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Creating a Historically Literate Classroom: Teaching Students to Think Like a Historian

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Abstract

This action research project examines the effect of the Thinking Like a Historian framework on student understanding and historical literacy in the secondary classroom. The project implemented the core TLH ideas of inquiry, evidence and interpretation in teaching history through direct instruction of the concepts, as well as having students apply the concepts on specific classroom assessments. The implementation occurred in a tenth grade U.S. history class of twenty students during the fall semester of the 2010-2011 school year in a small high school in Southeastern Wisconsin.

Student understanding was measured through administration of a pre- and post-implementation History Questionnaire and TLH Inventory to all students. Students showed an increase in understanding of key TLH concepts and of the historical process overall. There were increases between 21% and 68% of student understanding and ability to apply TLH concepts in their learning of history. Student ability to understand the TLH concepts increased to 100% in two areas; understanding the TLH concepts of Cause and Effect and Through Their Eyes. Students were able to demonstrate these concepts on course assessments by the end of the semester and demonstrated an increase knowledge and use of the elements for studying history.

This research concluded that the TLH framework has a positive influence on student understanding of history as well as an increase in historical literacy. The results support the inclusion of the TLH framework in teacher pre-service programs in order to effect change in implementing the TLH framework in history classrooms across the country.

Chapter One

Introduction to the Study

Ask most people what they remember most about high school history, and they will probably list a string of facts and dates that have no real meaning to them. For many of those same students, history would be quickly listed as their least favorite class because it was ‘boring’ and didn’t apply to their everyday life. I would argue students come to believe this about history not because of what they learned, but how they learned it. The question then becomes, how can one create meaningful history lessons that engage students in historical inquiry and literacy, while at the same time, maintain the integrity of the discipline of history? History should be a discipline, a way of thinking that encourages students to analyze, evaluate and interpret historical evidence and to then demonstrate their understanding of that evidence.

While many historians and teachers of history will agree that the approach of analyzing, evaluating and interpreting historical evidence is the most authentic for history instruction, many consider this to be an ‘unnatural’ process for most students. As historian Sam Wineburg noted, “Such thinking runs counter to the normal thought processes that allow us to get through the day. Historical thinking is neither a natural process nor something that springs automatically from psychological development...it actually goes against the grain of how we ordinarily think” (Wineburg, 2007, p. 129). Learning to think historically is a skill that has to be taught to students as a means of learning about and from history. In learning how to analyze documents, view events from different perspectives and question the authority and accuracy of relevant evidence, students learn skills that they can apply not only to historical subject matter, but in making them better informed, contributing citizens in a democratic society. When students learn

how to think historically they learn more than facts and dates; they learn how to analyze and synthesize information and apply the history they are learning to their everyday lives.

Learning to think historically requires going beyond chronology or factual information to looking at the relations that the facts bear to one another. Thinking historically does not necessarily mean knowing more facts than anyone else; on the contrary, it is understanding how those facts came to be and learning to use them to interpret corresponding events in today's world. Thinking historically does not call for accumulation of knowledge, facts and dates, but should teach students the process of verifying their sources and how to make an informed conclusion (Spoehr & Spoehr, 1994). Thinking historically requires a consistent and committed effort to teaching students the skills to be successful at developing historical thinking and application. These skills teach students how to ask essential questions of the material they are learning and how to extract meaning from the material to answer those questions. Learning how to think historically also teaches students how to look for evidence and in turn, how to evaluate such evidence as to interpret the historical information in question in their own way; they begin to apply the information they are learning by deciding what it means to them and their lives. In learning to do so, students are gaining the skills such as recognizing bias, evaluating different sides of an issue and looking at an event from different perspectives; all skills that are transferrable to other curricular areas and help to make a strong citizen.

Statement of Need

The goal of history instruction should be to find new ways to best prepare students to understand how historians think so that they can think critically about historical events for themselves. Learning to do so will improve a students' understanding of history and will also

improve their understanding of the difference in opinions and facts surrounding the history itself. Thinking critically about history is often times similar to teaching students to think critically about the present as well as the individual people and events that led to today (Hynd, 1999). In learning the skills to think historically; inquiry, evidence and interpretation, students are learning to understand historical events and times in the context in which they occurred, not how we see them today. History instruction in secondary schools needs to move away from rote memorization and reading of lifeless accounts to including the elements discussed here in order for students to better learn historical material as well as how to interpret that material as well as apply it. While many historians and teachers would agree with this viewpoint, the state of history education is at a crossroads. There is still the traditional view that history should be a presentation of factual information and concepts, on which students will be tested on the increasingly high stakes Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination (WKCE) in grades 4, 8 and 10. Yet, there are still others who are strong advocates for what we have been discussing here; reforming the way we teach history in a manner that rejects the traditional idea of coverage for the idea of teaching students how to understand history through developing historical understanding and literacy in methods of inquiry, evidence and interpretation.

According to Bain, history is more than a discrete subject matter, it is an “epistemic activity” (Bain, 2000, p. 159). It depends upon learning to restructure the past, not merely uncover or memorize the facts. Just as historians work to give meaning to historical facts, in order to make learning history meaningful, students must work to give meaning to their own historical experiences. Students of history need to be taught how to ask questions about the events and times in which they occurred and find answers in how those events helped to shape their own lives of today. This sort of historical learning is achieved when students are taught to question

what they are learning, seek and evaluate evidence that answers their questions, and learn to interpret the meaning of history for themselves rather than memorizing the facts and perspectives of the event as told by a textbook or other traditional method of teaching.

Historical inquiry, or the act of asking essential questions about the past and seeking evidence to understand them, is essential to good history instruction. Historical inquiry benefits students by promoting students' appreciation of their own personal stories while at the same time, learning the history of others (Fagnoli, 2006). Students best understand history when they are able to connect the effect past events have on current ones as well as on their own lives. Historical inquiry introduces students to the tools of historians and requires them to question, explore, test and argue their thoughts and opinions. While this is a very appropriate task, many teachers do not engage their students in developing historical questions because the teachers themselves need guidance in doing so, before they can guide their students.

While a review of recent literature supports the above assertions that teaching historical thinking through inquiry, evidence and interpretation is the best method of teaching history, very little research exists which correlates the use of historical inquiry with improvements in students' historical understanding, which is what this study aims to provide. Barton and Levstik agree, stating, "Because professional historians use sources, students should as well; because professional historians consider multiple perspectives, so too should students. If teachers want to acquaint students with disciplinary knowledge in history, they can't ask students to spend their time reproducing textbook knowledge or lectures, because that has no connection to what historians do" (Barton, K. & Levstik, L., 2003, p.360). In their article, *Why Don't More History Teachers Engage Students in Interpretation?*, Barton and Levstik argue that teaching such historical literacy is done so that students are prepared to be better citizens within our democratic

society. By learning to analyze and interpret information they are being taught the skills they will need to understand different beliefs and viewpoints and participate in society. While there is little disagreement among historians and history teachers alike that this method of teaching students to ‘think like historians’ is the best method in which to teach students to understand and do history, this study will focus on a relatively new framework for teaching historical thinking and its implications on student understanding of historical literacy.

Thinking Like a Historian Framework

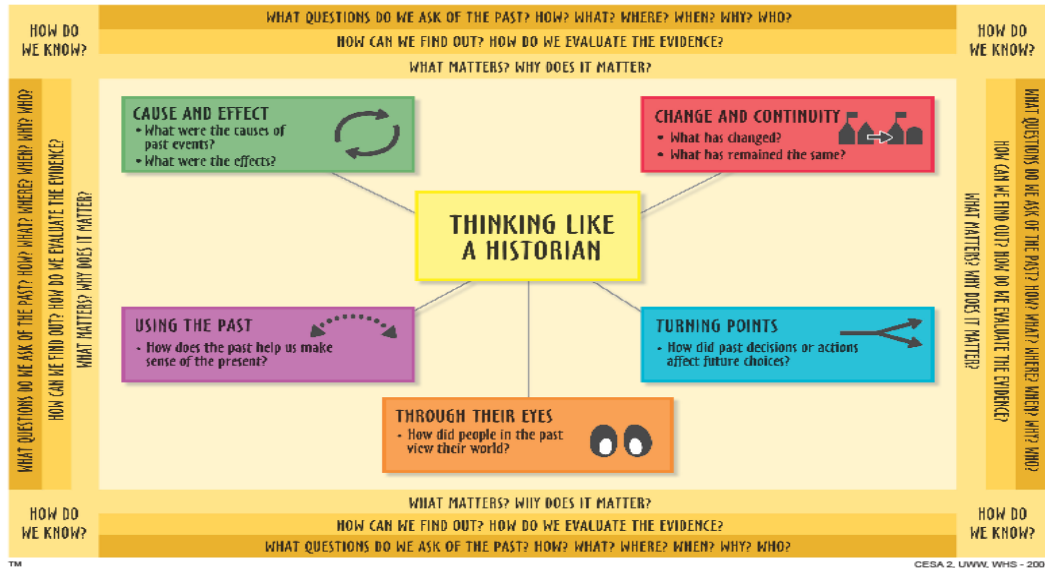
Thinking Like a Historian (*TLH*) is a conceptual framework for teaching history that encompasses the previously mentioned techniques of inquiry, evidence and interpretation. The framework was initially created by a group of teaching fellows, under the guidance of Nikki Mandell, History Professor at the University of Wisconsin – Whitewater and Bobbie Malone, Director of Education Services at the Wisconsin State Historical Society. The two year fellowship was a part of a federally funded Teach American History grant. The grants were initially sponsored by the late Senator Robert Byrd, in order to put more focus on teaching American History and creating workshops and seminars in ways to instruct teachers of American History in best practices. As a participant in the *TLH* fellowship, I was able to be a part of creating the framework and served as a contributing author to the subsequent, *Thinking Like a Historian: Rethinking History Instruction* (Wisconsin State Historical Society, 2007)_Teaching Manual that was published.

TLH is a framework or tool for teachers to use in developing both their own and their students’ historical inquiry and literacy capabilities. has also looks and the way in which they themselves understand and teach history *TLH* incorporates both historical process and historical categories of inquiry to define what historical literacy is and to transfer these skills to the everyday classroom. In essence, it aims to empower students to engage in history through

inquiry, analysis and investigation, just like professional historians would do. It asks students to work through this process; asking different types of questions of history, find and evaluate legitimate sources of evidence and then draw their own conclusions and interpretations from what they have found. In doing so, I would hypothesize that students would understand and apply the history they are learning in a more meaningful and personal way because they aren't just memorizing facts; they are challenging them and the way in which they are being interpreted. Rather than having history interpreted for them and taught to them, students who perform these tasks are 'doing history' in such a way as to make it their own. I hypothesize that in doing so, they will have a better understanding of the history itself as well as in the methods and pedagogy needed to study history, and in turn, will be better able to apply that understanding.

TLH illustrates five major elements of inquiry within the discipline of history: *Cause and Effect, Through Their Eyes, Using the Past, Turning Points and Change and Continuity*. The framework focuses on these elements as a means to begin the process of learning to ask questions about history. *TLH* rests on the foundation of inquiry, the fundamental element of disciplinary literacy within historical study and education. As such, the organization of *TLH* is framed by questions which are the tools a good historian uses to conduct his or her work (Franco, 2010). These questions are framed on a *TLH* 'chart' that students and teachers can use to guide their inquiry into more specific historical topics.

Figure 1.1: Thinking Like a Historian Chart



Mandell, N. & Malone, B. (2007) Thinking Like a Historian: Rethinking History Instruction. Madison, WI: Wisconsin Historical Society. (Reprinted with permission of Nikki Mandell, author)

History is a study of the past, not the past itself (Mandell & Malone, 2007). Studying history begins with questions about the past; as we investigate these questions, we can uncover different patterns and relationships. Asking questions of history is essential for students to begin to draw their own connections between past events and their present everyday lives; doing so allows them to decide for themselves how to interpret the past and the people, places and events that occurred in it rather than being told what to learn by others. It also serves as a means to form a historical awareness of subject matter; if a student can ask inquisitive and thought-provoking questions of an event, they can demonstrate a deeper understanding of it by deciphering the evidence and events that explain what happened.

The *TLH* chart has both an inner and outer banner that focuses on the areas of inquiry. The outer banner asks students questions such as, “What matters?”, “How can we find out”, “How do we evaluate evidence?” and “What questions do we ask of the past?” This outer layer is to serve as questions that require the student of history to questions what knowledge is constructed by the historian, and how it is constructed. These are meant to be essential or guiding questions throughout the method of inquiry.

The inner panel of the *TLH* chart demonstrates the ways in which historians organize and categorize their analysis of historical information. The categories constitute the various patterns that historians use to make sense of the past. There are five main categories of inquiry in the *TLH* framework that need not be exclusive of one another; the categories can, and oftentimes do, overlap to help make meaning of history.

Cause & Effect

“Historians often investigate historical events of the lives of individuals by looking for patterns of causality” (Franco, 2010). This often leads to an analysis of the necessary causes of events and their effect on future events. In order to show historical understanding, students should be able to show the critical thinking skills necessary to make these connections by asking questions such as, “What are the causes and consequences of past events? Who or what caused change to happen?” (*TLH* chart).

Figure 1.2: TLH Questions

WHAT QUESTIONS DO WE ASK OF THE PAST? THINKING LIKE A HISTORIAN				
CAUSE AND EFFECT	CHANGE AND CONTINUITY	TURNING POINTS	USING THE PAST	THROUGH THEIR EYES
What were the causes of past events? What were the effects? • Who or what made change happen? • Who supported change? • Who did not support change? • Which effects were intended? • Which effects were accidental? • How did events affect people's lives, community, and the world?	What has changed? What has remained the same? • Who has benefited from this change? And why? • Who has not benefited? And why?	How did past decisions or actions affect future choices? • How did decisions or actions narrow or eliminate choices for people? • How did decisions or actions significantly transform people's lives?	How does the past help us make sense of the present? • How is the past similar to the present? • How is the past different from the present? • What can we learn from the past?	How did people in the past view their world? • How did their worldview affect their choices and actions? • What values, skills and forms of knowledge did people need to succeed?

Mandell, N. & Malone, B. (2007) Thinking Like a Historian: Rethinking History Instruction. Madison, WI: Wisconsin Historical Society (Reprinted with permission of Nikki Mandell, Author).

Change & Continuity

While chronology is a part of any study of history, true historical chronology is, “Focused on change over time. Historical chronology marks the passage of time and the passage of people and events of that time” (Mandell & Malone, 2007, p. 19). The idea of change and continuity draws students’ attention to the fact that some historical concepts and themes continue throughout history while others change and adapt to the times in which they occur. The benefit of asking questions in this area is that it also helps students to identify which historical perspectives were critical. In this area, students are asked to question: “What has changed and what has remained the same over time? How does change and continuity affect me?” (*TLH* chart).

Turning Points

The identification of an event as a turning point in history is largely measured on its perceived impact at the time. According to Mandell and Malone, “A turning point signifies a profound change in one or more of the areas of human experience (political, social, economic, or cultural/intellectual). Turning points are characterized by change of such magnitude that the course of individual experiences and societal developments follows a new trajectory” (Mandell & Malone, 2007, p. 20). Such events are important for students to be able to identify in order to establish the true meaning of history in both the context of their study of history and how it affects their own personal history as well. In this area, students are asked, “Which changes were so dramatic that they became a turning point in history?”, “How do such events change a society’s ideas, choices and way of life?” (*TLH* chart).

Using the Past

Most students say that we need to study the past so we don’t ‘repeat it’. Yet, most historians would agree that the past is not repeatable, even if the actual events are. For students to understand this concept, they need to understand the disciplinary structure of studying history. Learning to use the past requires framing the students’ knowledge in a way they can understand and analyze, rather than memorize. According to Mandell and Malone, “using the past...to inform choices in the present and to better understand events in the past, makes history relevant. Using the past invests history with meaning” (Mandell & Malone, 2007, p. 21). As such, in learning to use the past, *TLH* asks students, “How can we look to the past as a guide to our present? How can the past serve as a lesson to help us grapple with events in the present?” (*TLH* chart).

Through Their Eyes

It is important for students to learn to examine a historical period or event from the perspective of those living in the past because the study is then grounded in the past, not in how we view the past from the vantage point of the present. It is important to distinguish that looking at the past through the eyes of those living it is not the same as simulating or pretending to be there – we can never truly put ourselves in someone else’s shoes, however we can use these first person accounts to help students to better understand the context in which a past event occurred or the circumstances surrounding it. What we can do then, is use the voices of the past without including our preconceptions of the present. To do so, *TLH* asks, “How did people in the past view their world?”, “How did their worldview affect their choices and actions?” (*TLH* chart).

Evidence and Interpretation

In addition to asking questions as a means of inquiry in learning history, the *TLH* framework focuses on teaching students to use evidence and interpretation to develop historical literacy. In order to answer the historical questions they create students need to use evidence. *TLH* focuses on looking at primary and secondary sources of information as historical evidence to answer these questions. Historical evidence provides facts about history, which are the building blocks we need to both ask and answer interesting and meaningful historical questions. Students need to learn how to find evidence and also need to be aware of the need for multiple sources, as well as how to evaluate the validity of a source when performing historical inquiry.

The final step in ‘doing’ history in the *TLH* process is historical interpretation; answering our historical questions using the reasonably available evidence, and interpreting the results. The quality of historical interpretation depends on the questions asked, the sources used and the analysis of this information by the student.

It is through the use of all three of these categories that students learn to, “Think Like a Historian” which creates stronger historical literacy, allows for students to sharpen their analysis, synthesis and interpretation skills, and creates a higher level of understanding and ‘doing’ history.

Statement of Purpose and Guiding Questions

The main purpose of this study is twofold: to implement the *TLH* framework of teaching in my classroom and to see how doing so impacts the students in my classroom. The overall goal would be to create a classroom that uses *TLH* to facilitate student engagement in ‘doing’ history through source interpretation, analysis and constructing meaning through inquiry and asking essential questions.

The main research question is: how does the *TLH* format influence a history classroom? In essence, how does implementing the *TLH* framework influence the classroom in the methods that are taught, the way in which students learn and their ability to develop historical understanding? I will be looking to see how student understanding is affected in two ways; their understanding of the methods of studying and learning history, such as inquiry, evidence and interpretation, as well as the way in which they understand the study of history overall. Do students create a more sophisticated understanding of history when studying it with the *TLH* framework?

My hypothesis, then, is that implementing the *TLH* framework of inquiry, evidence and interpretation will lead to a greater student demonstration of historical understanding and application of these methods in their learning of history. In this case, I have defined historical understanding as the ability to demonstrate a comprehension of historical study through the use of asking questions, using evidence and the ability to draw interpretations of such material. *TLH* is also expected to increase students’ historical literacy, defined as, “the acquisition of a set of inquiry and analytical skills that allow a person to conduct a sound historical investigation and

draw supportable conclusions” (Mandell and Malone, 2007, p. 125). Because this framework calls for higher-level thinking and greater student engagement in doing history rather than just being taught history, I believe that it will lead to greater student understanding not only of historical material, but of what historical literacy is, how to identify and ask historical questions, how to evaluate and find historical evidence, and how to use these two areas to interpret historical events in context.

The *TLH* framework was implemented into my Sophomore United States History class at Deerfield High School in the fall semester, 2010. In looking for an increase in student understanding, I surveyed students with a pre- and post implementation history questionnaire in order to have statistical data to compare, as well as a narrative *TLH* inventory to analyze student understanding and compare student perception of growth. I also kept an instructor’s log of daily observations of student interactions, classroom comments and demeanors, and observations that helped me to ascertain if my students were improving their inquiry, evidentiary and implementation skills. I also introduced more *TLH* formatted assessments in which I led improvement as the semester continued on the use of the *TLH* criteria: inquiry, evidence and interpretation, and students completed a minimum of three *TLH* related assessments.

Summary

Many historians and history teachers agree that to create historical literacy and understanding is key in teaching history. Teaching students the skills of historical inquiry, using evidence and interpreting the data for themselves are aspects of the discipline of doing history. The *TLH* framework offers a ready to use method for teaching these skills in any history classroom and helping students to think like historians.

How does the *TLH* framework influence my history classroom? What do students understand, learn and achieve as a result of its implementation? This research looks to determine

the answer to these questions, as well as what effect, the *TLH* framework has on student understanding and learning of history. I am hypothesizing that incorporating the TLH framework into my history instruction will have a significant effect on student understanding and ability to apply history and the methods with which we study it. I also hypothesize that students will become more aware of this increase in knowledge and practice through the administration of pre and post surveys to the introduction of *TLH*, as well as the use of the *TLH* inventory (both by the students and the instructor). Ultimately, it is the goal of this research to examine the impact the *TLH* framework has on my classroom. If, as I hypothesize, students demonstrate an increase in historical understanding and application of the methods of inquiry, evidence and interpretation, then perhaps with additional studies in its effects there will be cause to look at changing the way we in which we teach history across the state and even the nation. However, this action research study of my classroom will be an early empirical investigation into how the implementation of the TLH framework in a history classroom impacts student learning and perception of studying history.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

Teaching history requires one to not only learn factual information about people and events of the past, but also to learn the skills necessary to investigate, analyze and interpret those events. According to the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), the primary purpose of social studies education is to help young people develop the ability to “make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world” (NCSS Curriculum Standards, 2010). For many, learning high school history is the opposite: an endless list of names, dates and facts to memorize without being able to use that information in such a way as to make connections between the past and the present, or to analyze significant historical events where students learn how to draw their own conclusions of their effect on modern times. In recent years this has led to much discussion amongst history teachers and historians alike as to what constitutes both doing history and understanding history in the classroom.

True historical understanding requires students to engage in historical thinking; to, “raise questions and gather solid evidence in support of their answers; to go beyond the facts presented in their textbooks and to learn to examine the historical record for themselves: (NCSS, 2010, par.3). In essence, students must develop an understanding of history through a process of active construction. According to Bain, “historians have long defined history as investigation, casting themselves in the role of detectives seeking plausible explanations for historical events, trends and controversies” (Bain, 2006, p. 2080). It is now time to extend this way of thinking into the history classroom and allow history students to think like historians.

Much of the recent literature regarding secondary history instruction revolves around how to engage students in this process known as thinking like a historian; how to teach students

to ask essential questions, find, evaluate and investigate evidentiary support, and to interpret the results in relation to their own place in time. In addition to this idea of being able to ‘do’ history, many in the field recognize the increasing importance of disciplinary literacy amongst students and finding ways to teach students to use historical inquiry to think historically. While many teachers in secondary classrooms agree with this approach, some have found it hard to translate it into actual classroom practice. In a survey conducted by Warren (2007) of inservice secondary history teachers, he found that 89% of them agreed or strongly agreed that they should ask students to use historical documents as a means to learning history, yet only 57% of them indicated that they did so consistently. This led Warren to believe that, while seeing the value of teaching historical inquiry, many teachers did not have the background knowledge from which to do so. In presenting the use of more primary documents and questioning to teach history, Warren found that while the teachers saw and understood the emphasis on the use of documents and artifacts as central to understanding what history is, and, thus, to teaching history, many of them saw these as a sort of “window dressing that might occasionally be dropped into a lecture to illustrate a point, rather than a true method of teaching” (Warren, 2007, p. 253). Warren also concluded that there seemed to be a connection between the longer a teacher had been working in a secondary school and how receptive they seemed to be to discussing more authentic methods to teach history. Warren attributed this to the idea that many older, more veteran teachers seem to focus on the belief of teaching history to cover as much subject matter as possible, rather than engaging students in ways to explore and understand it.

Noted historian Sam Wineburg has said, “Knowledge grows and so should we” (Wineburg, 1997, p. 255). Inasmuch as the knowledge we learn about history grows, changes and adapts with the emergence of new social beliefs, so too does the way in which we teach

students to explore history. Thinking like a historian (TLH) is a teaching framework that was created through a Teach American History grant at the University of Wisconsin – Whitewater in 2006. A group of primary and secondary social studies teachers worked together with historians, history professors and the State of Wisconsin Historical Society to create the framework as a means in which to engage both students and teachers in active investigation while learning history. Created under the guidance of Nikki Mandell, Professor at the University of Wisconsin Whitewater and Bobbi Malone of the Wisconsin Historical Society, the framework aids teachers in creating a historically literate classroom and engages students in creating essential questions, finding and evaluating evidence and interpreting history for themselves; in essence, ‘doing history’ the way that a true historian would. Wineburg has stated that, “someone who ‘thinks’ like a historian asks questions about context, shows caution at the pronouncement of a unilateral causal statement and seeks corroborating evidence” (Wineburg, 1997, p. 260). While the TLH framework addresses these concepts, it is relatively new in the field of history education, and there has only been one case study of the influence of TLH on a classroom teacher. The framework aligns with many of the ‘best practices’ mentioned by previous historians and researchers; historical inquiry, disciplinary literacy, asking essential questions, and using evidence, all of which will be further explored in this review of relevant literature.

Historical thinking and inquiry

Historical thinking requires chronological thinking, historical comprehension, historical analysis and interpretation, historical research capabilities and analysis and decision making in relation to historical issues (National Center for History in the Schools, 2010). These same skills align closely with the TLH framework for teaching history. The TLH framework aims to teach students how to develop deeper thinking and inquiry skills in their study of history, similar to the same skills a historian would use to explore the same types of information. While one would

think this is a natural task, Sam Wineburg has argued that historical thinking is ‘unnatural’ as it requires those doing it to question what they have always taken as fact (Wineburg, 2007).

Historical thinking requires students to begin to question the evidence left behind by past events and to begin to comprehend these documents and records, while analyzing their relevance to their own daily lives and the current times in which they live. Students are required to thoughtfully read the historical writings created by others and to then make their own interpretations of the historical material. In doing so, the idea of an encounter between historians, teachers and students, helps provide the catalyst for rethinking what constitutes history education in today’s schools.

Seixas noted in his research that, “content, separated from pedagogy, is an incomplete metaphor for knowledge” (Seixas, 1999, p. 318). Teaching students to understand history by thinking like a historian and performing historical inquiry both teaches content, through the investigation of historical sources, as well as offers a form of pedagogy in authentic history education. In teaching secondary history, students should learn how to use the language and tools used by historians to study the past, and then be able to extend this knowledge to connect the past with how their own lives and times have affected history (Seixas, 1999).

To this end, historical inquiry can be viewed as an instructional approach which brings together new understanding about the discipline of history as well as recent developments in how to conduct historical research, especially in regards to the historical thinking of students. Hartzler-Miller suggests that a growing body of literature suggests that, “students who learn in conventional, transmission-style classrooms, tend to view history as static facts to be memorized. They believe that there is a single story about what happened, that teachers and textbooks are neutral sources of information and that their own judgments about the past are irrelevant”

(Hartzler-Miller, 2001, p. 675). Instead, according to Drake, “historical reasoning ought to be the principal aim of historical study” (Drake, 2001, p. 32). Both make a compelling argument; historical understanding can only take place after a student has learned how to think historically; including the ability to analyze sources and their effect on history, and to judge both the source material and the historical event critically. The National History Standards seek to distinguish between historical reasoning or thinking and historical understanding. They establish that, “the latter redefines what we should know; the former makes it possible for students to differentiate between past, present and future; raise questions, seek evidence, compare and analyze historical illustrations, records and stories, interpret the historical record” (NCSS, 2010) and ultimately, create their own way of thinking historically which leads them to create historical narratives of their own.

True historical inquiry, as cited in Hartzler-Miller (2001), “entails a shift from an emphasis on a story ‘well told’ to an emphasis on ‘sources well scrutinized’” (Hartzler-Miller, 2001, p.676). In other words, when students become able to ‘do’ history, in that they can construct their own questions, evaluate the evidence as they see fit, and struggle to build their own historical interpretations, they are more likely to develop a historical understanding of the topic at hand. In turn, this may help to increase the historical understanding, and challenge the historical beliefs, of other students in the same classroom. Hartzler-Miller also cited that, “when students were taught to do what historians do, the history they encountered is more like that of historians’ sense of the discipline. The idea is that as students learn to use primary source material, contextual clues, empathy and imagination to interpret events, they experience the ways in which authors’ background and values influence historical accounts” (Hartzler-Miller, 2001, p.676). This leads to a shift in pedagogy within the classroom; the students are not only learning

more in-depth content through accurate historical sources, but are learning an entirely new method in which to learn skills that teach them how to not only read and interpret data, but the sources from which they came.

Instead of assuming that students passively absorb information, historical inquiry invites them to create their own interpretations. By its nature, historical inquiry is ‘unnatural’ as noted by Wineburg. In most classrooms, students are taught to accept the authority of teachers and textbooks, not to question them as historical inquiry requires. Yet, historical inquiry is an instructional strategy that benefits students and the classroom dynamic by promoting students’ understanding of their personal stories while they are exploring the historical stories of others. In reviewing the work of Barton and Levstik, Gradwell argues that history education needs a clear, articulate rationale that does more than focus on promoting the disciplinary habits of historians. Instead, she argues that historical inquiry and thinking leads teachers to make more meaningful pedagogical choices that focus on preparing students for participation in investigation and in doing so, contributing to a more pluralistic society (Gradwell, 2010).

In looking at the effects of historical inquiry on preservice teachers getting ready to teach in an elementary setting, Fragnoli found that such an instructional strategy caused students to be, “more engaged in the subject than they would otherwise be in a class in which the teacher required only rote memorization of facts” (Fragnoli, 2006, p. 247). This would seem to many in the field to make perfect sense; students develop a clearer understanding when being engaged in the doing of history, rather than the memorization of facts and information.

Fragnoli performed a case study in which she looked at how preservice teachers managed their preexisting conceptions of the discipline and instructional practices of social studies with these new and innovative techniques based on historical inquiry. In gathering information, the

preservice teachers were asked to keep journals, participated in individual and group interviews, and in reflective dialogue. In the study, primary documents and historical objects were the main curricular materials used within all instructional techniques. In the end, the preservice teachers noted that they enjoyed the experiences of using primary documents, object-based instruction, and simulations, but lacked confidence in their abilities and their content knowledge to be able to create historical inquiry activities using these sources on their own. Students remarked that, while believing historical inquiry was a valid intellectual approach for their classroom, it would be helpful to have a guiding framework to assist them in putting it into place effectively (Fragnoli, 2006). For many, TLH may be that framework for teachers in K-12 history classrooms.

Spoehr and Spoehr wrote,

“Present day historians remain fully in agreement that facts do not speak for themselves, and that it isn't the historian's job to ask the right questions, to draw appropriate inferences, to make careful judgments when possible and to arrive at considered conclusions about what it all means. Thinking historically, in other words, does not call for accumulation, but discrimination and informed judgment” (Spoeher, K., & Spoehr, L., 1994, p. 71)

The literature thus shows that many historians and teachers alike agree that historical thinking and inquiry are fundamental to increasing students' historical literacy. Through asking questions, evaluating evidence, and creating interpretations of such, students learn both a process of inquiry that leads, to a higher level of thinking and understanding, as well as greater content knowledge. In doing so, students are creating skills that they will be able to use beyond the

history classroom and put to use in other areas of their daily lives, making them better prepared citizens.

Disciplinary Literacy

Along with creating historical understanding, it is critical that students of history learn disciplinary literacy. Cynthia Stearns Nelson defines historical literacy as, “the ability to understand and interpret the stories of the past” (Stearns Nelson, 1994, p. 552). Students who are demonstrating historical literacy should become, “meaning makers who are engaged in a journey of historical discovery” (Stearns Nelson, 1994, p. 552). Viewing history through a disciplinary lens leads students to have to focus and refocus their methods of inquiry; analyzing the evidence and deciding for themselves the way in which the history is best interpreted. In essence, it gives students the tools to ‘do’ history.

Viewing a text from a disciplinary perspective does not compensate for lack of vocabulary or conceptual knowledge that can quickly deter comprehension. It does, however, give the reader an idea of how to proceed and provides them with the skills to continue to investigate the historical material for themselves. According to Juel, et. al (2010), there are two main reasons to include disciplinary frames into history instruction, “disciplinary habits of the mind can extend students’ reading comprehension by providing scaffolds for thinking, and students who question and challenge one another for evidence in their discussions of the text typically acquire the habit of asking questions as well as the expectation that they will continually learn new things” (Juel, C., Hebard, H., Park Haubner, J., & Moran, M., 2010, p. 14-15). Learning history can also be an opportunity to practice historical reading and inquiry skills that can transfer to real-world situations. In learning how to read different types of historical texts with a critical eye and to question the information and authenticity of the source, students are developing skills that will be applicable to other areas of their lives. As such, when taught

how to incorporate historical literacy into their study, students should increasingly be able to see that the practice of history is based in literacy activities and has an important place in the school curriculum (Juel, et. al, 2010, p. 15). Part of teaching students to become historically literate is in helping them to learn that content specific reading enhances the learning of history and belongs in a history classroom.

History is quite distinctive among the disciplines in that it requires one to seek out many different sources, learn to evaluate the authenticity of those sources, and then demonstrate understanding of an often compelling historical event. A distinctive trait of the discipline is to teach students to synthesize vast amounts of text into a “cohesive narrative, which is precisely the kind of critical thinking that we want students who think like historians to do” (Juel, et. al, 2010, p. 16).

According to Seixas, there are two closely related aspects of ‘doing’ the discipline of history. The first is the critical reading of texts, both primary and secondary source accounts of the past. The second is the construction of historical accounts. Although these tasks used to be viewed as jobs for historians alone, teachers and students are beginning to engage in similar processes in the classroom much more often, though many times it is done subconsciously (Seixas, 1999). In doing so, students begin to develop a historical literacy that aids them in developing the tools to think like a historian in analyzing source material, often times without even knowing they are developing such competencies.

The critical literacy approach to information literacy encourages students to develop their own interpretations of source material and aims to teach them how to begin to question the authority of such material as they strive to uncover the past; whether that authority be that of the teacher, the text or the interpretation of the history itself. Asselin, Kymes and Lam did a study in

2007 of how information literacy curriculum and instruction was constructed during a ninth grade social studies research project between a teacher and a teacher librarian. The results showed that often times, different teachers held different views of information literacy and what constituted such a curriculum. The authors concluded that, “conventional informational literacy disables students from engaging in authentic and sustained inquiry and inhibits them from developing the new literacies established” (Asselin, Kymes & Lam, 2007, p. 1). In the same study, they found that the dominant practice in schools is using research as a fact gathering task, rather than a genuine quest to learn, question and evaluate historical material. To truly create disciplinary literacy in students, teachers and students alike need to develop stronger skills of inquiry and analysis of literary works. In their study, they found that process-oriented students used analysis and synthesis skills, tended not to copy from sources, and appeared to recognize that learning should be a result of their research activities much more often when it was done through a disciplinary lens (Asselin, Kymes & Lam, 2007, p. 3). Asselin and colleagues also found that teachers who worked to encourage their students to use this method of inquiry and that planned instruction that provided students with the knowledge and skills to perform it, “led to more student empowerment and creation of new knowledge” (Asselin, Kymes & Lam, 2007, p. 4). As students became more comfortable in their ability to use such skills in the classroom, they were more involved and interested in learning new history on their own.

When we think of disciplinary literacy in studying history, many of us turn to the history textbook. While history textbooks have come a long way from mainly providing a list of names and dates for rote memorization, they also can lead students to a false sense of accepting their authority as always being correct and the ‘end all’ of inquiry in a particular subject matter. As cited in Bain (2006), “The National Center for Education Statistics reported that over 84% of

12th grade U.S. history students claimed to read a textbook at least once a week, and 44% said they read from the textbook, about every day” (Bain, 2006, p. 2081). While history textbooks can be helpful in aiding students in understanding the historical context, it is important to help students be able to recognize and evaluate their legitimacy for themselves while developing a sense of historical literacy.

Bain urges history teachers to abandon textbooks for primary sources while at the same time, urging publishers, “to turn schoolbooks into teachable texts that provide a teacher with resource base for class work that is concerned with true historical thinking” (Bain, 2006, pp.2083-2084). Students must not only learn how to develop in themselves the tools for performing disciplinary literacy, but must also learn how to question the traditional methods of teaching it. In his study, Bain implemented historical literacy practices in three of his U.S. history courses by teaching students higher level thinking, asking questions, and how to use primary sources. He observed that over one semester, students were demonstrating a growth in making reasoned arguments and in their written work, they were increasingly using the historians’ tools; sourcing, corroboration, etc. He also observed that the students were, “increasingly showing changes in their understanding of history as a way of knowing that history involves more than facts, that it demands choices and interpretations to reach tentative conclusions grounded in the available evidence” (Bain, 2006, p. 2091). Creating disciplinary literacy is not just in how to read and analyze texts; it is also in how to read and analyze the authority of the source from which it comes and evaluate its authenticity.

In the same study, Bain also realized that while the students demonstrated such disciplinary knowledge, they were still prone to using their ‘historical imagination’ in using their past experiences with interpreting history. Bain found that while students were using the

‘historians tools’ for disciplinary literacy, they rarely seemed to turn and use those same tools of inquiry and analysis on the textbook or instructor; simply accepting their authority as foundationally true (Bain, 2006). Bain determined that his students, “were demonstrating a limited increase in historical literacy, as students were treating the textbooks, as well as the teacher, as the last word in discussions” (Bain, 2006, p. 2091).

Bain discovered that the critical eye the students were learning to use when working with primary sources did not seem to transfer when they analyzed textbook material. Students, “did not place textbooks within their understanding of disciplinary criteria, nor as an outgrowth of their developing historical understanding” (Bain, 2006, p. 2092). In order to try and combat this, Bain shifted the way in which he approached the textbook and began using it as the last source to supplement the primary documents and reversed the order in which students used sources to learn the material. Bain was attempting to place the students in a different relationship with the textbook. In doing so, Bain found that students were using the language of the discipline, such as ‘primary source’ and ‘corroborating evidence’ though simply using the language didn’t qualify for understanding. However, after the retraining of using sources and textbooks, Bain found that students were, “constructing historical arguments, reading, weighing and corroborating evidence; masking assertion as to how various sources supported, contested or extended their understanding of an issue, and wrote a paper using evidentiary support” (Bain, 2006, p. 2093). They were, in effect, ‘doing’ history and exhibiting historical literacy at the same time. Bain also found that the way in which the students used the documents varied in sophistication and skill depending on the individual student and how engaged they were with what they were studying, yet he found that all students were demonstrating a basic level of disciplinary literacy (Bain, 2006, p. 2094).

As students increased their disciplinary literacy and became more familiar with the terminology and use of the historians' tools, Bain found that the students become more critical of the textbook and its legitimacy. The absence of citations or sources in the traditional textbook began to bother students who had now been trained to use evidence to support their arguments. He found that students, "began asking for evidence as an explanation and authority that such evidence provided or because of the questions that the absence of evidence raised" (Bain, 2006, p. 2100). In response to learning this form of disciplinary literacy, students remarked that it, "was kind of scary to think that a teacher or historian can control what someone's knowledge on something is. Knowledge can control reason and reason can control action" (Bain, 2006, pp. 2102-2103).

In the end, Bain concluded that by using discipline specific scholarship, in this case, history, teachers can, "modify more general cognitive strategies to parallel the 'toolkit' that experts in disciplinary fields use to do their work" (Bain, 2006, p. 2103). He expressed concern that the work of a history teacher should be to go beyond content and develop historical thinking and practices in their students so as to create literate students of history.

Creating disciplinary literacy within the teaching of history leads to a stronger framework for history instruction. In learning how to read texts with a critical stance and to perform the tasks a historian would on the material develops a stronger appreciation of and understanding of both content and thinking like a historian in students.

Asking Essential Questions

History is to a great extent an investigation. It is, "a process of interrogating primary sources and secondary narratives as a means in which to interpret past events" (Drake & Drake Brown, 2003, p. 471). Historians primarily ask questions when they are 'doing' history by often

times asking the ‘why’ and ‘how’ of an event. As such, history teachers can ask questions in the classroom that may lead their students to begin to develop questions of their own.

Historical thinking includes, “periodization, assessing change over time, detecting motives of an author, constructing an argument through the use of evidence, and analyzing someone else’s argument” (Drake & Drake Brown, 2003, p. 476). Key to learning to think historically is learning to ask the questions of history; questions of the content, the authenticity of the material and the validity of its author. The types of questions which we want students of history to ask oftentimes don’t have ‘right answers’, but are ones in which students are required to develop a hypothesis and support it with evidence that is more persuasive than others.

The National Center for History in the Schools (2010) states that students should be able to identify the central questions a historical narrative addresses, as well as interrogate historical data. In his research, Seixas found that having teachers model the ongoing process of asking historical questions for students is important as a means for students to learn to ask good questions. (Seixas, 1999).

The value of teaching thinking skills in the classroom is that will both engage and motivate learners while at the same time, “supporting teachers in effecting a pedagogy that promotes social constructivism in an open-ended but structured and manageable environment” (Baumfield, 2006, p.189). Asking more open-ended questions in a classroom was found to be linked to increasingly focused questions of higher level thinking by students (Baumfield, 2006).

In using more historical inquiry and teaching thinking skills, Baumfield found that teachers began to refocus their priorities so that more attention was paid to the underlying concepts and processes in learning how to study history, rather than in the factual content. In doing so, she found that a natural shift to more authentic assessment occurred (Baumfield, 2006).

She was also able to conclude that there was, “ a significant impact on pedagogy within one semester and sustained change in approaches to teaching and learning after one year when using essential questions of history in the classroom” (Baumfield, 2006, p. 191).

In their study of preservice teachers and the best ways in which to teach historical questioning, Yeager and Wilson discovered the importance of, “using questioning to encourage historical thinking...questioning skills are the key to helping students gain an understanding of history (Yeager & Wilson, 1997, p. 193). In the same study, Yeager and Wilson found that most of the preservice students in the study incorporated historical thinking into their student teaching to varying degrees. Generally, the student teachers used historical thinking activities as a, “stimulus for their pupils’ abilities to draw reasoned conclusions, evaluate evidence and make informed judgments” (Yeager & Wilson, 1997, p. 194). Teaching students to question the past is fundamental for thinking like a historian, yet it is a skill that is hard for teachers to develop.

Bain urges teachers to teach students to read texts more strategically, encouraging them to raise questions about what the author was doing or saying in a text as they read (Bain, 2007). In learning to develop good questions about the past, students can use the questions across the curriculum; of different sources of material, different authorities and different interpretations. Drake concluded that learning to use reasoning in studying history makes the facts and themes more meaningful and thereby brings about a deeper understanding of the subject for the students in such a classroom (Drake, 2001).

Asking historical questions is another characteristic of mature historical thinking. Faced with an unfamiliar document or set of facts, the historians’ goal, “is not merely to issue a judgment about it, but to use it to stimulate new questions, to identify gaps in knowledge that prevent them from understanding the fullness of the historical moment” (Wineburg, 2007,

p.129). It is precisely this process that makes asking historical questions a sound practice for students in learning to think like a historian.

Using Evidence

Using primary and secondary evidence to learn and interpret history is a key element to student understanding. For students to truly think like historians, it is important that they learn to differentiate between historical facts and historical interpretations. Using evidence also provides instruction in how to evaluate different types of data. One of the key components in teaching students how to use evidence to support their historical interpretations is to learn to distinguish between unsupported expressions of opinion and informed hypotheses grounded in historical evidence.

In his study on pedagogy vs. content, Seixas proclaimed, “the success of professors’ use of primary sources is proof that hands-on-how-to-do-it is head and shoulders above any other way to teach anything to anybody” (Seixas, 1999, p. 329). In essence, students are taught the historian’s process, which in turn, becomes their own process of investigating sources. It is widely believed that when teachers use primary source documents, students are more likely to engage in the process of historical analysis. Students learn how to detect bias, determine reliability and validity, and draw conclusions based on sound judgments of the evidence (Gradwell, 2010).

In her study, Gradwell looked at one novice teacher’s goals for using primary sources in teaching two units of American History. The study was performed with an in depth questionnaire, classroom observations and interviews as well as the collection of classroom artifacts. The teacher chose to use primary sources because she believed that they were appropriate materials for her students to use to reach her larger goal of history education, which was to prepare her students for active participation in society. Students were often asked to

analyze documents and to use critical thinking skills. Primary source material included photographs, artwork, poetry, musical recordings of the time period and firsthand accounts from various perspectives in 1920s America. Gradwell suggests that analytic history may serve a number of purposes; for students to understand how present day society came to be, to provide students with lessons for the present, and for students to learn how accounts are created (Gradwell, 2010). The researcher found that by teaching her students how to work with primary sources and investigate the evidence, “students were learning a life skill when they learned to defend their arguments with evidence” (Gradwell, 2010, p. 67). Having students work with documents can prepare them for citizenship because it forces them to read documents closely and critically and to understand that arguments must be supported by evidence. In the end, Gradwell concluded that including multiple historical perspectives in the teaching of history allows students to learn that there is a wide range of contributions to the discipline from a variety of groups in society, just as there are different opinions and groups in society with multiple perspectives on different issues. (Gradwell, 2010, p. 65).

In his essay, *Why students don't get evidence and what we can do about it*, Sipress remarks that, “the problem of evidence is by its nature developmental, and thus not amenable to simple explanatory approaches” (Sipress, 2004, p.352). History, as a discipline, asks students to think in new and unfamiliar ways, and therefore teachers have to find ways in which to help students truly understand and invest in this new way of thinking. “The goal should be to organize the class around a theme of historical argument” (Sipress, 2004, p. 352).

In his study, Sipress redesigned a high school U.S. history course around the theme of argument. In doing so he hoped to improve student understanding and appreciation of the process of historical inquiry supported by evidence. He wanted to know why students, even

motivated ones, had difficulty engaging in historical investigation. He developed his course to be question driven and also required students to take a position on a series of important questions, making their case in writing with specific evidence.

At the conclusion of the fall semester, Sipress evaluated the students' final exams for mastery of skills in using evidence, making and supporting an argument, and asking historical questions. He found that students were generally able to formulate a thesis and summarize the arguments of others with success, but had a far more difficult time providing a well organized and supported argument of their own. What struck him most was that 71% of students gave little or no specific evidence for the position they took. This was troubling for Sipress, as throughout the course, 97% responded correctly that evidence was what was needed to make an argument persuasive, yet they didn't put it into practice on their final exam (Sipress, 2004). Sipress concluded that to resolve the problem, what was needed was a set of classroom practices that would help students understand, "historical argumentation as an endeavor that required them to make a justified choice amongst available evidence. Evidence, in other words, is the criteria by which we judge the persuasiveness of historical argumentation" (Sipress, 2004, p.358). After revamping his teaching method, the analysis of the second semester final exams indicated a dramatic improvement in students' ability to present evidence in support of a position. This time, 74% of students either mastered or partially mastered it (Sipress, 2004). Sipress attributed this change to the fact that students had to relearn what it meant to 'do' history and took the view that held evidence necessary to support their argument.

Teaching with primary sources is an active form of instruction in which the teachers must pose questions that cause students to read and examine evidence. The object is to provoke students to become engaged in historical inquiry and interpretation and to teach them how to

ground that inquiry in evidentiary support. It is also important for teachers to know the fundamentals of doing so as well, before they can teach such inquiry to their students.

Teacher Training in Historical Literacy

While few in the field of history would dispute the fact that the above mentioned components of historical thinking, literacy, questioning and evidence are required for sound historical teaching, many differ in how to get there. In order for students to be taught these methods of doing history, first their teachers, both preservice and inservice teachers, need to understand the methodology for themselves. Recent literature calls for more training for teachers in these areas of inquiry and in helping them learn how to teach students to think like historians.

One approach is to present teachers with a normative model of best practice – historical inquiry for example – and the rationale and methods for incorporating the preferred model into their own teaching. Harzler-Miller (2001), believes that historical inquiry is a very powerful tool for teachers to use in their classrooms in modeling how to best investigate and understand history, and calls for more methods classes to incorporate these strategies in preparing teachers.

Baumfield (2006) highlights the role of professional development workshops in enabling teachers to move from implementation to analysis of the function of thinking skills in their classrooms. However, she noted that while many agree with this methodology of teaching history, “research into the impact of thinking skills approaches on teachers is limited and tends to be conducted by enthusiasts with teachers who volunteer to be involved in such projects” (Baumfield, 2006, p. 194).

Yeager and Wilson concluded through their research that teachers who omit historical thinking and inquiry from their approach to the subject tend to do so for reasons related to the manner in which they had been taught in their own methods course (Yeager & Wilson). Based on discussions and observations of preservice teachers, they found that the most significant

factor in whether or not they included this methodology in their teaching relied on the methods course of instruction they had at the university level and its commitment to encouraging attention to historical thinking. In the same study, Yeager and Wilson (2007) found that most of the students incorporated historical thinking into their teaching to varying degrees. Most of them attempted to model the experiences they had had in their methods course; whatever those may have been. Generally, they used historical thinking activities, “as a stimulus for their students’ abilities to draw reasoned conclusions, evaluate historical evidence, analyze a perspective, and make informed judgments” (Yeager and Wilson, 1997, p. 193). If this is truly the case, many would argue that history methods courses need to be restructured; we need to prepare future teachers first.

Perhaps most importantly, Yeager and Wilson found that for students in their study who incorporated historical thinking approaches in their teaching, the methods course and related student teaching activities provided something else: a heightened sense of professional competence (Yeager & Wilson, 1997). If one takes the view that all students deserve a professional and competent classroom experience, then this research supports the view that teachers, particularly those in university methods courses, need more instruction in teaching historical thinking before they are able to use and teach it in their own classrooms.

Thinking like a historian framework

While there is not much literature yet surrounding the TLH framework specifically, it is of value to review that which does exist. The TLH framework encompasses the methods spoken to previously in this paper but provides something which they lack; a way of implementing those methods into classroom teaching.

TLH proposes to improve students’ historical literacy by ensuring that their teachers have, “a firm knowledge of historical events as well as the disciplinary methods of inquiry and

analysis through which historians explore the meaning of those past events” (Mandell, 2008, p.55). TLH defines historical literacy as, “an understanding of what history ‘is’ and what historians ‘do’. As a result, [we] concluded that historical literacy requires a degree of fluency in the disciplinary language of history and, more broadly, requires fluency in historical ‘ways of knowing’” (Mandell, 2008, p. 55).

TLH is an actual methodology that takes what historians and teachers do and make it more comprehensible both to themselves and their students. TLH holds the key elements of historical literacy in a common language that embeds that language in the discipline’s specific way of knowing. In learning to ‘speak’ this language, students learn how to investigate and explore history for themselves, as well as better understand it.

TLH seeks to separate the way historians study the past from the way historians organize their understanding of the past (Mandell, 2008). TLH argues that historical literacy should look the same in every classroom and focus on three steps: asking questions of the past, gathering sources and evaluating the evidence in those sources, and drawing conclusions, supported by the evidence, that answer the questions (Mandell, 2008).

By continually using this framework, teachers are able to provide their students a way to integrate their prior knowledge, as well as set a common language that students can use to develop their historical literacy. Over time, students should begin to think of the past in meaningful ways, rather than, “as a collection of information to be memorized and recalled on demand” (Mandell, 2008, p.58). It is hypothesized that regular use of the historical process and historical categories of inquiry will promote students’ historical literacy.

Research on TLH Implementation

As the TLH framework is relatively new, there is only one case study known to have been completed on it. The study, conducted by Eric Franco as his doctoral dissertation at

Edgewood College in 2010, examined whether the TLH framework had a transformative impact on a classroom teacher's disciplinary literacy. Franco performed the study of a high school social studies teacher who taught three 90-minute history classes a day, and had 12 years of teaching experience. The teacher had been a part of the two year TLH teaching fellowship and had incorporated the TLH framework into her classroom instruction.

Franco began by noting that there has been significant literature in recent years stating that history teaching which centers on inquiry, analysis and synthesis provides richer instruction and promotes historical literacy (as evidenced in this review). Franco defined the central question from this literature to be, "how one creates meaningful history lessons that engage a student in historical inquiry while at the same time, maintains the integrity of the discipline" (Franco, 2010, p.11). To determine this, Franco conducted pre and post study interviews, nine separate classroom observations, and gathered artifacts of classroom assignments.

Franco concluded that the TLH framework did indeed have a transformative impact on the teacher's teaching methods and skills (Franco, 2010, p. 110). Franco found that disciplinary literacy did not require a previous understanding of TLH, making it easily relevant and accessible to other classroom teachers. He found that TLH, "created a sense of informed and focused disciplinary framing for [the teacher's] metacognitive and practical use within the classroom" (Franco, 2010, p. 115).

The use of disciplinary based methods in the history classroom was a critical factor in developing students' historical understanding. The subject modeled historical questions of primary sources and the use of questions seemed to force students to think for themselves (Franco, 2010). In essence, the teacher created a classroom environment where students expected to discuss, think and learn. She was able to move, "from epistemological questions of

the content as mere subject to the ontological practices that are congruent with the professional historians; orientation of history as a discipline” (Franco, 2010, p.116).

Franco observed that as the teacher’s disciplinary literacy increased, it led to the classroom instruction being more grounded in the methods, language and processes inherent to the core elements of the discipline. He noted she, “became a teacher who ceased to simply attempt to think like a historian, but rather she became a historian” (Franco, 2010, p. 116).

Franco concluded that at all levels of history instruction, TLH was a powerful and effective cognitive foundation that, “simplifies the historical process while, at the same time, provides a consistent disciplinary framework for learning, understanding and doing history (Franco, 2010, p. 124). He recommended that while this transformative effect was apparent on the teacher in the study, he had not looked specifically at the subsequent effects of TLH on the students in the classroom, an area where further research should focus.

Franco’s study is the first on the effects of TLH, and it offers a strong correlation between the TLH framework and the increase in disciplinary literacy of the instructor. One must now hypothesize, if there is such an effect between TLH and its effect on the teaching methods, what sort of effect does the framework have on the students with whom it is implemented?

Conclusion

The aforementioned literature and research articles support the idea that the concepts presented in the Thinking Like a Historian framework are consistent with a sound, historically appropriate classroom. The concepts of teaching historical inquiry and thinking along with creating a disciplinary literacy promote stronger student comprehension and understanding of both the content and process of studying history. To that end, the methods of teaching students how to ask essential questions and challenge the history they are learning, along with learning to

analyze, interpret and source historical evidence, provide sound teaching methods in the history classroom.

The research here supports the idea that students who learn to ask historical questions and evaluate evidence are then able to interpret history in their own way; allowing them to create their own historical meanings rather than being subjected to memorizing the names and events that have been constructed for them by others. As evidenced by the Bain study, students who perform these types of thinking begin to develop a critical eye towards the sources and events themselves and increase their own historical thinking.

Finally, the case study performed by Franco gives the most legitimization to the influence the TLH framework could have on the history classroom. The study supports the assertion that the TLH framework has a transformative impact on how classroom teachers teach history. In doing so, it leaves the question of whether such an impact can be supported in the learning of history by students.

The TLH framework offers a strong pedagogy for both teacher and student learning of historical content and methodology. It offers a strong and concise construct that is easily applicable in any classroom, and offers teachers the resources and structure they seem to crave in learning how to implement the components of thinking like a historian.

Chapter 3: Design of the Study

Introduction

As evidenced in the previous chapter, a review of recent literature in the field of history education supports the belief that teaching students how to ask essential questions about the history they are learning, how to find and evaluate evidence to support those questions, and how to interpret the results for themselves is sound educational ‘best practice’ in the teaching of history. These skills are seen to be fundamental in student learning not only of content but of how to ‘do’ history the way a true historian would. Teaching students to use inquiry, evidence and interpretation supports a strong development of historical understanding and literacy, which are key elements of historical learning.

While many historians and history teachers alike agree these skills are essential to learning history, there are few frameworks developed specifically for teachers to use in implementing the strategies in their classrooms. The Thinking Like a Historian (TLH) framework was created by Nikki Mandell and Bobbie Malone in conjunction with their teaching fellows under the federal Teach American History Grants. As a product of that fellowship, the teaching manual, *Thinking Like a Historian: Rethinking History Instruction* (Mandell & Malone, 2007) was published as a means to get the framework into classrooms across the country. The *TLH* framework encompasses the idea of teaching history through the use of inquiry, evidence and interpretation; the core concepts that many historians agree are essential to learning, understanding and doing history. In teaching students to be able to apply these skills to their study of history, they are learning to ‘think like historians’ and apply the same skills a historian would to the study of historical content.

The *TLH* framework is a welcome addition to the field of history education; while most agree that teaching the concepts of inquiry, evidence and interpretation are essential to teaching

history, there are not many frameworks for putting together a method for doing so. As such, the framework is relatively new in secondary classrooms, and although it is gaining credibility in classrooms across the country and in social studies methods courses as far away as China, this study, to my knowledge, will be the first documented study of its effect on student understanding and learning in the secondary classroom. Dr Eric Franco instituted a study of how *TLH* affected the secondary classroom teacher as a dissertation thesis for Edgewood College in 2010 and found that it had a transformative impact on the teacher's teaching methods and skills (Franco, 2010). He further concluded that by learning the methods of *TLH* and how to implement them with her students she, "ceased to simply attempt to think like a historian, but rather she became a historian" (Franco, 2010, p. 116). It is the goal of this study to determine whether these same conclusions can be attributed to student learning and understanding in a classroom where the *TLH* framework is employed for student use.

Context and Purpose

Guiding Questions and Goals

How does the *TLH* framework influence a history classroom? Does using the *TLH* framework affect student achievement, i.e. the way in which they learn and understand history? In performing this research, the goal was to determine what effect the *TLH* framework had on student understanding and learning of history. I define student understanding as the ability to demonstrate a comprehension of historical study through the use of inquiry skills, using evidence and the ability to draw interpretations of such material. Student understanding is twofold: of historical content, but also of the learning process of 'doing' history. *TLH* is also expected to increase students' historical literacy, defined as "the acquisition of a set of inquiry and analytical skills that allow a person to conduct a sound historical investigation and draw supportable conclusions" (Mandell and Malone, 2007, p. 125). I hypothesized that implementing the *TLH*

framework in my classroom would positively affect how students understand history as well as the methods in which they study history.

Setting

The research in this project was carried out in my United States History class at Deerfield High School during the fall, 2010 school semester. Deerfield is a small rural school in Eastern Dane County with 237 students enrolled in grades 9-12. The student makeup of the school is primarily Caucasian, with 93% of all students falling into this category; 2% Asian population, 2% Hispanic population and 3% African American student population. Additionally, 19% of the high school student body is eligible for free or reduced lunch. The school is a major fixture of the community and enjoys great parental and community involvement in school events and programs.

Deerfield Middle and High School share one building, with students in grades 7-12 attending. As a social studies teacher, I teach only high school students and teach on the 90 minute block schedule; therefore I teach three different 90 minute classes a day with one 90 minute block of prep time. I began teaching my 13th year of teaching high school social studies at Deerfield High School during the fall semester and implementation of this project. Though I had a new principal in the fall semester, faculty has always enjoyed great support from administration in implementing new teaching methods and I had administrative support for this research project.

Participants

The participants in my study were students in my United States History course in the fall semester of 2010. There were 20 students in the course; thirteen males and seven females, with two students being identified as special education students and one student being diagnosed as having Asperger's Syndrome. To help meet the needs of these students, a special education aide was also in the classroom during instruction. This course is a required course to meet high

school graduation guidelines, and is taken by freshmen and sophomores. It contained students of varying learning abilities as we have a full inclusion plan with the majority of our student population.

Procedure

The procedure for implementing my research began with the first day of school, on September 1, 2010. Students in my United States History course were given a pre-instructional questionnaire on history that asks questions regarding the elements of TLH, i.e.: what does it mean to think like a historian? In what ways do you best learn history? Asking for student definitions of inquiry, evidence, interpretation, etc. (See Appendix A) This questionnaire will be used as a baseline for understanding what students already know a) about the study of history and b) about their own understanding and learning of history before introducing them to the *TLH* framework. In addition, students were given a specific *TLH* Inventory to self-assess prior to the *TLH* instruction taking place to establish a baseline understanding, in numerical form rather than in narrative form, of student understanding of key TLH concepts. The narrative form will be read and evaluated by the researcher to look for areas of understanding that are mastered, and areas in which instruction will be needed, as well as for patterns in student responses. The numerical *TLH* inventory will be scored to determine the percentage of students who demonstrate understanding at the various levels offered; allowing me to see what level student understanding is at pre-implementation. Both surveys were read and approved by the Superintendent of Instruction for use in this research.

After students took the above survey and inventory (so as not to influence their answers to the above), students were informed by the instructor of what *TLH* is; what it means to Think Like a Historian, and the three areas of focus: inquiry, evidence and interpretation. Students were also made aware of the fact that this is a pilot study/implementation and that they will be involved in

the research I am conducting. Students were offered the chance to opt out of inclusion in the research group; none declined.

During days three through seven of the class, students were introduced to a different form of inquiry each day; what it means, why it is important, how to construct questions of that method of inquiry and how to identify them in material that is already published. These included the five themes of inquiry present on the *TLH* chart: Cause and Effect, Through Their Eyes, Change & Continuity, Using the Past and Turning Points (Mandell & Malone, 2007). Students held class discussions about the meaning of each form of inquiry, and students developed a class definition for each to ensure all had an understanding of what they meant.

A large bulletin board was created in the classroom before school began that was a mock up of the *TLH* chart (See Appendices C and D), reminding students of the different types of questions and areas of focus in *TLH*. Throughout the semester, students were asked to write and identify essential questions that used the five different methods of inquiry and to post them on the board in the appropriate category, in doing so students began to understand and practice using different forms of inquiry. In addition, at the beginning of each new unit, students were asked to complete a blank *TLH* chart (See Appendix E) and write one question for each type of inquiry that they had about the unit. As the unit progressed, students were asked to find evidence that answered one of those five questions, and interpret the evidence in a short essay on the final unit test. On alternate tests students were also given a blank *TLH* chart as part of the test and asked to identify one thing they learned from that unit in each of the five categories of inquiry. These essays will be scored using the *TLH* rubric (See Appendix F) to gauge student understanding and, assumingly, an increase of such.

Students were also introduced to the idea of evidence: what constitutes evidence in history (primary and secondary sources), how to evaluate whether it is a good source or not, and how to use them. Students received TLH handouts from the Mandell & Malone publication on how to identify good sources and determine their validity and practiced finding primary and secondary evidence. Students also completed a minimum of three different assessments throughout the semester that required them to both use and to find evidence in answering a historical question of their creation. The *TLH* rubric will be used to determine if the evidence is appropriate, and to guide the researcher in seeing whether progress is being made in understanding and using evidence.

Lastly, students were instructed in the idea of interpretation using inquiry and evidence to draw their own conclusions with historical information. Students learned this through class discussion and examples provided by the instructor, and were eventually able to perform historical inquiry on their own, finding evidence, and drawing conclusions/interpretations on a minimum of three different assessments throughout the semester. Each will be graded again with the *TLH* rubric as a means to provide the researcher with data to analyze student understanding and learning progress. As a final semester project, students were asked to combine all three skills in a 'History Mystery' assignment where they answered a historical question of their own by finding sufficient evidence and interpreting that evidence to solve the mystery. Students presented their information as historical arguments to the class and lead discussion about the evidence.

Data Analysis & Assessment

At the end of the semester, students were again given the same history questionnaire, post instruction, that they took at the beginning of the semester to elicit a comparison on student thoughts, perceptions and understanding in narrative form and to look for progress that measured

whether *TLH* affected students and if so, how. I compiled all of the responses from the pre-implementation surveys for each question and did the same for the post-implementation surveys, looking for patterns in answers and improved understanding.

Students were given the *TLH* Inventory again post-implementation to facilitate comparisons with the quantitative data that was collected at the beginning of the class and look for an improvement in the percentage of students who understood the different historical thinking concepts. The percentage of students who answered each different level of understanding was computed and compared from pre to post implementation, looking for an increase in the number of students who self identified as understanding at level four or five on the rubric, indicating the level of full understanding.

The teacher observation journal was also kept to document student questions and behaviors as the implementation process took place. This journal was analyzed at the end of the project to give information and guidance from a teacher's evaluative stance on how the implementation affected and was affected by students in the classroom. A gradual increase in student scoring on the *TLH* will demonstrate a positive impact of the *TLH* framework on student understanding, as well as in the student narrative responses.

The success of the project was evaluated by analyzing the quantitative data on student completion of the *TLH* inventory, looking for patterns and improved levels of thought and understanding on the History Questionnaire and observations from the teacher journal.

Ultimately, the success of the research project was to determine if students were able to show a significant increase in historical understanding and literacy in their abilities to perform *TLH* tasks and cognitively reflect on the way in which they learned history. I expected an increase in

scores on the post-implementation TLH Inventory to demonstrate student achievement in understanding.

Summary

This research project aimed to determine what effect the implementation of the *TLH* framework of teaching had on my secondary history classroom. The *TLH* framework was implemented in my high school United States History course in the fall semester, 2010, in a rural high school setting by a teacher with twelve years of history instruction experience. Students were given pre and post instructional history questionnaires and *TLH* inventories to complete to look for improvement in student understanding and demonstration of historical literacy. Throughout the semester, students learned to perform inquiry, find and evaluate evidence and interpret their findings by completing blank *TLH* charts for each new unit and searching for evidence to use to interpret the answers to their questions. In addition, students completed a minimum of three *TLH* framed assessments, looking for student improvement and application of the TLH principals. Upon completion of the semester, students again completed a History Questionnaire and *TLH* inventory to look for patterns in student growth and assess the level of student understanding and historical literacy.

Chapter 4: Observations and Results

Implementation Process and Observations

Before implementing the TLH framework in my classroom, I hypothesized that doing so would lead to an increase in student understanding of history as well as greater historical literacy. To measure this, I administered a History Questionnaire (Appendix A) and a History Inventory (Appendix B) to my students pre and post implementation of the TLH framework. I also kept an instructor's journal as we moved through the implementation process. In looking at the results of all of the above materials, I believe that the TLH framework did meet my hypothesis and lead to greater student understanding and ability to use the main themes of the TLH framework; inquiry, evidence and interpretation, which are the keys to historical literacy.

I began the semester by administering the History Questionnaire and History Inventory to students on the first day of class and explaining to them that their answers would be the basis of my master's research, as I wanted students to take the survey seriously. All students cooperated fully in participating in the surveys. We spent the next several days going over what the TLH framework was, the five different methods of inquiry and what it means to ask essential questions. Students were intrigued and showed interest in learning the TLH framework; they seemed to really like the idea that they could think like a 'historian' and all of the prestige they assumed went along with that title. In order to aide in their understanding and application of the TLH concepts, I created a large bulletin board that was a mockup of the TLH chart with the five different methods of inquiry for students to refer to as the class progressed.

Students created a class definition of Turning Points, as it seemed to be difficult for them to agree what events constituted such. They defined it as, “an event that changed people’s lives and affects us today.” This was written on the large bulletin board as a reference, as were class definitions for each of the five areas of inquiry. Students then created timelines of US History from founding to the present in order to review the knowledge and events they brought with them to class. When presenting their segment of the timeline to the class, students were required to explain which event(s) in their time period they felt were turning points, and I was surprised at the higher level they were able to do so in such a quick time period. Comments like, “they changed the course of our nation”, “events that helped shape our country” and “important events that changed how people lived at the time and changed how we live now” were professed throughout the class and students seemed to understand and apply the Turning Points concept well. Whether this was because of our recent discussion and definition of what a Turning Point was or due to prior knowledge is unknown. At this point students were able to choose major events and identify why they were major, but couldn’t necessarily articulate how or why they were turning points; they seemed to confuse the two concepts.

At the beginning of each new unit, I asked students to write down one essential question they had going into the unit on a note card. Students then posted their questions on the TLH bulletin board under the appropriate level of inquiry they felt it was addressing; Cause & Effect, Through Their Eyes, Using the Past, Turning Point or Change and Continuity. At the beginning of the semester, questions, while being broad and essential in nature, were still at the lower level of the chart, focusing mainly on Cause and Effect, Using the Past and Through Their Eyes. Students expressed the idea that being able to ask questions and identify turning points as well as examples of change and continuity were still too “hard” for them, yet they were quickly

becoming versed in understanding how and why to ask questions of history. By the end of the semester, students seemed to shift from merely understanding TLH methods of inquiry to more application of it, as they were able to write essential questions for the units that were more focused on the higher level thinking required of Change and Continuity and Turning Points.

In implementing the TLH framework I made a conscious effort to spend time discussing with students what constitutes evidence of history, different types of evidence and how to evaluate the sources of where the evidence comes from. As I began to incorporate more assignments that required them to find evidence of their own, students seemed to show “surprise” at the amount of evidence that existed. One student remarked, “Why haven’t we looked for this stuff before?” As they became more versed in finding and evaluating evidence, I noticed that students were much more engaged in assignments that required them to find and explain evidence rather than when the evidence was merely provided for their interpretation. They also made an interesting observation that they felt finding evidence via the internet was much easier and led them to understand history better than “back in the day” when students would only have access to books and other written sources that may not have been as up to date or accurate.

The students completed several TLH related assignments, all of which seemed to contribute to a greater historical understanding. While studying the Industrial Revolution, students participated in a gallery walk of Lewis Heine’s photographs of child labor during the time period and were asked to write questions about the photos and interpret what the photos were teaching us about history. In discussion afterwards, students were able to identify the elements of inquiry, evidence (identifying the photos as primary sources of evidence) and interpretation in the assignment. They were also able to identify the elements of ‘Through Their

Eyes’ and ‘Using the Past’ in relation to understanding labor relation today. Students were demonstrating emerging skills of applying the TLH framework; this was in the third week of the implementation. Students were also able to write songs about the working conditions during the Industrial Revolution from the ‘Through Their Eyes’ vantage point and apply the factual knowledge they were gaining in the class through the TLH element.

Students also completed a “Dear Mrs. Roosevelt” assignment in which they researched and analyzed primary documents; letters written to the First Lady during the Great Depression. Students were asked to write essential questions about the Great Depression and find evidence to try and answer their questions. Student discussion centered around what evidence was and included things such as, “proof that supports an argument” and “documents that answer a question” . While working in the IMC on their assessment, students seemed to be amazed at how much evidence existed to prove elements of history. One student remarked, “It is so much easier to understand the idea of the Great Depression and what was happening when you look at all of this evidence.” It appeared to me that students who were very visual and tactile learners seemed to excel at understanding this assignment better with the inclusion of finding concrete evidence. Students were very surprised by the letters and photos they were able to find and were able to relate such evidence to the TLH framework. One student found photos of homeless students during the Great Depression and asked if that is what it was like for homeless students today; he then started ‘googling’ pictures of homeless students today and making the connection between the past and the present all on his own. While students seemed to have no trouble finding evidence, some of them still struggled with the interpretation portion of the framework in addressing the essential questions they had written. In reflective discussion after the assessment, students commented that the TLH framework helped them to understand the historical event

more because it was through the eyes of those who had lived it, and also because they were able to relate the event they were learning about to their own daily lives in the present. This assessment was seven weeks into the implementation.

Throughout the semester there were assessments that became routine; asking questions about a new unit and placing them on the TLH board, having a TLH section of questions in unit Jeopardy review games, and asking TLH specific questions on unit tests. In week twelve of the implementation students were asked to write a short essay about how they would address those who deny the Holocaust ever occurred. 80% of the class cited the TLH methods of evidence, eyewitness testimony (Through Their Eyes) and learning from the past (Using the Past) in their essays. Though they didn't all specifically use the TLH terminology, they applied the TLH concepts within their essays without instructor prompting to do so.

The final assessment of the semester was a "History Mystery" project where students chose from a provided list of different mysteries in history and had to apply all three elements of the TLH framework to answer the questions: inquiry (asking the essential question), evidence (they were required to find evidence to support their understanding) and interpretation (they were required to interpret the evidence and the event to answer their essential question). Students excelled at this assessment and 90% of them applied the TLH framework appropriately and demonstrated an advanced level of understanding as well as application. Students gathered all of the elements of the assessment into a power point presentation they gave to the class and were able to defend their evidence and interpretations with a high level of understanding.

Data Analysis

TLH Inventory Results

The specific quantitative data collected in this study was contained within the Thinking Like a Historian Inventory given to students pre and post implementation (Appendix B). The inventory consisted of twenty questions in which students were asked to rate whether they are able to perform the task on a scale of one to five, with five being, “I fully understand this concept and feel I can completely apply it in an appropriate way” to one being, “I have no idea what this means or how to use it.” Data analysis shows that there were increases from pre to post implementation in every single question, though some were statistically more significant than others (See Appendix F for full data tables).

Twenty students participated in the study at the beginning of the semester and only eighteen at the end, as two had been removed from the class due to scheduling issues. For each question on the inventory I compiled the percentage of students who scored themselves at each number on the rubric, from five to one, both pre and post implementation. For the purposes of this study, I focused on the percentage of students who scored themselves at a “4” or “5” level of understanding, as I believe that a student in either of these levels demonstrates a full level of understanding and ability to apply the concepts. I then looked at the combined number of students who scored at 4 or 5 at the beginning, versus the combined number at the end of the implementation to look for level of improvement. There were gains across all areas with the lowest gain being a 21% increase from pre to post implementation of students who had the ability to formulate an argument about a historical event (question five). The highest increase was 68% from pre to post implementation of students who had the ability to understand how to think historically (question four) ; a key element of this thesis and the TLH framework. It is important to recognize that the number of students scoring themselves at the 3-4 level may show

decrease in the post-implementation analysis after learning better how to apply the TLH techniques, causing those numbers to go down while the 5 level scores go up.

One of the primary focuses of the TLH framework is inquiry and teaching students to ask and answer essential questions. On the inventory, students were asked in question one to rate their ability to use driving or essential questions; pre-implementation, just 46% of students rated their abilities at a 4 or 5, post-implementation 72% of students did so; an increase of 46%. Likewise, there was an increase of 46% in the number of students who scored themselves a four or five in being able to create their own historical questions from the material they were learning (question two). These statistics support the hypothesis that students were becoming more historically literate after learning the TLH framework, as inquiry is an important factor of increasing historical literacy.

Perhaps one of the most important questions on the survey was number four: “I am able to understand how to think historically.” Pre-implementation, 0% of students scored themselves a five and 26% scored themselves at the four level. However, after implementing the TLH framework, 50% and 44% respectively of the students were able to do so. An increase in competency of 68% is clear evidence of an increase in understanding. Without being able to think historically, students would not be able to apply the history they are beginning to understand.

One of the key elements of the TLH framework is learning to use inquiry and evidence to form your own argument about what occurred; applying the concepts you have learned. Question five on the inventory asked the students to rate their level of ability in formulating an argument about a historical topic or event. There was a 21% increase in students who scored at

the fully understand level of 4 or 5; improving from 63% to 84% post-implementation. This increase could be interpreted as showing that student perception of how to apply the elements of the TLH framework increased throughout the implementation period.

Before students are able to apply evidence in their study of history they need to learn how to find and use primary sources in order to support the argument they are trying to create. Pre-implementation, 53% of students scored themselves at the 4 or 5 level on question six. After implementation of the TLH framework, 89% of students scored themselves able to fully understand and apply this skill; an increase of 36%. This score demonstrates that students believe that they are acquiring the skills they need to participate in the investigation of history and increase their historical literacy.

A student will not achieve historical literacy by simply finding sources, they need to be able to assess the validity of sources to be able to effectively answer their essential questions. In question fourteen students are asked to rate their ability to assess the validity of historical sources. There was an increase of 46% from pre to post-implementation from 26% to 72% of students being able to fully understand and apply this concept. This statistic supports the aforementioned one; if students can find primary sources to support their argument, they also feel they can validate whether or not those sources are accurate and reputable. Question fifteen asked students to put that into practice, asking them to rate their ability to defend an argument with evidence. Pre-implementation, 53% of students rated their ability at the fully understand level, while 89% scored themselves in that category after implementation of the TLH framework; a 36% increase.

A key argument for the implementation of TLH throughout this research has been that it teaches students to become historians and create their own view of history rather than being taught someone else's version of it. Therefore, it is impressive to note that the number of students who believed they were able to fully understand and apply this idea of drawing their own conclusions about historical events and people using evidence (question thirteen) grew from 48% to 83% after implementing the TLH framework; an increase of 35%.

Question ten asked students whether they are able to understand what is meant by historical literacy, the goal of this action research. Before implementing the TLH framework, 21% of students rated their ability to understand historical literacy at the fully understanding level. Post-implementation the number of students at this level was 84%; an increase of 63% of the students enrolled in the class. Next to being able to understand how to think historically, this was the second highest increase found on the TLH Inventory.

There were five questions on the inventory that were meant to test the five areas of inquiry in the TLH framework. Question number eleven asked students to rate their ability to understand the connection between past events and present day ones; this was meant to test the inquiry area of Cause and Effect. Before implementing the TLH framework, 63% of students rated themselves at the fully understand level of 4 or 5 on the inventory. Post-implementation, 100% of students identified themselves at this level; 50% at level five and 50% at level four. This is one of two questions in the inventory that was rated at 100% by students at post implementation.

Question sixteen asked students to rate their ability to use the past to make sense of the present, corresponding to the Using the Past level of inquiry in the TLH framework. Pre-

implementation 58% of students were at the fully understand level of 4 or 5, while 89% were at this level post-implementation; an increase of 31%.

Question seventeen asked students to rate their ability to view the past through the eyes of those who lived it; corresponding to the Through Their Eyes level of inquiry on the TLH framework. 58% of students rated their ability at the fully understand level of 4 or 5 pre-implementation while 100% of students rated themselves at this level at post-implementation. This was an increase of 42% and is the second question on the inventory to have a student understanding score of 100% at post-implementation.

Question eighteen asked students to rate their ability to identify and explain major turning points in history; corresponding to the Turning Points level of inquiry on the TLH framework. 58% of students rated their ability at the fully understand level of 4 or 5 at pre-implementation while 83% of students rated themselves at the same level at post-implementation; an increase of 25% overall.

Question twenty asked students to rate their ability to identify and explain what has remained the same over periods of time in history; corresponding to the Change and Continuity level of inquiry on the TLH framework. 52% of students rated their ability at the fully understand level of 4 or 5 at pre-implementation and 84% of students rated themselves at the same level at post-implementation; an increase of 32% overall.

The five areas of inquiry on the TLH framework demonstrated an increase in student perception of understanding across the board; with two of the five questions having 100% understanding level on the post-implementation inventory.

History Questionnaire Results

Students were asked to complete a History Questionnaire both pre and post-implementation of the TLH framework. The purpose of the questionnaire was to ask for more open-ended student responses in order to assess their level of understanding, in their own words, of the concepts being taught. The results were compared to look for growth in explanation, understanding and application of the concepts taught to them in implementing the TLH framework. All specific responses can be viewed in Appendix G.

Question one asked students, “Why do you think we learn history?” On the pre-implementation responses a majority of the students answered with ideas such as, “To understand the past”, “So we know how we got where we are now”, “To understand what not to do in the future...also to understand why things are happening now” and, “So we can learn from the mistakes we made.” A majority of the responses seemed to center around the ideas of understanding and learning, but no specific examples of how to use that understanding and learning were expressed. In the post-implementation responses students seemed to make more of a connection between learning and understanding and specific ways in which to do so. For example, students responded, “To understand and use what happened in the past today”, “To know how the past makes the present”, “To know the pain, struggles, that people in the past went through”, “To understand why the present is the way it is and to prevent any tragedies that happened in the past from happening today” and “To learn what happened so we can be prepared for the future.” These responses echo the pre-implementation responses of learning and understanding, but seem to be more concrete in ways in which to do so and why they need to do so. They also employ some of the TLH concepts in them, past and present, using the past, through their eyes, cause and effect.

Question two asked students, “What do you like learning most about history?” I had intended for this question to elicit responses about the ways in which they liked learning and using history, such as ‘being able to understand why things happened’. However, the majority of students in the pre-implementation responses answered with specific content related ideas such as, “I like learning about wars”, “Learning about what people did” and, “I like learning about wars and things like the Holocaust.” I discovered I may not have worded the question appropriately for the responses I had hoped to achieve, but did not want to alter the survey, so I asked the exact same questions in the post-implementation questionnaire. The responses post-implementation still contained a majority of content specific ideas, but were a bit more broad; “About how things in the past usually happen again in the present”, “How things in the past affect us today” and “I like learning about all the struggles people used to have and how we got where we are now.”

Question three asked students, “In what way do you best learn when studying history?” On the pre-implementation questionnaire the answers were quite scattered, each being as individual as the author, though they all identified different learning methods such as reading, watching movies, taking notes, listening and group discussion. Students seemed to list more concrete, specific methods of learning such as exact activities they traditionally participate in rather than in overarching themes of learning. However, on the post-implementation questionnaire the responses were more evidentiary in nature; “Hearing/reading from first person accounts”, “Being able to read first-hand accounts of what happened,” “When making the connections” or, “When I’m given examples and choosing how it affected us today.” There were also several students who listed that they learned best when doing hands-on projects. The answers in the post-implementation survey seemed to be more reflective of the main areas

developed in the TLH framework, specifically of learning from the past and learning by seeing it through the eyes of those who were there. The post-implementation responses were more focused on the themes and analytical views of learning history rather than being specific to the methods in which to do so, showing growth in student understanding of how they learn the discipline.

Question four asked students, “In your own words, what do you think it means to be historically literate?” To be honest, I don’t think most students had ever heard this term before, so their responses were interesting. Pre-implementation a majority of responses assumed it to mean that they would know and understand a variety of content information; dates, events and people. Responses ranged from, “To understand history and be correct”, and “To know what history is all about and how to use the terms” to, “Understanding history and helping people understand it through writing” and, “Knowing different points in history and be able to explain them.” Students believed historical literacy to have something to do with understanding and writing; perhaps they were looking at the literal meaning of the actual words themselves.

On post-implementation responses students demonstrated more application of the ideas from learning history; they moved from defining historical literacy as an understanding to interpreting and using the knowledge they were gaining. Responses such as, “To understand and interpret events in history”, “To be able to read and understand historical stuff” and, “We understand our past to help us understand the present and with our future.” While students still believe historical literacy focuses on understanding content, they were beginning to show connections between understanding and being able to apply that information through interpretation and connecting the past to the present.

Question five asked students to explain, “In your own words, what do you think it means to ‘Think Like a Historian’?” On the pre-implementation surveys students seemed to think literally about the meaning of the terms. Responses focused on studying history and knowing history as students assumed that is what a historian did. “The term ‘think like a historian’ means to see and think about all different aspects of history”, “Being able to determine what really happened without using much opinion”, “To study history and know all the facts” and, “To see things the way they see them” were all student responses in this fashion.

Post-implementation, student responses were more focused on recognizing that to think like a historian included the three main aspects of the TLH framework; inquiry, evidence and interpretation. Student responses: “To ask a lot of questions and get evidence”, “Using facts and evidence to analyze the past and then use that information to relate to present day events”, “To be able to connect something in history to something else and figure out why things are happening now”, “Being able to ask a question and to be able to find evidence to answer it” and, “You interpret historical events to make decisions in your daily life.” Students were demonstrating an increased understanding not only of what thinking like a historian looked like, but how to apply it and make the connections between the past and the present, as well as the personal connections to their own lives.

Question six was broken into four parts, asking students to define the key concepts to the TLH framework to be able to determine what these terms meant to students both pre and post-implementation of the TLH framework. It asked students, “When thinking about how you learn history, please define what each of these terms mean to you: essential questions, evidence, interpretation and analysis.”

When looking at the idea of essential questions, students on the pre-implementation questionnaire considered them to be, “important questions”, “broad questions with many answers” or, “big questions that need to be asked”. Whether they understood that essential questions were really important to what they were trying to study, or they guessed they were important because they were being asked about them remains to be seen. However, post-implementation, after being taught to write and use essential questions, student responses were much more defined; “questions that are the “meat” of what you are learning”, “important questions we should ask in order to fully understand”, “thought provoking questions that require more than a yes or no” and, “questions that need to be asked in order to understand what happened.” Students demonstrated understanding that the essential questions were central to what they were learning and needed answers in order to make historical connections.

When asked to define what evidence was, students in the pre-implementation questionnaire were very focused on the idea of “proof”. Almost every single response declared evidence to mean one was looking for “proof that something happened” or, “proof to back up an idea or theory.” While they were fixated on the idea of proof, students did not go beyond that; they did not identify what that proof was or how to determine if it was legitimate. On the post-implementation questionnaire, students were still using the term, “proof” for what they identified as evidence, but were able to understand exactly what kind of proof they were looking for. Responses were more specific; “pictures, quotes, diaries, etc. from history that’s viewed now as evidence”, “facts that can be used to support ideas”, “factual events that prove or disprove a theory”, “material that proves a point or argument.” Students now seemed to understand *what* constituted evidence and the connection between finding evidence and using it to answer an essential question or support interpretation.

When it came to asking students to define “interpretation”, their responses were all over the board on the pre-implementation questionnaire. Many felt it was, “to explain” or, “to translate” or believed it was, “how one views certain issues” or, (being) “able to interpret how that person dealt with situations. After learning how to interpret history through the TLH framework, student responses were more related to the study of history; “The way an individual sees facts”, “Explaining in your own words”, “why/how somebody believes something happened”, “how one sees the past and its events.”

Students responses to defining analysis were again more general in nature on the pre-implementation questionnaire. Students defined it as, “checking something and understanding”, “gaining an understanding”, “picking apart something to find a deeper meaning.” Post-implementation, students were much more specific in not only what analysis meant, but in how to perform it; “the solution to the essential question”, “your own reasoning on something”, “analyzing history and asking questions about it”, “your conclusion on the legibility of theories.” Students seemed to exhibit a better understanding of analysis after learning how to perform it themselves.

Question seven asked students, “How often have you been asked to use the above mentioned skills in learning history? Why do you think that is?” The purpose of this question was to decipher whether students were already using these skills, or had the perception that they were already using these skills. On the pre-implementation questionnaire, seven of the twenty student responses didn’t feel they were asked to use these skills very often; “Never- because teachers never taught it”, “Never. I don’t think like a historian”, “Minimal to none. Probably because it was too advanced for our level at the time, but if we did it was for something important.” Students seemed to assume that the skills required in TLH; inquiry, evidence, and

interpretation, were difficult and therefore, they had never been asked to do them. Others felt that they may have been asked to do some of these skills in the past, “because they were important words” or, “you use them in everyday things.”

Post-implementation, sixteen of eighteen students responded that they had been asked to use these skills a lot or all of the time; reflective of their learning the TLH framework. After being taught to use the skills, students responded that they had been asked to use them, “Everyday. It is a more efficient way to learn history”, “Every day of class if I think about it”, “Every day in history and other classes. Why? Because it helps you to understand.” One student made the connection more concrete, stating, “Well, they all fit together. First, you need an essential question, then you need evidence which you need to interpret and then you can give your analysis of it.” Clearly, students were much more aware of both what the terms of the TLH framework meant, as well as how and when they were applicable to the study of history after using the TLH framework.

Question eight asked students, “How important is it to you to be able to do something with the information you learn in history classes?” Once students learn the skills to be able to understand history, is it important to them to be able to use them in other aspects of studies as well? On the pre-implementation questionnaire, the responses were pretty evenly split between, “It’s pretty important”, “It is very important to know what went on in the past”, and, “It’s really important to me for college and just life.” However, one student response intrigued me: “I’d like to use what I learn but I don’t know how.” I wonder how many other students don’t know how to apply the concepts they learn in the classroom?

Post-implementation, the majority of students now found being able to use what they learned as important. The majority of the responses reflected it was, “very important because it helps me make arguments about today’s issues”, “Very: because if I have the information I can use it” or, “Very important because I can understand when someone is talking about it.” Students felt their learning was important so that they could use it to relate to others and understand further research in history. One student responded, “It’s not extremely important but it will be useful” which intrigued me; they may not find the factual content important to themselves, but they found the method of studying it to be useful.

Question nine asked students, “How is the study of history useful to your everyday life?” I wanted to measure whether students were able to connect the skills they were learning with applying them in to everyday activities. Pre-implementation, students responded about learning about specific events and began to make the connection between learning about the past and how it affected the present; “If someone is talking about something in history you know what they’re talking about”, “It helps me understand life better and how grateful I am”, “If you know what happened in the past it can help you in the future.” Post-implementation students focused less on specific events and content and more on making the connections between the past and the present; “It shows us what happened then to show us how we got here today”, “I use the mistakes people have made in the past to make decisions in my own life”, and, “It is helpful to understand so you can apply it to everyday life.” These answers reflect the idea of learning from the past and being able to apply that knowledge to modern day circumstances and events; as well as making a personal connection to what is being learned.

Question ten asked students, “What does it mean to understand history?” The purpose of this question was to decipher what students felt understanding history meant. On the pre-

implementation questionnaire, the majority of students again answered that it was ‘knowing’ specific events or ideas related to the past; “To know and get it”, “To understand and know the events that happened in history”, “To understand history means you know what went on in the past.” Students seemed to believe that understanding history was the same as knowing history, which they believed was learning about facts and events that occurred in the past.

On the post-implementation questionnaire, the majority of students had moved from merely knowing history, to knowing how to apply that knowledge, a higher level of thinking as evidenced on Bloom’s Taxonomy. The majority of the student responses included links to or actual terminology from the TLH framework; “You can interpret it and can use it”, “To be historically literate”, “Being able to ask questions and make theories about different events in history and comparing those events to the present”, “You can take info from the past and use it in everyday life”, and, “you understand why it happened and what caused it.” Student responses showed an increase in being able to use the knowledge they were now able to construct as the basis for historical understanding.

The final question asked students, “How do you know when you are understanding history?” The intent of this question was to look at how students determined when they are learning history and what that learning entails for them. On the pre-implementation questionnaire, the majority of students responded that they were understanding history when they could talk about it or earn a specific grade; many students determine their learning level by the grade they receive or their ability to repeat information to someone else, neither of which truly correspond to the level of understanding. Student responses included, “When you are getting an “A” in the class”, “When you can easily talk about it and tell others about it”, “When you can explain history” and, “When you think you can correctly teach someone else what you know.”

Post-implementation student responses related to several areas of the TLH framework; asking essential questions, making connections between events and being able to connect the past and the present. Students also made a strong connection between understanding history and being able to use it; applying the knowledge they have gained. Students responded; “When your essential question is answered”, “When you can take what you learned and use it”, “When you can make connections”, “When you can say what happened, why, and how it affected our world.” Again, students seemed to exhibit a clearer understanding of what it means to understand history and connected that understanding to its application.

Summary

Through observations in the instructor’s journal throughout the implementation process, it was concluded that students were showing increased understanding and application of the key TLH concepts of inquiry, evidence and interpretation. Students became versed in the TLH terminology and began to apply the concepts on their own without instructor prompting.

The data on the TLH Inventory showed increases of student scoring at the ‘fully understanding’ level of ability across every question from pre-implementation to post-implementation of the TLH framework. There were strong correlations between the increased scores on the questions relating to the five areas of inquiry; Through Their Eyes, Using The Past, Change and Continuity, Turning Points and Cause and Effect, and the implementation of the TLH framework for learning history. Two of these areas, Cause and Effect and Through Their Eyes saw improvement to 100% of students understanding how to apply them after the implementation process.

The results of the History Questionnaire also showed improvement in both student understanding and application of the TLH concepts. Student responses showed a shift from

‘knowing’ and ‘understanding’ the concepts required of being able to do history, to how to use and apply those same concepts. Students had more concrete responses to defining the key terms of essential questions, evidence, interpretation and analysis on the post-implementation responses, relating them strongly to the TLH framework rather than the vague and content specific responses on the pre-implementation responses.

Chapter 5: Conclusions, Limitations and Recommendations

Conclusions

This action research project set out to determine what effect implementation of the Thinking Like a Historian framework would have on my secondary history classroom. It was guided by the question of how such implementation would affect students' ability to develop historical understanding, both in the methods of studying and learning history, such as inquiry, evidence and interpretation, as well as the way in which they understand the study of history overall. Would students have a stronger sense of historical literacy after implementation of the TLH framework? I believe the data analysis and instructor observations show that it did.

Each question on the TLH Inventory showed an increase of student understanding and application on the post-implementation results. Most importantly, there was a 68% increase in the number of students who responded at the 'fully understand' level of how to think historically; from 26% to 94% of students identifying themselves as being able to do so. Students believed that they were able to learn to think historically under the TLH framework, and I would concur that they did; by learning how to ask essential questions, to seek and evaluate evidence, and to interpret history for themselves. Students also demonstrated a stronger awareness and ability in using these skills to understand history in their responses on the History Questionnaire at the post-implementation level as well.

There was a concrete increase in student ability to use and understand the five key components to the TLH framework on the TLH Inventory post-implementation. After implementing the TLH framework, 100% of students deemed themselves able to fully understand the connection between past events and present day ones. This is a key element of the cause and effect element of the framework, and students not only exhibited a clear increase in

understanding on the TLH Inventory, but also in their classroom discussion and application on assessments as evidenced in the responses in the Teacher's Observation Journal.

Students also showed an increase from 58% to 89% of students identifying themselves as fully understanding how to use the past to make sense of the present; key to the using the past element of TLH. In addition, students again showed an improvement from 58% to 100% fully understanding the concept of viewing the past through the eyes of those who lived it; a clear indication of student historical understanding.

The remaining two elements of the TLH framework saw increases in student understanding as well. Student scores went from 58% at pre-implementation to 83% of students at post-implementation fully understanding how to identify and explain major turning points in history. There was also a significant increase of students being able to understand and use the idea of change and continuity, with a 84% of students being able to fully understand how to identify and explain what has remained the same over periods of time; a 32% increase from the 52% at pre-implementation.

The aforementioned data clearly supports that implementation of the TLH framework has an impact on students understanding and application of history. Student perception on the TLH Inventory, as well as instructor perception in the Instructor's Observation Journal, clearly demonstrate that students understood the discipline of history and how to study it more so after the implementation than they did before it. Not only did students understand the key concepts of inquiry, evidence and interpretation, their explanation of each concept showed an increase in understanding as well on the History Questionnaire, where students moved from specific curricular examples and ideas of 'knowing' history to more higher level thinking skills in being able to use and apply those concepts to the broad study of history overall. Students were much

more successful at applying these concepts in their own learning of history after the implementation of TLH than they were prior.

Throughout the semester I made several important conclusions regarding the use of TLH in my classroom and with my students through my observation journal. First, students really seemed to grasp the idea of inquiry and evidence, feeling that they were “doing” history more than just learning it. They seemed to be quite proud or impressed with themselves when they were able to demonstrate these skills and made comments such as, “Hey, we’re doing it! We’re really doing that TLH thing!” This led to greater student effort and engagement in class discussions as well as completion of assignments because the TLH elements seemed to draw them in more so than a traditional method of teaching the material. This leads to the second conclusion; TLH was not only affecting how my students were learning history, it was affecting how I was teaching it. I was constantly trying to find more primary source documents; photos, letters, text that they could view as evidence and learn to interpret for themselves rather than supplying them with material that gave them the answers. I was creating assignments that tested the TLH framework, but they seemed to be higher level thinking than I had challenged my students to use in the past and began to move more from understanding to application of historical knowledge. While I was asking my students to use more analysis and inquiry in their understanding of history, I was beginning to do the same in my teaching of it.

In addition, I began to notice students’ vocabulary changing as the semester continued. Just as Bain had discovered in his classroom research that students began to use the language of historians, I too saw similar results. And, like Bain, simply learning the language didn’t suffice; as students began to learn the actual TLH concepts, they were more able to use them to construct historical arguments, evaluate evidence and use it to draw their own conclusions about the

history they were learning (Bain, 2006). Students began to use the TLH terminology in their everyday class discussions; they were asking if a particular event was considered a turning point, giving examples of how something we read was “through their eyes” and drawing connections between the past and present events. By the end of the semester they were using these concepts freely and correctly within class discussion and assignments, as well as amongst themselves, without teacher prompts. In essence, it seemed to have become natural to use such terminology in class discussion and interpretation of information, and they were applying the TLH methods they had learned without even stopping to think consciously about doing so. In class discussions, when a student would express a particular viewpoint, another would ask them what evidence they had to believe it was so rather than taking what they said at face value. When learning new concepts and factual information, they would begin to ask questions about how the material related to their lives today and have conversations about change and continuity. The TLH framework had become, in a sense, second nature to them and they were able to apply its concepts and methodology without consciously identifying they were doing so. In his research, Bain concluded that by using discipline specific scholarship teachers can, “modify more general cognitive strategies to parallel the ‘toolkit’ that experts in disciplinary fields use to do their work” (Bain, 2006, p. 2103). I found this to be absolutely true in this action research project, and TLH was the framework for which my students and I were able to do so.

In her research, Gradwell found that by teaching her students how to work with primary sources and investigate the evidence, “students were learning a life skill when they learned to defend their arguments with evidence” (Gradwell, 2010, p. 67). That was evident in the implementation of TLH as well; students were learning skills that they were beginning to view as applicable to other areas of their lives. Students echoed this sentiment on the History

Questionnaire with statements about learning history such as, “It is helpful to understand, so you can apply it to everyday life.”

Teaching students the methods of inquiry, evidence and interpretation is important in the history classroom, but are also skills that carry into being a contributing citizen in a democracy. Learning investigative and collaborative skills are important to being able to learn different perspectives in society and working with others to further specific beliefs and ideas. Barton and Levstik explain, “If students are to use history to understand the present, they must understand how historical accounts are created, so that they can evaluate how well supported those accounts are by the available evidence” (Barton & Levstik, 2003, p. 360). These ideas are central in the TLH framework and help students to become more well-rounded citizens, prepared to participate fully in a democratic society.

The framework of TLH teaches the skills needed to become good students of history, but also instills in students the skills necessary to investigate other areas of their daily lives. Barton and Levstik go on to conclude, “experience with historical investigations and consideration of multiple perspectives is no guarantee that students will develop into effective citizens of a pluralist, participatory democracy, but it does guarantee they will have taken part in some of its key activities” (Barton & Levstik, 2003, p. 360). TLH provides students with those skills; and gives them the tools they need to be able to participate effectively in democracy if they choose to do so.

Just as students’ use of TLH in the classroom began to be second nature, so too did the same occur within my teaching methods. As identified in Chapter three, I planned to have students complete at least three different TLH based assignments to see if they were

understanding and applying the concepts. However, as I began to work through the semester, I found myself using some part of the TLH concept in almost everything we did. This could be due to the fact that I was already doing some of them and hadn't identified them as specifically related to the TLH framework, but I believe that I was using more TLH concepts, specifically the five methods of inquiry and the use of evidence, in some aspect of every assignment we did because it was helping my students to better understand and use history. Implementing the TLH framework not only had a positive effect on my students, but also on myself as their teacher. It led me to create assessments that required my students to investigate history for themselves rather than feeding a particular view of history to them; it led me to feel that I was being a better history teacher.

Limitations

While I believe the data obtained in this action research project supports the belief that the implementation of the TLH framework has a positive effect on student understanding of history, there are limits as with any study. The data obtained could arguably be seen as subjective; each student scored their own perceptions of their understanding of the key TLH concepts, and it is hard to measure understanding. The Instructor Observation Journal also strived to be objective, but I obviously had an interest in the way in which observations were recorded, as well as which observations were recorded for further use. While the data may be subjective to some, it is still a strong example of student increase in understanding of the key concepts of TLH and a starting point for future research to improve upon.

Another possible limitation of the study is the TLH framework itself. Is it the teaching of inquiry, evidence and interpretation themselves that affects student historical literacy and understanding, or is it the actual TLH framework that causes the improvement? In other words,

could students be taught these same elements within another framework and achieve the same results? The answer to that question is beyond the scope of this research, but should be explored further to either affirm the TLH framework's success or nullify it.

In the interests of objectivity, it is only fair to look at my own in regards to this action research. As noted by Baumfield, "research into the impact of thinking skills approaches on teachers is limited and tends to be conducted by enthusiasts with teachers who volunteer to be involved in such projects" (Baumfield, 2006, p. 194). As a participant in the initial Dialogues With Democracy fellowship that created the TLH framework, and a contributing author to the Teacher's Manual, I have a vested interest in seeing TLH succeed. That being said, I worked very hard to stay objective in the implementation of this research project in order to see unbiased results of the effect the TLH framework could have in teaching history.

Recommendations

The TLH framework has shown to have a positive impact on my classroom, yet further research needs to be done to see if the results can be replicated in other classrooms. I would recommend another independent action research project be completed to verify these results and isolate whether it is the specific TLH framework or the teaching of the concepts of inquiry, evidence and interpretation that led to positive results. In other words, can other frameworks produce similar results, or is TLH truly unique in that regard?

This action research set out to study the effect of TLH on student understanding and historical literacy, but future research may want to focus on what effect TLH implementation may have on academic achievement as well. Does implementation of the TLH framework lead to higher student achievement, ie. grades and scores?

In his research on TLH, Franco identified that it had a transformative impact on how classroom teachers teach history. Along with teaching the effectiveness of teaching historical literacy and understanding to students, I am suggesting that these methods should be taught more explicitly to pre-service teachers in their university methods courses in order to have a wider impact on students achievement in the classroom. In order for the TLH framework of concepts to be implemented across the discipline, teachers need to be taught how to implement it effectively in their pre-service training. In recent discussions with Nikki Mandell, UW-Whitewater professor and author of the TLH framework, I formed the impression that this is already beginning; with the framework being taught in Social Studies methods courses at the UW-La Crosse, George Washington University, Missouri State University, and right here at the UW-Whitewater. The framework is also garnering attention in China and Great Britain as a strong framework for teaching students of history. I believe this will continue to grow; the framework has merit in the teaching of history and should be implemented nationwide.

In addition to teaching pre-service teachers how to implement the TLH concepts in their classrooms, I believe the framework should be taught across grade levels, K-12. In doing so, students would have a foundation of historical understanding and literacy from which to build upon and would be able to learn the key concepts and terminologies in the lower levels, and expand upon their application in the upper levels. Doing so would produce students who have a very solid understanding of history and the means in which we study it.

One change that I will be implementing as a result of this research is implementation of the TLH framework in all of my social studies courses. I truly believe the results of this study showed that my students had a better overall understanding of history as well as how to study history and use the knowledge they were gaining. The TLH framework taught my students the

skills they needed to be able to ask questions about what they were learning and search for evidence to answer those questions for themselves. In doing so, they truly seemed to develop a stronger sense of historical literacy, and I would like to continue that type of learning in all of my social studies courses. As a result of this study, I will be using the TLH framework to guide instruction of all of the social studies courses I teach.

Lastly, I would like to see change within my own school district, as well as within the state of Wisconsin in implementing the TLH framework in our history classrooms. While this research will lead me to implement the TLH framework in all of my own history classes, I would like to use the results of this research to initiate the TLH framework being included across all levels within my own district and believe it would positively impact the historical literacy of all of our students across the curriculum. I would also like to present the results of this research at the annual Wisconsin Education Association Council (WEAC) convention in October, 2011, to a broader audience of pre-service and veteran history teachers across grade levels and initiate a change in the way history is taught in our state. The TLH framework is one that not only improves student historical understanding, but leads students to better understand the methods in which we learn history, and I believe it would have the same positive impact on history classrooms across the state.

Historian Sam Wineburg may have found historical thinking to be “unnatural” but I believe that the Thinking Like a Historian framework makes it easy and accessible to all students. On the History Questionnaire, one student replied that they would, “like to be able to do something with what I learn;” TLH offers them the chance to do just that. Implementing the TLH framework has allowed my students to become better historians in their own right, and ultimately, given them the analytical skills they need to be able to apply that knowledge to their

understanding of history as well as to become productive, contributing citizens in our democratic world.

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Appendix

Appendix A: History Questionnaire for Ms. Bazan

Appendix B: Thinking Like a Historian Inventory

Appendix C: Thinking Like a Historian Chart: Front

Appendix D: Thinking Like a Historian Chart: Back

Appendix E: Blank Thinking Like a Historian Chart

Appendix F: Thinking Like a Historian Inventory Data Results

Appendix G: History Questionnaire Student Response Results: Pre and Post Implementation

Appendix A: History Questionnaire for Ms. Bazan

In order to best help you learn history, please take a few moments to thoughtfully reflect on the questions below in regards to what you learn about history and your beliefs about how you best learn history. Please answer each question thoughtfully and thoroughly.

1. Why do you think we learn history?
2. What do you like learning most about history?
3. In what way do you best learn when studying history?
4. In your own words, what do you think it means to be historically literate?
5. In your own words, what do you think it means to 'Think Like a Historian'?
6. When thinking about how you learn history, please define what each of these terms mean to you:
 - a. Essential Questions-

- b. Evidence-
 - c. Interpretation-
 - d. Analysis-
7. How often have you been asked to use the above mentioned skills in learning history?
Why do you think that is?
8. How important is it to you to be able to do something with the information you learn in history classes?
9. How is the study of history useful to your everyday life?
10. What does it mean to understand history?
11. How do you know when you are understanding history?

Appendix B: Thinking Like A Historian Inventory

The following concepts are important to learning and being able to 'do' history. Please read each carefully and clearly circle the number that best corresponds to you *at this time*.

Name: _____ Date: _____

5= I fully understand this concept and feel I can completely apply it in an appropriate way.

4=I fully understand this concept and can usually apply it in the appropriate way.

3= I understand this concept for the most part, but can only apply appropriately sometimes.

2= I don't really understand this concept or how to apply it in the appropriate way.

1= I have no idea what this means or how to use it!

I am able to:

Use driving or essential questions.

5 4 3 2 1

Create meaningful historical questions from the material I am learning.

5 4 3 2 1

Explain how and why historical events may be interpreted differently.

5 4 3 2 1

Understand how to think historically.

5 4 3 2 1

Formulate an argument about a historical topic or event.

5 4 3 2 1

Find and use primary sources to support my argument.

5 4 3 2 1

Find and use secondary sources to support my argument.

5 4 3 2 1

Understand and identify bias in history.

5 4 3 2 1

Find meaning in a variety of historical sources.

5 4 3 2 1

Understand what is meant by historical literacy.

5 4 3 2 1

Understand the connection between past events and present day ones.

5 4 3 2 1

Reinterpret the past using historical sources.

5 4 3 2 1

Draw my own conclusions about historical events and people using evidence.

5 4 3 2 1

Assess the validity of historical sources.

5 4 3 2 1

Defend an idea or argument with evidence.

5 4 3 2 1

Use the past to make sense of the present.

5 4 3 2 1

View the past through the eyes of those who lived it.

5 4 3 2 1

Identify and explain major turning points in history.

5 4 3 2 1

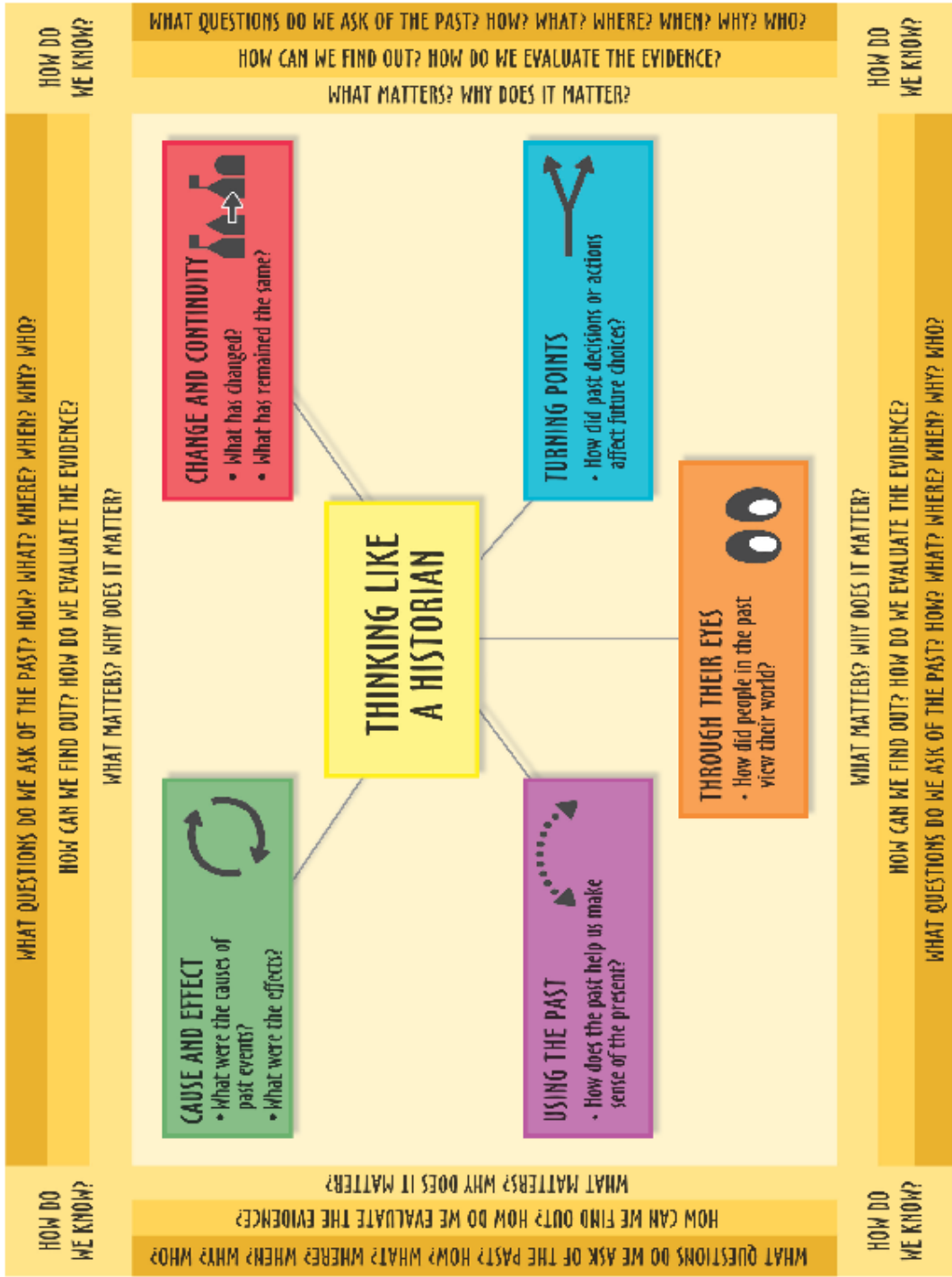
Identify and explain major changes in history over time.

5 4 3 2 1

Identify and explain what has remained the same over periods of time in history.

5 4 3 2 1

Appendix C: Thinking Like a Historian Chart: Front



Mandell, N. & Malone, B. (2007) *Thinking Like a Historian: Rethinking History Instruction*. Madison, WI: Wisconsin Historical Society

Appendix D: Thinking Like a Historian Chart: Back

WHAT QUESTIONS DO WE ASK OF THE PAST? THINKING LIKE A HISTORIAN

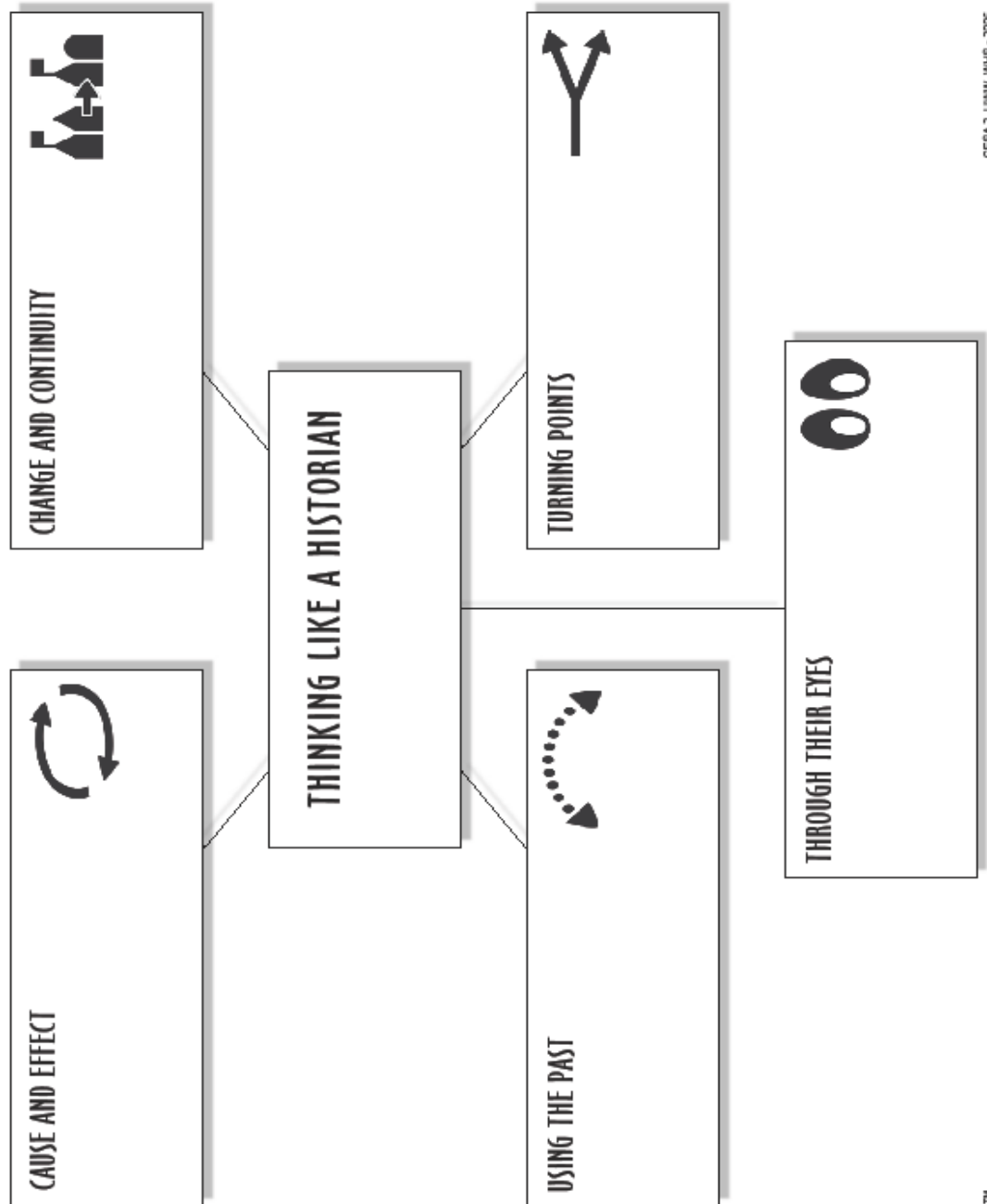
CAUSE AND EFFECT	CHANGE AND CONTINUITY	TURNING POINTS	USING THE PAST	THROUGH THEIR EYES
<p></p> <p>CAUSE AND EFFECT</p> <p>What were the causes of past events?</p> <p>What were the effects?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who or what made change happen? • Who supported change? • Who did not support change? • Which effects were intended? • Which effects were accidental? • How did events affect people's lives, community, and the world? 	<p></p> <p>CHANGE AND CONTINUITY</p> <p>What has changed?</p> <p>What has remained the same?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who has benefited from this change? And why? • Who has not benefited? And why? 	<p></p> <p>TURNING POINTS</p> <p>How did past decisions or actions affect future choices?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did decisions or actions narrow or eliminate choices for people? • How did decisions or actions significantly transform people's lives? 	<p></p> <p>USING THE PAST</p> <p>How does the past help us make sense of the present?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is the past similar to the present? • How is the past different from the present? • What can we learn from the past? 	<p></p> <p>THROUGH THEIR EYES</p> <p>How did people in the past view their world?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did their worldview affect their choices and actions? • What values, skills and forms of knowledge did people need to succeed?

TM

CESA 2, UNWW, WHS - 2006

Mandell, N. & Malone, B. (2007) Thinking Like a Historian: Rethinking History Instruction. Madison, WI: Wisconsin Historical Society

Appendix E: Thinking Like a Historian Chart: Blank



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Appendix F: Thinking Like A Historian Inventory Data Results

The following concepts are important to learning and being able to ‘do’ history. Please read each carefully and clearly circle the number that best corresponds to you *at this time*.

Name: _____

Date: _____

5= I fully understand this concept and feel I can completely apply it in an appropriate way.

4=I fully understand this concept and can usually apply it in the appropriate way.

3= I understand this concept for the most part, but can only apply appropriately sometimes.

2= I don’t really understand this concept or how to apply it in the appropriate way.

1= I have no idea what this means or how to use it!

TLH Research Class: 20 students, 13 female, 7 male,

I am able to:

1. Use driving or essential questions.

5	4	3	2	1	
0%	26%	53%	11%	11%	Pre-Implementation
44%	28%	22%	6%	0%	Post-Implementation

2. Create meaningful historical questions from the material I am learning.

5	4	3	2	1	
5%	32%	53%	11%	0%	Pre-Implementation
44%	39%	11%	0%	6%	Post-Implementation

3. Explain how and why historical events may be interpreted differently.

5	4	3	2	1	
21%	16%	37%	21%	5%	Pre-Implementation
44%	44%	11%	0%	0%	Post-Implementation

4. Understand how to think historically.

5	4	3	2	1	
0%	26%	47%	16%	11%	Pre-Implementation
50%	44%	0%	6%	0%	Post-Implementation

5. Formulate an argument about a historical topic or event.

5	4	3	2	1	
26%	37%	21%	11%	5%	Pre-Implementation
67%	17%	11%	0%	6%	Post-Implementation

6. Find and use primary sources to support my argument.

5	4	3	2	1	
11%	42%	26%	16%	5%	Pre-Implementation
67%	22%	11%	0%	0%	Post-Implementation

7. Find and use secondary sources to support my argument.

5	4	3	2	1	
11%	26%	26%	32%	5%	Pre-Implementation
56%	22%	22%	0%	0%	Post-Implementation

8. Understand and identify bias in history.

5	4	3	2	1	
0%	32%	26%	21%	21%	Pre-Implementation
33%	28%	28%	6%	6%	Post-Implementation

9. Find meaning in a variety of historical sources.

5	4	3	2	1	
5%	32%	37%	21%	5%	Pre-Implementation
50%	28%	22%	0%	0%	Post-Implementation

10. Understand what is meant by historical literacy.

5	4	3	2	1	
0%	21%	47%	21%	11%	Pre-Implementation
50%	34%	8%	8%	6%	Post-Implementation

11. Understand the connection between past events and present day ones.

5	4	3	2	1	
26%	37%	37%	0%	0%	Pre-Implementation
50%	50%	0%	0%	0%	Post-Implementation

12. Reinterpret the past using historical sources.

5	4	3	2	1	
21%	16%	26%	26%	5%	Pre-Implementation
44%	22%	22%	6%	0%	Post-Implementation

13. Draw my own conclusions about historical events and people using evidence.

5	4	3	2	1	
16%	32%	21%	26%	0%	Pre-Implementation
39%	44%	6%	6%	0%	Post-Implementation

14. Assess the validity of historical sources.

5	4	3	2	1	
0%	26%	42%	16%	11%	Pre-Implementation
39%	33%	17%	6%	0%	Post-Implementation

15. Defend an idea or argument with evidence.

5	4	3	2	1	
21%	32%	32%	11%	0%	Pre-Implementation
72%	17%	6%	0%	0%	Post-Implementation

16. Use the past to make sense of the present.

5	4	3	2	1	
26%	32%	21%	16%	0%	Pre-Implementation
67%	22%	0%	6%	0%	Post-Implementation

17. View the past through the eyes of those who lived it.

5	4	3	2	1	
21%	37%	26%	11%	0%	Pre-Implementation
60%	40%	0%	0%	0%	Post-Implementation

18. Identify and explain major turning points in history.

5	4	3	2	1	
26%	32%	32%	0%	10%	Pre-Implementation
50%	33%	11%	0%	0%	Post-Implementation

19. Identify and explain major changes in history over time.

5	4	3	2	1	
32%	21%	32%	5%	5%	Pre-Implementation
39%	44%	6%	6%	0%	Post-Implementation

20. Identify and explain what has remained the same over periods of time in history.

5	4	3	2	1	
26%	26%	32%	11%	0%	Pre-Implementation
28%	56%	6%	0%	6%	Post-Implementation

TLH History Questionnaire Student Response Results: Pre-Implementation

1. Why do you think we learn history?

- Because it's important that people know what's happened in the past.
- To teach us what happens now.
- So we can prevent atrocities from happening again.
- Because it helps show us why our life is how it is.
- So we are aware of what did and could happen to not only our country but world, and understand.
- To understand the past.
- So we know how we got where we are now.
- To understand what not to do in the future (or what to do) also to understand why things are happening now.
- To better understand the present and the future.
- To help us understand the present.
- So we can learn from the mistakes we made.
- To help us understand what's going on now.
- So we don't repeat mistakes people who lived long ago made.
- To learn how our country became what it is today.
- So we can understand what has gone on in our world, so we can do better in the future.
- So we get more knowledge of what people did and why.
- To know what happened in the past/answer questions about similar occurrences now.

2. What do you like learning most about history?

- That you get the knowledge of knowing what's happened and who are important people.
- How it all ties into what we are now.
- Foreign wars that the U.S. was involved in.
- I like learning about wars.
- I like learning how because of people's actions and discussions I the past how our life today is the way it is and how it could be different because of those.
- Things that affect people, like segregation and things like that. Not wars.
- I like learning about dramatic things that I can actually put myself in the people's shoes that had to go through it.
- The difference between now and then.
- I like knowing what happened then and how it effects now.
- Different cultures.
- Learning about what people did.
- I like learning about WWII.
- The fun parts.
- How the wars started and why.
- I like learning about wars and things like the Holocaust.

- Learning about people in the past.
- WWII.

3. *In what way do you best learn when studying history?*

- Through movies, reviews.
- Through reading, highlighting notes.
- Watching documentaries.
- Talking about it in groups or reading it alone.
- Reading and movies.
- Talking about it.
- Reading over it on my own and answering questions about what I just read.
- Listening.
- Taking notes and projects.
- Hearing first-hand accounts.
- Reading/writing
- Group discussion
- Reading books from the point of view of somebody who was there.
- Reading and watching documentaries.
- I can learn by reading, hearing, seeing, I don't have a preferred way.
- Seeing and having it read out loud.
- Reading/listening.

4. *In your own words, what do you think it means to be historically literate?*

- To know what happened in the past.
- To know what history is all about and how to use the terms.
- I think it means you know accurately what happened in the past.
- You can understand history easily.
- I think it means that you understand and speak history or is a major in history.
- To understand history and be correct.
- To know a lot about history and when it comes to history you could help explain things to people.
- To understand history.
- Understanding history and helping people understand it through writing.
- Knowing different points in history and be able to explain them.
- Knowing lots of stuff about history.
- Know about history and be able to write about it and understand it.
- You have read about history maybe?
- The ability to know and discuss history accurately.
- To be able to speak about history and know what you are talking about.
- Being able to write historical things.
- To know about a certain subject in history, or history in general.

5. *In your own words, what do you think it means to ‘Think Like A Historian’?*

- To have thoughts about history
- How all the history works.
- It means when you think about how to resolve a problem you look to the past to find an answer.
- To think cause and effect and about facts.
- The term “think like a historian” means to see and think about all different aspects of history.
- To understand history.
- I think it means think like you were there and stuff.
- To put yourself in history’s position and think about how a historian would remember/research it.
- Being able to determine what really happened without using much opinion.
- Understand the bias in history.
- Think like someone who knows history.
- You learn history and can interpret it.
- To have the same kinds of thoughts regarding history as people who have spent much of their lives studying it.
- To study history and know all of the facts.
- I think it means to think in the point of view of the people who were actually involved in the historical events.
- To see things the way they see them.
- To analyze/read things as a historian would from their point of view.

6. *When thinking about how you learn history, please define what each of these terms mean to you:*

A. *Essential Questions-*

- To ask a question that is about something important.
- What are the facts
- A question that is key to knowing what happened.
- Smart and good questions about the topic
- Important question
- Important questions.
- Important questions you should ask yourself or others.
- A big broad question with many answers.
- Deep meaning questions
- Questions that need to be answered.
- Important/key questions
- ?
- An important question that could help learn more about the subject or event.
- Big questions that need to be asked.
- Needed questions

- Questions that are an important part of a subject, something you need to understand.

B. Evidence-

- To have proof.
- Proof that shows it is real.
- Clues and proof.
- Proof that something happened.
- Proof that something happened in the past and how.
- Proof of something
- Something to prove.
- Proof of something or something that gives away something.
- The facts/opinions of the question.
- Proof to back up an idea or theory.
- Facts to back up what you're talking about.
- Proof.
- ?
- Able to prove that an event happened.
- Facts that prove the answers to the essential questions.
- Back-up facts.
- Facts or details that support an idea.

C. Interpretation-

- To interpret.
- Reenacting.
- What you think something means.
- To translate
- To translate
- To explain
- To explain
- What you get outta the meaning of what happened.
- How you understand history.
- How one views certain issues.
- Your version of something
- What you make of something
- ?
- Able to interpret how that person dealt with situations
- How you understand questions and answers
- Defining/understanding things
- A person or a group's idea of what a certain thing represents.

D. Analysis-

- To analyze

- What all happened.
- Checking something and understanding
- To break down things so they're easier to understand.
- To study
- What you think
- What you think
- Gaining an understanding
- You think about history and look at all the facts.
- Picking apart something to find a deeper meaning
- To look over something
- Summary
- ?
- To find more information on the subject.
- Final thoughts and statements that summarize everything you learn.
- Drawing conclusions
- A study of an object, etc. finding out more about something.

7. *How often have you been asked to use the above mentioned skills in learning history? Why do you think that is?*

- I don't know because I studied really hard.
- All the time in all the work I do in history. I think we would do this because it helps us learn better.
- I think I've been asked several times and I think that they've been asked 'cause they're useful in understanding history.
- A lot. Because they are helpful skills to understand history.
- Because in the past languages were often different so you had to analysis the writing and try to interpret and question is how I would look at it.
- Pretty often, because they're important words.
- Not often I don't think. I'm not sure.
- A little bit, not too often though (at least with what I remember) and because to understand why or what happened, you need to think about it.
- Not very much. Because they usually just tell us facts.
- Fairly often. To better understand history.
- Teachers sometimes ask me to use these because then I can come up with important questions and find answers in my own words.
- You use them in everyday things.
- Never- because teachers never taught it.
- Never. I don't think like a historian.
- Never. Because I JUST started high school.
- A lot! It is important o do those things to understand history/events in history.
- Minimal to none. Probably because it was too advanced for our level at the time, but if we did it was for something important.

8. *How important is it to you to be able to do something with the information you learn in history classes?*

- Because you can get a good job.
- Very important, makes you get better grades.
- Not very as long as it's interesting I don't care if I use it.
- Very, because you can retell other people about it and know the U.S. History.
- Pretty important.
- It's really important to me for college and just life.
- It's somewhat important.
- Somewhat important.
- Very important.
- It is very important to know what went on in the past.
- I'd like to use what I learn but I don't know how.
- Kind of.
- Really important because you need history to have a job that has something in the government.
- I like to be able to do something with what I learn, but it's not necessary.
- VERY important.
- Kind of important.

9. *How is the study of history useful to your everyday life?*

- Because you will know a lot
- Lets us know how things work today.
- It makes me feel smart and that's nice.
- If someone is talking about something in history you know what they're talking about.
- It helps me understand life better and how grateful I am.
- Can explain why things are happening now, or why things are the way they are.
- Helps you remind yourself of how we got where we are now.
- To understand why things are as they are.
- Somewhat important so we can understand what is happening now.
- I use it in my writing and it can be used when trying to hold a debate of discussion.
- If you know what happened in the past it can help you in the future.
- History may repeat itself.
- It is not very useful.
- We learn and improve from our mistakes.
- It helps me realize how lucky we are to have what we have today, compared to in the past.
- It helps you understand some connections to our century (the 21st)
- You can understand other related topics later.

10. *What does it mean to understand history?*

- To know and get it.
- To understand and know the events that happened in history.

- You get what happened and why.
- To know the facts and be able to talk about it.
- To really know how the world has become what it is today.
- To know things that happened and why.
- I think it means you know what you're talking about and everything
- To know what happened in the past.
- To be able to know what major things happened and why.
- To know what happened and why.
- To understand history means you know what went on in the past.
- You know what happened.
- That you comprehend things that happened in the past.
- Does it make sense to you.
- To understand history, is to know about it enough to be able to explain it.
- To comprehend and know what it means/is.
- To be able to interpret a past event and be able to explain it.

11. How do you know when you are understanding history?

- You'll be able to answer a lotta questions.
- When you are getting an "A" in the class.
- The information just flows in and I don't feel exhausted.
- When you can easily talk about it and tell others about it.
- When you can explain history.
- When you can explain it to other people and be correct about what you're saying.
- When I can talk about it and explain it to others.
- When you know about something that happened in the past and possibly why.
- You are able to help other people understand it.
- When I can compare it to everyday life easily.
- You know what happens in the past.
- You remember it.
- When you don't feel confused.
- You try to make differences to your country.
- When you think you could correctly teach someone else what you know.
- When everything starts to come together in your head.
- You aren't confused, when you can come up with conclusions on your own.

TLH History Questionnaire Student Response Results: Post-Implementation

1. Why do you think we learn history?

- To learn from the past and what formed the US
- To understand so we don't make the same mistakes and we keep doing the same good things.
- To understand and use what happened in the past today.
- To better understand how to solve our problems
- So we don't repeat mistakes, to learn from others' mistakes
- To know how the past makes the present.
- To make sense of the present.
- So we can understand what is happening nowadays better.
- To know the pain, struggles, that people in the past went through.
- So we can learn about the past and why things are the way they are these days.
- To better understand the present.
- To understand why the present is the way it is and to prevent any tragedies that happened in the past from happening today.
- It is important to learn how we got to where we are today.
- To understand the present.
- To learn what happened so we can be prepared for the future.
- To understand why the world is what it is.
- I believe we learn history because it's important we don't repeat history, especially if it's a bad thing (mistake) in the past.
- So we know how we got to where we are today and not repeat past mistakes.

2. What do you like learning most about history?

- I like learning about the wars.
- The holocaust
- Learning about why things turned out the way they did.
- WWII
- Depends on the subject, how and what happened during wars are pretty interesting.
- Terrible events and how the people involved lived and what happened to them.
- I like learning about the past and how it affected people.
- That you can learn what people went through.
- I like learning about all the struggles people used to have and how we got where we are now.
- About how things in the past usually happen again in the present.
- I like learning how problems, issues were handled and how the rest of the world and the civilians were affected.
- The events.
- I like learning about the Holocaust and wars and stuff.
- How things in the past affect us today.

- Wars
- The movies that have relativity to the subject.
- It is interesting, especially the wars. This is really the only topic I can get into.

3. In what way do you best learn when studying history?

- Projects
- When you talk and movies.
- Class projects
- Hearing/reading from first person accounts
- Reading stories about people who lived it.
- A show or movie
- Being able to read first-hand accounts of what happened.
- The taking notes and talking about it.
- Doing projects and watching movies
- Doing projects and taking notes and reading them over and over.
- Taking notes and going over them.
- When I'm given examples and choosing how it affected us today.
- With partner or group
- I can learn pretty much any way
- Writing notes, flash cards.
- Interactive and talking about it with the class.
- Movies, comparison to real life, or when I learn it through their eyes.
- I learn best by watching documentaries and movies about the topics.
- When making the connections.

4. In your own words, what do you think it means to be historically literate?

- To know the correct terms from history.
- To know stuff from history?
- To understand and interpret events in history.
- To be able to read and write about history in an intelligent way
- To be able to read and understand historical stuff.
- To speak and interpret stuff that happened in the past.
- To be able to use the past.
- Being able to think like a historian and understand different terms of the past.
- To know the basic things about history and to be able to explain it to someone else.
- To know words and terms that were used in the past.
- I think it means to get/understand history.
- To understand history
- I think it means that you are able to understand history and interpret it in many different ways.
- To be able to talk about and read history and know what it means and how to use it.

- To think in the point of view of someone who researches history for a living.
- We understand our past to help us understand the present and with our future.
- Being able to easily understand history.
- To understand history and be able to figure out what it means.
- You understand that one thing made something else happen and you know about past events.

5. In your own words, what do you think it means to ‘Think Like a Historian’?

- Find different ways to study history
- To ask a lot of questions and get evidence
- To know how to use and understand events in history
- To view events the way a historian would
- To be in the same mind frame as someone who just studies history.
- To speak and interpret stuff that happened in the past.
- Using facts and evidence to analyze the past and then use that information to relate to present day events.
- To be able to connect something in history to something else and figure out why things are happening now.
- To think and know about history.
- I think it means to think like you were them and putting yourself in their shoes.
- To think about what happened and put yourself in the thinkers shoes.
- I believe to think like a historian means that you think through every step of history and you think greatly about the cause and effect it will have on the world.
- To think “in the past” about the past.
- To think in the point of view of someone who researches history for a living.
- Being able to ask a question and to be able to find evidence to answer it.
- It means to think about the history like a professional historian.
- Research enough information and use different types of information to get to that information.
- You interpret historical events to make decisions in your daily life.

6. When thinking about how you learn history, please define what each of these terms mean to you:

A. Essential Questions

- Questions that are broad and help to understand history
- The main questions
- The “meat” of what you’re learning
- Questions that you need to know in order to understand the topic
- Questions that address the major point
- Important questions we should ask in order to fully understand.
- The main questions and how it relates to the subject you’re doing.

- Thought provoking questions that require more than a yes or no
- The main question about what you're studying
- Questions that are the main points about what you're studying
- Important questions on what you're looking for/at
- Important questions about what you're looking for or learning
- Thoughtful questions related to the topic in the past and present.
- Questions that are needed to understand
- Questions that are necessary to research.
- Questions that need to be answered.
- Smart questions to ask when reading and talking about history
- Important questions to be able to be answered
- Questions that need to be asked in order to understand what happened.

B. Evidence-

- Proof of what happened.
- Proof to support your theory
- Pictures, quotes, diaries, etc. from history that's viewed now as evidence.
- Facts that can be used to support ideas.
- Something that proves history happened.
- Proof of what happened.
- Factual events that prove or disprove a theory
- The proof supporting your theory
- You need essential evidence to prove stuff
- Proof of your argument
- Things that prove something
- Facts that prove thoughts/arguments
- Proof that something happened
- Things that prove essential questions
- Supporting facts to back you up
- Material that proves a point or argument
- Proof of what has happened
- Proof whether something did or did not happen

C. Interpretation-

- Interpreting the terms and events in history
- What you think about or got out of something
- Your own way of understanding things
- The way an individual sees facts
- Why/how somebody believes something happened
- Show how you think it happened
- How one interprets the past and events

- People's beliefs on a certain subject
- You have to be able to interpret history to put it in nowadays language
- To understand something completely
- To understand something
- Proving something from the past to the present
- Reading something and knowing what it means
- How you interpret/understand your evidence
- Explaining in your own words
- To understand something
- The way you understand it
- The way you consider something and conclude what it means.

D. Analysis-

- The solution of the essential question
- Looking at the information and making a decision
- Your own reasoning on something
- Interpreting facts
- Analyzing history and asking questions about it
- Look at the info and see what it is saying
- Your conclusion on the legibility of theories
- Think about a topic and discuss things about it
- You have to be able to analyze and sum it up
- The result
- The final answer/information
- To study facts or other info
- Going over things
- A final going over of your evidence
- Product of your research
- To look it over, observe
- Researching and going through it
- Studying

7. How often have you been asked to use the above mentioned skills in learning history? Why do you think that is?

- Every day. It is a more efficient way to learn history.
- Pretty often. So we learn to think like a historian.
- Every day of class if I think about it.
- All the time because it's your class and your idea!
- Sometimes
- Every day in history and other classes. Why? Because it helps you to understand.
- Very often, so I better understand it.

- A lot, so we can better understand history.
- A lot, because you have to know those terms to think like a historian
- A lot because you need to use all of those things to have a good argument and everything.
- Pretty often, because they're important to know.
- A lot because they're good steps to take when learning and studying history.
- A lot because we do it a lot in history class.
- Occasionally
- Well, they all fit together. First, you need an essential question, then you need evidence which you need to interpret and then you can give your analysis of it.
- A lot because they help you to understand.
- Pretty often- to understand the whole concept.
- All the time: I am asked this because it helps me learn history more fully and makes me interpret it for use later.

8. How important is it to you to be able to do something with the information you learn in history classes?

- Very important, because you need history for everyday things.
- Pretty important.
- It's important for college prep and college.
- A little
- Not very but a lot of it is still interesting to learn
- Pretty important, if you need to know what's going on.
- Very important because it helps me make arguments about today's issues.
- Very important because I find history fun and exciting.
- It is very because you can teach others.
- I'm not sure I think it's somewhat important for me but I don't plan on being a history teacher so not too important.
- Very important, because it helps you understand what happened.
- Kinda important.
- Very: because if I have the information I can use it.
- Pretty important
- Very important
- Very important because I can understand when someone is talking about it.
- I guess it's very important to me
- It's not extremely important but it will be useful.

9. How is the study of history useful to your everyday life?

- If you know the history of the United States it helps you understand how you came to be on this earth.
- It's not really for me, to the President it might be.
- Understand today's similar events.

- Not very, just a little.
- It's not really
- It shows us what happened then to show us how we got here today.
- It gives us something to compare to.
- It helps us better understand the things on the news.
- Because it changes our life to think in the past and see if we should or shouldn't do it in the same way.
- It can help you understand the war and what's going on possibly and understand the government a little more.
- Kind of useful because things repeat themselves.
- It shows what things have come from and to prevent bad things from happening
- It helps me know why the world is how it is
- It is helpful to understand, so you can apply it to everyday life.
- We can learn from the past so we don't make the same mistakes again.
- When people are talking about something in the past you can understand it.
- To know what our country shouldn't do. Expect the unexpected.
- I use the mistakes people have made in the past to make decisions in my life.

10. *What does it mean to understand history?*

- To learn from it and make sure it doesn't repeat itself.
- To know what happened and why
- You can interpret it and can use it.
- To know about something
- Know what happened and why
- To be historically literate
- Being able to ask questions and make theories about different events in history and comparing those events to the present.
- To be able to understand the basic events in history.
- To know your facts.
- It means to fully get what happened in the past and be able to inform other people about the past.
- To know what happened and why
- To know the past in many different ways and how it affects us today.
- To get it and know what it is.
- To know about it very thoroughly
- You can take info from the past and use it in everyday life
- It means to easily comprehend history and know what it means
- To be able to know what it's about and the subtopics
- You understand why it happened and what it caused.

12. *How do you know when you are understanding history?*

- When your essential question is answered
- When you aren't confused anymore

- When you can use what you learned and remember it
- When you no longer have major questions
- When you are out of questions
- You can take what you learned and use it
- When you can make connections
- To be able to explain it to someone else or later think about the things I learned.
- When you can state facts right out of your mind.
- I don't know
- When you know what happened and things make sense to you.
- If you have used all the above terms and gathered information on them and have a good statement and argument.
- When you can use it/talk about it in everyday life and class.
- When you feel like you could explain it and hold a discussion about it.
- When you talk to someone and you can talk about history and understand how to use it for the future.
- When you can easily talk about it and know facts about history.
- When I'm able to answer correctly about the subject.
- You can say what happened, why, and how it affected our world.