher, the focused topic for the study (Texans in World War II) correlated with the material being covered in their Texas history class. Prior to the teaching sessions, I conducted an introductory interview with each of the

students regarding their backgrounds, their interests, and their views of history teaching and learning.

I initiated the first session by asking the students to complete a K-W-L chart (where K represented “prior knowledge,” W exacted “what I want to know,” and L signified “learned knowledge”) and then presented a narrative overview of World War II and the Texans’ contributions using photographic images and a three dimensional map. In the second session, the students read the personal narratives from the soldiers of the 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry division (the Texas T-Patchers) in *The Fighting 36<sup>th</sup> Historical Quarterly* (published by the veterans of the 36<sup>th</sup> division), *Cruel Was the Way* (2000) (written Morris Courington and his seven buddies of the 36<sup>th</sup> division), and *Lost Battalion Railway of Death* (1994) by Kyle Thompson (survivor of the Lost Battalion of the *USS Houston*). At the requested interest of the female students, I decided to include selections from Jacqueline Cochran’s (founder and director of the WASP) autobiography *Stars at Noon* (1954). After reading the narratives, the students drew symbolic pictures of their interpretations and wrote a concluding paragraph regarding their historical assumptions.

For the third session, the students participated in a discussion regarding photographic images taken by members of the 36<sup>th</sup> infantry division (located in he Texas Military Forces Museum in Austin, Texas, <http://www.kwanah.com/txmilmus>) during the invasion of Italy. The fourth session involved a continuation of the discussion using images from the Lost

Battalion (from Kyle Thompson's personal narrative) and the WASP women (from the National WASP WWII museum) as well as the introduction of textual primary documents consisting of selections from the newsletters and personal letters from the 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry division (housed at the Texas Military Forces Museum), Kyle Thompson's personal letters, and Jacqueline Cochran's final report of the WASP training program (National WASP WWII museum). For the fifth session, the students continued to work with the same primary documents using inter-textual reading strategies designed to allow students to draw symbols, write phrases, and final summations of their thoughts. The students also read selections from the oral history transcripts of Texan survivors of the Lost Battalion (from the University of North Texas World War II oral history collection). For the sixth session, the students created a story board representing their new historical narrative, and the final session involved a concluding discussion as well as a discussion with online oral histories from the Go For Broke Educational Foundation ([www.goforbroke.org](http://www.goforbroke.org)) (focused on the Japanese American World War II veterans including members of the Texas 36<sup>th</sup> division).

Throughout the study, each student kept an audio tape journal of learning experiences, and I concluded by interviewing each student relative to his or her newly acquired historical perspectives and personal insights regarding the instructional process. I video taped and audio recorded the sessions. I transcribed the opening and closing interviews, the video taped sessions,



students' audio tape journals, and the seven instructional sessions for data analysis.

### Background of Participants

The students' introductory interviews provided essential information relative to their background and personal interests. I asked the students to comment on their views of history teaching and learning. The following descriptions reflect the students' comments prior to the instructional sessions and proved valuable in understanding the students' comments and reactions throughout the learning experience. All students' names are pseudonyms.

#### *Regan*

Regan, a native born Texan, has lived her entire life in the city of Cottonwood ((a pseudonym) and attended Cottonwood ISD schools. Since her parents immigrated to the United States from Iran, Regan spends her vacations revisiting her native land and reconnecting with family friends. In Cottonwood, she finds herself associating with other Muslim females who understand her dress code and way of life. In her spare time, she enjoys athletic sports including running, basketball, soccer, and swimming, but those activities sometimes cause gender tensions with her father who disapproves of her athletic attire. Regan respects her father's wishes for her to "remember who [she] is and where [she] came from," but she also enjoys the freedoms of American life, which she believes she cannot experience in Iran. In general, Regan enjoys school despite occasional teasing from insensitive students regarding her race and religion.

An avid reader of mysteries and an occasional history book, Regan prefers history above other—as she claims—more difficult subjects such as science and math, and she expresses a strong interest in historical topics such as the Gulf War and World War I but finds Texas history limiting relative to global issues. When asked why she likes history, Regan responded that it gave her a sense of personal identity and enabled her to “know what separates us [someone different from herself], but I want to know at what point I become like this and that person becomes like that...’cuz we all started in one place.” Regan expressed a predilection for hands-on learning, classroom discussion, debates, in-depth projects, and artifact examination over the textbook reading-and-lecture note taking practices typifying previous history learning experiences. Regan appreciates the opportunity to learn history from the “people’s” point-of-view, and when asked about the value of stories in history, she liked “seeing how other people thought about it [a historical event].”

### *Tyler*

Tyler, a Caucasian student, has lived in Cottonwood his entire life and prefers the fact that he lives across the street from his middle school. Tyler spends most of his time away from school socializing with friends, participating in sports, and playing video games. An “A” and “B” student, Tyler takes an interest in most school subjects—science, history, and math—and enjoys reading John Grisham and Tom Clancy books in his spare time. His primary historical interests include military history, and he finds the textbook lacking in specific

detail. For Tyler, historical narratives provide the in-depth information he hopes to acquire on a given historical topic, but he thinks he benefits from the traditional note-taking approach employed by his middle school history teachers. When asked what methods he would employ if he assumed the teacher role, he responded, “I have no idea.”

### *Naomi*

Naomi immigrated to Texas from India at the age of six, and she and her family return bi-annually to visit relatives and friends. Her earliest childhood memories surround the quiet, village where her parents worked. Despite her great love for her native land, she prefers living in the United States because of the freedoms and opportunities she enjoys. In particular, she appreciates American schools for allowing academic choice and for providing the “opportunity to learn something by yourself.” Naomi expresses a strong predilection for history because she wants to know “what my [her] ancestors did and everything and how life was back then.” In particular, she feels a personal connection to the old American way of life because it reminds her of memories of India.

Naomi revealed that she struggles with reading or listening to history unless the teacher provides some type of visual format such as movies or pictures. Although note-taking is a common routine, she appreciates her teacher’s willingness to provide a prepared outline for her to write down the information. She expressed fondness for the occasional reading groups and

historical dramatization activities she participated in at another school and indicated that she would use that approach if she taught the class.

### *Juan*

Juan, a Latino student, moved to Cottonwood from California, and he enjoys sleeping, watching television, socializing, baseball, and playing video games in his spare time. Although he earns high marks in school, he finds school boring especially since the teachers assign time-consuming assignments. Regarding history, Juan likes military history but still expresses boredom for most topics in his Texas history class. He cited note-taking and documentary films as a lackadaisical approach to history teaching and wishes his teachers would bring museum artifacts or fictional movies to class to captivate his interest. His textbook only provides him with the main idea and suggests that the publishers include more interesting, in-depth stories about people's experiences. When asked his preferred learning style, Juan indicated that he needs something more fun such as group activities or historical dramatizations.

### *Hannah*

Hannah emigrated to Texas from India six years ago. The first two years she lived in a small town in east Texas and the last four years in Cottonwood. She returns to her homeland every summer to visit her relatives. In her spare time, she surfs the Internet, spends time with friends, and reads mystery, adventure, and science fiction novels. She appreciates life in the United States because of academic freedoms such as lockers, library access, rotating classes,

time with friends, and the increased focus on the individual student (in contrast to the fast paced structure in India).

Hannah describes history as an easy subject where “you just need to know the facts.” She expressed an interest in understanding the underlying causes of war, since the leaders of countries behave “like children.” She cited the interactive notebook (reflective writing on political cartoons or historical problems) as her most memorable learning activity in history, and she believes visual aids enhance her learning. She criticized her textbook for “getting straight to the point” and not “elaborating more.” Regarding historical narratives, Hannah indicated that she loved the *Diary of Anne Frank* (Pressler, 1995) because “you see the world differently” from a “girl’s perspective,” and she wished that history books provided more narratives about the lives of women. She especially expressed a strong interest in learning about women’s contributions in World War II.

### *Karl*

Karl immigrated to the United States from Ghounzou, China (near Hong Kong) but indicated that he has lived in Texas the majority of his life (and only more recently in Cottonwood). He spends the majority of his time working on his website, “a blog ring thing.” Although he earns high A’s and participates in honors courses (including honors history), he thinks he could “take school or leave it.” His Texas history course is especially boring because of the narrow approach, and he wishes he had more opportunities to learn about World history.

He particularly complained about the textbook's repetitive focus on farming and declining prices. In general, he would like to cut out the historical "fluff," namely information (including historical narratives) he finds meaningless and repetitive, and instead provide the basic overview. When asked about how he would improve the teaching of history, Karl responded that Texas history is so boring that "one way is not better than another," but later in the interview, he did cite the journal writing—or writing a diary entry from the perspective of someone in the past—as a memorable, meaningful experience because he felt "more a part of thing and understood the situation better."

#### *Heidi*

At the age of one, Heidi immigrated from Pakistan to the United States and has spent the majority of her life in Cottonwood. Although she finds her native land interesting, she prefers life in the United States because of the freedoms she enjoys. She enjoys school and appreciates her teachers' willingness to take the necessary time to help her master her studies, and she participates in honors classes and earns A's in all of her classes. In her spare time, she reads historical fiction, her favorite book being *The Shadows of the Sea* (Hiatt, 2005), which discusses the fictional story of a German girl's challenges with the U-boats and family separation in World War II. Her treasured historical topics include the Renaissance, because the "creative ideas inspire me," and women's history because "people that don't think they [women] can do anything but cook or clean." When asked whether she thought historical narratives

improved her understanding, she indicated that she thinks personal accounts—namely, Marie Curie’s discovery of radium and polonium-- motivate her to accomplish greatness.

Heidi appreciates the note-taking approach to learning history and values the informative nature of the lectures and textbook. She wishes her textbook included more questions for exploration at the end of the chapter. Regarding photographs, she recommends that textbook publishers avoid pictures of war that might make the students queasy or uncomfortable, which could lead to biased debates over historical issues; however, she does value the use of maps and historical artifacts to increase memory retention. She also encourages jokes and humor to ease tensions at school.

### *Chad*

Chad is a Caucasian male who has lived in Cottonwood his entire life. In his spare time, he participates in a variety of sports including basketball, tennis, swimming, soccer, and golf. He enjoys school but especially appreciates his teachers who use humor to relieve the pressures of academics. He claims that his parents place high expectations on him to earn high marks in school. An able student, Chad responds positively to intense action in history but disapproves the textbook’s boring emphasis on facts and numbers and hates to memorize dates for history exams. He especially dislikes Texas history’s lack of action.

Regarding historical narratives, Chad only likes interesting historical stories with action and excitement, and he expressed strong feelings regarding

the need for textbooks and teachers to emphasize the big picture. When I probed further, he indicated that he wanted to understand the entire historical event instead of the pointless details delivered through overhead notes and textbook reading. He appreciates the occasional inclusion of historical research projects that provide something different from the regular routine. He also wishes that his teachers would allow him to write about his own opinions instead of dictating the historical “side” he should take. He specified movie watching as his preferred learning style because he could actually visualize history instead of “just going over stuff.”

#### The Participants and the Emergent Themes

Of the eight students who participated in the study, three indicated they enjoyed reading (especially historical fiction) in their spare time, and all eight of the students earned mostly A's in their classes. The K-W-L chart generated during the first session revealed that the students knew the well known names and events (i.e. Pearl Harbor, the atomic bomb, Hitler, Mussolini, Churchill, Franklin Roosevelt) occurring in World War II. When asked about their prior knowledge, the students indicated they gained most of their knowledge from movies, an occasional book, and their current history class (where they had viewed a documentary of the war). Regan mentioned a close family member who had fought in the war, and Chad had visited the Holocaust museum.

The students' prior knowledge improved their contextual knowledge. In the opening session, the students readily grasped the information from the



pictorial overview of WWII. This knowledge base later enhanced their primary document research. Historical philosopher Hexter explains the essential role of prior knowledge by describing the historian who approaches the records of the past with an empty mind would “surely condemn himself to nearly total futility, redundancy, and ‘error’: he would not be a historian at all” (Dickinson, Gard, & Lee, 1978, pp. 8). The students’ prior knowledge clearly played a fundamental role in helping the students interpret the primary documents. The ready response of the students enabled me to proceed quickly into details of Texans’ involvement in the war.

The students’ encounter with historical narrative inquiry confirmed the previous findings, by VanSledright (2002), Wineburg (2001), and Yeager and Doppert (2001), that students develop in-depth understandings by “doing” history. The analysis of the students’ experiences unearthed the emergent themes: student interest, studying people, individual impact, heroism, historical imagination, social justice issues, and the students’ learning preferences. I present a discussion of each of the themes in the following sections.

### Student Interest

At the beginning of the first teaching session using a K-W-L chat, I asked the students to generate questions about the war, and they listed numerous factual questions about the number of soldiers in the war, the number of states participating, and the forms of torture employed by the Nazis. A few more probing questions emerged relative to the causes of the war and the reasons for

the Hitler's hatred of the Jews. As Levstik and Barton (2001) explain, history students often can recite the states' capitals or other trivial geographical facts without possessing a keen understanding of historical principles, movements, institutions, and people.

I consequently turned for direction to the opening interviews in which the students enumerated their personal historical interests relative to World War II. After reading the brief account of World War II in their textbooks, the four girls informed me that they wished to learn more about the WASP and the contributions of women during war times. Three of the boys, Juan, Tyler, and Chad, related their interest in the battles and the more action-oriented aspects of the war. Karl, in contrast, simply stated that Texas history is boring and expressed a desire to skip the subject altogether. After the K-W-L session, I gathered material relative to the students' interests making a special effort to include specific narratives and documents about the WASP and military battles. Throughout the entire study, the students responded enthusiastically to the material and directed their attention towards military strategy, gender discrimination, and the WASP, and the students spoke extensively about those same topics in their post intervention interviews.

Interestingly enough, the four female students took an active interest in the military focus, and Chad and Karl offered significant contributions to the student-directed discussions of gender and the WASP. The exchange and transfer of interest areas between students caused me to reflect about the role of

student-interest in any historical study. Teachers must first learn to discover their students' interests (which may emerge at less programmed times such as one-on-one dialogue) and their declared interests as the impetus for disciplined social study and discovery.

### Studying People's Experiences

The students studied World War II from the lens of the everyday soldier or citizen. To bring the students into the lives of the historical actors, I asked the students to read selections from the soldiers' published personal narratives and from their oral history interviews. This approach enabled the students to identify more personally with the historical actors.

The oral histories and personal narratives allowed the students to view history through the experiences of the participants. Tyler mentioned that he liked "the first hand views," and Karl related, "It gives you a better understanding of the soldiers instead of just seeing them as whole [a whole group of soldiers]." For Heidi, historical narratives enabled her to "compare yourself [herself] to the character, the person being described in the story and have more personal insights towards it." Juan indicated, "It's a lot deeper than just seeing the whole battle itself. It's one person who actually experienced it..." Regan claimed that the individual accounts "put her in the place" of the historical agents studied. As Dickinson and Lee (1978) and VanSledright (2002) affirm, students naturally are drawn to studying people in history. Not surprisingly, their first historical insights usually emerge from this vantage point.

The students particularly identified with the difficulties faced by the historical actors. The turmoil of working as a POW for the Japanese and dangers at Rapido River evoked the most riveting emotional responses from the students. After reading two Texas soldiers' account of the difficult labor, unsanitary conditions, rampant disease, and scarcity of food associated with life as a POW, Juan expressed his shock with expressions such as "that's harsh" and "they treated them like cattle slaves." Naomi replied, "The treatment was so bad that they were a few minutes from death," and Chad resounded, "Well I could tell that the treatment was really bad because even if they had a severe, severe sickness it was treated like a bruise or something, and the Japanese wanted to like use as few materials as they could to help the prisoners of war."

The emotional aspect of the war created an additional aspect of historical engagement inherent in historical studies. Bage (1999) supports story's ability to "appeal to children's curiosity, emotions, and imagination" as "an effective way of introducing new knowledge, extending vocabulary, and address moral issues" by "easing the difficult relationships between history as content, information and understanding," and thereby transforming information into "meaningful, motivational, and therefore affective educational experiences" (p. 27). Bage realizes that emotions—whether intended or not—matter in history, and a teacher's willingness to work with (instead of reject) the students' ideas and emotional expressions remains fundamental to the development of historical empathy (Lee & Ashby, 2001).

## Individual Impact

In his post intervention interview, Karl explained his interaction with the primary documents in terms of “impact,” meaning “I [Karl] felt more a part of the war and seeing other events instead of just like reading about them.” For Karl, the photographs, personal narratives, and oral history interviews enabled him to “feel more a part of the thing” instead reading about the events in a textbook. I use the phrase individual impact to explain the students’ discovery regarding the role of everyday people—not the well-known political leaders or military officers—but the lesser known contributors and their role in event making. For Karl, the “impact” he felt extended, in part, from his newly acquired understanding of the power of individuals.

Regan also spoke in her post-intervention interview of individual impact when she stated that the study “opened her eyes” “towards what the Texans did” and their individual contributions to the war. For Regan, the study brought her “into the place” of the soldiers, and she learned that the war was not just about major countries, famous battles, and well-known leaders and generals. The following dialogue demonstrates how the point-of-views of the common folks influenced the students:

Interviewer: What was your impression of World War II before and after we began this study?

Hannah: Well, I used to think of World War II as a big war, and now I see it from an individual point-of-view.

Regan: I never realized how much individuals contributed to World War II. I just thought it was America, the other countries, Germany or Japan, but now after doing this, I realize that in between America or Japan, there were the little things that made it what it was.

Naomi: Before I started this, I used to look at the big picture, but now after learning about the Texas T-Patchers and Lost Battalion, I can now see the inside view. How the soldiers felt. How people were thinking about it.

Heidi: Before this whole program started, I thought the war was just bloody, no plans, no tactics. I now know how much Texans contributed to Rome, or going to Italy, the Salerno place.

Chad: I kind of realized that America wasn't just fighting a battle—the battle fronts. Everyone was kind of helping, and even if you weren't fighting, you were helping make ammunitions or doing something important.

Without studying the lives of the soldiers or the women on the home front, the students would not have realized that history extends beyond well-known leaders and influences the lives of all people, regardless of political position. This difficulty may stem from the inability of young adolescents to relate to the lives of adults (Farris, 2003), especially adults whose high-profile roles dramatically differ from those of modern middle school students. The young soldier fighting in Italy or the young woman enrolled in the WASP—these ordinary players offered the students a unique, personal inward lens.

For the students, the opportunity to learn in-depth about “people like me”—everyday folks—helped the students relate more personally. The power of the individual to shape history spoke forcefully to the students, and near the close of the study, they commented frequently on their newfound discovery. Thus, the students underwent a two-fold transformation: first, the personal *impact* they

experienced from their encounters with the primary documents, and second, a fresh awareness of the *impact* of ordinary individuals on historical outcomes.

### Historical Heroes

Throughout the study, the students spoke heroically of the historical agents. The Fighting 36<sup>th</sup> Texas T-Patcher newsletters contained numerous stories of heroic deeds performed by brave soldiers, and the students responded enthusiastically to those accounts. I did not discuss with the students the probable intent of the newsletters but instead gave them autonomy to interact with the accounts, and the students highlighted the heroic deeds as the most symbolic and important. In response to a letter written by a soldier stationed in Italy, Juan, Tyler, and Chad wrote, “This guy was a cool dude. You can never underestimate who can be a hero.” When asked about his new insights regarding World War II, Juan poetically exclaimed, “I learned it wasn’t just a bloody war, but a war where heroes were made.” Hannah compared the heroism of the soldiers of the Fighting 36<sup>th</sup> to the heroic tales of American soldiers in Iraq; Regan spoke of the “great honor of being in combat”; and Heidi drew parallels between the soldiers and victims on the Titanic.

The accounts of the WASP women, in particular, kindled heroic statements from the female students. Speaking of the contributions of the WASP women, Hannah commented, “They risked their lives for the men in the war. If they hadn’t done that, I mean the flights and stuff, they could have just fallen off the sky, just randomly.” Heidi used lyrical language to express her feelings

regarding the WASP women, “The WASP reached for the stars (picture of a star) aware of the risks they were taking. With patriotic spirit and hope shining like the sun, they conquered their mission—once a dream unable to be reached.” The gender barriers of the 1940s and the WASP’s contributions especially impressed the girls. Heidi expounded on her views regarding female equality in her statement, “They [WASP] broke through the barriers of gender discrimination. Today women can reach the galaxy.”

Popular film tends to glorify combat as a great struggle in which as Juan indicated “heroes are made,” and popular media culture, the current war in Iraq, and the concurring language arts unit on literary heroes may have influenced those reactions in the students. Traditional patterns of social studies teaching at the elementary level may also bear credence to students’ use of historical language in their descriptions. Brophy and VanSledright (1997) refer to the traditional elementary social studies curriculum as a collection of stories with heroes and villains and as such fails to penetrate beyond surface perceptions. The heroic statements of the students may reflect their own youthful ambitions (for example in Heidi’s case).

Irregardless of the cause, the heroic aspects of the war dramatically influenced the students’ perceptions of the historical agents’ experiences. As Lee and Ashby (2001) purport, teachers must become aware of the ideas students bring with them and find ways to work with those ideas instead of dismissing them as unimportant and improbable. The students bring so much of



themselves—their identity, experiences, biases, and perceived realities—to any historical study; thus, students' perceptions must and always will remain an integral part of process learning in history.

### Historical Imagination

The historical imagination functioned as an integral part of the historical cognitive process as students debated and wrestled with their probable conclusions. As philosopher, Collingwood explains, the writing of history stems from a “web of imaginative construction” (1946/ 1962, p.242), because primary documents present bits of evidence that must be deciphered and interpreted. The historian must derive the most probable conclusion, dependent, in part, on his or her own imaginative reconstruction:

It is the historian's picture of the past, the product of his own *a priori* imagination that has to justify the sources used in its construction...The critical historian has to discover and correct all of these and other kinds of falsification. He does it, and can only do it, by considering whether the picture of the past to which the evidence leads him is a coherent and continuous picture, one which makes sense. (Collingwood, 1946/1962, p. 245).

The invocation of imaginative options, the selection of explanatory narratives, the elimination of faulty alternatives, and the sustaining of a historical viewpoint constitute much of historical reasoning. The teaching of historical thinking allows children—despite their less developed faculties—to formulate, test, and explore their proposed options against the primary document material (Lee & Ashby, 2001; Levstik and Barton, 2001; VanSledright, 2002, Wineburg, 1994).

The students demonstrated their ability to imaginatively construct possibilities from their readings of the primary documents. This became particularly evident in the more poignant aspects of history such as soldiers facing difficult odds in a battle, women's contributions to the war despite gender barriers, and the suffering POW's of the Lost Battalion. To illustrate, the students tried to uncover what it must have been like to work on Death Railway as a POW for the Japanese. In their oral history interviews, the soldiers while laboring for the Japanese. The students discussed several problems that soldiers faced such as limited food, poor medical treatment, and harsh working conditions. The students wanted to understand the *intentions* of the Japanese by asking, for example, about the ease, cost effectiveness, and health sustenance of a daily food ration of one bowl of brown rice. Chad wondered whether the Japanese used brown rice as a minimal nutritional treatment to avoid providing more extensive forms of medical relief; Juan discussed the vitamin content of brown rice; and Regan determined that brown rice lacked the nutritional power to defend a POW against scurvy.

After listening to a POW's description of cattle duty and the process of building a bridge, the students again speculated regarding the materials used and what that information revealed about the purposes of the Japanese leaders and their guards.

Regan: When he was talking about cattle duty and the little brown tags he [POW] had to wear, it didn't seem like he used the cattle... Well they were lower than cattle.

Juan: Yeah, they were like cattle slaves.

Chad: It kind of seemed like the Japanese just built the bridges to give the POW's something to work on. 'Cuz if they like really wanted the bridge, then they would make it sturdy to last through the years.

Tyler: The reason they didn't build the bridge sturdy is because they wanted to build 'em quickly and use 'em as soon as they were done.

Juan: Or they just wanted to make the POW's mad.

Tyler: Yeah.

Regan: I kind of agree with Tyler because they didn't really care about the quality of the bridges. We just need to get over here, so.

The above dialogue illustrates the students' ability to formulate possible alternatives as to why the Japanese would materials of lesser quality for bridge construction. The students never settled the issue, but they did reach a consensus regarding the apparent ill treatment of the soldiers.

The photographs of the soldiers in the Italian campaign generated extensive debates about military strategy. After showing a mapped drawing (*Figure A.1*) from the soldiers' records of the Salerno invasion, the students debated about the wisdom of the organizational tactics of plan.



Tyler: I disagree with Hannah, because what they were attacking from the Germans or whoever was controlling the area they would have to spread out because you just keep your troops at one spot, then they can surround you, which gives you no escape, so by attacking over farther areas, they had farther room. They had to spread out more, which made their lines thinner, which made them easier to break through.

Heidi: I disagree with Hannah. If you look at the map, everyone is going into a different territory and land form. Some are going into the mountains, others into the plains, some people are going onto the hills. Even if the mission turns out to be a complete failure, they sort of know more about the land and the environment and the land making it an advantage.

The dialogue continues with Hannah protesting against the divided army due to communication difficulties especially when facing enemy troops and the entire group questioning the level of surprise afforded by the invasion strategy. The above dialogue illustrates the students' ability to formulate possible alternatives using an authentic military map. The students never settled the issue, but they did demonstrate the beginnings of what Collingwood (1946/ 1962) deems the imaginative reconstruction of history.

In addition, to ascertain the intentions of the historical actors, the students had to determine what Wineburg (1994) calls the representation of human artifact, meaning what document reveals about the unseen thoughts, feelings, intentions, and assumptions of those who authored the text. After reading selections from the final report of the WASP training program, the four female students tried to ascertain the precise meaning of phrase within the text, "The objectives in activating the women pilot program as stated by the Commanding

General of the Army Forces: (1) To see if women could serve as military pilots...” In response to this phrase, Regan wrote in the margin, “Women had to be tested to take the jobs of men.” Regan’s written comment prompted a debate among the girls, who tried to determine whether the women took literal flying tests or whether the army wanted to see whether women could serve as military pilots.

Heidi: Was it really a test? Or were they just desperate? I think they were desperate.

Regan: I think they were just using them.

Regan: Guys had to fly too, so they had to go to school, so it’s not saying that girls had to go through more than guys did.

Heidi: But didn’t they have too, because there were less women pilots so there were less volunteers.

Hannah: To see if they could serve as military pilots, and if so...

Naomi: (frustrated tone) It’s not a test to see if they are as good as men.

Regan: It just is a test to see if they could fly a plane.

Naomi: This wasn’t just once, they had to test every time.

Heidi: Look, it says the objective in activating the women’s pilot program as stated by the *commanding general of the army, air force, army...uh, air force*. Okay, the air force, they had to pass through school in order to go into the air force.

Eventually the girls determined that the phrase indeed meant to see if women possessed the capability of serving as military pilots, in part, because the men were off to war. Regan’s comments reflect the group’s consensus after their verbal struggle with the textual material, “So, they were used. Well, not used, but

yeah, used. They were used because they needed someone to fly the planes. What were their options, women or kids? So they picked women.” Naomi furthered Regan’s comments in her statement, “The women are the people behind the scenes, and the men are the actors on the stage.”

Certainly, the girls needed more opportunities to test their conclusions against additional source material, but the dialogue illustrates the students’ ability to examine a more sophisticated primary document and formulate a historical viewpoint using textual evidence. The process of proposing possibilities and then discussing those possibilities plays an important role in perspective development. The students discovered their own meanings—albeit incipient in form—from their encounters with the primary sources.

#### Social Justice Issues

In their analysis of the primary documents, the students were drawn to social justice issues, such as gender equality, racial equality, and war ethics. A portion of the interviews included Japanese-Americans describing their experiences with Pearl Harbor, racial prejudice, and fighting their native country. These issues prompted some of the most poignant reactions from the immigrant students—Karl, Regan, and Naomi—who commented on the reality of Japanese-Americans fighting Japanese. Karl noted that the hostility between the Americans and the Japanese “wasn’t like by race but what side you were really on” because “they don’t really care who you are.”

After reading the personal narrative written by a Texas soldier who survived the death railway, Regan drew a picture (*Figure A.2*) with a mathematical equation: “In Japan’s eyes (symbol of Japanese eyes), American soldier (picture of soldier) equals (picture of equal sign) an elephant (picture of an elephant).”



*Figure A.2.* Regan’s symbolic representation of a personal narrative account of a POW who worked on Death Railway.

When questioned regarding her image, she referred to a specific passage in the text, “Well in Japan’s eyes, the men were just as equal as elephants because it said if they were caught behind the elephant lying down, they were beat really bad.” The soldier’s account impacted Regan, as evidenced by her attention to the severities of Death Railway.



After reading a selection from Jacqueline Cochran's autobiography of her experiences with the Women Air force Service Pilots, Heidi, Chad, and Regan drew a picture (*Figure A.3*) of an airplane with the word man on one wing, woman on the other wing, and an equal sign on the tail near the engine.



*Figure A.3.* Chad and Heidi's symbolic representation of the role of the WASP in World War II.

Chad explained the meaning of the equal sign as “at that time, men and women became equal.” Heidi drew clouds and stars around the plane and referencing a specific quote from the autobiography said, “If you fuel with desire and ambition’ (quoting from the autobiography) you can go places...and since she’s already

been able to go around the world because of the airplane, the only place left is the moon or the sun or something like that.” Heidi continually referenced the quote “fuel with desire and ambition” stating that women (such as the WASP) can fly to reach their dreams. The figurative picture of the airplane and the equal sign later surfaced throughout the study as the students debated and tried to explore the actual nature of gender equality experienced by women in the WASP. They never really came to final determination on the issue, but given more time and resources, they may have found more conclusive answers. Most importantly, the historical narratives helped students formulate metaphorical analogies and ask important questions about historical issues.

Compelling social justice issues, such as gender discrimination, captured the minds of the students and served as an impetus for speculation and debate. As Levstik and Barton (2004) affirm, historical empathy should instill students with a sense of care for the historical agents, and more specifically for the common good. Issues of fairness compelled the students, who *wanted* to understand these topics; thus, their interests’ became the impetus for inquiry.

#### Students’ Learning Preferences

The students provided positive feedback regarding the employed teaching strategies, especially the opportunity to work in a group and create representations of their ideas on butcher paper. The students spoke repeatedly of the visual components—both the historical photographs and the student-generated drawings—as helpful to processing and analyzing information. In their

post intervention interviews, the students commented on the value of photographic images in helping them to visualize and grasp history. Juan indicated that the images helped the textbook come alive by capturing his interest; Regan attributed the images with transporting her into the historical place; Karl appreciated his renewed ability to feel “more a part of the war.” For Naomi, the photographs “cleared up her doubts” and kept history “rich in my [her] mind,” thereby augmenting her understanding of the textual documents.

In their pre intervention interviews, a few of the students, Juan, Kevin, and Chad, complained about boring, mundane information in history classes, but at the end of the study, these three boys expressed appreciation for the exposure to more in-depth details about World War II. Hannah, Naomi, Heidi, and Tyler also thought the first-hand accounts augmented their interest and constituted as one of the most valuable aspects in the study. Regan, Hannah, and Naomi spoke of the advantages of group dialogue and discussion because of the opportunity to learn from their peers’ comments. Juan, in contrast, found the verbal debate irksome but overall enjoyed the teaching strategies: “If you just tell it flat out, it will get boring. No one will listen.” Despite her busy schedule, Regan was grateful for the opportunity to participate in the study and believed she gained new insights about World War II from her experience. The colligated teaching approach involving active, collaborative learning strategies, group discussions, historical visualizations, and primary document analysis proved meaningful and gratifying for the students involved. For these students, the study provided a

refreshing alternative to traditional lecture style, textbook reading formats by offering direct first-hand exposure to historical material.

The living voices communicated via the oral history interviews touched the students in a more intimate personal way and caused them to reflect upon the ideas communicated. Particularly, Karl indicated he felt the most impact through this medium, as mentioned previously, the tragic conditions endured by the Lost Battalion generated thoughtful responses from all of the students. The students viewed the oral history interviews as the most accurate depiction of the past because they came in contact with the participants of a remote event. For example, Regan commented, “I think it would be really cool to live through—but if I was right interviewing someone, or if I was watching someone, I think that would be like remarkable. I think it would be a great honor for me to get to interview someone.”

#### Final Conclusions and Need for Further Research

The results of the study uncovered important findings relative to teaching and learning in history and more particularly to historical empathy and the historical narrative inquiry model.

1. Students' interests often drive investigative research in history. Students often are drawn to poignant issues (such as gender or race), suffering or tragedy, heroism, and other emotional aspects of history. Historical problems such as military strategy can serve as powerful catalysts for inquiry.
2. Studying people using personal narratives and oral histories help students comprehend point-of-view. The focus on everyday individuals enables students personally to identify with people “more like me.”

3. Students' historical imaginations function as an essential component of historical thinking. Students can ask probing questions, propose possibilities, and explore options with primary documents; however, their historical imaginations must be tempered by evidentiary focus.
4. Authentic visual images help ease students into primary document analysis. The opportunity to see history first-hand improves students' contextual understandings.

Additional research with the historical narrative-inquiry model is needed with students of varying ability level. Future research should explore the impact of the model with students who are taught procedural knowledge and given more time for exploration.

#### Suggestions for Classroom Practice

Based upon the conclusions for this study, I recommend the following for classroom practice. Individual circumstances may dictate adaptation.

1. Discover and build upon students' prior knowledge before engaging in primary document analysis.
2. Provide opportunities for students to express their historical interests at the onset and throughout an instructional unit, and use their declared interests to shape the direction of study.
3. Find ways to work with (instead of against) students' pre-existing notions, reactions, and imaginative responses. When steeped in evidence, students' ideas can become powerful motivators for disciplined inquiry.
4. Employ a variety of primary document resources, especially images and oral histories, and provide sufficient grouping activities for students to dialogue about the documents.
5. Emphasize historical narratives that help students understand people—their challenges, contributions, perspectives, and everyday realities. Historical narratives about everyday people are encouraged.

6. Use historical problems, such as social issues or military strategy, to stimulate the students' historical imagination. Provide sufficient resources to help students develop more accurate, plausible conclusions.

### Conclusion

The historical narrative inquiry model did facilitate inquiry and invoke the historical imagination for the seventh-graders in the study. The model proved advantageous in teaching the point-of-view of the historical agents. The students needed more time and resources, however, to develop more conclusive perspectives. The historical narrative inquiry model offered a refreshing alternative for students, who appreciated and valued the past's living voices, and who discovered history in a more intimate and meaningful way.

APPENDIX B  
CURRICULUM USED IN STUDY

The curriculum spans the Texas Revolution, with a focus on military history and individuals participating in the conflict. The study began in October of 2006 and continued through December of that same year. During that time, the students experienced my historical-narrative inquiry model (*Figure 1*).

Throughout this process, the students researched a topic of their choice, read and analyzed secondary and primary documents, wrote an original historical narrative, and prepared an artistic display and group presentation. I adapted the curriculum to meet the needs of the school district; thus, the curriculum is written in lesson plan format and is aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). I have included in this appendix a selection of the primary documents used as found in the *Alamo Reader*, *Documents in Texas History*, *The Mexican Side of the Texas Revolution*, *Texas Tears and Sunshine: Voices of Frontier Women*, and *With Santa Anna in Texas: A Personal Narrative of the Revolution*.

I relied extensively on the digital primary documents held by the Texas State Library and the Center for American History at the University of Texas. The *Maps of Texas and the Southwest, 1513-1900* provided supplementary material. The students also read selections from Sam Houston's autobiography (*Life of General Sam Houston: A Short Autobiography*) and Davy Crockett's autobiography (*The Adventures of Davy Crockett*).

In preparation for the project, I read and referenced histories of the Texas Revolution, including *Exploring the Alamo Legends*, *Gone to Texas: A History of*



*the Lone Star State, Mexico Biography of Power: A History of Modern Mexico, 1810-1996, Rendezvous at the Alamo: Highlights in the Lives of Bowie, Crockett, and Travis, Sam Houston (J. Haley), Sam Houston and the American Southwest, Sleuthing the Alamo: Davy Crockett's Last Stand and the mysteries of the Texas Revolution, Susanna Dickinson: Messenger of the Alamo, Tejano Journey 1770-1850, Texian Iliad: A Military History of the Texas Revolution, 1835 – 1836, The Battle of San Jacinto, and The Course of Mexican History.*

With the students, I used selections from the aforementioned texts, especially *Gone to Texas* and *The Battle of San Jacinto*. To provide a more comprehensible history for seventh-grade students, I also asked the students to read and interpret selections from *Make Way for Sam Houston, Texas: An Illustrated History, The Alamo: An Illustrated History* (E. P. Hoyt), and *The Women and Children of the Alamo*.

## Introduction to Military Life in the Texas Revolution

### OBJECTIVES

1. Describe the weaponry, apparel, and supplies of the soldiers of the Texian and Mexican armies.
2. Identify the different groups of people that served in the Texian and Mexican armies and their roles in the war effort.
3. Explain the importance of the weaponry and equipment used in the war.

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills ALIGNMENT  
TEKS 7.3(B), 1.19 (C)

### SUPPLIES

Paper clips, scissors, tape, illustrations of soldiers (small and large)

### INTRODUCE

*Warm-Up Activity; Activating Prior Knowledge*

Ask the student to complete a K-W-L chart either independently or in a group.

K - What I already know about the Texas Revolution?

W - What I would like to know about the Texas Revolution?

L – What I learned about the Texas Revolution?

K – What I already know?	W – What I would like to know?	L- What I learned about?
Specifically, what do I know? And how did I acquire this knowledge?	Specifically what are the students' interests?	Specifically, what new insights did the students' gain?

### ENGAGE

Ask the students to think about what life was like for soldiers in the Texas and Mexican armies. What kinds of weaponry and equipment did the soldiers use? How did those items impact their ability to fight?

Using the small image captions, have the students create standing figures of the soldiers. The paper clips should be bent to create a stand. The students will cut out the pictures, and then tape the pictures to the stand.

## EXPLORE

Using the illustrations of soldiers the Texas Revolution from Stephen Hardin's *The Texian Iliad*, have the students discuss the weaponry and uniforms worn by the soldiers. Explain to the students that the illustrations represent the mostly likely depiction of the different people who fought on both sides of the conflict. A discussion of each of the images is included for teacher use.

The discussion format should be determined by the teacher; however, the following questions may prove advantageous: (a) What did you learn from the picture about the military life of the soldier? (b) How does this soldier's equipment differ from the other soldiers? (c) What are the advantages and disadvantages in equipment and weaponry for both the Mexican and Texian soldiers? (d) What does the picture reveal about the individual's role in the war?

## ASSESS/ RETEACH

To close the activity, ask the students to share with the entire class what they learned from the pictures. Students may list their new findings under the L-column of their K-W-L chart.

## The Big Picture of the Military Activity Of the Texas Revolution

### OBJECTIVES

1. Describe the events of the Texas Revolution using secondary historical accounts.
2. Describe the events, people, and places of the Texas Revolution by examining daguerreotypes and artistic portraits.
3. Interpret military maps outlining the movement of Texian and Mexican armies.
4. Understand the difference between the geography and demographics of Texas in 1835-1836 and the present day.
5. Comprehend and represent the sequence of events of the Texas Revolution.

### TEKS ALIGNMENT

7.2 (C, E), 7.3 (A, B), 7.9 (A, B), 7.21 (A)

### SUPPLIES

Maps of Texas (Texas State Highway maps); figures of soldiers; Overview packets containing reading selections and images, activity instruction sheet, two military maps, and a timeline of events

### INTRODUCE

*Activate Prior Knowledge; Introduce Lesson Concepts*

Show the students an old map of Texas from the 1830s. Ask the students to consider the differences in the old map and the modern map of Texas. Explain that the political boundaries, the population demographics, and the geography have altered over time.

### ENGAGE

Using the Overview packets, the students will simulate the movement of the armies. The packets contain an instruction sheet for the students to follow. The passages and selections are numbered. After reading the numbered selection, the students will examine the accompanying image, the timeline, and the military map. The students will then move their armies across the Texas State Highway Map. If the map is laminated, the students may use Expo markers to draw the movement of the armies from place to place. The students may need additional assistance in interpreting the military map and in moving their armies on the Texas State Highway Map.

ASSESS/ RETEACH

The students will create a storyboard depicting the major events of the Texas Revolution. The students will draw a symbol or picture representing each event and will write a caption describing the event underneath. The story plot does not have to move in a singular linear fashion. The students may choose to represent multiple plot lines at once (Figure B.1).

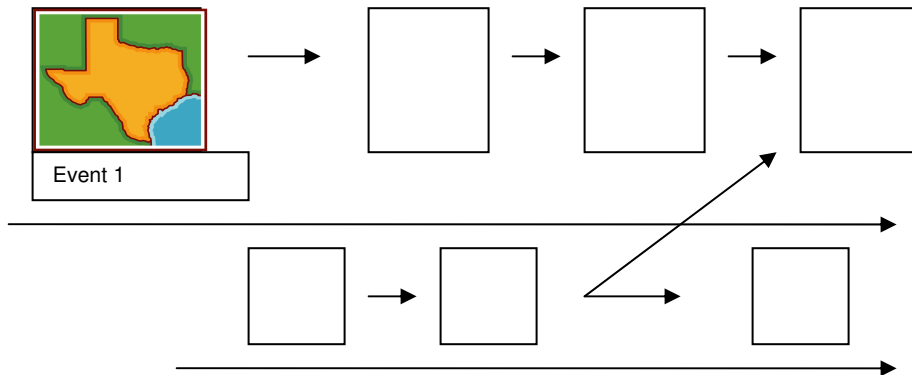
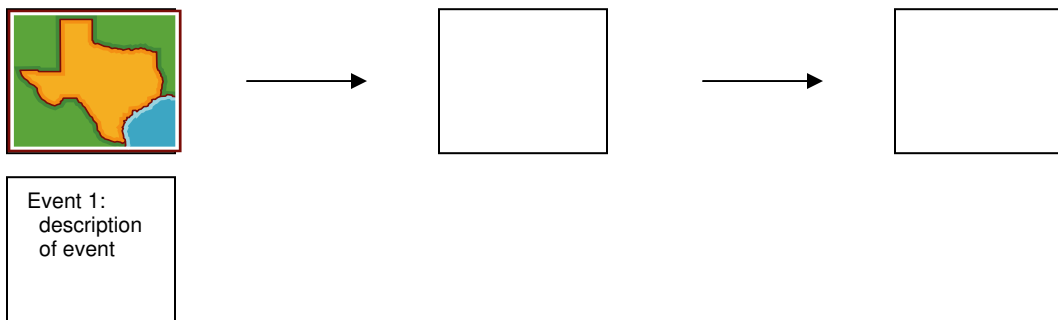


Figure B.1. Examples of storyboards.

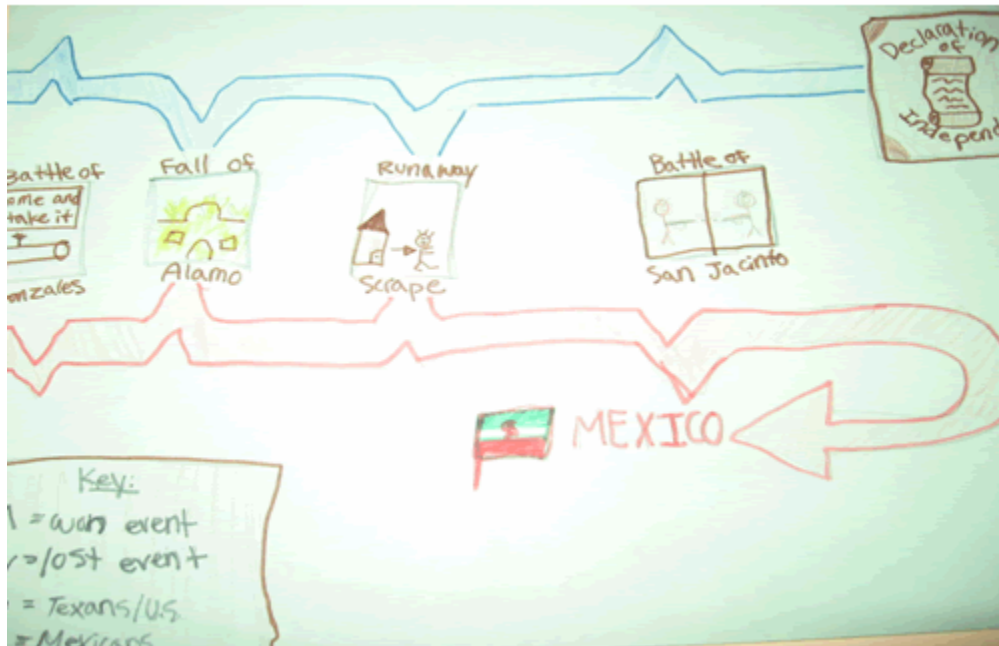


Figure B.2. Seventh-grade student's sample of a storyboard from the Texas Revolution.

## Biography of Sam Houston

### OBJECTIVES:

1. Describe the major events of Sam Houston's life.
2. Discuss Sam Houston's influence on the Texas Revolution and the development of Texas.
3. Identify the historical perspective of a biographer towards Sam Houston.
4. Ask historical questions about Sam Houston's life and the perspective of the biographer.
5. Read and interpret a biography by preparing written responses to historical questions.

### TEKS ALIGNMENT

7.3 (A, B), 7.4 (A), 21 (A), 22 (C, D)

### SUPPLIES

Selections from a biography of Sam Houston (*Make Way for Sam Houston*, Jean Fritz), note cards, drawing paper, markers, and a Sam Houston costume.

### INTRODUCE

*Activate and Assess Prior Knowledge; Introduce Lesson Concepts*

Ask the students to identify the difference between the following two questions: How did Sam Houston influence the outcome of the Texas Revolution? OR Where was Sam Houston born?

Explain to the students the difference between factual questions and "thinking" questions. Explain the importance of asking historical questions that encourage in-depth exploration. Write the word *biography* on the board, and ask the students to discuss what a biography is. Explain that a biographer communicates his or her own perspective of a person and that different biographers may articulate varying viewpoints.

### ENGAGE

Select a student to play the role of Sam Houston. If possible, use props and costuming. Ask the student to read a short biographical introduction (listed below) about the life of Sam Houston. Place the students in small groups, and ask them to read three selections from the biography of Sam Houston. After reading the passages, students should prepare a series of questions and answers based upon the reading. The questions and answers will be used for a performance interview with Sam Houston.

Depending on the students' prior experience with secondary accounts, the instructor may need to prepare at least one question for the students.

The students then will conduct an interview with Sam Houston. The student playing the role of Sam Houston will use the written responses as his answers. After the interview, ask the students to reflect upon what they learned about Houston and his role in the Texas Revolution.

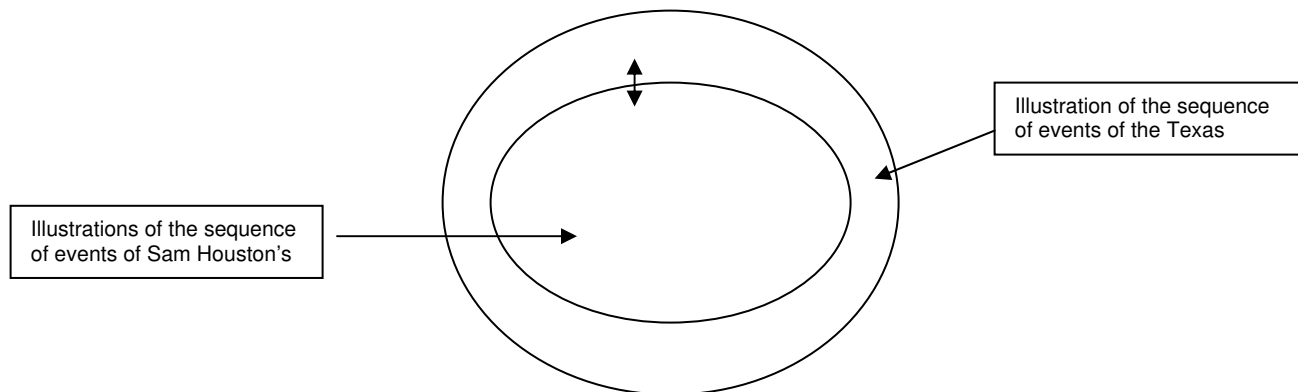
#### ASSESS/ RETEACH

If desired, the students may write a reflective journal entry about their experience with the interview activity. In small groups or individually, the students will prepare a graphic organizer about the life of Sam Houston and his influence on Texas. The graphic organizer will contain illustrations of Sam Houston's life and of his impact on the Texas Revolution. The organizer contains two images, one of Houston's silhouette and a circle diagram of the events of Houston's life. For the silhouette, the students also will draw an outline of Houston's body and fill in the body with words and images. The students will want to consider the following:

- (a) head (What does he think?);
- (b) hands (What does he do?);
- (c) heart (What does he feel?);
- (d) feet (Where does he move to?);
- (e) eyes (What does he see?);
- (f) mouth (What does he say?).

For the circle diagram, the students will fill in two concentric circles, with the first circle illustrating the events of Houston's life and the second circle illustrating how those events impacted Houston and his role in the Texas Revolution. The purpose of the circle diagram is to show how Houston's life story interacted with the story of the Texas Revolution. The circle of Houston's life is placed inside the circle of the Texas Revolution to demonstrate how *meta narratives* interweave with larger historical narratives. The diagram represents the circle diagram (*Figure B.3*).





Below the illustrations, the students will also answer the question, “How did Sam Houston impact the Texas Revolution?”

The photograph below demonstrates the graphic organizer of “People In History.”

*Figure B.3.* Circle diagram representing the influence of an individual’s life history (meta narrative) on a larger historical narrative.



Figure B.4. Seventh-graders' graphic organizer on Susanna Dickinson.

#### EXTENSIONS

The activity can be applied to person in history. Using the collection of biographical sketches of people from the Texas Revolution, the students may prepare additional graphic organizers for the people of their choice.

## The Process of Historical Inquiry

### OBJECTIVES

1. Describe the process of historical inquiry.
2. Comprehend and recognize a wide array of secondary and primary resources.
3. Analyze and interpret primary documents according to meaning, purpose, and reliability.
4. Record ideas into a research log.
5. Compare secondary and primary accounts to one another.

### TEKS ALIGNMENT

7.3 (A, B), 7.8 (A), 7.21 (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H), 7.22 (A, B, C, D), 7.23 (A, B)

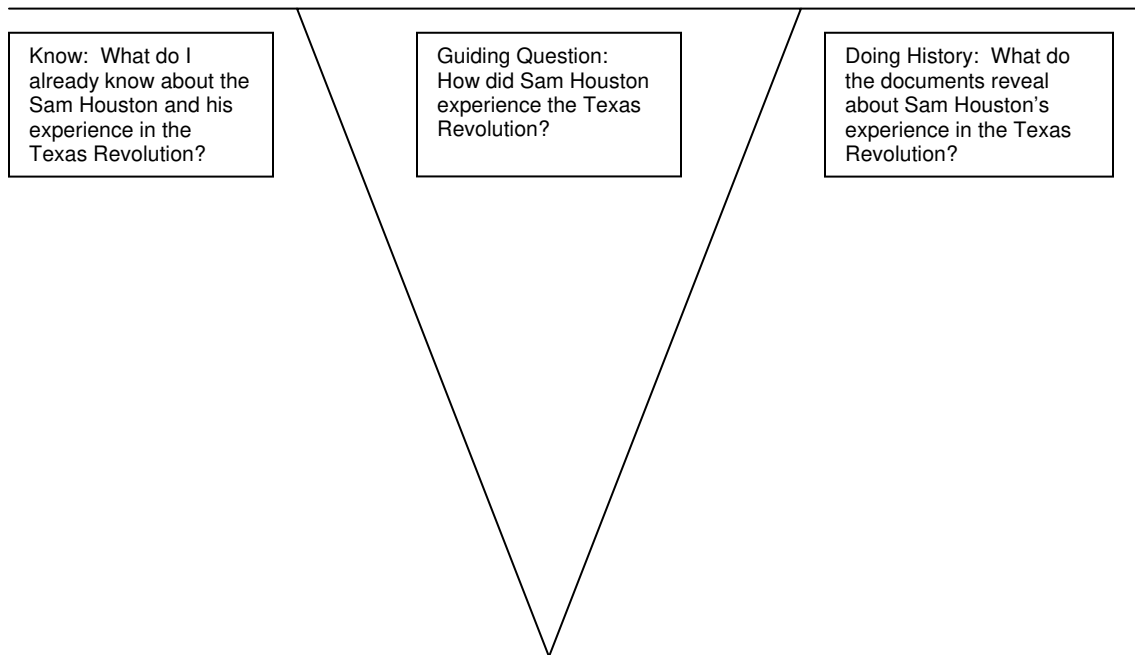
### INTRODUCE

Show the students the optical illusion *Old Woman/Young Woman*. Ask the students if they can see both an old woman and a young woman in the image. Discuss with the students how the visual illustrates point-of-view in history. Consider the point-of-view of different people in history, of different historians, and of conflicting primary documents. Emphasize that each individual in the class also will develop his or her own point-of-view about history.

### ENGAGE

This lesson is designed to cover a period of several weeks; however, the lesson may be tailored to suit a variety of situations. The students will first select a topic for further investigation and then analyze primary documents on their selected topic. Before engaging in primary document research, ask the students to complete the handout *Historical Inquiry* by drawing pictures to represent the different stages. This may be completed over a series of days. The teacher may need to explain the meaning of the boxes.

Using a Vee diagram, the students will select a historical topic and then write a guiding question in the center of the triangle (*Figure B.5*). The students may need assistance in writing question; thus, the teacher may devise a possible prompt such as, "How did \_\_\_\_\_ experience the Texas Revolution?". The students will use the left side of the page to record their prior knowledge. Throughout the process, the students will use the right side of the page to record their conclusions from the document collections. The graphic organizer may be reproduced on a larger sheet of construction or butcher paper for individual, group, or large class use.



*Figure B.5.* Example of a Vee diagram as applied to seventh-graders' study of the Texas Revolution. The "know" column represents students' prior knowledge, and the "do" column represents the ideas that the students gained from doing history.

The students will examine a collection of digital and printed historical images and documents. I recommend using the digital images from the Center for American History at the University of Texas., *The Alamo Reader*, and *Documents of Texas History*. The included reference list contains an extensive collection of primary documents.

The students may examine the documents individually or in small-groups. The students will use the handout *Research Log* to record their impressions. For small groups, I placed the primary document on a large sheet of butcher paper, and the students drew pictures and wrote words around the document to represent their ideas.

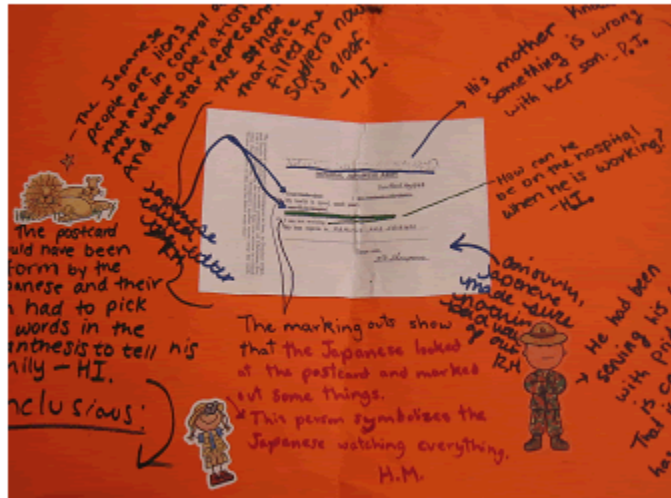
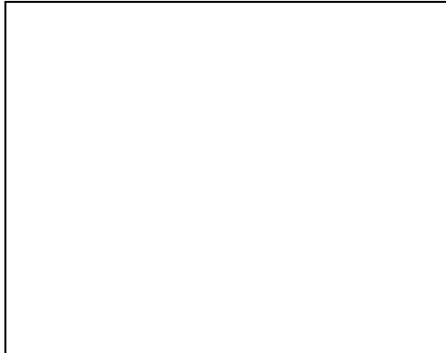


Figure B.6. Photographic reproduction of seventh-graders interactions with a primary document.

## ASSESS

I recommend closing the primary document sessions with a class discussion about the students experiences with the historical material. The students may choose to share the ideas that they recorded on their butcher paper logs. At the end of each session, I recommend that the students write a short diary entry about their experiences. The diary entries may be kept with the research logs in a notebook.

## Historical Inquiry



Ask probing questions.



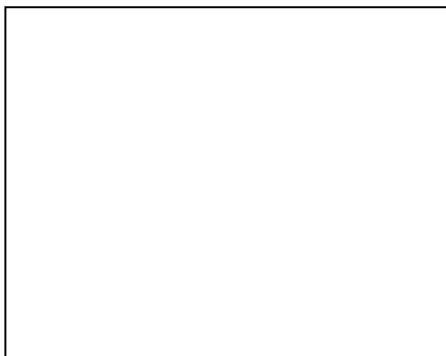
Consider more than one point-of-view.



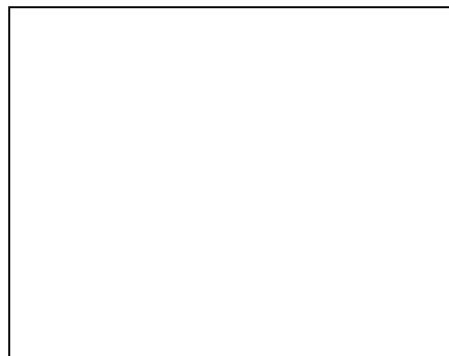
Read and interpret secondary accounts.



Examine and interpret primary documents.




Reflect upon your own perspective of history.



Write and share your own version of history.

## Research Log

Name of the Primary Document	Description of the Document	Bright Ideas about the Document 

## Student Authorship

### OBJECTIVES

1. Discuss findings from primary document research.
2. Formulate a perspective after conducting the process of historical inquiry.
3. Brainstorm, prepare outlines, and rough drafts for student-authored secondary account.
4. Write and illustrate a secondary account.
5. Publish and share the secondary account.
6. In a group, prepare and present a museum display.

### TEKS ALIGNMENT

7.22 (A, B, C, D), 7.23 (A, B)

### INTRODUCE

Review with the students the process of historical inquiry. Show the *Old Woman/Young Woman* image again, and ask the students about how the image applies to the process of historical inquiry. Explain to the students that they should develop their own perspective about their chosen topic.

### ENGAGE

Ask the students to consider their own perspective about their chosen topic. The students will write a statement of their own historical perspective using the brainstorming handout *My Historical Perspective*. In small-groups, the students begin their preparations for the museum display. The teacher may decide to have the students brainstorm their ideas on a large sheet of butcher paper.

The requirements for the museum display may be adapted according to the needs of the students. A handout explaining the requirements of the assignment is attached. The students will write a historical narrative on their chosen topic. The handout *My Historical Perspective* and the group brainstorming activity may serve as the prewriting exercises for the assignment. The teacher may decide to have the students write a rough draft, conduct a peer editing session, and type a final draft. The essay should include at least one illustration. The students will assemble the narratives into a class book. The class may decide to create one book for the entire class or multiple books with collections of narratives on the same topic. The teacher may decide to have the students create a cover page and a table of contents and then assemble the pages accordingly.



## ASSESS

The students may place their museum displays throughout the room, and the class teacher may decide to have the students conduct a gallery walk. Students are welcome to have a group member(s) in costume present a short narration of the display. The secondary account books may be shared with the class.



## My Historical Perspective

Guiding question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

My point-of-view about my topic is... \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I have this point-of-view because the primary documents revealed.... \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Secondary Account

Using your selected topic (i.e. Davy Crockett, women and children, Sam Houston, or Santa Anna), write your own secondary account. Your story should answer the question on your inquiry chart. Your secondary account should accomplish the following:

- represent the life of your selected individual(s)
- discuss his or her impact on the Texas Revolution
- communicate your unique point-of-view
- represent the point-of-view of your individual(s)
- include illustrations.

The essay will be typed in the computer lab. As a group, you will assemble your secondary accounts into a class book. The class book will include a cover page, a table of contents, the secondary accounts, and the accompanying illustrations.

## Historical Museum Display

As a group, you will create a museum display representing the life of your selected individual(s). The display may include pictures, physical objects, and images. The display should include a short description of each of the display's contents. The description may be posted next to the display, or you may choose a member of your group to act as narrator to read the description to the class. I strongly encourage the narrator to pose as your selected individual (i.e. Crockett, Santa Anna, Susanna Dickinson, or Sam Houston). The narrator may decide to wear a historical costume. The display should accomplish the following:

- represent the life of your selected individual(s)
- discuss his or her impact on the Texas Revolution
- communicate your unique point-of-view
- demonstrate your creativity
- include at least six images, pictures, or objects
- include a narration of the display
- may include a narrator in costume.

## Primary Document Selections

### **Madame Candelaria on Davy Crockett**

Crockett played the fiddle and he played well if I am any judge of music. He was one the strangest-looking men I ever saw. He had the face of a woman and his manner was that of a young girl. I could not regard him as a hero until I saw him die. He looked grand and terrible standing in the door and fighting a whole column of Mexican infantry. He had fired his last shot, and had no time to reload. The cannon balls had knocked away the sand bags, and the infantry was pouring through the breach, Crockett stood there swinging something bright over his head. The place was full of smoke and I could not tell whether he was using a gun or a sword. A heap of dead was piled at his feet, and the Mexicans were lunging at him with bayonets, but he would not retreat an inch. Poor Bowie could see it all, but he could not raise from his cot, Crockett fell and the Mexicans poured into the Alamo.

Madame Candelaria, newspaper interview, about 1898.

*San Antonio Light*. February 19, 1899. Taken from *The Alamo Reader* (Hansen, 2000, p. 303).

attack the east front, which was the strongest, perhaps because of its height or perhaps because of the number of cannon that were defending it, three of them situated in a battery over the church ruins, which appeared as a sort of high fortress. The fourth column . . . was entrusted with taking the entrance to the fort and the entrenchments defending it. . . .

Our commander made much of Travis's courage, for it saved him from the insulting intimation that the critical circumstances surrounding Travis would have sufficed to spare the army a great sacrifice.

Beginning at one o'clock in the morning of the 6th, the columns were set in motion, and at three they silently advanced toward the river, which they crossed marching two abreast over some narrow wooden bridges. . . . Silence was again ordered and smoking was prohibited. The moon was up, but the density of the clouds that covered it allowed only an opaque light in our direction, seeming thus to contribute to our designs. . . . Light began to appear on the horizon, . . . and we soon heard that terrible bugle call of death, which stirred our hearts, altered our expressions, and aroused us all suddenly from our painful meditations.

The columns advanced with as much speed as possible; shortly after beginning the march they were ordered to open fire while they were still out of range, but there were some officers who wisely disregarded the signal. Alerted to our attack by the given signal, which all columns answered, the enemy vigorously returned our fire, which had not even touched him but had retarded our advance. Travis, to compensate for the reduced number of the defenders, had placed three or four rifles by the side of each man, so that the initial fire was very rapid and deadly. Our columns left along their path a wide trail of blood, of wounded, and of dead. . . . It could be observed that a single cannon volley did away with half the company of chasseurs from Toluca. . . .

The columns, bravely storming the fort in the midst of a terrible shower of bullets and cannon-fire, had reached the base of the walls. . . . All united at one point, mixing and forming a confused mass. Fortunately the wall reinforcement on this front was of lumber, its excavation was hardly begun, and the height of the parapet was eight or nine feet; there was therefore a starting point, and it could be climbed, though with some difficulty. . . . The most daring of our veterans tried to be the first to climb, which they accomplished, yelling wildly so that room could be made for them, at times climbing over their own comrades. Others, jammed together, made useless efforts, obstructing each other, getting in the way of the more agile ones and pushing down those who were about to carry out their courageous effort. A lively rifle fire coming from the roof of the barracks and other points caused painful havoc, increasing the confusion of our disorderly mass. The first to climb were thrown down by bayonets already waiting for

them behind the parapet, or by pistol fire, but the courage of our soldiers was not diminished as they saw their comrades falling dead or wounded, and they hurried to occupy their places and to avenge them, climbing over their bleeding bodies. . . .

A quarter of an hour had elapsed, during which our soldiers remained in a terrible situation, wearing themselves out as they climbed in quest of a less obscure death than that visited on them, crowded in a single mass; later and after much effort, they were able in sufficient numbers to reach the parapet, without distinction of ranks. The terrified defenders withdrew at once into quarters placed to the right and left of the small area that constituted their second line of defense. . . .

Our soldiers, some stimulated by courage and others by fury, burst into the quarters where the enemy had entrenched themselves, from which issued an infernal fire. Behind these came others, who, nearing the doors and blind with fury and smoke, fired their shots against friends and enemies alike, and in this way our losses were most grievous. On the other hand, they turned the enemy's own cannon to bring down the doors to the rooms or the rooms themselves; a horrible carnage took place, and some were trampled to death. The tumult was great. . . .

This scene of extermination went on for an hour before the curtain of death covered and ended it: shortly after six in the morning it was all finished; the corps were beginning to reassemble and to identify themselves, their sorrowful countenances revealing the losses in the thinned ranks of their officers and comrades, when the commander in chief appeared. He could see for himself the desolation among his battalions and that devastated area littered with corpses, with scattered limbs and bullets, with weapons and torn uniforms. . . .

The general then addressed his crippled battalions, lauding their courage and thanking them in the name of their country. . . .

Shortly before Santa Anna's speech, an unpleasant episode had taken place, which, since it occurred after the end of the skirmish, was looked upon as base murder and which contributed greatly to the coolness that was noted. Some seven men had survived the general carnage and, under the protection of General Castrillon, they were brought before Santa Anna. Among them was one of great stature, well proportioned, with regular features, in whose face there was the imprint of adversity, but in whom one also noticed a degree of resignation and nobility that did him honor. He was the naturalist David Crockett, well known in North America for his unusual adventures, who had undertaken to explore the country and who, finding himself in Béjar at the very moment of surprise, had taken refuge in the Alamo, fearing that his status as a foreigner might not be respected. Santa Anna answered Castrillon's intervention in Crockett's behalf with a gesture of indignation and, addressing himself to the sappers, the troops

closest to him, ordered his execution. The commanders and officers were outraged at this action and did not support the order, hoping that once the fury of the moment had blown over these men would be spared; but several officers who were around the president and who, perhaps, had not been present during the moment of danger, became noteworthy by an infamous deed, surpassing the soldiers in cruelty. They thrust themselves forward, in order to flatter their commander, and with swords in hand, fell upon these unfortunate, defenseless men just as a tiger leaps upon his prey. Though tortured before they were killed, these unfortunates died without complaining and without humiliating themselves before their torturers . . . .

To whom was this sacrifice useful and what advantage was derived by increasing the number of victims? It was paid for dearly, though it could have been otherwise had these men been required to walk across the floor carpeted with the bodies over which we stepped, had they been rehabilitated generously and required to communicate to their comrades the fate that awaited them if they did not desist from their unjust cause. They could have informed their comrades of the force and resources that the enemy had. According to documents found among these men and to subsequent information, the force within the Alamo consisted of 182 men; but according to the number counted by us it was 253. Doubtless the total did not exceed either of these two, and in any case the number is less than that referred to by the commander in chief in his communique, which contends that in the excavations and the

trenches alone more than 600 bodies had been buried. What was the object of this misrepresentation? Some believe that it was done to give greater importance to the episode, others, that it was done to excuse our losses and to make it less painful.

Death united in one place both friends and enemies; within a few hours a funeral pyre rendered into ashes those men who moments before had been so brave that in a blind fury they had unselfishly offered their lives and had met their ends in combat. . . .

When calm opens the way for reflection, what sad and cruel thoughts rush to the sensitive soul contemplating the field of battle? . . .

The reflections after the assault, even a few days after it had taken place, were generally well founded; for instance, it was questioned why a breach had not been opened? What had been the use of bringing up the artillery if it were not to be used when necessity required, and why should we have been forced to leap over a fortified place as if we were flying birds? Why, before agreeing on the sacrifice, which was great indeed, had no one borne in mind that we had no means at our disposal to save our wounded? Why were our lives uselessly sacrificed in a deserted and totally hostile country if our losses could not be replaced? These thoughts were followed by others more or less well based, for the taking of the Alamo was not considered a happy event, but rather a defeat that saddened us all. . . .

#### Questions

1. According to Lieutenant Colonel de la Peña, why did General Santa Anna insist on attacking the Alamo?
2. In the opinion of de la Peña, what mistakes were made by Santa Anna in the attack?
3. According to de la Peña, how did the frontiersman Davy Crockett die at the Alamo?

\*From José Enrique de la Peña, *With Santa Anna in Texas: A Personal Narrative of the Revolution*, (Perry Carmen, ed. and trans., 1975).



## 47. THE RUNAWAY SCRAPE

March-April, 1836

From "The Reminiscences of Mrs. Dilue Harris," *The Quarterly* of the Texas State Historical Association, IV (January, 1901), 160-179.

On March 26, 1836, General Sam Houston broke camp on the Colorado River and began moving eastward, abandoning the country to the advancing Mexican forces. Probably as many as a thousand families lived along the Colorado and the Brazos at the time. The news that the army was retreating, coupled with that of the fate of the defenders of the Alamo and Goliad, created panic not only among the inhabitants of the abandoned territory but among those east of the Brazos as well. The people fled in confusion toward the Sabine where they hoped to find safety within the United States, most of the group encountering great suffering in the course of their flight. The following account of the "Runaway Scrape," written by Mrs. Dilue Harris who was one of the refugees, is based on a journal kept by Dr. Pleasant W. Rose, the father of Mrs. Harris. In copying the journal, Mrs. Harris added her own recollections in a manner that makes the two accounts almost indistinguishable.

. . . By the 20th of February [1836] the people of San Patricio and other western settlements were fleeing for their lives. Every family in our neighborhood was preparing to go to the United States. Wagons and other vehicles were scarce. Mr. [Adam] Stafford [a cripple], with the help of small boys and negroes, began gathering cattle. All the large boys had gone to the army. . . .

Father finished planting corn. He had hauled away a part of our household furniture and other things and

hid them in the bottom. Mother had packed what bedding, clothes, and provisions she thought we should need, ready to leave at a moment's warning. Father had made arrangements with a Mr. Bundick to haul our family in his cart; but we were confident that the army under General Houston would whip the Mexicans before they reached the Colorado river. . . .

On the 12th of March came the news of the fall of the Alamo. A courier brought a dispatch from General Houston for the people to leave. . . .

Then began the horrors of the "Runaway Scrape." We left home at sunset, hauling clothes, bedding, and provisions on the sleigh with one yoke of oxen. Mother and I were walking, she with an infant in her arms. Brother drove the oxen, and my little sisters rode in the sleigh. We were going ten miles to where we could be transferred to Mr. Bundick's cart. Father was helping with the cattle, but he joined us after dark and brought a horse and saddle for brother. He sent him to help Mr. Stafford with the cattle. He was to go a different road with them and ford the San Jacinto. Mother and I then rode father's horse.

Me met Mrs. M——. She was driving her oxen home. We had sent her word in the morning. She begged mother to go back and help her, but father said

not. He told the lady to drive the oxen home, put them in the cow pen, turn out the cows and calves, and get her children ready, and he would send assistance. . . .

It was ten o'clock at night when we got to Mrs. Roark's. We shifted our things into the cart of Mr. Bundick, who was waiting for us, and tried to rest till morning. . . .

Early the next morning we were on the move, mother with her four children in the cart, and Mr. Bundick and his wife and negro woman on horseback. . . . He brought with him two slaves, the woman already mentioned and a man who was driving the cart; and, as Mr. Bundick had no children, we were as comfortable as could have been expected. . . .

Mr. Cotie would not go to the army. He hauled five families in the big blue wagon with his six yoke of oxen, besides negroes, provisions, bedding, and all the plunder the others could not carry.

We camped the first night near Harrisburg, about where the railroad depot now stands. Next day we crossed Vince's Bridge and arrived at the San Jacinto in the night. There were fully five thousand people at the ferry. The planters from Brazoria and Columbia with their slaves were crossing. We waited three days before we crossed. Our party consisted of five white families: father's, Mr. Dyer's, Mr. Bell's, Mr. Neal's, and Mr. Bundick's. Father and Mr. Bundick were the only white men in the party, the others being in the army. There were twenty or thirty negroes from Stafford's plantation. They had a large wagon with five yoke of oxen, and horses, and mules, and they were in charge of an old negro man called Uncle Ned. Altogether, black and white, there were about fifty of us. Everyone was trying to cross first, and it was almost a riot.

We got over on the third day, and after travelling a few miles further to the next timber and water, some of our party wanted to camp; but others said that the Trinity river was rising, and if delayed we might not get across. So we hurried on.

When we got about half across the prairie Uncle Ned's wagon bogged. The negro men driving the carts tried to go around the big wagon one at a time until the four carts were fast in the mud. Mother was the only white woman that rode in a cart; the others travelled on horseback. Mrs. Bell's four children, Mrs. Dyer's three, and mother's four rode in the carts. All that were on horseback had gone on to the timber to let their horses feed and get water. They supposed their families would get there by dark. The negro men put all the oxen to the wagon, but could not move it; so they had to stay there until morning without wood or water. Mother gathered the white children in our cart. They behaved very well and went to sleep, except one little boy, Eli Dyer, who kicked and cried for Uncle Ned and Aunt Dilue till Uncle Ned came and carried him to the wagon. He slept that night in Uncle Ned's arms.

Mother with all the negro women and children walked six miles to the timber and found our friends in trouble. Father and Mr. Bundick had gone to the river and helped with the ferry boat, but late in the evening the boat grounded on the east bank of the Trinity and didn't get back until morning. While they were gone the horses had strayed off and they had to find them before

they could go to the wagons. Those that travelled on horseback were supplied with provisions by other campers. We that stayed in the prairie had to eat cold corn bread and cold boiled beef. The wagons and carts didn't get to the timber till night. They had to be unloaded and pulled out.

At the Trinity river men from the army began to join their families. . . . The Texas army was retreating and the Mexicans were crossing the Colorado, Col. Fannin and his men were prisoners, there were more negroes than whites among us and many of them were wild Africans, there [were] . . . the Cherokee Indians in Eastern Texas at Nacogdoches, and there were Tories, both Mexicans and Americans, in the country. It was the intention of our men to see their families across the Sabine river, and then to return and fight the Mexicans. I must say for the negroes that there was no insubordination among them; for they were loyal to their owners.

Our hardships began at the Trinity. The river was rising and there was a struggle to see who should cross first. Measles, sore eyes, whooping cough, and every disease that man, woman, or child is heir to, broke out among us. . . . The horrors of crossing the Trinity are beyond my power to describe. One of my little sisters was very sick, and the ferryman said that those families that had sick children should cross first. When our party got to the boat the water broke over the banks above where we were and ran around us. We were several hours surrounded by water. Our family was the last to get to the boat. We left more than five hundred people on the west bank. Drift wood covered the water as far as we could see. The sick child was in convulsions. It required eight men to manage the boat.

When we landed the lowlands were under water, and everybody was rushing for the prairie. Father had a good horse, and Mrs. Dyer let mother have her horse and saddle. Father carried the sick child, and sister and I rode behind mother. She carried father's gun and the little babe. All we carried with us was what clothes we were wearing at the time. The night was very dark. We crossed a bridge that was under water. As soon as we crossed, a man with a cart and oxen drove on the bridge, and it broke down, drowning the oxen. That prevented the people from crossing, as the bridge was over a slough that looked like a river.

Father and mother hurried on, and we got to the prairie and found a great many families camped there. A Mrs. Foster invited mother to her camp, and furnished us with supper, a bed, and dry clothes.

The other families stayed all night in the bottom without fire or anything to eat, and the water up in the carts. The men drove the horses and oxen to the prairies, and the women, sick children, and negroes were left in the bottom. The old negro man, Uncle Ned, was left in charge. He put the white women and children in his wagon. It was large and had a canvas cover. The negro women and their children he put in the carts. Then he guarded the whole party until morning.

It was impossible for the men to return to their families. They spent the night making a raft by a torch light. As the camps were near a grove of pine timber, there was no trouble about lights. It was a night of terror. Father and the men worked some distance from



the camp cutting down timber to make the raft. It had to be put together in the water. We were in great anxiety about the people that were left in the bottom; we didn't know but they would be drowned, or killed by panthers, alligators, or bears.

As soon as it was daylight the men went to the relief of their families and found them cold, wet, and hungry. . . . When the men on the raft got to those who had stayed all night in the Trinity bottom they found that the negroes were scared, and wanted to get on the raft; but Uncle Ned told them that his young mistress and the children should go first. It was very dangerous crossing the slough. The men would bring one woman and her children on the raft out of deep water, and men on horseback would meet them. It took all day to get the party out to the prairies. . . .

The second day they brought out the bedding and clothes. Everything was soaked with water. They had to take the wagons and carts apart. . . . It took four days to get everything out of the water.

The man whose oxen had drowned sold his cart to father for ten dollars. He said he had seen enough of Mexico and would go back to old Ireland.

It had been five days since we crossed the Trinity, and we had heard no news from the army. The town of Liberty was three miles from where we camped. The people there had not left their homes, and they gave us all the help in their power. My little sister that had been sick was buried in the cemetery at Liberty. After resting a few days our party continued their journey, but we remained in the town. Mother was not able to travel; she had nursed an infant and the sick child until she was compelled to rest.

A few days after our friends had gone a man crossed the Trinity in a skiff bringing bad news. The Mexican army had crossed the Brazos and was between the Texas army and Harrisburg. Fannin and his men were massacred. President Burnet and his cabinet had left Harrisburg and gone to Washington on the bay and were going to Galveston Island. The people at Liberty had left.

We had been at Liberty three weeks. . . . One Thursday evening all of a sudden we heard a sound like distant thunder. When it was repeated father said it was cannon, and that the Texans and Mexicans were fighting. . . . The cannonading lasted only a few minutes, and father said that the Texans must have been defeated, or the cannon would not have ceased firing so quickly. We left Liberty in half an hour. . . .

We travelled nearly all night, sister and I on horseback and mother in the cart. . . . We were as wretched as we could be; for we had been five weeks from home, and there was not much prospect of our ever returning. . . .

We continued our journey through mud and water and when we camped in the evening fifty or sixty young men came by who were going to join General Houston. One of them was Harvey Stafford, our neighbor, who was returning from the United States with volunteers. . . . He said also that General Gaines of the United States army was at the Neches with a regiment of soldiers to keep the Indians in subjection, but didn't prevent the people from crossing with their slaves. General Gaines

said the boundary line between the United States and Mexico was the Neches.

The young men went a short distance from us and camped. Then we heard some one calling in the direction of Liberty. We could see a man on horseback waving his hat; and, as we knew there was no one left at Liberty, we thought the Mexican army had crossed the Trinity. The young men came with their guns, and when the rider got near enough for us to understand what he said, it was "Turn back! The Texas army has whipped the Mexican army and the Mexican army are prisoners. No danger! No danger! Turn back!" . . . When the young men began to understand the glorious news they wanted to fire a salute, but father made them stop. He told them to save their ammunition, for they might need it.

[The courier] . . . showed a despatch from General Houston giving an account of the battle and saying it would be safe for the people to return to their homes. The courier had crossed the Trinity River in a canoe, swimming his horse with the help of two men. . . .

The good news was cheering indeed. The courier's name was McDermot. He was an Irishman and had been an actor. He stayed with us that night and told various incidents of the battle. There was not much sleeping during the night. . . . We were on the move early the next morning. The courier went on to carry the glad tidings to the people who had crossed the Sabine, but we took a lower road and went down the Trinity. . . .

We crossed the San Jacinto the next morning and stayed until late in the evening on the battle field. Both armies were camped near. . . . I had lost my bonnet crossing Trinity Bay and was compelled to wear a table cloth again. It was six weeks since we had left home, and our clothes were very much dilapidated. I could not go to see the Mexican prisoners with a table cloth tied on my head for I knew several of the young men. I was on the battle field of San Jacinto the 26th of April, 1836. . . .

We stayed on the battle field several hours. Father was helping with the ferry boat. We visited the graves of the Texans that were killed in the battle, but there were none of them that I knew. The dead Mexicans were lying around in every direction. . . .

We left the battle field late in the evening. We had to pass among the dead Mexicans, and father pulled one out of the road, so we could get by without driving over the body, since we could not go around it. The prairie was very boggy, it was getting dark, and there were now twenty or thirty families with us. We were glad to leave the battle field, for it was a grewsome [sic] sight. We camped that night on the prairie, and could hear the wolves howl and bark as they devoured the dead. . . .

Early the next morning we were on the move. We had to take a roundabout road, for the burning of Vince's bridge prevented us from going directly home. We could hear nothing but sad news. San Felipe had been burned, and dear old Harrisburg was in ashes. There was nothing left of the Stafford plantation but a crib with a thousand bushels of corn. . . .

Burning the sawmill at Harrisburg and the buildings on Stafford's plantation was a calamity that greatly affected the people. On the plantation there were a sugar-



mill, cotton-gin, blacksmith-shop, grist-mill, a dwelling-house, negro houses, and a stock of farming implements. The Mexicans saved the corn for bread, and it was a great help to the people of the neighborhood. . . .

We stayed one day on Sim's Bayou. There were more than one hundred families, and all stopped to rest and let the stock feed. . . . It was only fifteen miles home. . . .

Early in the morning we broke camp. . . . The weather was getting warm, and we stopped two hours in the middle of the day at a water hole. When the sun set we were still five miles from home. . . . It was ten o'clock when we got home. We camped near the house. . . .

As soon as it was light enough for us to see we went to the house, and the first thing we saw was the hogs running out. Father's bookcase lay on the ground broken open, his books, medicines, and other things scattered on the ground, and the hogs sleeping on them. . . . Through the joy and excitement since the battle of San Jacinto, we had forgotten our sad bereavement.

The first thing that father did after breakfast was to go to the corn field. He had planted corn the first of March, and it needed plowing. He did not wait for Monday, or to put the house in order, but began plowing at once. His field was in the bottom, and he had hidden his plow. . . .

Father had hid some of our things in the bottom, among them a big chest. Mother had packed it with bedding, clothes, and other things we could not take when we left home. After a few days, Uncle and brother hauled it to the house, and that old blue chest proved a treasure. When we left home we wore our best clothes. Now our best clothes were in the chest, among them my old sunbonnet. I was prouder of that old bonnet than in after years of a new white lace one that my husband gave me.

By the middle of May our neighbors that we had parted from came home. They had got to the Sabine River before they heard of the battle of San Jacinto. . . .

## 48. THE BATTLE OF SAN JACINTO

April 21, 1836

### 1. HOUSTON'S OFFICIAL REPORT

April 25, 1836

From Sam Houston, Commander-in-Chief, San Jacinto, To his Excellency D. G. Burnett [sic], President of the Republic of Texas, April 25th, 1836 (MS; Archives, Texas State Library, Austin).

Headquarters of the Army

San Jacinto, April 25th, 1836

Sir — I regret extremely that my situation since the battle of the 21st has been such as to prevent my rendering you my official report of the same, previous to this time.

I have the honor to inform you that, on the evening of the 18th inst., after a forced march of fifty-five miles, which was effected in two days and a half, the army arrived opposite Harrisburg. That evening a courier of the enemy was taken, from whom I learned that General Santa Anna, with one division of his choice troops, had marched in the direction of Lynch's ferry, on the San Jacinto—burning Harrisburg as he passed down. The army was ordered to be in readiness to march early on the next morning. The main body effected a crossing over Buffalo Bayou, below Harrisburg, on the morning of the 19th, having left the baggage, the sick, and a sufficient camp-guard, in the rear. We continued to march throughout the night, making but one halt in the prairie for a short time, and without refreshments. At daylight we resumed the line of march, and in a short distance our scouts encountered those of the enemy, and we received information that General Santa Anna was at New Washington, and would that day take up the line of march for Anahuac, crossing at Lynch's ferry. The Texan army halted within half a mile of the ferry, in some timber, and were engaged in slaughtering beeves,

when the army of Santa Anna was discovered to be approaching in battle array, having been encamped at Clopper's point, eight miles below. Disposition was immediately made of our forces, and preparation for his reception. He took a position with his infantry, and artillery in the centre, occupying an island of timber, his cavalry covering the left flank. The artillery, consisting of one double-fortified medium brass twelve-pounder, then opened on our encampment. The infantry, in column, advanced with the design of charging our lines, but were repulsed by a discharge of grape and canister from our artillery, consisting of two six-pounders. The enemy had occupied a piece of timber within rifle-shot of the left wing of our army, from which an occasional interchange of small-arms took place between the troops, until the enemy withdrew to a position on the bank of the San Jacinto, about three quarters of a mile from our encampment, and commenced fortification.

A short time before sunset, our mounted men, about eighty-five in number, under the special command of Colonel Sherman, marched out for the purpose of reconnoitring the enemy. While advancing, they received a volley from the left of the enemy's infantry, and, after a sharp rencounter with their cavalry, in which ours acted extremely well, and performed some feats of daring chivalry, they retired in good order, having had two men severely wounded, and several horses killed. In the meantime, the infantry under the command of Lieut.-Col. Millard, and Col. Burleson's regiment, with the artillery, had marched out for the purpose of covering the retreat of the cavalry if necessary. All then fell back in good order to our encampment about sunset, and remained without ostensible action until the 21st, at half-



past three o'clock, taking the first refreshment which they had enjoyed for two days. The enemy in the meantime extended the right flank of their infantry, so as to occupy the extreme point of a skirt of timber on the bank of the San Jacinto, and secured their left by a fortification about five feet high, constructed of packs and baggage, leaving an opening in the centre of the breastwork, in which their artillery was placed, their cavalry upon their left wing.

About 9 o'clock on the morning of the 21st, the enemy were reinforced by five hundred choice troops, under the command of Gen. Cos, increasing their effective force to upward of 1500 men, while our aggregate force for the field numbered 783. At half-past three o'clock in the evening, I ordered the officers of the Texan army to parade their respective commands, having in the meantime ordered the bridge on the only road communicating with the Brazos, distant eight miles from our encampment, to be destroyed, thus cutting off all possibility of escape. Our troops paraded with alacrity and spirit, and were anxious for the contest. Their conscious disparity in numbers seemed only to increase their enthusiasm and confidence, and heightened their anxiety for the conflict. Our situation afforded me an opportunity of making the arrangements preparatory to the attack without exposing our designs to the enemy. The 1st Regiment, commanded by Col. Burleson, was assigned to the centre. The 2d. Regiment, under the command of Col. Sherman, formed the left wing of the army. The artillery, under the special command of Col. George W. Hockley, inspector-general, was placed on the right of the 1st Regiment; and four companies of Infantry, under the command of Lieut.-Col. Henry Millard, sustained the artillery upon the right. Our cavalry, sixty-one in number, commanded by Col. Mirabeau B. Lamar (whose gallant and daring conduct on the previous day had attracted the admiration of his comrades, and called him to that station), placed on our extreme right, completed our line. Our cavalry was first despatched to the front of the enemy's left, for the purpose of attracting their notice, while an extensive island of timber afforded us an opportunity of concentrating our forces, and deploying from that point, agreeably to the previous design of the troops. Every evolution was performed with alacrity, the whole advancing rapidly in line, through an open prairie, without any protection whatever for our men. The artillery advanced and took station within two hundred yards of the enemy's breastwork, and commenced an effective fire with grape and cannister [sic]. Col. Sherman, with his regiment, having commenced the action upon our left wing, the whole line, at the centre and on the right, advancing in double quick time, raised the war-cry, "Remember the Alamo," received the enemy's fire, and advanced within point-blank shot, before a piece was discharged from our lines. Our line advanced without a halt, until they were in possession of the woodland and the enemy's breastwork—the right wing of Burleson's and the left of Millard's taking possession of the breastwork; our artillery having gallantly charged up within seventy yards of the enemy's cannon, when it was taken by our troops.

The conflict lasted about eighteen minutes from the time of close action until we were in possession of the

enemy's encampment, taking one piece of cannon (loaded), four stand of colours, all their camp-equipage, stores, and baggage. Our cavalry had charged and routed that of the enemy upon the right, and given pursuit to the fugitives, which did not cease until they arrived at the bridge which I have mentioned before—Captain Karnes, always among the foremost in danger, commanding the pursuers. The conflict in the breastwork lasted but a few moments; many of the troops encountered hand to hand, and, not having the advantage of bayonets on our side, our riflemen used their pieces as war-clubs, breaking many of them off at the breach. The rout commenced at half-past four, and the pursuit by the main army continued until twilight. A guard was then left in charge of the enemy's encampment, and our army returned with their killed and wounded. In the battle, our loss was two killed and twenty-three wounded, six of them mortally. The enemy's loss was 630 killed, among whom was 1 general officer, 4 colonels, 2 lieutenant-colonels, 5 captains, 12 lieutenants; wounded 208, of which were 5 colonels, 3 lieutenant-colonels, 2 second lieutenant-colonels, 7 captains, 1 cadet; prisoners 730—President-General Santa Anna, Gen. Cos, 4 colonels, aides to Gen. Santa Anna, and the Colonel of the Guerrero Battalion, are included in the number. Gen. Santa Anna was not taken until the 22d, and Gen. Cos yesterday, very few having escaped. About 600 muskets, 300 sabres, and 200 pistols, have been collected since the action; several hundred mules and horses were taken, and near twelve thousand dollars in specie.

For several days previous to the action, our troops were engaged in forced marches, exposed to excessive rains, and the additional inconvenience of extremely bad roads, illy supplied with rations and clothing; yet, amid every difficulty, they bore up with cheerfulness and fortitude, and performed their marches with spirit and alacrity—there was no murmuring.

Previous to and during the action, my staff evinced every disposition to be useful, and were actively engaged in their duties. In the conflict I am assured that they demeaned themselves in such a manner as proved them worthy members of the army of San Jacinto. Col. T. J. Rusk, Secretary of War, was on the field. For weeks his services had been highly beneficial to the army; in battle, he was on the left wing, where Col. Sherman's command first encountered and drove in the enemy: he bore himself gallantly, and continued his efforts and activity, remaining with the pursuers until resistance ceased.

I have the honor of transmitting herewith a list of all the officers and men who were engaged in the action, which I respectfully request may be published, as an act of justice to the individuals. For the Commanding General to attempt discrimination as to the conduct of those who commanded in the action, or those who were commanded, would be impossible. Our success in the action is conclusive proof of their daring intrepidity and courage; every officer and man proved himself worthy of the cause in which he battled, while the triumph received a lustre from the humanity which characterized their conduct after victory, and richly entitles them to the admiration and gratitude of their General. Nor should we withhold the tribute of our grateful thanks from that Being who rules the destinies of nations, and has in



afterwards; Mrs. Dickson [*Dickinson*], Mrs. Juana Melton, a Mexican woman who had married an American, also a woman named Concepcion Losoya and her son Juan, who was a little older than I.

"The first thing I remember after getting inside the fort was seeing Mrs. Melton making circles on the ground with an umbrella. I had seen very few umbrellas. While I was walking around about dark I went near a man named Fuentes who was talking at a distance with a soldier. When the latter got nearer he said to Fuentes: 'Did you know they had cut the water off?'"

"The fort was built around a square. The present Hugo-Schmeltzer building is part of it. I remember the main entrance was on the south side of the large enclosure. The quarters were not in the church, but on the south side of the fort, on either side of the entrance, and were part of the convent. There was a ditch of running water back of the church and another along the west side of Alamo Plaza. We couldn't get to the latter ditch as it was under fire and it was the other one that Santa Anna cut off. The next morning after we had gotten in the fort I saw the men drawing water from a well that was in the convent yard. The well was located a little south of the center of the square. I don't know whether it is there now or not.

"On the first night a company of which my father was one went out and captured some prisoners. One of them was a Mexican soldier, and all through the siege he interpreted the bugle calls, on the Mexican side, and in this way the Americans kept posted on the movements of the enemy.

"After the first day there was fighting every day. The Mexicans had a cannon somewhere near where Dwyer Avenue now is, and every fifteen minutes they dropped a shot into the fort.

"The roof of the Alamo had been taken off and the south side filled up with dirt almost to the roof on that side so that there was a slanting embankment up which the Americans could run and take positions. During the fight I saw numbers who were shot in the head as soon as they exposed themselves from the roof. There were holes made in the walls of the fort and the Americans continually shot from these also. We also had two cannon, one at the main entrance and one at the northwest corner of the fort near the post office. The cannon were seldom fired.

#### REMEMBERS CROCKETT

"I remember Crockett. He was a tall, slim man, with black whiskers. He was always at the head. The Mexicans called him Don Benito. The Americans said he was Crockett. He would often come to the fire and warm his hands and say a few words to us in the Mexican language. I also remember hearing the names of Travis and Bowie mentioned, but I never saw either of them that I know of.

"After the first few days I remember that a messenger came from somewhere with word that help was coming. The Americans celebrated it by beating the drums and playing on the flute. But after about seven days fighting there was an armistice of three days and during this time Don Benito had conferences

every day with Santa Anna. Badio [*Juan A. Badillo, per Matovina*], the interpreter, was a close friend of my father and I heard him tell my father in the quarters that Santa Anna had offered to let the Americans go with their lives if they would surrender, but the Mexicans would be treated as rebels.

"During the armistice my father told my mother she had better take the children and go, while she could do so safely. But my mother said:

"No, if you're going to stay, so am I. If they kill one, they can kill us all."

"Only one person went out during the armistice, a woman named Trinidad Saucedo.

"Don Benito, or Crockett, as the Americans called him, assembled the men on the last day and told them Santa Anna's terms, but none of them believed that anyone who surrendered would get out alive, so they all said as they would have to die any how they would fight it out.

"The fighting began again and continued every day, and nearly every night. One night there was music in the Mexican camp and the Mexican prisoner said it meant that reinforcements had arrived.

"We then had another messenger who got through the lines, saying that communication had been cut off and the promised reinforcements could not be sent.

#### THE LAST NIGHT

"On the last night my father was not out, but he and my mother were sleeping together in headquarters. About 2 o'clock in the morning there was a great shooting and firing at the northwest corner of the fort, and I heard my mother say:

"Gregorio, the soldiers have jumped the wall. The fight's begun."

"He got up and picked up his arms and went into the fight. I never saw him again. My uncle told me afterwards that Santa Anna gave him permission to get my father's body and that he found it where the thick of the fight had been.

"We could hear the Mexican officers shouting to the men to jump over, and the men were fighting so close that we could hear them strike each other. It was so dark that we couldn't see anything, and the families that were in the quarters just huddled up in the corners. My mother's children were near her. Finally they began shooting through the dark into the room where we were. A boy who was wrapped in a blanket in one corner was hit and killed. The Mexicans fired into the room for at least fifteen minutes. It was a miracle, but none of us children were touched.

"By daybreak the firing had almost stopped, and through the window we could see shadows of men moving around inside the fort. The Mexicans went from room to room looking for an American to kill. While it was still dark a man stepped into the room and pointed his bayonet at my mother's breast, demanding:

"Where's the money the Americans had?"

\* Enrique Esparza, interview, 1902, recorded by Charles M. Barnes, "The Story of Enrique Esparza," *San Antonio Express*.

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### 1.2.7. Susanna Hannig (Dickinson), interview before 1874.

Morphis, James M. 1874. *History of Texas from Its Discovery and Settlement . . .* 174-77. New York: United States Publishing Co.

Aside from quotation marks, it is not clear from the book's layout when the testimony of Mrs. Hannig ends and further text by Morphis continues. The last definite first-person statement is that about Crockett, fourth paragraph from the end of this excerpt.

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I will now describe the memorable FALL OF THE ALAMO as related to me by Mrs. Susan Hannig, formerly Mrs. Dickinson, who witnessed it.

"On February 23d, 1836, Santa Anna, having captured the pickets sent out by Col Travis to guard the post from surprise, charged into San Antonio with his troops, variously estimated at from six to ten thousand, only a few moments after the bells of the city rang the alarm.

"Capt. Dickinson galloped up to our dwelling and hurriedly exclaimed: 'The Mexicans are upon us, give me the babe, and jump up behind me.' I did so, and as the Mexicans already occupied Commerce street, we galloped across the river at the ford south of it, and entered the fort at the southern gate, when the enemy commenced firing shot and shell into the fort, but with little or no effect, only wounding one horse.

"There were eighteen guns mounted on the fortifications, and these, with our riflemen, repulsed with great slaughter two assaults made upon them before the final one.

"I knew Colonels Crockett, Bowie and Travis well. Col. Crockett was a performer on the violin, and often during the siege took it up and played his favorite tunes.



"I heard him say several times during the eleven days of the siege: 'I think we had better march out and die in the open air. I don't like to be hemmed up.'

"There were provisions and forage enough in the fort to have subsisted men and horses for a month longer.

"A few days before the final assault three Texans entered the fort during the night and inspired us with sanguine hopes of speedy relief, and thus animated the men to contend to the last.

"A Mexican woman deserted us one night, and going over to the enemy informed them of our very inferior numbers, which Col. Travis said made them confident of success and emboldened them to make the final assault, which they did at early dawn on the morning of the 6th of March.

"Under the cover of darkness they approached the fortifications, and planting their scaling ladders against our walls just as light was approaching, they climbed up to the tops of our walls and jumped down within, many of them to immediate death.

"As fast as the front ranks were slain, they were filled up again by fresh troops.

"The Mexicans numbered several thousands while there were only one hundred and eighty-two Texans.

"The struggle lasted more than two hours when my husband rushed into the church where I was with my child, and exclaimed: 'Great God, Sue, the Mexicans are inside our walls! All is lost! If they spare you, save my child.'

"Then, with a parting kiss, he drew his sword and plunged into the strife, then raging in different portions of the fortifications.

"Soon after he left me, three unarmed gunners who abandoned their then useless guns came into the church where I was, and were shot down by my side. One of them was from Nacogdoches and named Walker. He spoke to me several times during the siege about his wife and four children with anxious tenderness. I saw four Mexicans toss him up in the air (as you would a bundle of fodder) with their bayonets, and then shoot him. At this moment a Mexican officer came into the room, and, addressing me in English, asked: 'Are you Mrs. Dickinson?' I answered 'Yes.' Then said he, 'If you wish to save your life, follow me.' I followed him, and although shot at and wounded, was spared.

"As we passed through the enclosed ground in front of the church, I saw heaps of dead and dying. The Texans on an average killed between eight and nine Mexicans each—182 and 1,600 Mexicans were killed.

"I recognized Col. Crockett lying dead and mutilated between the church and the two story barrack building, and even remember seeing his peculiar cap lying by his side.

"Col. Bowie was sick in bed and not expected to live, but as the victorious Mexicans entered his room, he killed two of them with his pistols before they pierced him through with their sabres.

"Cols. Travis and Bonham were killed while working the cannon, the body of the former lay on the top of the church.

"In the evening the Mexicans brought wood from the neighboring forest and burned the bodies of all the Texans, but their own dead they buried in the city cemetery across the San Pedro.

#### 1.2.8. Susanna Hannig (Dickinson), interview, September 23, 1876.

Hannig, Mrs. Joseph. September 23, 1876. Adjutant General (RG-401), Strays—Alamo Dead and Monument. TSLA.

During the period of 1875 to 1878, the adjutant general's office conducted an investigation to identify the defenders of the Alamo. The referenced "Strays" file is a compilation of the investigation, while some of the original documents were located in other files. The Hannig documents do not identify who took her testimony.

Austin, Tex. Sept. 23. '76

Called on Mrs. Susanna Hannig, whose husband Joseph Hannig is living with her. She was at the sacking of the Alamo in 1836, 6<sup>th</sup> Mch; was then in her 15th year; was then named Susannah Dickerson wife of Lieut Almarion Dickerson, and her maiden name was Susanna Wilkenson. Her parents were in Williamson Co. Tenn. Her husband was one of the Killed. They had one child, a daughter, who, then an infant, was with them in the Alamo; This daughter married [sic] John Menard Griffith, a native of Montgomery Co. Texas, by whom she had 4 children, all of whom are living. She died in Montgomery Co. Tex about the year 1871.

The Mexicans came unexpectedly into San Antonio & witness & her husband & child retreated into the Fort. Enemy began throwing bombs into Fort, but no one hurt till the last day, i.e. the assault, except one horse killed. Had provisions enough to last the besieged 30 days. Among the besieged were 50 or 60 wounded men from Cos's fight. About 18 cannon (she believes) were mounted on parapet & in service all the time. The enemy gradually approached by means of earth-works thrown up. Besieged were looking for reinforcements which never arrived. The only outsiders who succeeded in coming into Fort were 3 of our spys who entered 3 days before the assault & were all killed.

Dr. Horace Alsbury (bro. of Perry Alsbury of S.A.) retreated into the Fort for protection with his Mexican wife & sister-in-law. He left, unknown to witness, & the two women escaped to the enemy & betrayed our situation about 2 days before the assault—

On morning of 6<sup>th</sup> Mch. about daylight enemy threw up signal rocket & advanced & were repulsed. They rallied & made 2<sup>d</sup> assault with scaling ladders, first thrown up on E. side of Fort. Terrible fight ensued. Witness retired into a room of the old church & saw no part of fight—Though she could distinctly hear it. After the fall she was approached by a Col. (?) Black (an Englishman) an officer in the Mexican service) who sheltered her from Mexican injury & took

example is necessary, in order that those adventurers may be duly warned, and the nation be delivered from the ills she is daily doomed to suffer.["]

#### 2.1.1.8. Santa Anna, military order, March 5, 1836.

*Texas Almanac*. 1870. 37–38.

This is the general order for the attack on the Alamo. The source for this version is "Translated from General Filisola's 'Memoirs on the Campaign of 1836, in Texas.'" A microfilm of the original is in Archivo Historico Militar, Expediente 1897:4–5, with an official copy in 1897:10–11, UC Bancroft Library. A typed transcript is in the Archivo General de Mexico, Secretaria de Guerra y Marina 334:52–54, CAH.

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ARMY OF OPERATIONS  
GENERAL ORDERS OF THE 5TH OF MARCH, 1836.

2 o'clock P.M.—Secret

*To the Generals, Chiefs of Sections, and Commanding Officers:*

The time has come to strike a decisive blow upon the enemy occupying the Fortress of the Alamo. Consequently, His Excellency, the General-in-chief, has decided that, tomorrow, at 4 o'clock A.M., the columns of attack shall be stationed at musket-shot distance from the first entrenchments, ready for the charge, which shall commence, at a signal to be given with the bugle, from the Northern Battery.

The first column will be commanded by General Don Martin Prefecto [*sic*] Cos, and, in his absence, by myself.

The Permanent Battalion of Aldama (except the company of Grenadiers) and the three right centre companies of the Active Battalion of San Luis, will compose this first column.

The second column will be commanded by Colonel Don Francisco Duque, and, in his absence, by General Don Manuel Fernandez Castrillon; it will be composed of the Active Battalion of Toluca (except the company of Grenadiers) and the three remaining centre companies of the Active Battalion of San Luis.



The third column will be commanded by Colonel José María Romero, and, in his absence, by Colonel Mariano Salas; it will be composed of the Permanent Battalions of Matamoros and Jimenes.

The fourth column will be commanded by Colonel Juan Morales, and, in his absence, by Colonel José Miñon; it will be composed of the light companies of the Battalions of Matamoros and Jimenes, and of the Active Battalion of San Luis.

His Excellency the General-in-chief will, in due time, designate the points of attack, and give his instructions to the Commanding Officers.

The reserve will be composed of the Battalion of Engineers and the five companies of Grenadiers of the Permanent Battalions of Matamoros, Jimenes and Aldama, and the Active Battalions of Toluca and San Luis.

This reserve will be commanded by the General-in-chief, in person, during the attack; but Colonel Agustin Arnat will assemble this party, which will report to him, this evening, at 5 o'clock, to be marched to the designated station.

The first column will carry ten ladders, two crowbars, and two axes; the second, ten ladders; the third, six ladders; and the fourth, two ladders.

The men carrying ladders will sling their guns on their shoulders, to be enabled to place the ladders wherever they may be required.

The companies of Grenadiers will be supplied with six packages of cartridges to every man, and the centre companies with two packages and two spare flints. The men will wear neither overcoats nor blankets, or anything that may impede the rapidity of their motions. The Commanding Officers will see that the men have the chin-straps of their caps down, and that they wear either shoes or sandals.

The troops composing the columns of attack will turn in to sleep at dark, to be in readiness to move at 12 o'clock at night.

Recruits deficient in instruction will remain in their quarters. The arms, principally the bayonets, should be in perfect order.

As soon as the moon raises, the centre companies of the Active Battalion of San Luis will abandon the points they are now occupying on the line, in order to have time to prepare.

The cavalry, under Colonel Joaquin Ramirez y Sesma, will be stationed at the Alameda, saddling up at 3 o'clock A.M. It shall be its duty to scout the country, to prevent the possibility of an escape.

The honor of the nation being interested in this engagement against the bold and lawless foreigners who are opposing us, His Excellency expects that every man will do his duty, and exert himself to give a day of glory to the country, and of gratification to the Supreme Government, who will know how to reward the distinguished deeds of the brave soldiers of the Army of Operations.

(Signed) JUAN VALENTINE AMADOR.

A certified copy:  
BEXAR, March 6th, 1836.

(Signed) RAMON MARTINEZ CARO,  
*Secretary*



APPENDIX C  
STUDENTS' HISTORICAL NARRATIVES

The students' historical narratives are reprinted in this appendix. I have included only the students' illustrations that could clearly be replicated with a digital camera. Before writing the essays, the students completed a pre-writing activity, where they articulated their point-of-view on their topic (Appendix B). The pre-writing (which explains the essays' underlying themes) accompanies the students' essays. To maintain authenticity, I have retyped the essays without correcting the misspellings and grammatical errors.

#### Group 1: Sam Houston

Ryan's pre-writing.

My point-of-view on that topic is that he was being very smart and was thinking of the future instead of that one battle. Even though the troops disapproved, he still did it.

Ryan's essay.

I thought that Sam Houston was a very noble but at the same time arrogant man. When I first saw that he retreated I was very surprised but when I analyzed it, it became clear. When he lived with Cherokee's they called him the big drunk. I read he had a large capacity for making friends. He was also a very focused man when he went into battle he went strong. When he retreated he, retreated strong. In various battles in the Texas Revolution he was more tactical

and smart, because he knew he didn't have men. He won some battles and he lost some.

Toward the end of his life he settled down and gets serious. I think Sam Houston hugely influenced the outcome of the Texas Revolution.

John's pre-writing.

Sam Houston was a wise, intelligent man. He was the only man that could prevent Santa Anna's assassination. Therefore he was very powerful. He also made a big decision by not fighting when he retreated. This made the soldiers' very angry.

John's essay.

Sam Houston was a wise, intelligent man. In his early life Sam Houston was living with the Cherokee Indians. He loved to drink, that's why they called him the "Big Drunk." He successfully ran for congress from 1823 to 1827. A short time after, he was elected governor of Tennessee. During the Texas Revolution, Sam Houston retreated, and made his men back off, and this made the soldiers very upset, and fearfully angry. Sam Houston had a lot of wives, half of them didn't even love him. Sam Houston was very powerfull as well. In fact, he was the only man that could prevent Santa Anna's assassination. Following the revolution, Houston was elected president of the Republic of Texas. He was the Governor of Texas when the state seceded and joined the confederacy in

1861, but he refused to endorse the decision, this led to his removal from office. Although Houston the battle of the Alamo, he won the Texas Revolution. He's one of the most memorable men ever known to Texas!

Chad's pre-writing.

Sam Houston was a wise, intelligent man. He made very good decisions to win the war. Some people doubted him but he didn't doubt himself and that's why he didn't make dumb decisions.

Chad's essay.

Sam Houston made some risky decisions to win the Texas Revolution. Now I am still unsure if he made the decision about the runaway scrape. But if he did make that decision that was one of the many risky but rewarding decisions.

Lets go back to Mr. Houstons early life. When Sam was young he was adventures, or so they say. I can see where they could get that he was adventrus because once he grew up he was the same way. He had a capacity for making friends, and even larger for making enemies. Sam Houston lived from 1793-1863. A little later in his life time he successfully ran for congress from 1823 to 1827. Houston was in the army for a number of years. He has his bring times and his not so bright times.

I could name one decision of his that people thought weren't so bright but he thought otherwise. When Houston decides to retreat some of his men agreed with him, but after a while his men thought Houston should step forward and fight instead of backing away and retreating. But Houston thought he was doing the right thing by retreating. This very decision basically won him the revolution. After the revolution he ran for and was elected President of the republic of Texas. Just before Houston died on July 26, 1836. His last words were, "Texas, Margret, Texas."

#### Group 2: Santa Anna

Riley's essay.

There are many things I learned over weeks, but I guess I will have to narrow it down to a few. Before this I had only read in a Textbook about how they moved across Texas but when we did that activity with the maps it made what I read make sense. I learned a hole lot about Santa Anna also for exsample I didn't know that Sam Houston and Santa Anna's lives were allot alike. They both went to the military at a young age. Santa Anna in an interview said that he killed inosent people because he was under orders from the Government and Sam Houston said you are the Government. That what I learned.

Tim's pre-writing.

He was playing dumb at the Alamo and underestimated the Texans. He's a powerful person but I guess pride took over him. So he basically lost

Tim's essay.

Santa Anna always thinks he can push around weak people. After awhile, pride took over him and he thought he can destroy Texas easily. That made Santa Anna play around with the Alamo. Santa Anna underestimated the Texan, and now Santa Anna will feel the rage of Texans. If he had respected Texans and remained loyal to Federalists, there wouldn't have been a war between Texas and Mexico. Basically, Santa Anna got stuck with greed and more hunger for power, he became out of control. I think all who gain power are afraid to lose it. Eventually Santa Anna did lose it. He didn't learn respect that much, but it would've made a big difference in his characteristics.

Matt's essay.

The thing I learned about Santa Anna is cool sort of, Santa Anna—worked for the Spanish Government or the Mexican Government which was under the control of the Spanish. He burned through the ranks and became a brigadier General and then led a military coup to overthrow the Spanish military Mexico, and sent the Spanish military home packing. The coup was a success, the

Spanish occupation force retreated back to Spain and Santa Anna was the new president of Mexico. When Santa Anna went from a federalist to a centralist, USA and Texas feared his powers might grow and invade Texas which they did.

Gary's pre-writing.

Santa Anna was a cruel leader, a person who wanted power and cared for only himself. He destroyed tons of Texans at the Alamo. And other battles to tell citizens to obey him.

Gary's essay.

Santa Anna was a hispanic leader who loved a lot of power. The power I am talking about is the power that everyone bows down to him, and respects and follows his every command. He loved that kind of power so he could be like no one else. He wanted to be a powerful leader, a leader that would make history. He wanted to be an individual, a special, special person. He wanted to be in the Texas Revolution!

Santa Anna was enlisted in the Mexican arms at age 12. Once he gained control of Mexico, he became a royalist, and turned on the Texans. He believed he was doing the right thing for Mexico. He became a leader that wanted more power, wealth, and glory. He fought the Texans at the Alamo and won, but when he fought at San Jacinto, he lost. On his way to defeat Sam Houston while he was retreating, he went through Goliad, and killed so many innocent citizens of

Goliad. That was the thing that made him a sick, cruel leader. On his way to East Texas, he burned down a lot of towns. But one day, when he was trapped between the river and Sam Houston, he decided to take a nap. So his whole army fell asleep in the middle of the day, and while they were sleeping, Sam Houston's army defeated Santa Anna's. It only lasted 18 minutes. And that was the end of the Texas Revolution.

James' pre-writing.

Santa Anna believed he was doing the right thing for Mexico. He was a leader who wanted power, glory, and wealth. The war was going his way until the battle at San Jacinto.

James' essay.

Santa Anna was a leader who wanted power, glory, and wealth. He started to want these at age 12.

When Santa Anna became 12 years of age, his parents decided to put him in the Mexican Armed Forces. He soon became a great fighter. His ranks went up at a steady pace. It was as if he was born to fight. Everything was going his way.

He became a Federalist, and wanted Mexico to be like the U.S.. When he came to power, Stephen F. Austin sent a letter declaring Texas its own state. He was furious! Then he switched sides and became a dictator.



Soon battles were everywhere, just because he believed he would get rich and famous. At the Alamo, he was in control. He won sending only the women and children to spread the word, but killing the men. After the battle he lied and said he killed thousands of Texans. Then everything went downhill.

At San Jacinto he lost. His soldiers were tired and hungry. No one fought, but they ran for the only way out. The Texans won.

Santa Anna no longer had glory. He barely had any power. He had almost no money. He was powerful, he had money, and he had glory. No one thought he was great anymore.

### Group 3: Women and children

Amy's pre-writing.

The women and children had a rough experience. They had to watch as the husbands, dad, or brothers die. They didn't have any way to protect themselves. The women and children have many memories from The Alamo that haunt them.

Amy's essay.

The women and children of the Alamo had a very difficult life. One of those women was Susanna Dickinson.

Susanna Dickinson went to the Alamo with her husband & children. Right before her husband died he kissed her. Once Santa Anna found them hiding he asked Susanna if she would tell Sam Houston about the Alamo. Santa Anna offered to take her daughter and take care of her, but she refused. Susanna Dickinson was only one of the hundreds of women and children at the Alamo.

Karen's pre-writing.

Women and children had a horrible time during the Alamo. They were each given the same amount no matter if they were old or young. Most people were sick. The Alamo turned to kill many women and children. Some of the survivors were Susanna Dickinson, Enrique Esparza, Madame Candelaria.

Karen's essay.

Women and children, experienced a harsh, unbearable life during the Texas Revolution. Many women such as: Susanna Dickinson, Madame Candelaria, Dilue Rose Harris. each were exposed to different parts of the Texas Revolution. Susanna Dickinson experienced the Alamo. While her husband was fighting, she cooked for the people in the Alamo. She knew Crockett and many others. After the Alamo, throughout her while life the memories of the Alamo haunted her. Susanna was not a happy women either. Madame Candelaria also experienced the Alamo at age 85. She lived upto 115 years old with her faithful dog. Dilue Rose Harris experienced the Runaway

Scrape in the Revolution. Dilue was 13 yrs old when she got married, she was 10 in the Runaway Scrape. Their she took care of her ill siblings while her mother lay close to death. She was a survivor of the Runaway Scrape and carried out stories of that time. Dilue Rose Harris lived to an age of 88 yrs old. Each one of these characters have their own part which may not be true. But they have had a harsh life which pays off with our history on the Texas Revolution.

Sasha's prewriting.

The women and children had a hard time living during the Texas Revolution. They must have been brave and hardworking to survive. After the revolution they were scared for life because of the horrible experiences!

Sasha's essay.

Many women and children experienced the Texas Revolution out but there were only a few survivors. Two women who lived to tell us their different stories were Susanna Dickinson and Dilue Rose Harris. Susanna Dickinson lived through the Alamo and the Texas Revolution. She is a main source to most information about the Alamo. Dilue Rose Harris didn't fight in the Alamo, but she did fight to survive the Runaway Scrape! She has diary entries and other documents that describe how she lived her life. Both of these women had hard

painful lives. The woman and children of the Texas Revolution are remembered and honored because they were so brave and hard working!!

#### Group 4: Women and Children

Kandy's essay.

The women helped out in the Texas Revolution by providing food, keeping children healthy, while men fight, and also helping fight for what they wanted. When the women were stuck out in the middle of the war they were speechless. Some of the women were survivors but most of them weren't. Susanna Dickenson was a survivor of the fight. Her power was strong enough to help her through the whole thing. Her daughter was also following in her footsteps Angelina Dickenson was Susannas daughter. Susanna was pretty much Angelina's roll model. They had many rough times together, they struggled through many things to be survivors. Now they are almost a legend. Not really but close enough. Maybe when other people start fighting for what they want they will become a living legend too.

Mandy's pre-writing.

The women and children of the Texas Revolution helped greatly from their support, courage, bravery, and passion for the freedom of their state. Many went

through hard times from losses of their loved ones, and pain and suffering of battles.

Mandy's essay.

The women of the Texas Revolution had lost many loved ones and eye witnessed many deaths. One woman was in the Alamo, Susanna Dickenson, eye witnessed Davy Crockett laying on the ground with his fur hat, and also saw the deaths of many men and women in the Alamo who were also fighting for freedom. One detailed death that she wrote about was her first husband in the Alamo. Knowing that he was going to die, he kissed her on the cheek and told her he loved her before he went out to fight. He never did return.

Another brave woman was in the Runaway Scrape. She wrote a diary on her experiences being a child in the Revolution. She described packing very few things and heading along journey. She told of how she went on a boat of an eight man crew, and how many were left behind. She then talked about crossing rivers and blowing up bridges behind them, causing the deaths of many animals and humans. The most detailed part she told of in her diary was when she arrived at the prairies, and was offered warm clothes to wear, food to eat, and a fire to sit next to, and a place to sleep. She was very grateful to be a survivor.

As you can see, if it weren't for the women with their bravery, support, passion, courage, and desire to be free, the Alamo and the Texas Revolution

would have been a lot harder, where we might not have even gotten our freedom.

Rita's pre-writing.

My point-of-view of women and children is that they were a big part of the Revolution. Not very many people know a lot about them but they were a significant part of the Revolution!

Rita's essay.

Susanna Dickenson was a role model for women. Her bravery was shown in the Battle of the Alamo.

Susanna had one child named Angelina. She was nicknamed the "Babe" of the Alamo. When Susannah and her daughter moved to the Alamo, they saw very little of the battle. Santa Anna asked Susanna if he could take the Babe, and dress nice and bring her to a nice school. Susannah declined this offer. (The Babe died before she was 19)

Before Susannah's husband died, she kissed him and told him she loved him. (Personally i thought that was very sadd & romantic!)

Olivia's pre-writing.

Many women were scared during the Alamo, but they were still brave.

Susanna Dickinson has a very vivid memory and can remember a lot of details.

Susanna Dickonson's husband kissed her before his death.

Olivia's essay.

The women and children in the Alamo have told stories about their experiences at the excruciating battle at the Alamo. Susanna Dickonson, one of the was scared for life, having nightmares of the Alamo almost every night.

Susanna Dickonson was not the only woman at the Alamo. there was a lady named Madam Candelaria who experienced the Alamo at a young age, even though she died at the age of 112, has told her point-of-view of the Alamo, Madam Candelaria was the wife of the governor. Some doubt her appearance at the Alamo. Another child at the Alamo was Enrique Esparza, Enrique was a little boy when he was in the Alamo. Enrique saw the shooting in the Alamo was about 15 minutes long. Many others have experienced the Alamo but didn't live to tell their story.

## Group 5: Davy Crockett

Mark's prewriting.

Davy Crockett is brave and well known, he hunted everyone known him as brave and courageous.

Mark's essay.

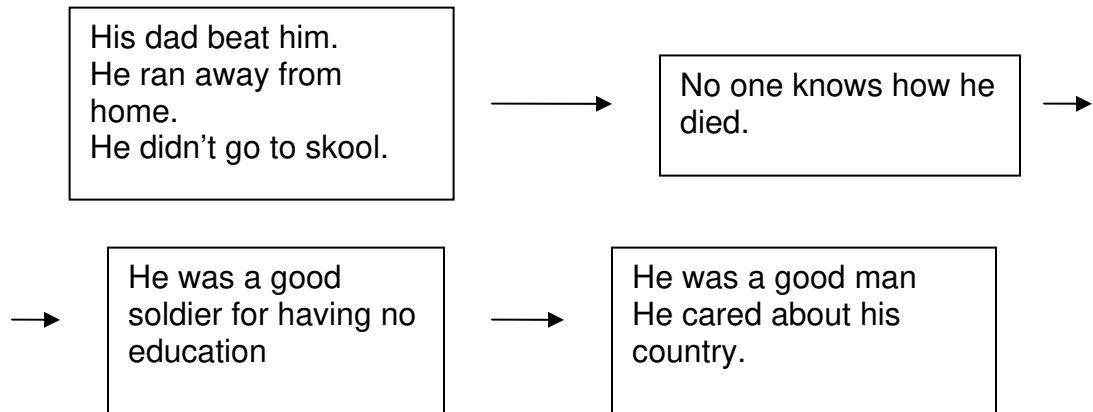
Everyone thought Davy Crockett was so brave and courageous that made the soldiers wanna fight and save them more courage and so they lost and some surrendered.

Jake's essay.

Davy Crockett, His death is leaving Historyans in a frenzy. No one knows how he died. Some say he died fighting, some say He died instantly, but I think otherwise. I might believe the storys if they weren't so distorted. I might of belived that he fought bravely, but killing 30 Mexicans before dieing that unbaliveable. Anyways my openion is that he committed suside under the presher.



Katy's prewriting.



Katy's essay.

Davy Crockett had a hard life. When he was little boy he didn't like school, and if he didn't go to school his dad used to beat him with a hickory stick. Some believe that he didn't like school because people used to make fun of him, so he got in a lot of fights. So at a very young age he ran away from home. He worked in a farm. It payed enough money to get him food and other things he would need. When he was about 16 he went to go fight in the army. No one knows how he died some say he was killed by fighting, some say he was executed, But I think he killed himself, because he couldn't take the pain any longer. He was a very good soldier even though he had barly any education. He was a strong willing soldier that never gave up. He fought tell the end of his life.

Jared's pre-writing.

When davy crockett was little he was always in trouble. His dad beat him with a hickory stick because he was in the army he expected more from davy. After awhile of being beaten with a hickory stick so he ran away and after a long while he became a hunter. Davy Crockett, I think he came to texas knowing he had to fight, so I think he died fighting bravly.

Jared's essay.

When Davy Crockett was little he was nothing but a troublemaker that hated school. Being that his dad was in the army, davy was always beaten with a hickory stick because he expected more. Davy ran his and one time he didn't come back. After awhile he became a hunter and he got so good at it that he became famous because he could big bears, and rans and deer.

When he came to Texas probably knowing he would have to fight he was probably killed trying to fight for Texas Independence.

Davy Crockett was surrounded by Mex. Solders he killed most of them by himself. Other opinions are that because of the poblicty he shot himself or purpousfully stepped into the line of fire, but I think he died fighting for TEXAS!!!

Kelsey's prewriting.

Many people thought Davy Crockett was a wimp. I don't thin he was, because, he know how to do a lot of things and I think he impacted the revolution.

Kelsey's essay.

Davy Crocket was born in a small house in Kentucky. He didn't know much about his father. His dad would hit him with a hickory stick, and he made him go to school wich he hated very much, so he ran away. Later when he was an adult he came back. He got married to Mary Elder but they got a divorce. He met another woman named Polly Fenly. They got married. Polly died after her 3<sup>rd</sup> child. Then he met another girl, Elizabith Pathiman. He had many jobs but he arose to begin his political career. Next he was elected to the U.S. Congress. When his time was up he ran for the Congress again. He wasn't voted on. So he went to the Texas Revolution. I think he went there fur a job. Instead he started fighting. He impacted the revolution because in one of his other jobs he used a gun this helped him in the war. Finally in the end he died by a church with Mexicans surrounding him. I think he died fighting because all that he went through with the Hickery stick, him running away, having so many wives and having two that left him, and loosing his political career. So, I don't think he was a wimp. I think he was a true fighter.

## Group 6: Davy Crockett

Walter's pre-writing.

He experienced death, friendships, and found something to fight for.

Walter's essay.

Before the Texas Revolution, Davy Crockett was unsure of what he wanted. He thought he should go into politics, but people didn't take him seriously.

He fought in the Creek War, but didn't like the way the Indians were treated, so he hired someone to carry out his enlistment. After he had raised a family, he moved to Texas, so he could find an opportunity. Crockett found an opportunity to fight in the Texas Revolution; even though he was 50 years old he fought better than most men.

Davy Crockett died at the battle of the Alamo, but there are so many different ideas of how he died that nobody really knows. All we know is that he was one of the last people to die.

Some people think he was a coward, and begged for money. Others say he fought hard, and was found dead next to a pile of Mexican soldiers.

I think Davy Crockett was the last person fighting at the Alamo, and was respected by most Mexican officers. Except Santa Anna, of course.

Peter's essay.

Davy Crockett was a brave man he was born in Tennessee ran away from home. Joined William Travis in a battle and decided to run for legislature which he did for 2 terms killed about 800 bears and joined Travis at the Alamo and died

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