

**Discussion Questions for *Reading, Thinking, and Writing About History: Teaching Argument Writing to Diverse Learners in the Common Core Classroom, Grades 6-12.***

Chapter	Questions
<p style="text-align: center;">1: On Integrating History and Literacy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How do you define literacy? How does the author define it?</li> <li>● How is disciplinary literacy different than a traditional approach to literacy? The author provides an example of disciplinary literacy. What elements of the scenario make it an example of disciplinary literacy?</li> <li>● The author points out that history and social studies have such a natural connection to literacy. Do you think this is true?</li> <li>● “Students won’t pick up historical thinking or literacy practices through occasional assignments; the effort must be strategic and sustained.” --What are the classroom, curriculum, and compliance barriers to making this statement a reality in the classroom?</li> <li>● What three concepts are central for integrating literacy and history into the curriculum (pg. 6)?</li> <li>● Why do you think the author says that social studies educators must embrace inquiry and interpretation (pg. 7)?</li> <li>● What does Wineburg claim are the three historical reading practices used by experts (pg. 7)?</li> <li>● Do our curricular documents (state or local) allow teachers the time to integrate these types of experiences into a study of national or world history? If not, why?</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;">2: Teaching Disciplinary Literacy Through a Cognitive Apprenticeship</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How does the author define cognitive apprenticeship? What does this mean to you?</li> <li>● A gradual release of responsibility is described in order to best implement cognitive apprenticeship. How do you currently think about gradual release of responsibility in your classroom?</li> <li>● The author outlines five stages to help students engage in cognitive apprenticeship. Which stage is the most difficult to implement in your classroom now? Why?</li> <li>● How do you think the IREAD tool can help students grappling with the use of primary sources?</li> <li>● How do you think the How to Write (H2W) tool helps students see what good historical writing looks like? Why is this important?</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Two tools are created (A10/11 and A12) to help students and teachers reflect on their progress. How do you give feedback in your classroom currently?</li> </ul>
<p>3: Who Fired the First Shot at Lexington Green?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Why do you think students don't often view history as interpretation?</li> <li>● There are several famous historical events that are based in myth more than fact because of pop culture. How does this make it more difficult for students to interpret what really happened?</li> <li>● Sam Wineburg found that when historians read, they source a text first. Why is this critically important in the history field? How is this a different practice from other disciplines?</li> <li>● What should sourcing "look like" in a history classroom?</li> <li>● In this chapter, the author outlines each stage of historical investigation. How would you approach the idea of historical investigation in your own classroom?</li> </ul>
<p>4: Were Shays and His Followers Rebels or Freedom Fighters?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● This chapter specifically addresses students wrestling with conflicting sources. How is this sometimes challenging for students from an historical thinking perspective?</li> <li>● The title of the chapter brings out the idea that an historical event can be viewed very differently. How can we use primary sources to help students make an argument in order to answer questions like, "Were Shays and His Followers Rebels or Freedom Fighters?"</li> <li>● The author addresses the fact that history is messy. While textbooks often portray Shays' Rebellion as a "tidy story," it is not so simple. How does the introduction of history as "messiness" challenge students' traditional views of history?</li> <li>● What does the author say about the importance of contextualization in order to help students analyze conflicting sources?</li> <li>● The author states, "Reading historically means that no one text should be considered absolutely trustworthy, but each is a clue to a larger story." How do we get students to internalize this in order to engage them in historical thinking?</li> <li>● The author points out the importance of giving teacher feedback to student writing and shows examples of this on</li> </ul>

	<p>page 62-63. The author uses polish and praise as an example of giving feedback. How do you currently provide teacher feedback to student writing?</p>
<p>5: Did the Alien and Sedition Acts Violate the U.S. Constitution?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The main components of argument writing- claims, evidence, explanation, analysis, and rebuttal, are critical for getting students to write as historians. How can you use the frameworks in the book to better support student writing in a social studies classroom?</li> <li>● This chapter introduces the idea of removing the graphic supports for annotations while analyzing sources. Why is it important to scaffold this over time?</li> <li>● The author also presents the idea of adapting sources based off the principles introduced by Wineburg and Martin. These are focusing, simplification, and presentation. How does this strategy help students better access sources? Why is this important?</li> <li>● This chapter embraces gradual release of responsibility by taking away some scaffolds presented in earlier chapters. Why is this important for internalizing historical thinking practices?</li> </ul>
<p>6: What Path Offered the Best Chance of Survival for the Cherokee in the Early 1800s: Staying in Their Original Territory or Removal to the West?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “Investigation 4 pushes students to make an argument grounded in historical context rather than current biases.” What are some ideas to help teachers empower students to see history through the lens of the past?</li> <li>● Does the assessment tool always have to be a full essay?</li> <li>● A key question for students to tackle in Investigation 4 is “...what impact might an author or audience have had on the sources?” How is this type of question, and the thinking embodied in it, different from what students are asked to engage in during a typical DBQ exercise?</li> <li>● How can we anticipate teacher pushback and put in place tools to ameliorate these concerns?</li> <li>● The writing and reflection sessions described on page 102 sound a lot like English class. How do we encourage this practice with social studies teachers and eliminate the complaint that “I teach history, not English”?</li> </ul>

<p>7: What Was the Most Effective Way to Free Slaves in the United States Before the Civil War: Nonviolence or More Aggressive Action?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Structured Academics Controversy approach is modeled in chapter 7. How would you adapt/implement this approach with your students?</li> <li>● How can a teacher recognize ‘individual student growth’ while maintaining high standards and expectations for all students?</li> <li>● The author reminds teachers to “address common challenges.” How can teachers incorporate this admonition into their instructional practices?</li> </ul>
<p>8: Was the United States Justified in Going to War with Mexico in 1846?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The central challenge outlined in this chapter is the movement to greater independence by students. What tools do the authors outline that might assist students in becoming more independent?</li> <li>● “Without background knowledge or historical context, students will have a hard time engaging in the critical reading and thinking that this curriculum targets. Teachers can help students by situating each investigation in a broader historical context and the specific time period.” How do you do this in your classroom without diluting student enthusiasm for the investigation?</li> <li>● “Try to move students away from black-and-white thinking about text. No text is all right or all wrong.” How can you develop this level of nuanced thinking with students?</li> </ul>
<p>9: Assessing Historical Thinking and Writing Outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Are multiple choice questions inconsistent with assessing the types of skills promoted by the “curriculum” outlined in this book?</li> <li>● Is it feasible for teachers to measure student growth with the approach outlined in the book?</li> <li>● Substantiation and rebuttal...</li> <li>● Does the author’s discussion about the assessment of student writing open up avenues of collaboration with ELA teachers?</li> <li>● What professional development is required to help teachers to be able to evaluate student writing in a manner consistent with that outlined in this chapter?</li> <li>● “When students contextualize, they situate their essay in a time</li> </ul>

	<p>and place and connect their subject matter to events or issues that have bearing on their topic. When writers fail to contextualize, their statements aren't grounded in time or in the topic of their essay.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The progress made by the students that are the focus of this book occur over the course of six investigations. Would six of these experiences demand too much teacher time or is this feasible?</li> <li>● The authors suggest that teachers “try this curriculum with a colleague so you can discuss how to use the ideas in your classroom.” Could this model work/be promoted/supported within your district?</li> <li>● The authors suggest that formative assessment opportunities are available through “circulating and talking with students, looking at annotations [on sources] or plans [prewriting]”: Is the information gleaned from these occasions enough to inform teacher practice?</li> </ul>
<p>Overview/ Overarching Questions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How can teachers be professionally developed to implement these strategies by gradually releasing responsibility to students?</li> <li>● How can the process of annotating sources be incorporated into instructional practices?</li> <li>● What is a more important historical thinking skill for teachers to both understand and teach to their students: Context, sourcing, or corroboration?</li> <li>● Do all of these investigations need to end up in a full blown essay or are there other forms of writing that could be used as formative assessments?</li> <li>● What roadblocks exist to this type of instruction (real or perceived), and what are some effective strategies and PD that might help teachers overcome those roadblocks.</li> <li>● The exemplar lessons included in the book require a functional knowledge of the time period an event occurred and the documents were created as well as an understanding of the documents themselves. How can we as supervisors help</li> </ul>

teachers to develop, share and implement lessons that require more functional knowledge than just content?

- Many students struggle with reading comprehension; What scaffolding and chunking strategies can be utilized by teachers to better facilitate similar experiences for our struggling readers?
- How can this approach be blended into current content-only instructional practices?
- Can the literacy and writing practices illuminated in these exemplar lessons be spiraled through one curriculum and through an full social studies sequence of courses?
- What is missing from this “curriculum” that might increase the efficacy of the approach?