

## Energizing the History Classroom: Historical Narrative Inquiry and Historical Empathy

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*The article presents a historical narrative model designed to encourage analytical thinking. My historical narrative inquiry model (a) teaches procedural knowledge (the process of “doing” history); (b) enhances interpretative skills; (c) cultivates historical perspectives based upon evidentiary history; and (d) encourages student authorship of historical narratives. The instructional model emphasizes small- and large-group activities, including oral presentations, discussions about primary documents, and considerations relative to the creation of written history. Students generate their own historical narratives in order to articulate their perspectives. The purpose of the model is to facilitate students’ historical understandings by developing more empathetic perceptions of the people of the past.*

### Introduction

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

I have developed an instructional model based upon my interpretation of several concepts, including historical thinking (the nature of cognition in history), historical empathy (the ability to perceive history from the perspectives of those in the past), disciplined inquiry (the nature of historical investigation and the historian’s craft), and historical narrative theory (the acceptance and recogni-

tion of narrative — with its linguistic, literary, stylistic, and structural influences — as the communicator of past events) and have called the model the *historical narrative inquiry model* (Figure 1). The model’s primary goals for student achievement include advancements in (a) a renewed interest in and attention to the past; (b) the development of procedural knowledge (or the process of doing history); (c) the development of the ability to analyze and critique authentic historical documents; (d) the acquisition of interpretative skills for historical narratives (content, truthfulness, argument, language, and structure); (e) the formation of historical perspectives based upon evidentiary history; and (f) the articulation of those perspectives through student-authored historical narratives and argumentative essays.

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

tive to enable students to develop rich, generative — as opposed to passive — historical understandings. I propose that understanding the fundamental relationship of narrative to

history — as the inherent communicative structure of historical rendering — opens new possibilities for generating historical empathy.

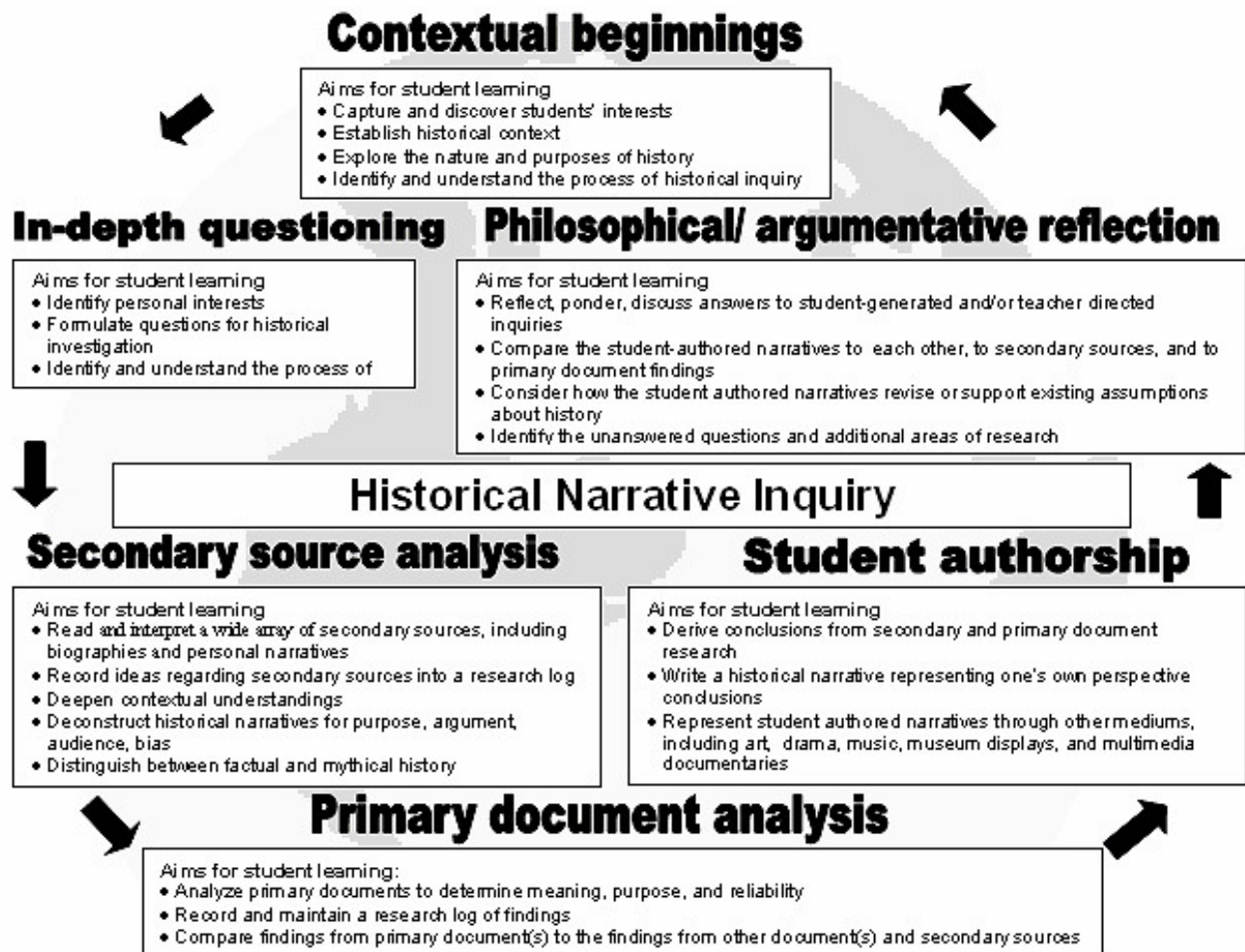


Figure 1. Historical Analysis Model

### Historical Empathy

By definition, historical empathy is the ability to enter the foreign world of the past — to the extent that retrieval is possible — and to demonstrate in-depth understandings of its realities. That empathy arises through modes of narrative inquiry which encourages students to assume the role of historian/inquisitor,

investigator, formulator, and philosopher; the history classroom thereby comes alive with theoretical discourse. If successful in implementation, students will come to appreciate the complexities of historical people, events, and time periods. Such an endeavor requires a student to participate actively in the research process by delving through a wide array of secondary and primary sources. Empathy

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

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

Historical empathy does not require a sympathetic view toward historical figures; indeed, empathy moves beyond walking in another's shoes. Mere identification with the agent cannot facilitate the probing questions and in-depth investigation required for perspective building. Through historical empathy, one comes to understand what the agent could have known and what the agent could not have known. The agent's intentions, accomplishments, and failures become cast in the theater of his or her own stage, and modern witnesses withhold their judgments until the complete play unveils the story's complexity. Indeed, hindsight affords the contemporary analyst the advantage of retrospection from its attendant vantage point. The scrutiny of the multiple dynamics surrounding the agent's performance becomes the enabler of rich, complex understandings (Lee, 1983; Lee & Ashby, 2001).

Barton and Levstik (2004) divide historical empathy into both a cognitive and an affective

endeavor. Cognitively, students seek to know and understand the perspectives and realities of remote peoples; affectively, students learn "to care with and about people in the past, to be concerned with what happened to them and how they experienced their lives" (Barton & Levstik, 2004, pp. 207-208). The latter form of empathy invokes a sort of shared normalcy that bridges time; therefore, by placing historical empathy in the affective domain, historical empathy then affirms Bage's (1999) claim that emotions matter in history.

Historical empathy is a high, scholarly attainment requiring persistence and patience (Davis, 2001; Lee & Ashby, 2001). As Bruce VanSledright (2001) accurately indicates, empathy as an achievement prepares students to function in a democratic society:

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

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

Before undertaking a study of past figures, historians must consider and evaluate their own lives, relative to their attitudes and modern influences (VanSledright, 2001). Thus, the historian moves beyond empathetic regard to a rich level of historical understanding:

Accepting empathetic regard as an act of sorcery forces us, I think, to continually re-examine the illusions we project on our ancestors and their actions and intentions. Such re-examinations push us to look at how we work with historical evidence and attempt the contextualization process. In turn, this pursuit demands that we understand ourselves more fully. (VanSledright, 2001, p. 66)

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

Historical empathy demands considerable effort and time from the teacher and students. Historical studies should include three essential elements to augment the growth of empathetic responses: (a) the investigation of a wide array of sources, (b) the exposure to multiple perspectives, and (c) sufficient time for exploration (Lee, 1983). To become a cogent catalyst for change, historical empathy must assume prominent pedagogical recognition by challenging the facts-based history classroom.

### History and Narrative

Though the perspective-forming power of narrative still remains largely untapped in the area of history education, it offers a valuable component to the improvement of historical empathy. Because history educators view narrative mainly as a form of passive delivery rather than as medium for inquiry (Levstik & Barton, 2001), they fail to harness its interpretative nature. Although scholars may seek to divorce history from the storytelling tradition,

alternative forms such as chronicles and annals lack the ability to illustrate history's complexities, including characterization, human action, and conflict innate to the historical plot (Ricoeur, 1980; White, 1984).

Narrative, on the other hand, embeds the multiple layers of causation and human action, maintaining the ability to present information in linear form while still preserving the overlapping aspects of the plot by "Turning to narrative activity...the time of the simplest story escapes the ordinary notion of time conceived as a series of instances succeeding one another along an abstract line" (Ricoeur, 1980, p. 170). The ensemble of human relationships, actions, and dynamics unravels through narrative delivery which Ricoeur succinctly explains:

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

The power to invoke inquiry, analysis, and judgment is found in the unique vantage point afforded by narrative: The reader may move backward or forward or return to different points along the linear sequence. The reader may also dissect and scrutinize specific parts or choose to examine the story as a whole, thereby producing Gestalt-like understandings (King, 2005). Thus, historical narratives possess an untapped, multi-linear potential through the interweaving of human action, motives, social constructs, group dynamics, disruptions, and deviations. The multiple layers of the historical narrative facilitate analytical thinking through the principle of repetition — patterns of repeated experiences,

events, and movements unfold (Bruner, 1990; Ricoeur 1981).

In the historical narrative, time is shared by society; thus, public time establishes a sense of community between the reader and the agents described. Ricoeur (1980) defines narrative's role as the enactor of *within-timeness*, meaning the connection between "being in time" and "telling about it" (Bruner, 1990; Ricoeur, 1980). Narratives then impart a renewed kinship between the historical present and the historical past as Ricoeur explains, "The art of storytelling retains this public character of time, while keeping it from falling into anonymity. It does so first, at time common to actors, as time woven in common by their interaction" (p. 171). Change agents, within the constraints of public time, act in a foreign world — a world shared by the agents' contemporaries and the modern observers. Notably, narratives may present history from a dual angle — the mode of the past and the present — and consequently, agents may be viewed as both the cause and as the product of a historical movement (Ricoeur, 1984; White, 1991).

Through narrative, one may come to realize the heroes, the symbols, the structure, and the climate of a time period. The agents' actions "produce meanings by their consequences, whether foreseen and intended or unforeseen and intended, which become embodied in the institutions and conventions of given social formations" (White, 1984, pp. 26-27). By highlighting human action, historical narratives often foster judgments through the recounting of human behavior. This poses powerful implications for the development of historical empathy, especially in consideration of the motives, aims, and actions of human beings.

The evaluation and comparison of multiple narratives, such as competing narratives, micro narratives, private narratives (i.e., autobiographies, biographies, personal narratives), and grand narratives (or the universally accepted history of a people), enables students to evaluate history from multiple perspectives

(Holt, 1995; King, 2005; Mink, 1978). Historical accounts are value-laden due to the inquiring perspective of the historian. Thus, "in the selection of topics, the choice and arrangement of material, the specific historian's 'me' will enter," and despite attempts at objectivity, the historian "remains human, a creature of time, place, circumstance, interest, predilection, culture" (Beard, 1935, p. 83). The challenges inherent within historical narratives stem from the cumbersome problems of historical scholarship itself (Berkhofer, 1995). Allowing students to examine conflicting historical narratives helps students to recognize historical bias and to weigh the evidence.

Through their work with elementary and middle school students, Levstik and Barton (1996a; 1996b; 2001) used historical fiction and trade books, and their research revealed — in contrast to the textbook — the increased benefits of reading narrative accounts of history: supporting imaginative entry, providing moral weight to analysis, emphasizing ethical dilemmas, stimulating interest, and formulating judgments. This approach, however, proved problematic because the children rarely questioned the authenticity of narrative texts, confused fact and fiction, and relied on emotionally charged responses to formulate judgments. VanSledright and Brophy (1992) and VanSledright (2001) found similar shortcomings with elementary students who vocalized unfounded romantic notions about history. Thus, narrative functioned as a two-edged sword: Stories encouraged imagination and offered coherent structures, yet they also led to the conflation of unrelated details and naïve, fanciful elaborations.

These concerns pose valid challenges to the teaching of the historical narrative as genre. Notably, the concerns stem, in part, from the void of an early elementary, critical social studies curriculum; instead, curricula centers on the self, the family, and the community. Heritage acculturation overrides historically-grounded instruction, as indicated by the mythical narratives often depicting famous



people (Brophy & VanSledright, 1997). This vacuum of historical knowledge causes structural cognitive challenges later for upper elementary and middle school students who consequently lack experience with historical topics (VanSledright & Brophy, 1992). To buffer these difficulties, I recommend teaching (a) the historical narrative as a genre (and how that genre differs from fiction), (b) the deconstruction of historical narratives (i.e., themes, evidence, symbols, imagery), and (c) the process of writing historical narratives (representing students' developed perspectives).

Selecting multifaceted, research-based historical narratives will improve the quality of the students' experiences. Shemilt (2000) developed four levels for the teaching of historical narratives:

***Level 1: A Chronically Ordered Past.***

History is taught through the sequential ordering of timelines.

***Level 2: Coherent Historical Narratives.***

The map of the past incurs new dimensions and layers through the rendering of storied forms intended to provide understandings relative to "what happened" and "what is going on."

***Level 3: Multidimensional Narratives.***

The multiple dimensions of history become interwoven to provide a more complex narration embodying the means of production and population of history (economics, technology, and people); forms of social organization (social structures, institutions, and politics); cultural and intellectual history (common-sense, religion, and institutionalized knowledge). (p. 97)

***Level 4: Polythetic Narrative Frameworks.***

Much like physicists who strive to formulate a GUT — a Grand Theory of Everything — historians undergo an extensive process of inquiry, research,

evaluation, comparing, re-examination, and reconstruction to formulate a GUN — a Grand Unified Narrative. This type of narrative history attempts to construe the whole as the *most probable* explicative answer about the past. In this framework, accepted narratives represent polythetic explanations; comparative narratives are recognized; historical relativism is valued. (pp. 93-98)

Shemilt's (2000) recommendations are designed to counter the partial inclusion of narrative history as monolithic and monolinear. Through the use of multidimensional and polythetic narrative frameworks, students are prompted to consider logical rather than imaginative possibilities.

**The Historical Narrative Inquiry Model**

Inquiry, when centered on students' interests and concerns, inspires investigation into the past, and communities of learners often prove motivational (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Dewey 1916; 1938; Levstik & Barton, 2001; Vygotsky, 1987). Historical understandings begin with a desire to discover historical phenomena, to challenge accepted viewpoints, to uncover historical truths, and to evaluate individuals and societies (Lee 1983; Levstik & Barton 2001; White 1984). Historical narrative inquiry is a cyclical process involving inquiry, investigation, and interpretation — that is, the restructuring of existing narratives and the organizing of new accounts. My historical narrative inquiry method centers on knowledge development, the posing of meaningful questions, the scrutiny of secondary and primary sources, and the organization of historical material into a narrative framework (Levstik & Barton, 2001; VanSledright, 2001; Yeager & Foster, 2001). The model includes a revolving six-stage process: contextual beginnings, in-depth questioning, secondary source analysis, primary document analysis, student authorship, and philosophical/argumentative

reflection. That model is represented in circular form to illustrate the frequent necessity of revisiting the various stages throughout the process. (see Figure 1).

### ***Contextual Beginnings***

The contextual beginnings phase attempts to excite students about history, to provide introductory contextual knowledge, and to establish foundational skills in procedural knowledge and historical narrative analysis. Colorful historical narratives capture attention, stimulate interest, and provide clear, meaningful presentations (Bage, 1999; Husbands, 1996). As Bruner (1990) notes, narrative serves as a more comfortable, attractive form of discourse differing from alternate scientific versions. Stories provide a human element, which serves two purposes: first, stories offer greater motivational appeal, and second, stories stand as powerful revelators of social phenomenon. Historical narratives should be selected that capture student interest and improve contextual understanding. McKoewn and Beck (1994) found that the lack of student engagement in history textbooks primarily stemmed from the lifeless presentation of historical material. In contrast, energized textual accounts of history improved the motivation *towards* as well as the comprehension and retention *of* historical background material.

The contextual beginnings phase should also begin with an introduction to the value of studying history and should introduce students to the historical method (Stearns, 2000). The purposes of history may include:

1. What it means to be human;
2. The roots and origins of the contemporary world and one's own place in that world;

3. The evolution of societies and social change;
4. A deeper understanding of one's own ancestral past;
5. Historical cognitive skills; and
6. Encouraging leisure pursuits in history. (Shemilt, 1980)

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

The process of historical inquiry should be introduced and may include ideas such as secondary and primary sources, the checking and cross-checking of resources, and the formulation of historical perspectives. A simple exercise in personal narrative writing and gathering (Levstik & Barton, 2001) will provide a concrete, easily accessible means for teaching historical inquiry, authorship, and bias. For example, students may research their own lives through the collection of documents (both written and verbal interviews) and then produce written narratives of their discoveries. Effective historical scholarship requires an understanding of one's own biases; thus, students should consider their backgrounds, attitudes, and perceptions and how these factors potentially impacting their historical interpretations.

<b>Capture and discover students' interests.</b>	<b>Establish historical context.</b>
As a class, generate a list of topics and questions that interest the students. Conduct an online scavenger hunt to find the answers.	Using the National Archives collection of World War II pictures from <a href="http://www.archives.gov/research/ww2/photos">http://www.archives.gov/research/ww2/photos</a> , create photographic timelines illustrating events, people, and places from the war.
Collect and share colorful stories and facts about World War II. Students may share the stories by preparing mini-skits, drawing cartoon strips, or participating in storytelling groups.	Using enlarged maps, toy armies, and toy ammunitions, re-enact the story of World War II. Students can create their own maps and props before beginning the game. See the World War II map collection at the University of San Diego: <a href="http://www.history.sandiego.edu/gen/ww2Timeline/Maps.html">http://www.history.sandiego.edu/gen/ww2Timeline/Maps.html</a>
<b>Explore the nature and purposes of history.</b>	<b>Identify and understand the process of historical inquiry.</b>
Using audio or video recorders, conduct humorous impromptu interviews for students to ask people provoking questions about history. Consider the following questions: What is history? What do historians do? Is history true? Why study history?	Teach the concept of perspective by asking students to examine optical illusions found online or in I-spy books. Inform the students that history can be considered from multiple angles.
Present five objects representing what history is and why people should study the subject. The students or the teacher may bring the objects from home.	Draw cartoons representing the process of historical inquiry: ask questions, investigate secondary sources, investigate primary sources, consider multiple points-of-view, and write and share your version of history.

*Figure 2. Strategies for the contextual beginnings phase for a sample unit on World War II.*

### ***In-Depth Questioning***

In evaluating historical narratives, students should offer additional interpretations, test the story's authenticity, pose questions, examine the story's representation of events and people, and compare the account to first hand evidence (Husbands, 1996). The ability to know and understand how to ask probing questions constitutes a form of advanced learning, requiring practice and formative structure (Bruner, 1965; Caine & Caine, 1991). The following criteria designed by Good and Brophy (2003, p. 380) serve as guidelines for

helping students formulate questions which are (a) clear, (b) purposeful, (c) brief, (d) natural and adapted to the level of the class, (e) sequenced, and (f) thought-provoking. I also recommend that students consider the untold or unanswered aspects of historical narratives. To provide organization and structure to the process of historical inquiry, I adapted the Vee diagram (designed for scientific thinking) as a heuristic for history (Novak & Gowin, 1984). Introduced at this phase of the model, Figure 3 is intended to function as a working development in subsequent phases.



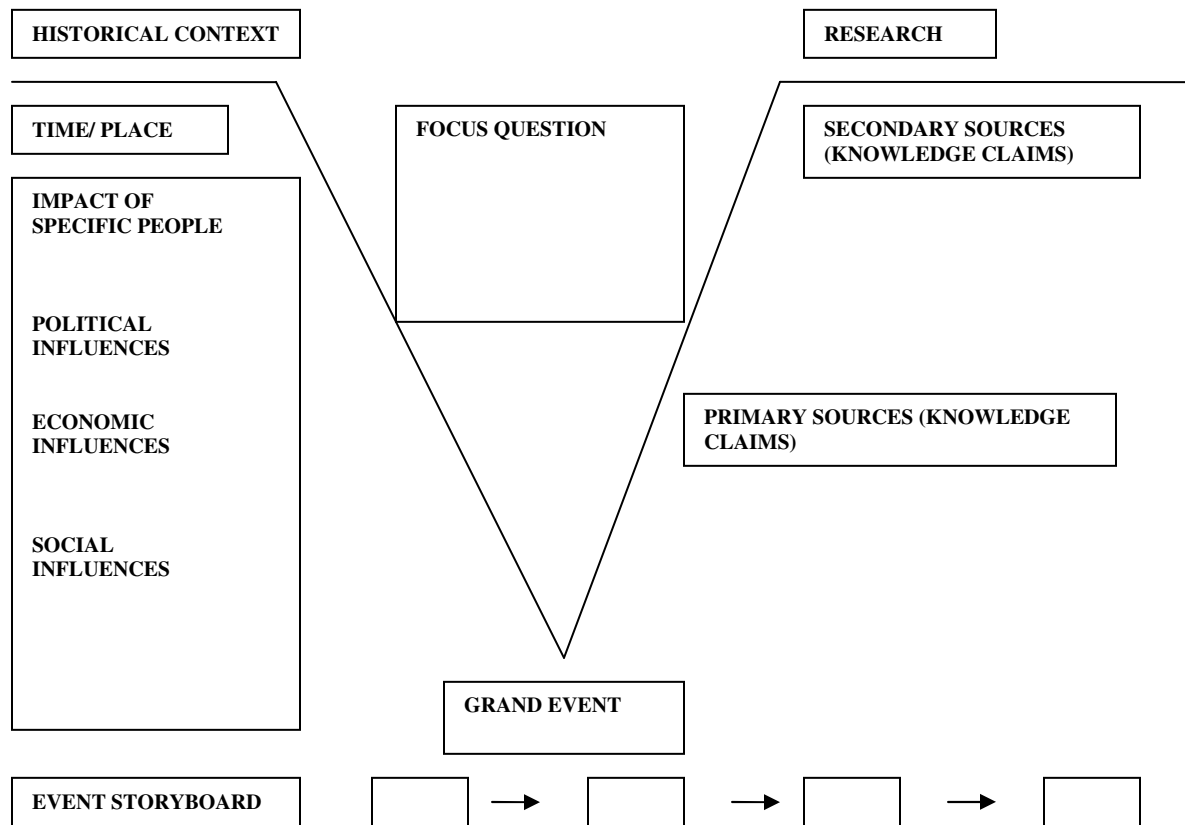


Figure 3. Historical inquiry heuristic.

Identify students' interests.	Formulate questions for historical investigation.	Identify and understand the process of historical inquiry.
Group the students into interest teams. Create mind maps depicting what students already know about World War II. List potential topics that students would like to explore further.	Using the question guide by Good and Brophy (2003), formulate potential questions for research. Students may need sample prompts. When ready, select an overarching question to fill into the Vee diagram.	Play a game of "Pictionary" using important words associated with historical inquiry and World War II. Generate a list of terms such as secondary document, primary document, historical narrative, perspective, and bias.

Figure 4. Strategies for the in-depth questioning phase for a sample unit on World War II.

### ***Secondary Source Analysis***

Secondary source analysis improves comprehension, builds a knowledge base, and facilitates inquiry. Students also need exposure to a wide array of sources depicting multiple perspectives (Davis, 2001; Lee, 1983; Riley, 2001; Vansledright, 2001; Yeager & Foster, 2001). For example, a teacher introducing the Cold War may consider sharing both the United States and the Soviet perspective. Additionally, the teacher is not limited to traditional secondary historical narratives; as recommended by Bage (1999, p. 37), the storied genre includes the following forms:

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

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Autobiographies</li> <li>▪ Biographies</li> <li>▪ court proceedings &amp; cases</li> <li>▪ descriptions</li> <li>▪ educational &amp; performance drama</li> <li>▪ essays or elements of them</li> <li>▪ explanations of events</li> <li>▪ film</li> <li>▪ folklore &amp; folktales</li> <li>▪ games &amp; simulations</li> <li>▪ legends</li> <li>▪ letters</li> <li>▪ life stories</li> <li>▪ memories programs)</li> <li>▪ monologues</li> <li>▪ museum displays</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ myth</li> <li>▪ narrative visual art forms (e.g., some diaries paintings, tapestries, murals, etc.)</li> <li>▪ oral histories &amp; presentations</li> <li>▪ personal anecdotes</li> <li>▪ poetry</li> <li>▪ procedural descriptions</li> <li>▪ recounts of events in the past</li> <li>▪ reminiscences</li> <li>▪ sayings</li> <li>▪ songs</li> <li>▪ television (especially in news, media reports &amp; representations investigative &amp; documentary)</li> <li>▪ titles, terms, &amp; pronouns</li> <li>▪ written fiction-stories &amp; novels</li> </ul>
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The use of more artistic, mythic, and/or persuasive media within the storied genres should not replace sound, factual, secondary historical accounts. Storied genres involving broader interpretative elements (i.e., art, fiction, or biases accounts) can be analyzed according to authenticity, impact, and cultural representations (Bage, 1999; Husbands, 1996). The deconstruction of narrative texts may involve the following considerations:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Who is the account written for? (audience)</li> <li>2. What is the purpose of the account? (theme)</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. What does the account reveal? (thematic development)</li> <li>4. What is missing from the account? Why? (selection of information)</li> <li>5. How probable does the narrative account appear to be? Or how much of the account is true? Not true? (historical truth)</li> <li>6. What might be the impact of this account on its audience? (influence)</li> <li>7. How does this account compare with my view? With other accounts?</li> </ol> |
|---|---|

(cross-checking secondary and primary documents)

The questions may be pondered in reflective writing exercises or be integrated into small- or large-group discussions. With practice, students can become more adept at recognizing bias and distinguishing between mythical and factual history. Secondary accounts, biographies, and personal narratives offer a variety of perspectives by enabling students to examine historical topics from multiple lenses.

As an ongoing component of their research experiences, students should keep and maintain a research log of important findings, thoughts, and perspectives (VanSledright, 2002). To aid

reading comprehension and to support contextual understandings, historical narratives need to be dissected, analyzed, and then reconstructed in meaningful, organizational formats. Graphic organizers can be used to depict plot lines, historical actors, social institutions, economic factors, and political controls. Simple concept mapping as demonstrated in Figure 5 serves as an effective means of representing relationships between historical movements, concepts, events, and the actions of historical actors. In this graphic, the concept map begins with a narrative theme, traces the associated historic events, and offers multiple avenues for exploration.

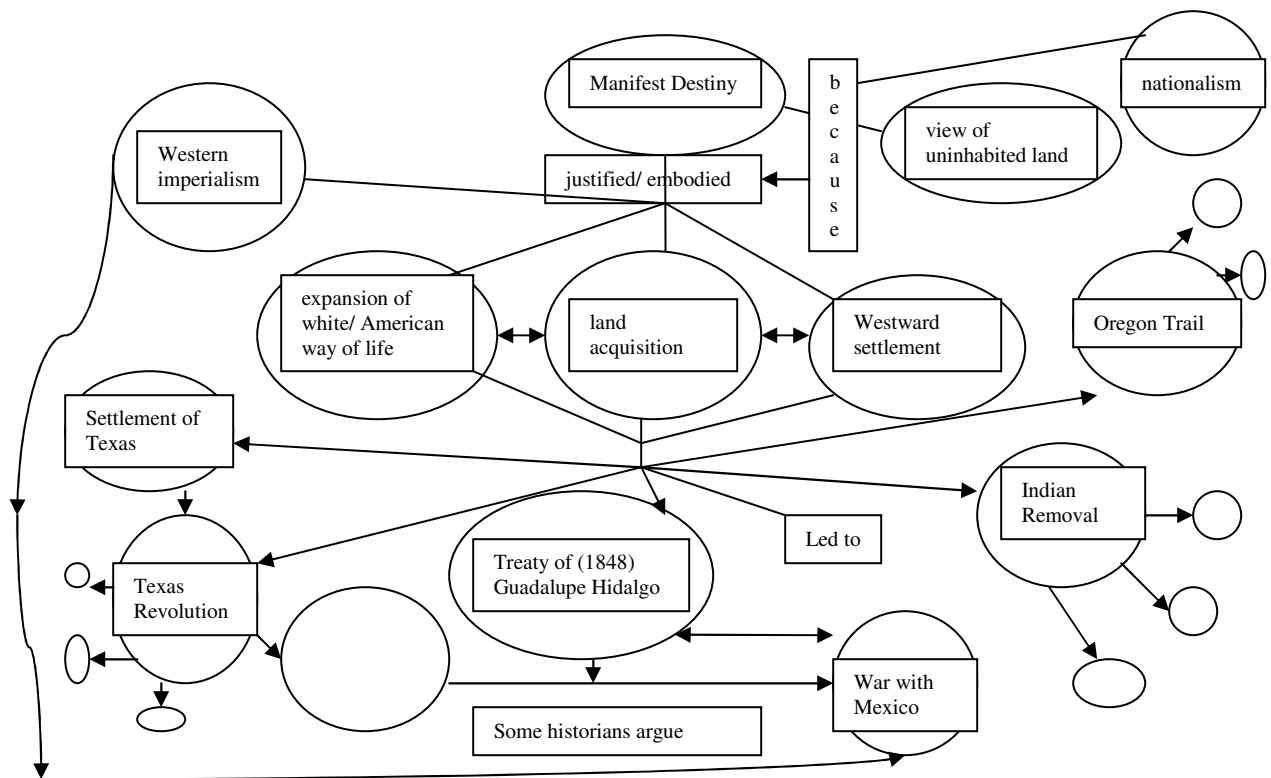


Figure 5. Concept map of ideas associated with Western expansion.

The graphic organizers can be used as platforms for small- and large-group discussions.

Read and interpret secondary sources.	Deepen contextual understandings.	Deconstruct historical narratives.	Distinguish between mythical and factual history.
After reading personal narratives, draw symbols representing the overall meaning of the text. Suggested narratives include <i>Lost Battalion: Railway of Death</i> (Thompson, 1994) and <i>Cruel Was the Way</i> (Courington, 2000). Selections from both are appropriate for grades (7-12).	Using personal narratives and stories about people in the war, conduct a living history museum, where students in costume present vignettes. Students may add maps and artifacts to the museum displays.	Write the deconstruction of narrative texts questions (p. 22) on sets of cards. Discuss the answers to the questions in small groups. Record findings in a journal, research log, and/or on the Vee diagram.	Examine mythical depictions of World War II in film/literature. Compare findings to secondary accounts. Use graphic organizers such as T-charts or Venn diagrams to represent ideas. The smart art graphics included in the Microsoft Office 2007 suite can be used to create compare/contrast organizers <a href="http://www.office.microsoft.com">http://www.office.microsoft.com</a>

Figure 6. *Strategies for secondary source analysis phase for sample unit on World War II.*

### ***Primary Source Analysis***

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

Recent scholarship by VanSledright (2002) with elementary school students supports existing research (Davis, 2001; Lee, 2001; Lee & Ashby, 2001; Yeager & Foster, 2001) relative to the conditions necessary for students' success with primary document analysis: an understanding of historical contexts, the exposure to multiple secondary and primary sources, and sufficient time for development. Lee (1978) offers his recommendations relative to the effective integration of primary documents:

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

dence, and the formation of conclusions as measured against accepted historical narratives. Grouping strategies may aid struggling students, increase cooperation, and create a discussion forum.

Wineburg (1991a; 1994; 2001), Levstik (2001), and Yeager and Doppen (2001) have used *think-alouds* to facilitate analytic processing during primary document analysis. By definition, a think-aloud is the active process of verbally speaking out loud one's thoughts while engaging in some sort of intellectual activity (Ericsson & Simon, 1993). The think-aloud is an effective instrument in facilitating cognitive processing by providing a consistent, interactive approach to improve reading comprehension and contextual interpretations. By activating the natural, spatial memory and

by embedding procedural skills and facts into this memory, the think-aloud functions as a powerful learning experience (Caine & Caine, 1991). On occasion, students may enjoy conducting think-alouds by talking independently into an audio recording device. For group settings, I capture the spirit of the think-aloud by using a talking stick that students pass from person to person.

Wineburg (1991b; 1994) conducted a seminal study on historical cognition by conducting a series of think-alouds with six historians who interpreted primary documents from the American Revolution. Based upon the historians' responses during the think-alouds, Wineburg (1994) developed a cognitive model of historical texts representing the nature of this type of thinking. I have chosen to translate these concepts into a series of guiding questions as possible student prompts (Figure 7).

### **Prompts for Primary Document Analysis**

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

Figure 7. *Prompts for primary document analysis.*



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

Analyze primary documents.	Record findings.	Compare findings.
<p>Analyze primary documents by placing images and texts on large pieces of butcher paper (Figure 9). Draw arrows, write words, and draw symbols to represent impressions. The prompts for primary document analysis (Figure 7) will help generate thinking.</p> <hr/> <p>Suggested resources include: <i>Go for broke oral history videos of Japanese Americans</i> at <a href="http://www.goforbroke.org/">http://www.goforbroke.org/</a>. World War II collection at National Archives (Figure 2);</p> <p>Rutgers oral history archive at <a href="http://www.oralhistory.rutgers.edu;">http://www.oralhistory.rutgers.edu</a>;</p> <p><i>Time</i> magazine World War II archive collection at <a href="http://www.time.com/time/archive/collections/">http://www.time.com/time/archive/collections/</a>;</p> <p>Yale's Avalon Project World War II at <a href="http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/wwii/wwii.htm">http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/wwii/wwii.htm</a></p>	<p>For each student, keep research folders containing journal entries and Vee diagrams. Handout 1 will assist students in keeping a log of their impressions.</p>	<p>Compare findings to other primary and secondary accounts. Use graphic organizers that show relationships between ideas. See Figure 6 for recommendations on Microsoft's smart art graphics.</p>

Figure 8. *Strategies for primary source analysis phase for a sample unit on World War II.*

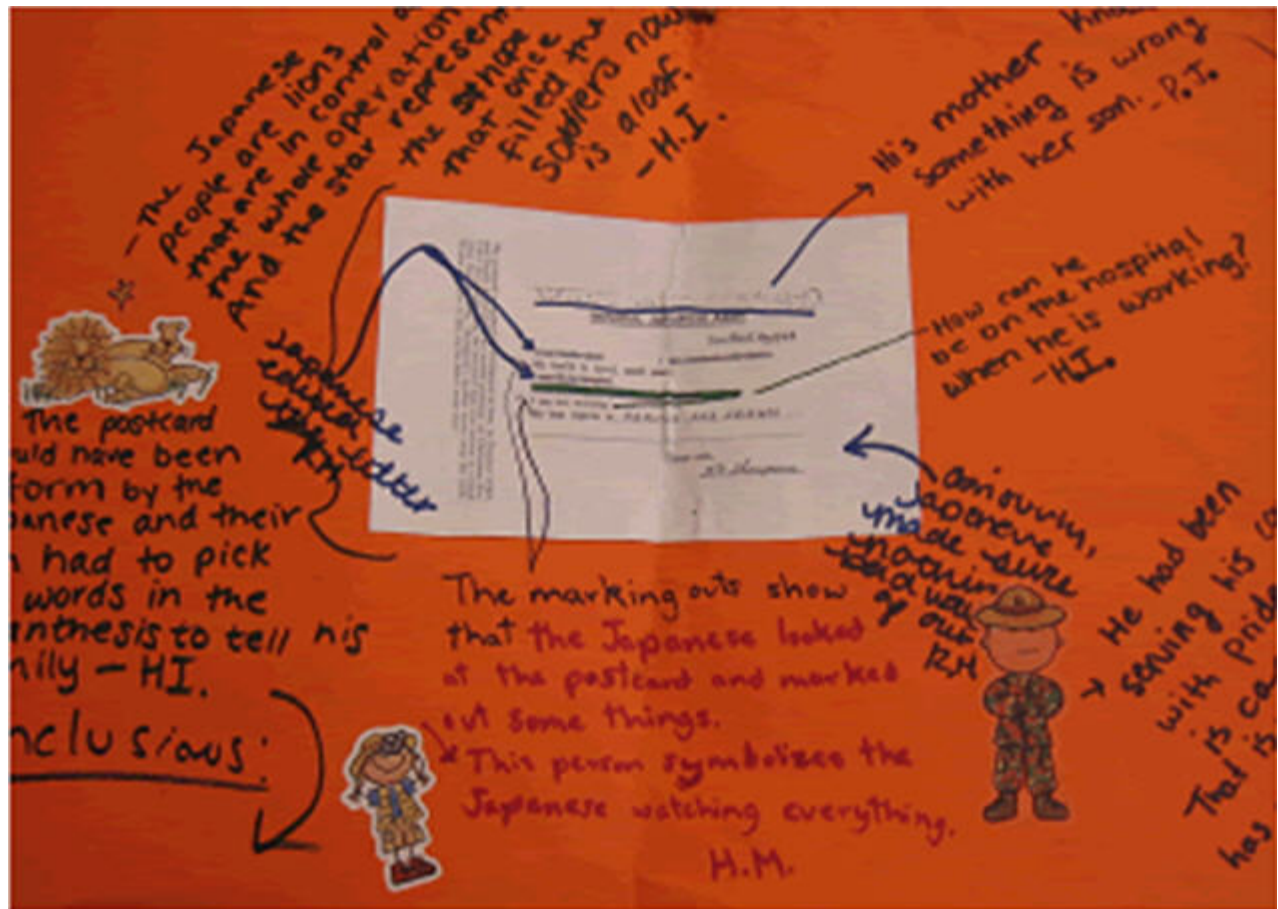


Figure 9. Photographic reproduction of seventh-graders' interactions with a primary document from *Lost Battalion* (Thompson, 1994).

### Student Authorship

In this phase, students place compare their discoveries to secondary accounts and the grand narrative. Depending upon their analyses, students may choose to add to existing historical narratives or to emphasize discrepancies. Students may create historical narratives describing single events, individuals, or individuals within an event. Perspective narrative development affords students the holistic, contextual view of history by processing of parts and wholes simultaneously through storied patterns (Caine & Caine, 1991; Sternberg, 2005). In addition to single narratives, students may construct larger narratives to

reflect the GUN, or grand unified narrative (Shemilt, 2000).

The historical narratives should reflect the students' newly acquired perspectives as supported by evidentiary material. Historical writing can prove challenging, especially for struggling students; thus, grouping strategies, peer mentoring, and individual writing conferences (one-on-one discussion with teacher) are recommended interventions. Teachers may consider multiple genres for the representation of student narratives such as art work, dramatic performances, illustrated children's books, monologues, multimedia presentations using PowerPoint or film development software, museum displays, musical scores, oral storytel-

ling, pictorial illustrations, and website development.

Derive conclusions.	Write historical narratives.	Represent historical narratives through art and multimedia.
Returning to the optical illusions (Figure 2), discuss in small- or large-groups the students' developing perspectives. Using Handout 2, have each student write his or her own perspective about their topic.	As a pre-writing exercise, prepare storyboards for the narrative (Figure 11). Write and edit several drafts of the narratives. Create illustrations to accompany each narrative. The final copy can be assembled into a class book with a title page and table of contents.	Using their written historical narratives, students will prepare an art or multimedia piece representing their conclusions. Possibilities include dramatic performances, poetry, drawings, sculpture, paintings, websites, Power Point presentations (highlighting findings), oral storytelling, digital documentaries, and musical slideshows.

Figure 10. Strategies for the student authorship phase for a sample unit on World War II.

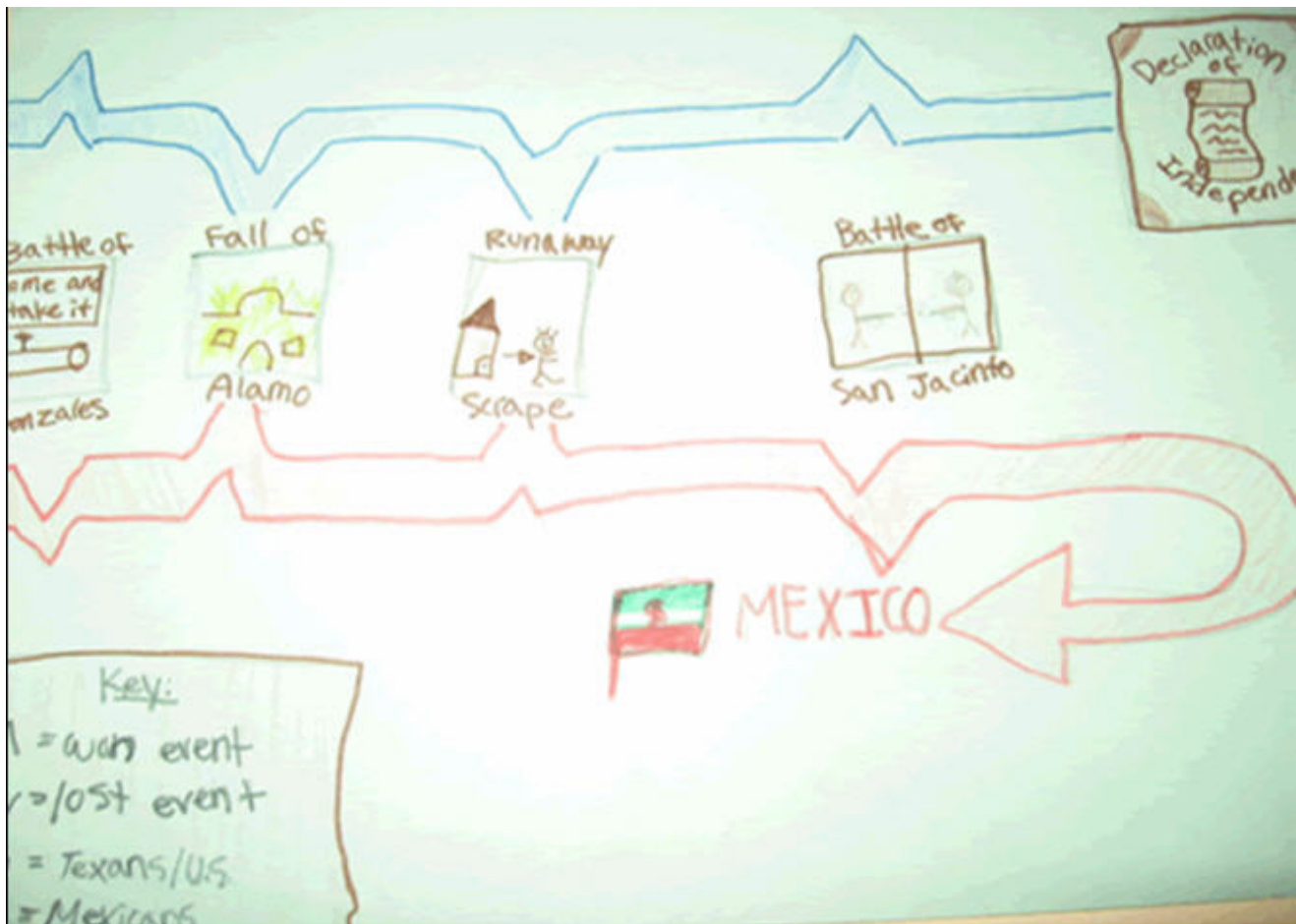


Figure 11. Seventh-grade student's sample of a storyboard from the Texas Revolution. The blue and red lines represent two different plot lines and how those plots interact.

### *Philosophical/Argumentative Analysis*

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

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

The student inquiries generated at the onset of research may be used as question prompts for argumentative or reflective essays. Also, the heuristic devices provided may serve as

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

The role of dialogue in the argumentative/philosophical phase enables students to participate in a learning community by reflecting upon their new perspectives, by considering the value of their learning experience, and by sharing their views in small- and large-group settings. In particular, students benefit from attempting to answer history’s probing questions, the charged issues, and the questions and interests they expressed throughout the research experience (Levstik & Barton, 2001).

Reflect on conclusions.	Compare conclusions.	Identify unanswered questions.
Write reflective essays about the conclusions derived from the students’ historical inquiries. Alternatively, small- and large-group discussions can occur.	Prepare students to serve on panel discussions. Each panel will represent the perspectives of the historical inquiry teams. Alternatively, individual students may play the role of a historian. The class will prepare questions and ask those questions to the members of each panel.	List the conclusions derived from the historical inquiries. Rate the conclusions according to the criteria: almost certainly true, probably true, partially true, unlikely, very unlikely. Identify gaps and uncertainties. Consider possibilities for additional research.

Figure 12. Strategies for philosophical/argumentative reflection phase for sample unit on World War II.



## Concluding Remarks

Recognizing empathy as “a power, an achievement, a process, a disposition” (Lee, 1983, p. 35) places high expectations on students; however, the benefits of exercises in empathy and historical thinking are compelling. The historical narrative inquiry model goes beyond existing scholarship by imparting structural organization through historical narrative frameworks. The goal of the model is to deepen the affective, the mental, and the value-forming impressions of history teaching’s aims through the inherent power of narrative, especially as that is related to innovative pedagogy and the highly generative powers of historical empathy.

By implementing the historical narrative inquiry model, instructors empower students to challenge historical truth. In an inquiring classroom, the students create a collaborative forum for the exchange of ideas, motivate one another through cooperation, and serve as peer models. The rigorous process of analyzing and comparing secondary and primary sources fosters critical perspectives. Through historical narrative inquiry, students deepen their historical knowledge, identify the steps of historical investigation, acquire research skills, and generate historical arguments. As students direct their own investigations, they acquire enriched historical understandings articulated through class discussion, writing, digital media, and art.

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