The Intersection of Reading, Writing, and Thinking in a High School History Classroom: A Case of Wise Practice

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Abstract

Adolescent literacy needs our attention. This case study examines the potential of content-based literacy instruction by analyzing the practices of a teacher who integrated reading and writing into history. Data included observations, interviews, and artifacts such as assignments and feedback from one semester of a required 11th-grade US history course. Analysis included multiple analytic passes of data, developing codes based on patterns, testing propositions, and searching for alternative explanations. Four practices emerged as key elements of a discipline-based approach to literacy in this history classroom: (1) Reading historical documents in pursuit of historical questions; (2) teaching reading through writing; (3) writing essays to promote analytical reading and thinking; and (4) guided discussion and explicit instruction in historical reading strategies. This study suggests that literacy instruction need not annul history instruction. Indeed, discipline-specific ways of reading and writing can help students understand history, learn to think historically, and develop advanced literacy skills.

The Intersection of Reading, Writing, and Thinking in History: A Case of Wise Practice

> Writing about history, has always been somewhat of a struggle for me. I always try to focus more on the factual parts of it, because that is always what I have been taught in the textbooks of middle school. The documents that we read in this class, allowed me to step back from just the numbers and dates, and really interpret history. Because of this, I really enjoyed writing this term, and feel like it has been one of my strong suits…
>
> ~11th grader Ben Atkins

After one semester in Mr. Lyle's required US history course, Ben believed that he could read and write better, had a greater sense of purpose, and was more engaged in the subject. Ben started the year below the average performance of his peers as demonstrated by incoming essays. Through reading and writing, Ben learned to see history as an interpretive process rather than retrieval and reporting of facts. Furthermore, Ben's performance on essays improved by the end of the semester—as did the majority of his classmates. Done well, a history class can be an important venue for adolescent literacy development.

Adolescents need to develop advanced literacy skills that go beyond basic comprehension and written expression toward analytical thinking and logical reasoning. The International Reading Association (IRA) recommends that adolescents need "a well-developed repertoire of reading comprehension and study strategies such as the following: questioning themselves about what they read …recognizing how a text is organized…judging their own understanding; and evaluating authors' ideas and perspectives" (Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik, 1999, p. 5). Yet

results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) tell us that very few adolescents demonstrate such skills. Only 5% of adolescents tested in reading could interpret an author's point as expressed in a document, consistently provide supporting examples for their conclusions about a document, make connections between multiple texts, or recognize that a text's author has a purpose in writing a document (NCES, 2007). As for writing, only 2% of adolescents can claim a position and consistently support it with well-chosen reasons and examples, or extend the main idea in an essay (NCES, 2003). The 2005 Rand Report also highlights the low proficiency rates in NAEP reading and writing results, and notes the wide disparity among socioeconomic, racial, and ethnic groups (McCombs, Kirby, Barney, Darilek, & Magee, 2005). The majority of adolescents tested may be able to read and comprehend the literal meaning of documents or claim a position in writing, but they are unable to make inferences or consistently support arguments with evidence. These are some of the hallmarks of advanced literacy most in need of development.

Given the nature of historians' work, history supports ways of thinking that are the foundation of advanced literacy. For example, historians analyze evidence, weigh conflicting accounts, consider the influence of bias, and develop evidence-based arguments. These are similar to the areas in which 65% of 12th grade readers and 76% of 12th grade writers performed below grade level (i.e., below "proficient") on recent NAEP tests (NCES, 2003; NCES, 2007). Ben's report indicates that integrating literacy instruction into history classes could help students learn to read for subtext, develop interpretations, and support ideas with evidence—the very skills in need of development. But how do we teach reading and writing in this specific content area?

The IRA position paper offers useful principles for developing adolescents' literacy skills such as "adolescents deserve instruction that builds both the skill and desire to read increasingly complex materials" and "adolescents deserve expert teachers who model and provide explicit instruction in reading comprehension and study strategies across the curriculum." What might these principles mean in a history classroom? Thus far, much content area literacy research has focused on strategies that can be used across content areas—summarizing, outlining, or using graphic organizers are classic examples. But such strategies do not approach reading and writing from a disciplinary perspective, nor do they capture the essence of any particular discipline. Indeed, little consideration of specific content is often given in these "content area" approaches.

This study seeks to address discipline-specific literacy approaches by examining the practices of Ben's history teacher. What did Mr. Lyle do in his classroom that encouraged the growth signaled by Ben's reflection and students' improved writing scores? Specifically, this study asks: *What does successful discipline-based reading and writing instruction in a history class look like?* This article shares several of Mr. Lyle's historical literacy strategies as a case of wise practice, a case of the successful integration of reading, writing, and thinking in the historical discipline.

Background

Defining history. Many people tend to view history as a fixed story comprised of predetermined facts—indeed as a *single* story of the past (Seixas, 1993). Laypeople usually do not appreciate the idea that historical narratives are constructed from evidence that has been questioned, pieced together, and interpreted (Holt, 1995; Rosenzweig, 2000). Classroom research confirms that students tend to view history as established facts—as reality, not interpretation (VanSledright, 2002). Consistent with this conception is the belief that one does not interact with

or question evidence, nor offer counter-evidence that challenges the story of the past (Linenthal & Engelhardt, 1996). Many people tend to view the past through a "presentist" lens in which they regard evidence from the past in the context of their own lives (cf., Gitlin, 1995; Seixas, 1993). School history instruction typically reflects this common conception of history and embraces memorization of facts rather than investigation (Page, 1991; Ravitch, 1987). Because this view of history leaves little room for making sense of historical texts, questioning evidence, or developing one's own interpretation, it may be difficult to learn to reason, read, or write in such classrooms.

This study focuses on a classroom in which the teacher approaches history in a manner more consistent with the discipline. A disciplinary approach to history embraces inquiry as its core. Historical reasoning begins with questioning records of the past. As the philosopher of history R. G. Collingwood (1943) wrote,

> The scientific historian never asks himself: 'Is this statement true or false?'… the question he asks himself is: 'What does this statement mean?'… It is the equivalent, rather, to the question 'What light is thrown on the subject in which I am interested by the fact that this person made this statement, meaning by it what he did mean?' (p. 275)

Any question put to evidence is directed toward trying to understand the meaning of the evidence as it relates to the historical inquiry. Particular approaches to historical texts facilitate this reasoning process. As Wineburg (2001) found, historians source, corroborate, and contextualize evidence as they make sense of the past. Sourcing involves noting authors of historical documents as well as their intentions and assumptions. Contextualization includes situating a historical document in the time and place in which it was created. Corroboration involves

comparing multiple historical documents to facilitate sense making and determine acceptable facts. The iterative process of moving between these kinds of questions and evidence eventually leads historians to make a case for a particular interpretation of the past.

By reading and thinking in these ways, historians seek to understand the uniqueness of specific events, given the time and place of occurrence and the people involved (cf., Mink, 1987). To the historian, an event can only be understood by situating it in context—the time, place, people involved, and circumstances of its happening. J. H. Hexter (1971) has stated, "The historical analyst who disjoins his abstractions or generalizations from the actualities of the past—the 'when,' the 'where,' the 'who,' the 'how many'… is likely to sacrifice understanding of the past" (p. 177). Indeed, the environment and circumstances in which a historical event occurred are as important as the event itself. In sum, historical reasoning includes analyzing evidence, understanding the meaning of evidence, and using evidence to construct and explain historically plausible accounts of the past. Historians typically express these accounts as written arguments.

Teachers who approach history from a disciplinary standpoint often embrace historical reasoning as a central goal and inquiry as a core method. Such classrooms often focus on analyzing evidence, developing arguments, and conveying interpretations in writing (Bain, 2000; Holt, 1995; Levstik & Barton, 2000; VanSledright, 2002). Because this approach privileges analysis and interpretation of historical texts, it naturally leads to an emphasis on reading, writing, and thinking more than a focus on conventional school history might do.

Research on literacy in history classrooms. Historical literacy research indicates that the kinds of texts students work with influence their reasoning processes. Rouet, Britt, Mason, and Perfetti (1996) found that when students had read primary documents, they were more likely to

evaluate the genre of the document and to cite passages from the document in their writing than with other kinds of documents (e.g., historians' monographs or textbooks). Similarly, Paxton (2002) found that historical texts with "visible authors" (e.g., primary documents or historians' monographs in which an authorial voice was clearly present) increased the chances that students interacted with the texts as they read. These studies suggest that giving students the opportunities to engage in tasks that represent the work of historians, as well as conflicting historical sources with which to work, promotes the development of historical thinking.

However, students do not tend to read like historians naturally (Wineburg, 2001). For example, in reading historical texts, students often focus on the literal meaning of documents and miss intertextual reading strategies that might promote interpretive work (Afflerbach & VanSledright, 2001; Stahl, Hynd, Britton, McNish, & Bosquet, 1996; Wineburg, 2001). Research also confirms that students use their background knowledge of historical topics in making sense of texts (Perfetti, Britt, & Georgi, 1995; Wolfe & Goldman, 2005). When working with evidence and writing, students take distinct approaches; in one study, they listed facts, selected relevant facts, or analyzed facts (Greene, 2001).

The nature of tasks and instruction influence the development of students' argumentative writing in history classrooms. De La Paz (2005) found that middle school students exposed to instruction in making arguments in history and writing produced more accurate and persuasive essays regardless of their incoming skills. Other forms of scaffolding such as structured reading activities and oral debates improved high school students' abilities to write persuasive essays (Felton & Herko, 2004). Writing argumentative essays while using multiple texts has been shown to foster content understanding (Wiley & Voss, 1999) and synthesis of information (Young & Leinhardt, 1998).

Research on literacy across content areas. Reading comprehension is perhaps the most relevant aspect of reading research to adolescent literacy. The National Reading Panel (NRP) reviewed quantitative studies, and concluded that seven types of instruction help develop the reading comprehension skills of students in grades 3-8. These strategies include comprehension monitoring, cooperative learning, use of graphic and semantic organizers, question answering, question generation, story or text structure, and summarization. Each strategy identified by the NRP is supported by research (cf., Beck, McKeown, Hamilton, & Kucan, 1997; Goldman, & Rakestraw, 2000; Rosenshine, Meister, & Chapman, 1996). In their textbook on content area literacy, Alvermann and her colleagues (2007) added three comprehension practices to the NRP list: teaching readers to use their prior knowledge, teaching readers to make predictions while reading, and integrating reading and writing.

Several findings about writing across content areas are noteworthy. Research suggests that writing in combination with reading activities promotes thinking (Tierney, Soter, O'Flahavan, & McGinley, 1989). Other research confirms that writing essays helps students develop content knowledge and improves their thinking more than short-answer questions or note-taking might (Langer, 1986). This may relate to Bereiter and Scardamalia's conclusion that the process of writing, as observed in experts, offers a path to deeper understanding and knowledge development through "the *transformation* of knowledge already in the mind" (1987, p. 179). Particular teaching practices, such as a focus on deep understanding and connectedness of learning across tasks (Langer, 2001) or participatory approaches that actively engage students (cf., Applebee, Langer, Nystrand, & Gamoran, 2003), appear to improve students' writing.

In sum, few studies of reading and writing are rooted in the historical perspective. There is often little content in content area research, but rather an emphasis on literacy strategies that

cut across content areas. This study connects the historical discipline with literacy to advance discussions about developing adolescent literacy in the content areas.

Methods

This study used mixed methods in an embedded case study design (Yin, 2003). Analysis of class performance trends entailed comparison of pre- and post-test essay scores. Analysis of teaching used multiple, embedded units of analysis, including writing opportunities, reading opportunities, use of class time, and teacher feedback.

Participants. Based on nominations from northern California teachers, administrators, and educational researchers, I observed and interviewed teachers to find who best fit three pre-determined criteria. Mr. Lyle satisfied all of them. (1) He had an advanced degree in history from a reputable institution. (2) He talked about and modeled teaching history as an inquiry-based subject. (3) He reported giving students writing opportunities at least once per week. It was hypothesized that students in such a classroom would be more likely to learn to write evidence-based historical essays than would students in traditional history classrooms, where writing and evidence-based thinking may be more rare. Furthermore, Mr. Lyle had been teaching for 25 years. Seventeen students from his Civil War course participated in the study, though a pre- and post-writing sample were collected from only 15 students, due to school absences.

Mr. Lyle taught the required 11th-grade US history courses (i.e., "Civil War" and "Recent America") at The Pacific School, a small independent school in a large urban area. He taught an average of 13 students per class and had freedom to define his curriculum. The school schedule enabled Mr. Lyle to meet weekly with his department members. He planned the Civil War course individually and was the only one on the faculty who taught the course. The school year was divided into three 12-week terms; each term was equivalent to one semester in a typical

public school. Within each term, the block schedule provided two or three 70-minute periods and one 150-minute period per week. The school philosophy emphasized independent learning, inquiry, and investigation. Students did not receive grades at Pacific; instead, teachers gave extensive written evaluations to students and their parents every 6 weeks (GPAs were kept for all students to facilitate the college application process).

Of the 295 students at Pacific during the time of this study, 27% were students of color. In the class of 17 that I observed, one student was African American, one was Asian American, and all students spoke English as their first language. One marker of socio-economic status (SES) indicated that 24% of the student body received aid ranging from $3,000 to $26,000 per year in order to support the $26,000/year tuition. The college application process is supported by two college counselors and includes visits from college representatives to the Pacific campus.

Student data. The pre- and post-writing samples were the first and last in-class essays assigned by Mr. Lyle during the 12-week course. Students were given the same amount of time to complete each task and completed the readings upon which assignments were based the night before. Both assignments asked students to consider what a primary source could tell them about the author of that source and the times in which that author lived. The first in-class essay focused on Cornelia MacDonald, a Southern woman who lived during the time of the Civil War. The final in-class essay focused on Abraham Lincoln. One inconsistency arose in that the first in-class essay was based on one document written by MacDonald, but the last in-class essay was based on two documents written by Lincoln. The two reading sets were roughly equivalent in length, though the different documents for the Lincoln essay made the post-instructional reading slightly more difficult.

Student data analysis. The first writing sample and other early classroom assignments served as a baseline against which to assess change over time in student performance. An analytic framework of knowledge of history (cf., Collingwood, 1943; Hexter, 1971; Mink, 1987; Wineburg, 2001) and argument structure (cf., Chambliss & Murphy, 2002; Lunsford & Ruszkiewicz, 2001; Toulmin, 1958) guided the analysis of student work over the course of the year. Propositions developed through individual case studies were tested on all students' writing samples and led to the creation of a rubric (Monte-Sano, 2006). This rubric was used to systematically chart individual students' progress in historical reasoning and argumentation, and compare relative growth in each class. A series of meetings with three history education experts led to refinements in this rubric and increased confidence in its content validity. The experts included one a professor of history education with a PhD in educational psychology, a post-doctoral fellow with a PhD in history education, and a PhD student in history education. All had experience teaching high school history. Conversations focused on historical thinking, argumentation, student learning, and developmental levels typical of high school students' history writing. The researcher coded all samples and conducted inter-rater reliability tests with 27% of the pre-writing samples. Inter-rater reliability tests included four raters and resulted in a reliability coefficient of .84. The raters included two of the three aforementioned history education experts and two current high school history teachers.

Teacher data. Teacher data was collected from four sources: interviews, observations, feedback, and classroom artifacts (see Table 1) over the course of the 12-week class. Observations focused on what students did during class, how the teacher represented history, and the opportunities to learn evidence-based reasoning, argumentation, and writing. Field notes and data summary charts were completed during and after observations. Artifacts from Mr. Lyle's

course were collected, including course syllabi, readings, reading assignments, writing assignments, daily activities, tests, teachers' written feedback, and rubrics.

Insert Table 1 about here

Teacher data analysis. Field notes and interview data were organized chronologically. Field notes and interview tapes were transcribed. Memos tracked key ideas, highlighted illustrative excerpts of class, and noted what to look for in future observations. Once initial codes were developed and tested, field notes and interviews were selectively transcribed where excerpts challenged and supported codes. Examples of questions applied to teacher data included the following:

- How does the teacher convey to students the role of evidence in historical interpretation?
- What opportunities do students have to read? What is the nature of those opportunities?
- What opportunities to learn about writing, argumentation, and the use of evidence does the teacher provide?
- How does the teacher scaffold, support, or give feedback to help students learn to write and argue with evidence?

All teacher data were arranged in different ways to facilitate analysis. A calendar of Mr. Lyle's course was created to visually track the tasks students performed such as the uses of class time and take-home assignments. A data display was constructed to show the amount of time Mr. Lyle devoted to particular topics, the number of writing assignments per topic, and the readings per topic. Additionally, a matrix tracked key excerpts from and components of reading and writing assignments in chronological order. Another matrix noted key excerpts from readings

that students had at their disposal for essay assignments. Tracking patterns in assignments, readings, observations, and feedback led to the development of propositions that were tested and refined with multiple data passes. These data arrangements also allowed for time series analyses based on key elements of teachers' practices related to these propositions (e.g., use of primary sources, modeling of reading strategies, or scaffolding for writing assignments).

Student Findings

One cannot see all there is to see about student development from two essays, but I use these as indicators to highlight overall trends. Next, I briefly review Ben's pre- and post-instruction writing sample (see Appendix A and B for his writing samples). Then I explain class trends on these writing samples. (See Monte-Sano [2006] for a complete analysis of class trends and an in-depth look at one student's writing from the entire semester.)

In the pre-instruction essay Ben included quotations from the text to support his interpretation of a historical figure; however, the evidence selected did not consistently support or relate to his claim. Furthermore, Ben misrepresented the historical figure by making an inaccurate claim that overstated the figure's position. Ben also included evidence for each point in his post-instruction essay. However, after 12 weeks, his choice of evidence and concurrent analysis painted a historically accurate and nuanced picture of a historical figure. The quotations Ben selected grounded his interpretation and conveyed key aspects of the historical figure's beliefs. By the last essay of the term, Ben was better able to (1) interpret the historical figure's positions as expressed in the documents he read, (2) consistently provide supporting evidence for his own interpretation, and, (3) extend the main idea of the essay by demonstrating the complexities of this figure's beliefs. These are some of the very literacy skills in need of development according to NAEP and the IRA.

Comparison of every student's scores for the first and last in-class writing sample revealed that over the course of the term the majority of Mr. Lyle's students improved in argumentation and historical reasoning (see Table 2). As assessed here, historical reasoning overlaps with particular adolescent literacy goals, including consistently supporting interpretations with evidence, recognizing subtext and nuance, and accurately interpreting texts. In history, astute interpretations of text rely on an understanding of authors' perspectives, as well as historical context, causation, and significance. In this way, students can convey their content understanding in their written interpretations. The argumentation criteria for this study that are most consistent with adolescent literacy expectations include making claims and consistently supporting those claims with evidence.

Insert Table 2 about here

Students' scores in argumentation and historical reasoning showed impressive growth. On a scale of 1-5, students improved an average of .73 points in argumentation (SD=.18) and an average of 1.27 in historical reasoning (SD=.7). What went on in Mr. Lyle's class that coincided with students' growth? To find out, I analyzed the teaching that occurred during the time in which data on students' writing performance was collected.

Teacher Findings

Reading and writing were integrated throughout Mr. Lyle's history class. Four practices in particular exemplify these connections: (1) reading historical documents in pursuit of historical questions; (2) teaching reading through writing; (3) writing essays to promote

analytical reading and thinking; and (4) guided discussion and explicit instruction in historical reading strategies.

Reading historical documents in pursuit of historical questions. The structure of Mr. Lyle's required course made it possible for students to investigate a historical problem in depth—the causes of the Civil War—and understand relevant context and perspectives. Students began their study by examining the realities of the war and what it meant for those in the US. The death and destruction caused by the Civil War begged the question: how could the nation have come to such devastation? This beginning primed students to go back and investigate why the North and South went to war in the first place. The question—why did the Civil War happen?—was the central focus of the course. The course consisted of four units: the setting of the Civil War, the heritage of the American Revolution, the opponents and defenders of slavery, and the politics of sectionalism. Each unit was designed to help students understand the causes of the Civil War. This organization lent purpose to students' work: each unit was a clue to the larger investigation. Likewise, every reading presented a different idea about causes of the Civil War; each was a potential answer to the overarching inquiry.

Compared to portrayals of typical history classrooms in the literature (cf., Cuban, 1991), Mr. Lyle's approach was highly unusual in that he eliminated the textbook, focused overwhelmingly on primary documents, and gave students examples from historians' monographs. There was no traditional textbook; instead, Mr. Lyle created three compilations of primary documents for his students to read over the term. The rest of the students' reading involved excerpts from historians' monographs, including: James McPherson's (2003) *Crossroads of Freedom: Antietam, the Battle that Changed the Course of the Civil War;* Jeffrey D. Wert's (1999) *A Brotherhood of Valor: The Common Soldiers of the Stonewall Brigade, CSA,*

and the Union Brigade, USA; and Carol Berkin's (2002) *A Brilliant Solution: Inventing the American Constitution*.

Mr. Lyle's students read an average of 10 pages a day. Although students read primary and secondary sources, 82% of pages read and 92% of class time focused on primary documents. In discussing the role of primary documents, Mr. Lyle remarked,

> I think it gets them to understand the motivation, the context of the document… [authors are] not writing this stuff because they have a contract for [a] textbook, they're writing this because at that particular point, with Garrison in 1829, he had something to say about slavery… I think you're giving them the head and the heart of somebody back then in a way that if you don't have primary sources, then you've just got facts, no matter how well a textbook is written. (Interview, October 13, 2004)

Primary documents for each unit represented different perspectives on the same topic and gave students an opportunity to delve deeply into the content and consider the complexities and nuances of topics. Figure 1 displays the primary documents for one unit. These readings gave students opportunities to become familiar with the context of the Civil War and the ways of thinking about the world that dominated that era.

Insert Figure 1 about here

Teaching reading through writing. On the first day of class, Mr. Lyle outlined his expectations that Pacific students annotate while reading (see Figure 2) just as they had for every history course since freshman year. In annotating, students underlined words or wrote notes, questions, and ideas in the margins. This kind of writing while reading encouraged

comprehension monitoring, self-questioning, questioning the author, question answering, and summarizing, among other basic comprehension strategies. This practice is similar to "talking to the text" (cf., Schoenbach, Greenleaf, Cziko, & Hurwitz, 1999), but differs in its emphasis on historical content and ways of thinking. Unlike Mr. Lyle's, typical history classrooms involve textbook reading with end-of-the-chapter questions (cf., Cuban, 1991). In this more conventional approach, reading and writing are separate processes—and careful reading is often overlooked. In contrast, Lyle's practice of annotating directly linked reading and writing for the purpose of improved comprehension. Students interacted with the texts they read and began the process of interpreting texts.

Insert Figure 2 about here

Every time students read a text in their classes, they annotated it. By the 11th grade, annotating was a fact of life for Pacific students. And judging from their course readers, most students annotated daily.

As an example, one student from Mr. Lyle's class wrote the following annotations around the margins of Garrison's 1831 *Liberator* editorial on Nat Turner's insurrection (see Figure 3).

Insert Figure 3 about here

This student's annotations were a mix of questions, cross-references to other texts, clarifications, summaries, definitions, and interpretations. In another example of annotations, Mr. Lyle asked students to mark those phrases in the Constitution that protected Southern interests with a big

"S." This gave students a specific purpose for reading the document that connected their reading and the larger inquiry. In practice, annotating meant that students read with pen in hand and approached reading as a sense-making process. By requiring students to write questions and ideas, and to highlight text, annotations guided students to read closely and reason with the text.

Mr. Lyle gave feedback in his assessment of students' annotations in their readers. When one student had trouble supporting his arguments with evidence, Mr. Lyle examined the student's annotations and found that he was not making notes in the margins of his reader:

> When I looked at his annotations—I do collect their sources and I do look at their annotations and I try to see what kind of conversation they're engaging in with the document. And so I was looking at his book and there were no annotations. … And so we talked …and he said 'I've never done this before, I've never had to do this before, I don't know how to annotate, I don't know what to say.' And then I tried to tell him there are lots of different kinds of annotations and you could identify what you think is the major idea here of the paragraph and put that down. … Or, you could also express a sense of wonderment …you could put a little exclamation point … or a question or a question mark… So I said there are ways in which you can interact with this. (Interview, December 8, 2004)

Mr. Lyle's reference to a "conversation" with the text indicated that reading in his class was not about gathering and seeking information. Instead, reading was about interacting with a text to construct meaning; and writing in the margins was a tangible aspect of that interaction. This is a sophisticated way of reading and thinking about history that is typical of experts, not high school students. In this example Mr. Lyle used in-class conferences in the middle of the term to learn more about his student's understanding and remediate with concrete strategies. It turned out that

this student was new to Pacific. Notably, what brought Mr. Lyle to examine the student's reader was the lack of evidence in the student's essays. This indicates that Mr. Lyle saw students' reading, writing, and evidence-based thinking as an interactive enterprise. In helping this student learn to interact with the text and annotate more effectively, Mr. Lyle believed he was helping the student learn to write stronger essays.

Writing essays to promote analytical reading and thinking. Mr. Lyle used frequent writing assignments to help students process texts and develop an understanding of history. Students wrote every 2.5 days on average. Writing assignments represented history as inquiry and gave students opportunities to develop their own interpretations. Moreover, writing directed students' attention to specific aspects of the text and gave them practice in sourcing, contextualizing, perspective-taking, and grounding ideas in evidence.

Mr. Lyle assigned two types of writing: (1) expositions of one text or one author, and (2) synthetic interpretations of multiple documents. In-class essays were expository in their emphasis on close reading of a single text or multiple texts by the same author. These essays gave students the opportunities to make sense of and interact with a text. They were a routine part of class, comprised about two-thirds of the students' writing opportunities, and usually took place in the first 30 to 40 minutes of the period. Mr. Lyle liked to have students write at the beginning of the class, and then discuss, because he felt that the writing process helped students understand the texts better and contributed to a stronger discussion. Figure 4 cites two of the six expository essay prompts from the "Opponents and defenders of the 'Peculiar Institution'" unit.

Insert Figure 4 about here

These assignments asked students to begin their consideration of the past with an exploration of the evidence instead of their own personal views. Mr. Lyle's instructions referred directly to the reading that the students did and pointed out that students should use the documents to help them make sense of the past. He often asked students to cite page numbers when quoting or using a source. In all of the assignments Mr. Lyle communicated that students should stop to think, read carefully, and then interpret historical sources.

After students wrote several expository essays on different documents and discussed the sources multiple times in class, Mr. Lyle assigned a second prompt: interpretive syntheses of complex topics using a wider range of sources. These essays tended to be take-home assignments and allowed students to pull together ideas regarding a topic they had been reading about, writing about, and discussing for an extended period of time. To do so, students had to corroborate various documents related to one topic; they had to read and see the documents together. Consider one of the two synthetic writing assignments from the "Opponents and defenders of the 'Peculiar Institution'" unit displayed in Figure 5.

Insert Figure 5 about here

This assignment directed students to primary documents and asked for citations of evidence from the documents. Mr. Lyle asked students to survey all of the readings from the unit in order to capture the essence of the Abolitionist movement and its challenges. At this point in the term, students had spent three weeks reading and discussing sources authored by various abolitionists including Frederick Douglass, William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, and the Women's Anti-Slavery Convention, and a few by slavery supporters including John C. Calhoun

and William Fitzhugh. Students had written about various abolitionists in six in-class exposition assignments and one take-home synthesis of Douglass's *Narrative*.

The set-up of an interpretive synthesis assignment *after* being given several fine-grained, micro-level writing assignments on the same topic scaffolded their writing. Lyle spoke directly about this set-up in an interview:

> So what I try to do is I try to build understanding one document at a time … so I do have a big question in mind that I want to ask at the end of the study of a particular set of documents or a topic. So I know where I'm going. So I'm using each one of the in-class essays to try to get them to see what those people said so they understand what that writer said, what's in that document. And not just some kind of general idea; I want them to understand that document from the inside out.… So that at the end of two weeks you have maybe 20 documents or something like that and then I want them to do something with those 20 documents. But it's impossible to ask students after two weeks to do something with 20 documents if they haven't even done anything about any of them before. So then I want them to go back into their writing and to take—and to go back into their reading—so at least they know, 'ah yes, I have written about this, I have something to say here.' (Interview, December 8, 2004)

The sustained focus on particular historical topics gave students the chance to look at the same issue from multiple perspectives and to explore significant contextual factors, thereby deepening their content knowledge. In addition, when students wrote their interpretive synthesis pieces, they had former essays complete with feedback, annotated readings, and class notes to work with.

In his written feedback on student papers Mr. Lyle regularly stressed the importance of accurate and compelling evidence as well as plausible interpretation. Lyle's feedback in Figure 6 demonstrates his emphasis on historical interpretation and correction of historical inaccuracies, as well as positive aspects.

Insert Figure 6 about here

Analysis of Ben's complete Abolitionist Panel Discussion essay demonstrated patterns in Mr. Lyle's written feedback (see Table 3).

Insert Table 3 about here

The comments that "demand evidence" or engage in "interpretive disagreements" demonstrate that Mr. Lyle directly corrected factual details, confronted misinterpretations, or requested evidence. Mr. Lyle's comments directed Ben back to the text to read more carefully and find excerpts to explicate his ideas. "Extension of content" comments went beyond the text by sharing contextual information and engaging in conversation. In addition to these direct confrontations about evidence and interpretation, Mr. Lyle integrated an average of five positive comments per essay as well as personal comments that developed his relationship with a student (e.g., a reference to a particular student's special interest). Three specific feedback patterns—historical accuracy, demand for evidence, and interpretive disagreement—direct students back to the text to read more carefully. Through these comments Mr. Lyle connected careful reading to more accurate or compelling interpretation.

Guided discussion and explicit instruction in historical reading strategies. In addition to individual, at-home work with texts, Mr. Lyle guided students in reading for historical meaning during class time. Mr. Lyle made particular ways of reading explicit: grounding interpretations in evidence, sourcing, contextualizing, and perspective-taking. During the 12 days I observed, every class focused on making sense of a text and using the text to understand the past.

Mr. Lyle began text-based discussions by asking for students' interpretations, then immediately followed up by asking for the evidence that led students to reach their conclusions. These discussions were often based on what students wrote in class at the beginning of the period and therefore gave students opportunities to review their essay and receive immediate feedback on evidence selection and interpretation. In the following excerpt, Mr. Lyle began a discussion about Frederick Douglass's autobiography after students had completed an in-class essay on the topic.

Mr. Lyle: What did you say, what did you write, what ideas did you play around with in your paper?

Student: [shares his response]

Mr. Lyle: Really. You want to tell us where that is? [To class] I really want you guys to use the source book. [He says this as he waves Douglass's *Narrative* around in the air.]

Student: Okay, I, um, here it is. Um.

Mr. Lyle: Which page?

Student: Page 85.

Mr. Lyle: And tell us where on page 85.

Student: It's the second paragraph. [He reads]

Mr. Lyle: So last night you were kind of reading through and you found this.

Student: Yes.

Mr. Lyle: How did that resonate with you?

(Field notes, October 13, 2004)

In such interactions, students shared their insights about a text, and Mr. Lyle immediately directed them to the text in order to ground their responses. In so doing, Mr. Lyle communicated that he valued students' ideas; however, only evidence-based interpretations were acceptable. In the three classes I observed on the "Opponents and defenders of the 'Peculiar Institution'" unit, Mr. Lyle asked students to share and explain the passages that supported their thinking an average of 10 times per class. This explicit instruction fosters a way of reading and thinking that is central to good historical writing.

Mr. Lyle also used class time to foster discipline-specific ways of reading such as sourcing, contextualization, and perspective-recognition. For example, Mr. Lyle highlighted the practice of considering source information, such as who wrote a document and when it was written (Wineburg, 2001). These text-based interactions offered students modeling and explicit instruction in a historical reading strategy—sourcing—that facilitates comprehension and interpretation. In the following excerpt Mr. Lyle directs students to recognize the attribution and take important source information into account:

Mr. Lyle: This is Volume 1 of the letters of William Lloyd Garrison. When was the 'Park Street Address?'

Students: [calling out] 1831? 1829?

Mr. Lyle: 1829. *The Liberator* was 1831. …So what do you expect? Before you even read this letter, what might you expect? See, this is another way to look at sources.

> You don't have to look at sources cold. You already have some clues…you already know there was a speech on July 4, 1829, at the Park Street Church.
>
> (Field notes, October 13, 2004)

Mr. Lyle's questions and statements emphasize the time, place, and genre of the documents. Drawing attention to these aspects of the documents models sourcing and gives students opportunities to notice key influences in the documents' creation and consider historical documents as social interactions captured on paper. Lyle did this in the natural course of students' reading and gave them practice on an important way of reading and thinking in the discipline that is not often visible to the novice.

Mr. Lyle also used class time to model another historical reading strategy: contextualization. Contextualization is the process of placing a document in time, place, and social context (Wineburg, 2001). In the following exchange Mr. Lyle gives students background information necessary to understand how Frederick Douglass could have met his wife despite restrictions placed on him as a slave:

> Mr. Lyle: Where do you think a guy and a girl would meet each other in antebellum America? Not in college or not in the club scene. At work? Not at Starbucks. Not in the personals sections of the newspapers. Where do you think? It was your topic yesterday.
>
> Student 1: At church!
>
> Mr. Lyle: At church. Yeah, remember what was his argument he had one day—he wanted time off for what?
>
> Student 2: He wanted to go to religion camp.

> Mr. Lyle: He wanted to go to religion camp which is called what?…Remember this? You guys have no idea. You know why you have no idea? Because you live in San Francisco—this is why you have no idea. …So this is something you missed entirely. which I can understand. [Student 2] said 'I think that he went to religious camp' but they were called camp meetings. And camp meetings were what we know now as revival meetings. And you think, well, not our Frederick Douglass, he's really cool and modern …only Bush folk go to revival meetings. Not true. So that Frederick Douglass met his wife at a religious revival meeting. People would go there for several days and there would be tents for the various ministers to give their sermons …and you would go and have 2-4 days of religious experiences and meet people and try to get right with God … and so that's how he met his wife almost certainly. [Mr. Lyle shows photograph of Douglass's wife].
>
> (Field notes, October, 13, 2004)

This background information was not trivial; this interaction was not solely about Douglass's love life. Indeed, this interaction conveyed the central role of religion in people's lives in the 1800s—something students had to know in order to fully comprehend Douglass's life and the abolitionist movement. Moreover, Mr. Lyle's comments conveyed that students' assumptions about the world do not always work in historical sense-making because the past is different from the present. Lyle directly confronted his students' sense of a liberal person and helped them see that to be liberal in the 1800s was entirely different than what it means today. These kinds of interactions challenged students' natural inclinations to evaluate the past based on their present-day assumptions and promoted an alternative way of thinking. This is another example of making visible expert thinking in history and guiding students toward contextualized reading.

Finally, Mr. Lyle used class time to guide students' reading and understanding of multiple perspectives. In the following classroom excerpt, Mr. Lyle models his consideration of the pro-slavery position by explaining John C. Calhoun's speech, *Slavery as Positive Good*.

> So they're fighting over land, they're fighting over an ideal. Who is going to tell us how to live? Are they going to tell us? [It's like a] screaming argument with a parent— 'Don't tell me how to live my life!'—this is like what the South is saying. 'We have our way of life; you have yours. We're not trying to tell you how to live your life. Do you have slaves in Massachusetts? No, no more. …We're not trying to get you to have slavery just don't tell us how to live.' (Field notes, October 22, 2004)

The views of slavery supporters were wholly foreign and reprehensible to the students in Mr. Lyle's class. Mr. Lyle directed students to consider the rationale of slavery supporters, given their circumstances and beliefs. Again, Mr. Lyle's intention was that students understand the past. He said,

> I think you have to understand something about the time—you have to try to understand that world in some way. In thinking historically, in some sense you kind of enter it, you enter it with all the biases of that time—that's maybe the hard part … to understand why John C. Calhoun … thinks African Americans are inferior, why he thinks that slavery is a benign institution, why he thinks it's a positive good for Whites and for Blacks and to understand that's a part of his argument. To understand his argument and that it's applicable not just to him but to his class of planters and even people not slaveholders who certainly embrace the ideology. (Interview, October 27, 2004)

Students needed to understand Calhoun in order to understand the persistence of slavery and the conflict between North and South. But understanding what Calhoun had to say required close attention to his words—a challenge for students who believe that slavery is wrong. Understanding multiple perspectives in Mr. Lyle's class meant setting aside present-day views and using primary documents as clues to the beliefs, values, and interests of historical actors.

In summary, Mr. Lyle used class time to train students to read and think like historians—to ground thinking in evidence, to pay attention to source information, to contextualize, and to grasp historical perspectives. In learning to read and think historically, students had a better chance of developing a solid understanding of the history.

Discussion

Mr. Lyle is a case of wise practice in teaching discipline-based literacy. In his teaching, reading and writing are interwoven and deeply connected to history. Lyle's practice overlays literacy-rich practices onto a course that is firmly rooted in historical content.

The overlap between students' historical reasoning, argumentation, and literacy skills. As assessed here, students who reasoned historically developed an interpretation of a text that took the author's point of view and historical context into account. An understanding of the history and sophisticated reading strategies, such as constructing inferences or recognizing subtext, enabled these students to make historically accurate interpretations. Students who demonstrated historical reasoning in their writing also consistently supported their interpretations with evidence. Students who demonstrated argumentation skills in their writing made claims and supported them with evidence. These ways of reading and writing are consistent with NAEP's criteria for advanced performance on reading and writing assessments. Such criteria include

interpreting an author's point, claiming a position, consistently providing supporting examples for conclusions, recognizing an author's purpose in writing a document, or making inferences. A dual focus on literacy and content can help students reach these related goals. Lyle's case demonstrates that incorporating literacy strategies does not have to compromise a focus on history. In his classroom the same students who improved their ability to support arguments with evidence also improved their historical understanding as indicated by their historical reasoning scores.

The overlap between Lyle's teaching and adolescent literacy. Those practices of Mr. Lyle that teach the historical discipline support goals for adolescent literacy. When Mr. Lyle asked students to annotate their readings, he pushed them to be active readers who engaged with the text by asking questions, answering questions, making connections to prior knowledge and other texts, integrating reading and writing, and summarizing. These are also reading comprehension strategies advanced by literacy specialists (cf., Alvermann et al., 2007). One way of interacting with the text in Lyle's classroom involved considering the source and context of documents. In literacy terms, when Lyle directed students to the date, author, and genre of a document, he helped them recognize the text format and preview the text in order to make predictions that would help them understand the text. The particularities of where he directed students' attention were historical in nature. Analyzing authors' intentions, subtext, and the context in which documents are written are key to interpreting the meaning of a historical text. Such historical ways of reading support comprehension, inference, and interpretation skills.

The inquiry orientation of Lyle's course meant that interpretation was a central goal. Students had a focus for reading the many historical documents—to understand why the Civil War happened—and Lyle encouraged them to read documents for the sake of understanding this

central question. Writing annotations and essays nearly every other day emphasized the importance of writing to learn: Lyle treated writing as a tool for learning and developing ideas. Daily annotations and frequent in-class essays portrayed writing as less risky than might be normally seen in classrooms where the only writing comes on a unit test. Take-home essays gave students the opportunity to synthesize ideas and texts, and to develop interpretations of the past. Literacy research indicates that such writing experiences enable students to work through their ideas, develop their content knowledge, and improve their thinking about that content (Langer, 1986).

Finally, Lyle's consistent calls for evidence in class discussions, and directives to cite texts in essays, emphasized evidence-based thinking. In calling for evidence or directing students to reconsider evidence, Lyle fostered close reading as well as comprehension of the literal text and subtext. Repeated calls for evidence sends the message that claims must be supported by textual evidence—an area of low performance for high school students on both reading and writing NAEP tests.

The historical nature of Lyle's literacy practices. Mr. Lyle's teaching lends insight into discipline-specific literacy practices. In guiding students' reading and modeling his own reading, Mr. Lyle goes beyond basic comprehension and embraces historical thinking in his approach to literacy.

Lyle confronted a key obstacle to contextualized thinking, "presentism," when he acknowledged students' incoming beliefs and pointed out how those beliefs are sometimes incongruous with the past. When Lyle asked students where Frederick Douglass would have met his wife, and got into a discussion of religious revival meetings, he directly pointed out the difference between his students' present-day judgments about religion and people's attitudes

toward religion in antebellum America. This guidance highlighted the historical context of Douglass's day and the necessity of suspending current beliefs to understand Douglass's life. Contextualized thinking is unique to history; the value of Lyle's focus on context and setting aside present-day values is unique to history classrooms.

In addition to contextualized understanding, historical interpretations depend on the public display of evidence (Evans, 1997). The inclusion of examples, details, and quotations exemplifies this aspect of reasoning. Further, historical interpretations must account for the available evidence (Hexter, 1971). This often involves altering interpretations to accommodate contradictory evidence. Comparing different—and contrasting—documents is a visible manifestation of this way of reasoning. Mr. Lyle expected students to make interpretations based on evidence and repeatedly called for evidence to support their ideas in activities, assignments, and feedback. Because Mr. Lyle's students had multiple primary and secondary texts to consult, they compared evidence and considered conflicting accounts, thus advancing the notion of history as interpretation.

Mr. Lyle's essays and discussion questions were deeply historical in nature. Most in-class essays and discussions focused on what a particular text could tell students about the author who wrote it or the times in which the author lived. This approach established primary sources as clues to understanding another time, rather than devices used to encourage students to share their personal judgments. Understanding the past, not students' opinions, was the primary focus. For example, one Frederick Douglass essay question asked, "What is he aiming to do in this speech? How do you suppose he believed that this address would further and strengthen the abolitionist cause?" Students were not asked to evaluate or judge Douglass, but to understand him based on what they could get out of the primary source.

Had Lyle instead asked "Should Douglass have given the fifth of July speech?" he might have encouraged students to judge Douglass based on their present-day beliefs. Such an approach allows for argumentation in that students are encouraged to make a claim and support it, but the nature of the analysis may not be historically sound. To promote historical thinking Lyle asked a question (i.e., "What is he aiming to do?") that directed students to understand who Douglass was and why he took certain actions in the context of the times in which he lived. In Lyle's class, consideration of historical texts focused on what a document indicates about a person from the past. Both the nature of reading and writing opportunities and the ways in which students were guided to read and write reflected the historical discipline in Mr. Lyle's class.

As Moje and her colleagues (2004) have said, it is difficult to distinguish between content learning and content literacy learning, since a key part of learning a discipline is learning to communicate through the oral and written language of that discipline. Learning history in Mr. Lyle's classroom was as much about learning to talk, read, write, and think historically as it was about the substance of the Civil War content.

The intersection of reading, writing, and thinking. When one student could not support his ideas in his essays with evidence, Mr. Lyle looked at the student's reading annotations to figure out why. Before discussing their thoughts about a text they had read, students first wrote about it. Mr. Lyle's approach is anchored in the dual premises that how students read influences their writing, and how students write is an indication of their reading. Reading and writing are related—not separate—processes. Furthermore, reading and writing are rooted in thinking—not just basic comprehension, but analysis such as questioning texts or recognizing and evaluating authors' opinions. This level of skill resonates with the IRA position paper on adolescent literacy (Moore et al., 1999). Reading for subtext transcends basic literacy levels; here, literacy is also

about critical thinking. Rather than separating reading, writing, and thinking into discrete, unrelated activities, Lyle integrates these processes in supporting ways. Instead of reading for homework and writing an essay about a general topic two weeks later, students in Mr. Lyle's class use writing to better comprehend a single reading and use reading to develop ideas to write about. The end game is the development of analytical—in this case, historical—thinking.

Cognitive apprenticeship in historical reading and thinking. Mr. Lyle enacted cognitive apprenticeship in his practice (cf., Collins, Brown, & Holum, 1991) in the form of modeling, explicit instruction, scaffolding, and coaching. For example, in class discussions of text Mr. Lyle made explicit historical ways of reading and thinking—namely sourcing, contextualizing (Wineburg, 2001), perspective-taking, questioning, interaction with text, and setting aside present-day values. Further, he consistently modeled these ways of reading and thinking, and coached his students to do the same. Throughout these experiences students received oral and written feedback from Mr. Lyle individually and in groups. Supporting ideas with evidence, recognizing authors' intentions, and considering historical context were constant themes.

Conclusion

The premise for making claims about Mr. Lyle's effectiveness lies in the assessment of his students' essays over the course of the term. These assessments emphasize writing, argumentation, and historical reasoning. Therefore, any findings should be taken as an indication of effective teaching for only these particular outcomes. The nature of this study prevents the assumption of causal connections between teaching practices and student outcomes. It does, however, improve our understanding of what happened in one literacy-rich history classroom and the student performances that occurred simultaneously.

In all probability, the context of the Pacific School significantly influenced Lyle's practice. All students began the year with strong literacy backgrounds, small classes met in multiple extended blocks of time, and there were no external demands on his curriculum. Limited outside pressures on curricular choices and extended blocks of time made it possible for Mr. Lyle to conduct prolonged investigations into historical topics. Mr. Lyle's school sends the majority of its students to college. Indeed, Pacific was largely defined by its focus on preparing students for and getting them into college. In terms of financial support, Mr. Lyle had access to resources as evidenced by his course readers and laptop computers. One important implication of this study is the need to test Mr. Lyle's approach with a wider range of students in various academic contexts.

Some might say that Mr. Lyle's privileged academic context negates any lessons that can be learned from his practice. While it would not be possible to transfer Mr. Lyle's approach intact to public high schools, where student background knowledge and skills vary widely and teachers often see 120-150 students per day; and where the current climate of mandated K-12 curriculum and assessments would make such a practice difficult to implement, Mr. Lyle's approach presents successful integration of reading and writing in a history class and can serve as a model for developing adolescent literacy through history. Mr. Lyle combines careful reading and frequent writing to help students more fully comprehend texts and work through their ideas. Reading and writing are not viewed as discrete, unrelated processes, but instead are integrated. Most importantly, Mr. Lyle's teaching demonstrates that there are *discipline-specific* ways of reading and writing that can help students understand the content, promote disciplinary thinking, and develop those critical literacy skills in need of attention.

If 5% of adolescents tested do not think while reading or critically evaluate a source, and only 2% consistently support arguments with evidence, it's time to embrace literacy instruction across content areas. Mr. Lyle's practice demonstrates that literacy instruction does not require abandoning disciplinary content or understanding. On the contrary, reading, writing, thinking, and content knowledge can be developed all at the same time. Intertwining skills and content give students meaningful, engaging learning opportunities and help them learn skills effectively.

Literacy instruction and the disciplines need not be separate. Instead, we need to learn more about what it means to be literate in the various disciplines so that literacy instruction may be more effectively integrated into students' daily learning experiences and the integrity of the disciplines can be maintained.

Table 1

Teacher Data

Teacher data	When collected	Relevant research questions	How analyzed?
Interviews (3)	September, October, December	How does Lyle understand his subject matter? How does Lyle understand student progress and learning challenges? How does Lyle think about pedagogical decisions?	-Multiple analytic passes -Within case pattern coding -Testing propositions, searching for alternative explanations
Observations (25 hours)	1-2 times/week for the 12 week term	How does Lyle's lessons represent the discipline? What opportunities to think and write historically does Lyle provide? What curriculum materials does Lyle provide?	-Multiple analytic passes -Within case pattern coding -Complex time series analysis -Testing propositions, searching for alternative explanations -Explanation building
Assignments & Materials	Daily	How do Lyle's assignments and materials represent the discipline? What opportunities to think and write historically does Lyle provide? What curriculum materials does Lyle provide?	-Multiple analytic passes -Within case pattern coding -Complex time series analysis -Testing propositions, searching for alternative explanations -Explanation building
Feedback	For every essay collected (one assignment per week)	How does Lyle diagnose students' understanding and shape their instruction accordingly? What messages about history and evidence does Lyle convey in his feedback?	-Multiple analytic passes -Within case pattern coding -Testing propositions, searching for alternative explanations

Table 2

Score Changes in Mr. Lyle's Class

	Percent and Number of Lyle's Students
ARGUMENTATION	
Score ↓ by 1-2 points	0
No change	33% (6)
Score ↑ by 1-2 points	67% (9)
HISTORICAL REASONING	
Score ↓ by 1-2 points	0
No change	13% (2)
Score ↑ by 1-2 points	87% (13)

Frederick Douglass's *Narrative* (1845)
Harriet Jacobs (1861), Excerpts from *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*
Nat Turner (1831), Confessions
William Lloyd Garrison (1829), "Park Street Address"
William Lloyd Garrison (1831), Opening editorial of the first *Liberator*
William Lloyd Garrison (1833), *Declaration of Sentiments of the American Anti-Slavery Society*
John Quincy Adams (1837), Defending the Right of Petition
The Anti-Slavery Society of American Women (1837), Minutes from the Anti-Slavery Convention of American Women
Theodore Dwight Weld & Angelina Grimké Weld (1839), *Slavery as it is: A testimony of a thousand witnesses*.
Frederick Douglass (1852), *Fifth of July*
Wendell Phillips (1853), Philosophy of the Abolitionist Movement
John C. Calhoun (1837), *Slavery as a Positive Good*
John C. Calhoun (1838), *The Importance of Domestic Slavery*
George Fitzhugh (1854), *A Defense of the Peculiar Institution*

Figure 1. Primary documents read during "Opponents and defendants" unit

ANNOTATIONS:
When you do start reading, you will need to annotate. I see annotations as a chance to slow yourself down and to read more thoughtfully, mindfully, and intentionally. It is an opportunity to sort out the material as you read and to understand what you do know and what still is puzzling. If you do not understand a passage, a paragraph, a sentence, write a '?' next to it. I will check your annotations periodically and they will be factored into my assessment of your performance.

I will definitely help you with and check your annotations. You can annotate in one of two ways or a combination of the two.
1. Annotate as you read.
2. Purposefully underline and circle a few words here and there—and write a few key words here and there, as well. Then return to the reading and annotate more fully.

Figure 2. Excerpt from Reading Guidelines handout.

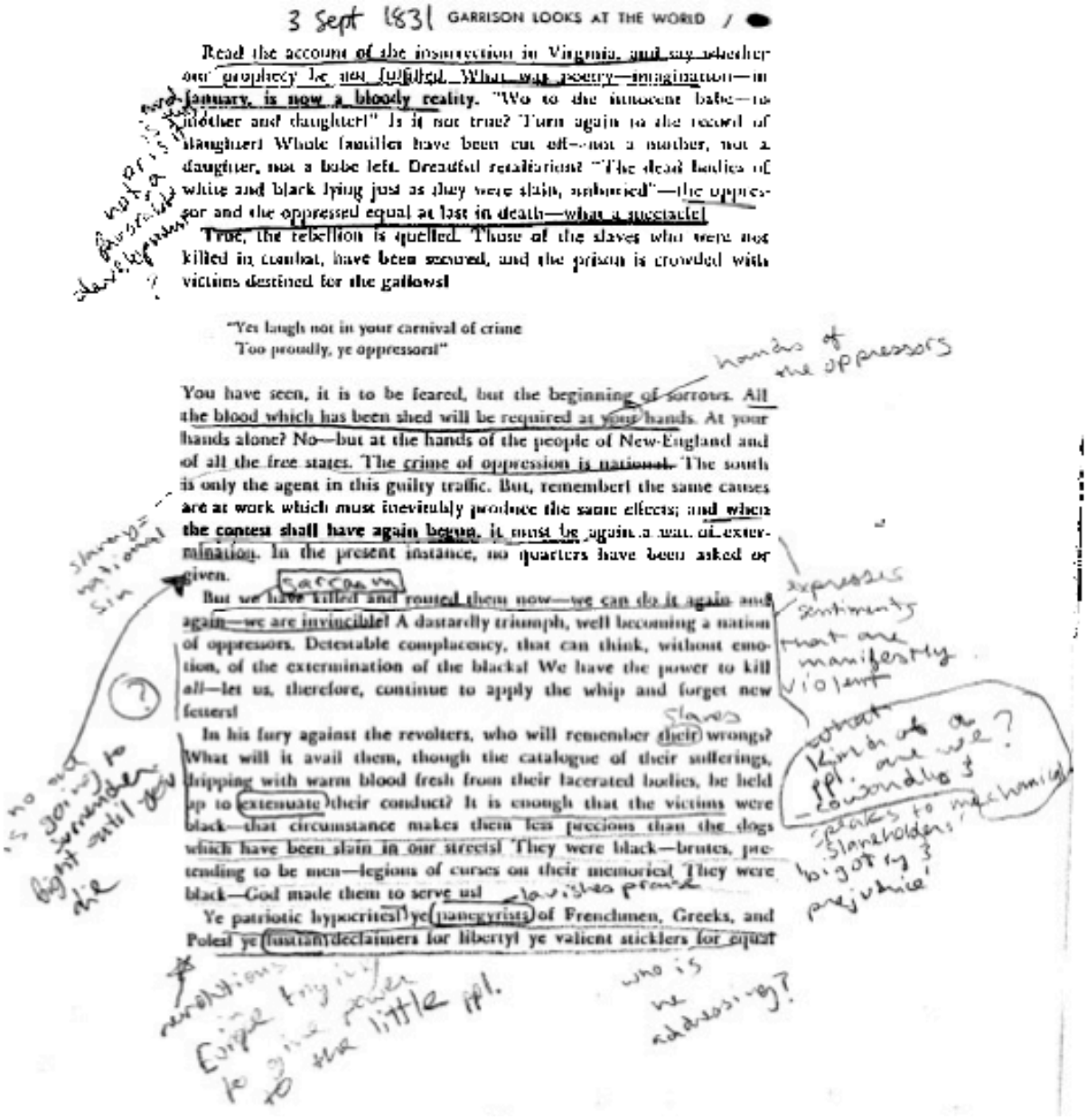


Figure 3. Excerpt of one student's annotations of Garrison's *Liberator* editorial on Nat Turner's Insurrection.

Frederick Douglass—5th of July

Closely, alertly, thoughtfully, and creatively survey the latest source, Frederick Douglass's 1852 speech in his adopted city of Rochester, New York. What is he aiming to do in this speech? How do you suppose he believed that this address would further and strengthen the abolitionist cause? What is he trying to tap into? Does he succeed – why?; why not – or hard to say? (Please explain)… (writing prompt, October 18, 2004)

William Lloyd Garrison & Religion

Using the three Garrison documents from pp. 78-97 (1. The Park Street Address on 4 July 1829; 2. the Opening Editorial of the Liberator on 1 January 1831; and, 3. the Declaration of Sentiments of the American Anti-Slavery Society in December 1833), please assess the place of religion in Garrison's thinking. What insights might your ideas provide in the study of the abolitionist movement?

Please do not begin to write immediately – survey the reading and your annotations; take a few notes and then begin. (writing prompt, October 12, 2004)

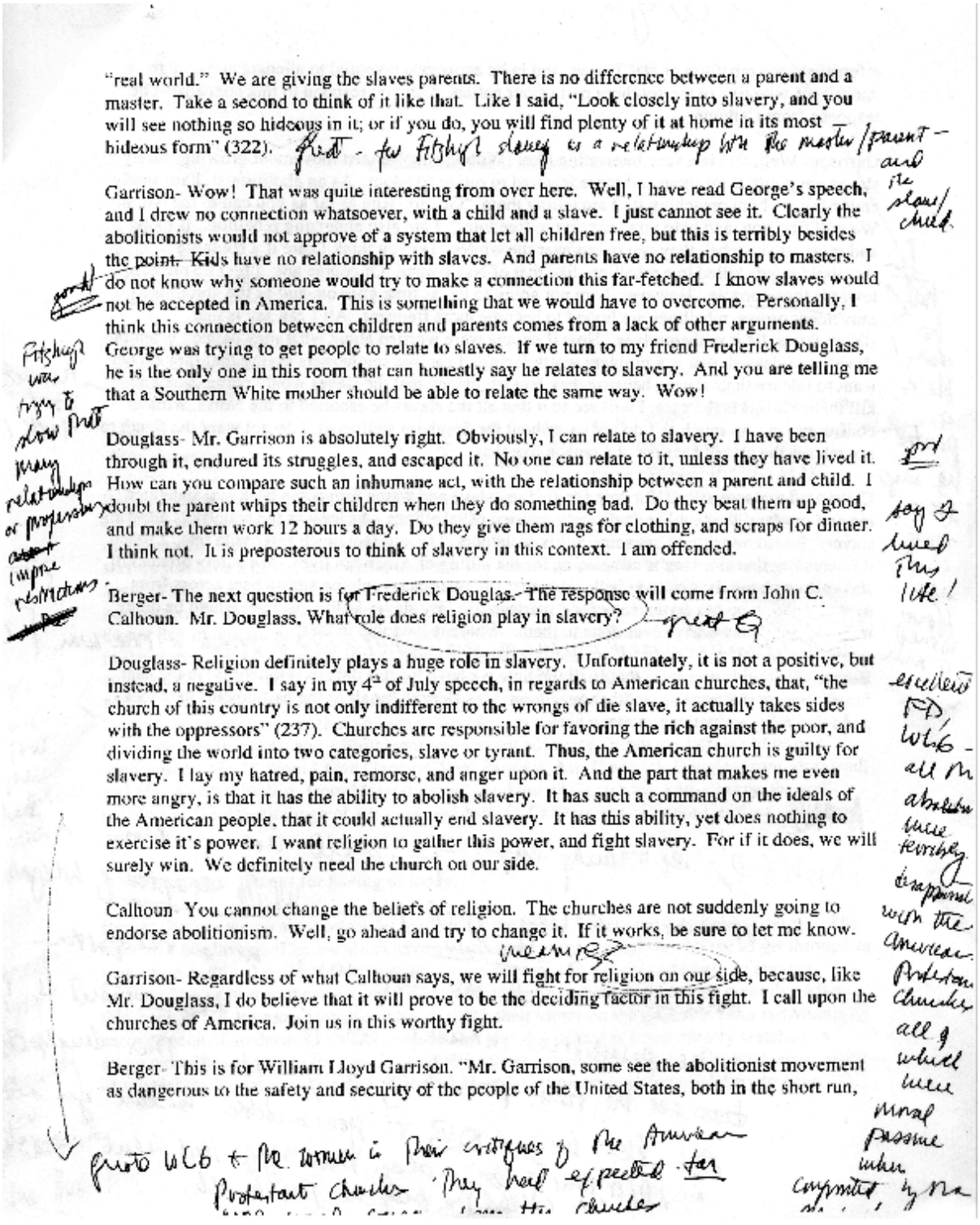
Figure 4. In-class expository writing assignments.

Abolitionist Panel Discussion

You have gathered a group of three to five prominent abolitionists and one pro-slavery advocate to participate in a panel discussion on the abolitionist movement. Transport yourself back to antebellum America and make a serious inquiry into the movement and its leaders.

Your obligation as moderator is to ask thoughtful, thought-provoking, tough, challenging questions of the panelists (and they, indeed, can ask questions of each other.) Your goal is to initiate a real conversation among the panelists that will illuminate the movement from many angles and perspectives. The panelists must respond to questions clearly and thoughtfully and must be alert to the previous comments of the other panelists. …Please envision the discussion having a life of its own with the panelists responding to each other, asking each other questions -- and you, now and then, responding with a question or a clarification. You will play all roles: the moderator and the many panelists. Please cite all quoted passages with the page number in parentheses…. 4-5 pages. (writing prompt, October 25, 2004)

Figure 5. Interpretive synthesis essay assignment.



"real world." We are giving the slaves parents. There is no difference between a parent and a master. Take a second to think of it like that. Like I said, "Look closely into slavery, and you will see nothing so hideous in it; or if you do, you will find plenty of it at home in its most hideous form" (322).

Garrison- Wow! That was quite interesting from over here. Well, I have read George's speech, and I drew no connection whatsoever, with a child and a slave. I just cannot see it. Clearly the abolitionists would not approve of a system that let all children free, but this is terribly besides the point. Kids have no relationship with slaves. And parents have no relationship to masters. I do not know why someone would try to make a connection this far-fetched. I know slaves would not be accepted in America. This is something that we would have to overcome. Personally, I think this connection between children and parents comes from a lack of other arguments. George was trying to get people to relate to slaves. If we turn to my friend Frederick Douglass, he is the only one in this room that can honestly say he relates to slavery. And you are telling me that a Southern White mother should be able to relate the same way. Wow!

Douglass- Mr. Garrison is absolutely right. Obviously, I can relate to slavery. I have been through it, endured its struggles, and escaped it. No one can relate to it, unless they have lived it. How can you compare such an inhumane act, with the relationship between a parent and child. I doubt the parent whips their children when they do something bad. Do they beat them up good, and make them work 12 hours a day. Do they give them rags for clothing, and scraps for dinner. I think not. It is preposterous to think of slavery in this context. I am offended.

Berger- The next question is for Frederick Douglas. The response will come from John C. Calhoun. Mr. Douglass, What role does religion play in slavery?

Douglass- Religion definitely plays a huge role in slavery. Unfortunately, it is not a positive, but instead, a negative. I say in my 4th of July speech, in regards to American churches, that, "the church of this country is not only indifferent to the wrongs of die slave, it actually takes sides with the oppressors" (237). Churches are responsible for favoring the rich against the poor, and dividing the world into two categories, slave or tyrant. Thus, the American church is guilty for slavery. I lay my hatred, pain, remorse, and anger upon it. And the part that makes me even more angry, is that it has the ability to abolish slavery. It has such a command on the ideals of the American people, that it could actually end slavery. It has this ability, yet does nothing to exercise it's power. I want religion to gather this power, and fight slavery. For if it does, we will surely win. We definitely need the church on our side.

Calhoun You cannot change the beliefs of religion. The churches are not suddenly going to endorse abolitionism. Well, go ahead and try to change it. If it works, be sure to let me know.

Garrison- Regardless of what Calhoun says, we will fight for religion on our side, because, like Mr. Douglass, I do believe that it will prove to be the deciding factor in this fight. I call upon the churches of America. Join us in this worthy fight.

Berger- This is for William Lloyd Garrison. "Mr. Garrison, some see the abolitionist movement as dangerous to the safety and security of the people of the United States, both in the short run,

Figure 6. Mr. Lyle's comments on Ben's Abolitionist Panel Discussion essay.

Table 3

Patterns in Mr. Lyle's Feedback on Ben's Abolitionism Panel Paper

Type of Feedback	**Historical Accuracy**	**Demand for Evidence**	**Interpretive Disagreement**	**Extension of Content**
Example of feedback from Ben's paper	"On and off. I'd say since about 1831 with a very sharp exchange 1819-1820 over Missouri—and then pretty quiet until 1831"	-"[You] should state some of his beliefs here." -"Good but how: not yet officially but in other ways—spell these out because these will support his hope/plans for separation from the North" -"Quote WLG and the women in their critiques of the American Protestant Churches."	-"I'm not sure he would say this. For WLG it is more sickening that Americans do not find slavery sinful and abhorrent." -"Argh! But he does! He is a pacifist—he says this time and again! How would a man who believes in a biracial society think it moral and wise to preach a race war??"	-"Ben—great—for Fitzhugh, slavery is a relationship between the master/parent and the slave/child." -"Excellent. FD, WLG—all the abolitionists were terribly disappointed with the American Protestant churches, all of which were moral passive when confronted by the [abolitionists]."

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Appendix A: *Ben's first in-class essay/Pre-instruction writing sample.*

Lyle's Question: As an historian, how have you used the MacDonald diary to help you to understand Mrs. MacDonald, her world, and the war in which she is now enmeshed? Please list at least five topics that you believe you could develop—and then develop two. Please cite page numbers when referring to the text or when quoting directly (August 31, 2004).

Ben's Response:
Sacrificing- We see a lot in this story about sacrifices. They are the backbone of war. Without sacrificing there would be no volunteers for the military, thus countries would not be able to fight for what they believe in. In this autobiography, we see Mrs. McDonald making a sacrifice as well. She sacrifices her home and land for the war efforts. She puts her country before her family, by opening her doors to hundreds and hundreds of soldiers. So for the time being, she was sacrificing her life for the efforts of helping the war.

The Hardships of War

Patriotism from war

Rage to Remorse- In the beginning of Mrs. McDonald's story, she has so much rage towards the Union, or North. "Oh! The triumph of their [The Northerners] faces when they had a slight advantage! It was maddening to see!" (34) This quote shows only a portion of the rage she has towards the enemy. Clearly she hates the North and would love nothing more then to see them suffer because of the pain they have caused her and her family. This same type of attitude continues until she starts to realize the affect that war has on not only the soldiers, but on her as well. When she sees the "pile of amputated limbs heaped up near the door," (38) as well as the look on her children's faces after they see war first hand, she begins to question whether the unbelievable loss of life is justly worth the cause. As the war continued and was brought to her backyard, she changed into feeling remorse for everyone in the war, north and south. When the prisoners that the South held captive lined the streets of her town begging for anything, we finally see the transformation complete. She sends them many items via her children. By the end, she isn't as excited and anxious about the war. She is much more humble and anticipating the end and return of her loved ones, as well as the youth of the community which all had been recruited to the war efforts.

Appendix B. *Ben's final in-class essay/Post-instruction writing sample.*

Lyle's Question: You have now read two of Abraham Lincoln's speeches (and you will read several more). What can you say about Lincoln at this point in your investigation? Choose your topics thoughtfully and purposefully, but boldly. Use your sources mindfully and alertly—burrow deep into each speech. Do not begin to write until you thoughtfully circumnavigate both of the speeches. Please cite your sources.

Ben's Response:

Meeting Lincoln

From what I had learned previously on Lincoln, I suspected him of being fairly neutral on the idea of slavery. I remember hearing that he did have slaves during his presidency. However, this did not necessarily mean he was totally pro-slavery. After reading some of his speeches, his ideas, feelings, and concerns on slavery became present.

Lincoln wants to focus on the moral issue of slavery. This is when his strongest opinions come out. At one point during a speech, he is discussing whether slaves should be allowed to be transported by their masters, and extend slavery into other parts of the country and even to new countries. "That is to say, inasmuch as you do not object to my taking my hog to Nebraska, therefore I must not object to you taking your slave. Now I admit this is perfectly logical, if there is no difference between hogs and Negroes" (4). He is saying that, if slaves were indeed the exact same as animals, then he can find no objection to slaveholders who wanted to transport their "animals," and extend slavery. However, he says that slaves are not animals, thus, we should object to this. He goes on to say, "But while you thus require me to deny the humanity of the negro, I wish to ask whether you of the South yourselves, have ever been willing to do as much? It is kindly provided that all of those who come into the world, only a small percentage are natural tyrants" (4). He is posing this question to the south: Are you all really against the humanity of the slaves? He is trying to say, that not all of them could possibly be tyrants. And if they are not complete tyrants by birth, why would they be so inclined to treat slaves the way they do? "The poor negro has some natural right to himself—that those who deny it, and make mere merchandise of him, deserve kickings, contempt and death" (5).

Abraham Lincoln then proceeds to attack how to words of the constitution, contradict the act of enslaving. "If a negro is a man, why then my ancient faith teaches me that "All men are created equal;" and that there can be no moral right in connection with one man's making a slave of another…What I say is, that no man is good enough to govern another man, without the other's consent" (7). This is the meat of his argument. He is saying that no man can think of himself as being morally right, if he enslaves people. No one has, or should have, the power to rule over someone else's life.

Lincoln's next ideas, show where he could have been seen to be neutral on the issue of slavery. "Let it not be said I am contending for the establishment of political and social equality between the whites and blacks. I have already said the contrary. I am not now combating the argument of necessity…But I am combating what is set up as moral argument for allowing them to be taken where they have never yet been—arguing against the extension of a bad thing, which

where it already exists, we must of necessity, manage as we best can." (8) This clears his entire argument up. He views slavery as something that can be considered as a necessity. Because of this, it is something that we do not want to try to change. Instead, he says that they want to deal with it. In other words, it is not worth breaking the Union up over. He wants to focus on the idea that slavery may extend to other lands. As he says, slavery is clearly a bad, thus he does not want it to get out of control by spreading to new lands.