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ANALYZING STUDENTS' HISTORICAL THINKING SKILLS AT DIFFERENT GRADE
LEVELS

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ANALYZING STUDENTS' HISTORICAL THINKING

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Abstract

The purpose of this research study is to compare and contrast the historical thinking abilities of students in distinct age-groups through their use of disciplinary literacy skills. This was accomplished by having eight total subjects from four distinct student age-groups participate in a guided inquiry activity about the beginning of the Korean War. As they engaged in the inquiry activity, the participants' cognitive process and responses to the researcher's questions were recorded and transcribed and later analyzed. These transcriptions were juxtaposed with one another in search of any major patterns that emerged during the inquiries. Several patterns were identified including the use, or lack thereof, of important disciplinary literacy skills, logical fallacies, and differences in the information extracted from visual sources by the participants. Students' training for and experience with history appear as the key variable shaping efficiency. These patterns have implications for both current history and social studies teachers as well as educational researchers.

Key words: historical thinking, historical literacy, historical communication, inquiry, social studies education.

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Introduction

Historical thinking, as it is defined and used in this study, is the macroanalytic process that trained historians use when inquiring about the past. This means that historical thinking is a set mindset and epistemology that is based on the mental act of critical evaluation that materializes as a cognitive process. Characteristics of historical thinking include determining historical significance, thinking about ethical dilemmas, identifying continuity and change, causality, and the analysis of perspectives, both historical and of the historian themselves. This mindset influences the ways in which historians interact with historical documents and informational materials. Historical thinking manifests itself in this manner through a set of discipline-specific skills that will be referred to as *historical literacy*. This is microanalysis rather than macroanalysis. Historical literacy includes skills such as close reading, sourcing, contextualization, corroboration, and more. *Historical communication* is what emerges from this process of thinking and analyzing. This is where historians combine the evidence they found using their historical thinking and literacy skills with their own subjective view to create and argue for their interpretation of the past. This is the finished product of the process of *historical inquiry*. Inquiry is how historians use their thinking, literacy, and communication skills to question and research events or people of the past. Historical thinking is both its own distinct process as well as an umbrella term for how historians use literacy skills and communication styles to conduct inquiries of the past.

Using inquiry-based instruction in an educational setting is how teachers can best foster and build historical thinking skills in students today. Influenced by decades of academic research about the effectiveness of inquiry-based instruction, recent educational initiatives like the Common Core State Standards have placed an emphasis on critical thinking and literacy in

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education. This paper focuses on historical thinking as it relates to inquiry-based education and compares the cognitive processes of students at different grade levels as they go through a historical inquiry.

Literature Review

Too often in education today, students are not challenged in the right way during their history classes. Students are often asked to recall and recite facts from their textbooks or showcase rote memorization of names and dates (Lucey, Shifflet, & Weilbacher, 2014). Students are more often assessed on their content-knowledge rather than their ability to think, read, and write like historians do. The typical multiple-choice standardized history assessments are as much measures of how well students can remember what they read, or what their teacher lectured about, as they are indicators of complex critical thinking skills (VanSledright, 2014, p. 5). This is because, during the types of tests that dominate assessment in history classrooms, students are usually only selecting the correct answer out of several choices instead of using higher-order thinking skills to showcase their content understandings. According to the revised Bloom's Taxonomy, using higher-order and critical thinking leads to more complex thought in students (Krathwohl, 2002). In history classes, higher-order thinking would constitute using the process of inquiry and historical thinking skills to actively engage with content and build deep understandings as well as develop useful life skills. The traditional method of history instruction does not accomplish this and is a waste of the great opportunity for student growth that social studies classes provide (Lovorn, 2017). Teaching history using an inquiry-based approach is the better and more beneficial model for history education for students.

The first step in shifting the way history is taught, is to change the way students understand what history is. Students need to understand the concept of history the same way

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historians do. Educational researcher Sam Wineburg called this *historical thinking*, which he described as an unnatural act because it is complicated and uncommon in most schools (Wineburg, 1991; 2007; 2010). This cognitive process is imperative for students to understand if they are going to be able to think, read, and write like historians. Historical thinking is what historians have been trained to do in order to best understand what they study. This is not an easy thing for students to learn or consistently use, but it is necessary in order to effectively engage in the process of inquiry.

Once students understand the basics of historical thinking, then they can start to develop their historical literacy skills through the process of inquiry. This is where students use discipline-specific strategies to guide their interactions with history. Using these specific historical literacy skills and techniques has been shown to improve student's reading comprehension, synthesis, and argumentation writing skills. This way of teaching history also gives students better opportunities to make deep connections with the historical content, so they can retain what they learn far better than the way they are traditionally being taught.

Historical Thinking

Before teachers can ask their students to read and write historically, they must first understand the nature of history as a discipline. History is not a single, linear narrative of what happened in the past (Wineburg, 2007). History and the past are not one and the same. In reality, the past is a random series of endlessly complex and intertwined events with no real structure or form. Instead, history is the events and people that historians have deemed to be important or influential enough to study and write about as time has passed. History is the attempt at taking the factual information of the past and superimposing a logical and evidence-based narrative upon it (Nokes, 2017a). Historical narrative is open to the interpretation of the historian, and it is

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their job to write using the most effective logic which should be substantiated by the best available evidence. (Andrews & Burke, 2007; Nokes, 2017a; Monte-Sano & Harris 2012).

The ultimate goal of teaching history is not for students to have an encyclopedia –like knowledge of historical facts, but to give them the tools to synthesize their own interpretations and narratives that are grounded in evidence. Once students understand this about the discipline of history as a whole, then they can start to think historically.

Understanding the concept of historiography is another important concept for students to learn when they think about the interpretive nature of history. Historiography is the study of how historians have interpreted and written about a particular subject. The historiography of a significant event or person can change over time, as the interpretative works of different historians may converge and diverge based on their own study and research. The skill of historiographical analysis is important to incorporate into the classroom as it helps to develop the student's understandings of the interpretive nature of history (Lovern, 2014).

Teaching students historical thinking skills is simply put, teaching them to do consciously what historians do unconsciously (Andrews & Burke, 2007; Wineburg, 2007; 2010). Historians understand that they are, in a sense, detectives, who are looking to put together pieces to make sense of what happened in the past (Wineburg, 2010). In order to accomplish this, they use their historical approach of inquiry (Stripling, 2009; Swan & Grant, 2015). First, historians must come up with a question about the past they believe is important enough to be answered, one that is too complex to be answered by a quick internet search. Then, they must find a multitude of diverse sources that allow them to understand what factual events took place. Finally, they must take their critical analysis and evaluation of these sources and pieces of evidence and form an answer

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to their question. This approach is what separates simply thinking about what happened in the past and historical thinking.

A student's *epistemic stance* is how students view the content they are learning. In regard to history, Kimberly Reddy and Bruce VanSledright (2010) identified three possible epistemic stances that students can have while interacting with historical information. These three stances are a reflection of how students have been taught to interact with historical content, and therefore are an extension of their teacher or professor's own epistemic stance.

The first stance that students may have is an *objectivist* perspective (Reddy & VanSledright, 2010, Cited in Nokes, 2014). This is when students will accept the traditional historical narratives without a second thought (Nokes, 2014). This is best illustrated in Wineburg's 1991 study when high school students viewed textbooks as the most reliable sources of factual information when compared to primary source documents. Students who have an objectivist perspective will be likely to view history as a single linear narrative of what happened in the past rather than an interpretation or subjective narrative crafted by historians.

The second epistemological stance identified was the *subjectivist* perspective (Reddy & VanSledright, 2010). This is when students think of history as complete opinion (Nokes, 2014). While individuals who view history with this type of stance do understand that different people can have differing views of the same event and that the whole past is unknowable, they accept all viewpoints as equally valid (Nokes, 2014). This is most likely because people with a subjectivist perspective would say that everyone is entitled to their own viewpoint and therefore all accounts or interpretations are all to be believed (VanSledright, 2010, p. 65).

The final epistemic stance that students can have is the *criterialist* perspective (Reddy & VanSledright, 2010). This is the stance that trained historians would be most likely to have.

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Criterialists understand that much of history is interpretative and that people can have differing accounts of the same event. However, what sets criterialists apart from the other stances is that they are able to analyze and evaluate the validity and logic of each perspective's use of evidence to determine the most reliable account (Nokes, 2014).

Students who have an objectivist or subjectivist epistemic stance are unable to engage in historical thinking. This is because objectivists view traditional history narratives as unbiased facts rather than interpretations that are based in evidence. Subjectivists cannot evaluate differing historical perspectives because they believe that both sides are equally believable. These two perspectives do not understand that the information they will encounter cannot just simply be accepted or dismissed without further evaluation (Nokes, 2014). While student's epistemic stances are important to understand, it is equally important for teachers to know that they are learned perspectives that can be changed. Nokes' 2014 study showcased that elementary students learned to shift their thinking from objectivist or subjectivist to criterialist after being exposed to inquiry-based history education. This shows that a student's epistemic stance is a learned way of thinking that reflects the type of history education that they have been exposed to during their academic career.

In order to teach students to think historically and possess a criterialist perspective, they need to look at a source or event in a deeper and more nuanced way. In order to help students accomplish this, one approach that educators can use is teaching students how to use the Five Cs of Historical Thinking. The Five Cs are: Context, Complexity, Causality, Continuity and Change, and Contingency (Andrews & Burke, 2007). These five concepts are key to understanding the nature of history as a discipline and how to use historical thinking skills.

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Context is understanding what was going on in the world at the time the source was created, or the significant event was happening. This is closely tied to student's background knowledge. Understanding the context will give students a deeper understanding of how what happened came to be (Andrews & Burke, 2007, Wineburg, 2010; 2007). Complexity is understanding that events in the past did not occur in any set order or single narrative. There is far too much information available about the past to know everything that happened. However, it is the job of historians to make sense of the facts that they do find to come up with their own interpretations of history (Andrews & Burke, 2007, Nokes, 2017a; Monte-Sano & Harris 2012).

Causality is one way in which historians argue about their interpretations of the past. Historians must try and determine the main factors that contributed to causing certain events to happen. They do this using evidence from multiple historical sources that all may say different things and offer different explanations. Historians then must evaluate all the information they have gathered to synthesize their interpretation of what caused the event to happen (Andrews & Burke, 2007, Nokes, 2017a). Continuity and Change is the idea that while the world has grown and evolved drastically over time, some things have stayed the same (Andrews & Burke, 2007, Monte-Sano & Harris, 2012; Nokes, 2011). Continuity is knowing that certain aspects about the world have remained constant for hundreds of years. Major religions, holidays, some cultural norms, etc. have endured centuries. On the other hand, the concept of change is understanding that the world is constantly changing over time. People live in a very different place from 5-10 years ago, much less hundreds of years ago. Understanding how the world has changed, and yet how some parts of it has stayed the same is key to thinking historically.

Finally, contingency may be the most difficult concept in the Five Cs for students to grasp. Contingency is understanding that everything that has happened is dependent on many

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different previous events, which were dependent on more previous events, and it can go on forever (Andrews & Burke, 2007, Wineburg, 1991; 2007; 2010). Understanding that the past is so complex that if one single event happened differently, that the outcomes of any event may have changed is a challenging idea to wrap the mind around. Students should understand that the past is so extensive and complex that nobody is able to know everything that happened, but that historians can only work with what they have in terms of sources and documents as well as with their own worldview and subjective knowledge. The concept of Contingency is what separates history from being an exact science. Because the complexity of the past can never be recreated, historians can only argue that their interpretation is best, rather than absolute truth. The 5 Cs, as outlined here, are a good way for student to practice the mindset of historical thinking when interacting with the past. This will help them process and critically analyze the past like a historian would.

Another important historical thinking skill is the ability to determine historical significance. Identifying what is significant is an important skill that allows students to focus on information they will find more useful than other information. What constitutes significance can differ from person to person however (Lévesque, 2005; Lesh, 2011). The criteria of historical significance identified by Stephane Lévesque (2005) is Importance, Profundity, Quantity, Durability, and Relevance.

Importance deals with how influential the event, person, or perspective was (Lévesque, 2005). Students must identify how large the impact or effects of the event were and why that might be important to think about in their analysis. Profundity takes into account how deeply people were affected by the event or person (Lévesque, 2005). Were the impacts not felt for very long or did they change lives deeply? Quantity is simply how many people were affected by the

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historical subject (Lévesque, 2005). Durability refers to how long the impacts of the event or person were felt. How long did the effects last? Finally, relevance means how much does the event or person have to do with the historian or student's inquiry (Lévesque, 2005). If an event or person is relevant to the inquiry, then they are more significant. All of these factors are taken into account by students and historians alike. However, the answers to these questions about significance can still be subjective based on the perspective of the individual or the purpose of the inquiry.

Students take these factors into account during their inquiry of an event, person, or historical document to determine how significant it is. Lévesque also found in this study that student's own subjectivity and background experiences heavily influenced their ideas of significance. This is an example of how the historian's own viewpoint and subjectivity, Bruce Lesh called this "historical baggage" (2011, p.145) is something that plays a major role in the historical thinking abilities of all people.

Historical Inquiry and the C3 Framework

In schools, students are required to think like scientists in science class, mathematicians in math class, or writers in English classes. However, students in traditional history education classes have not traditionally been asked to act and process information like historians would. In the sciences, students are taught to use the scientific method to hypothesize answers to questions and solve problems. In mathematics, students are taught basic principles and formulas and expected to use them to solve equations. If teachers used the same process in those classes as they do in traditional history education, they would have students memorize the answers to questions so they could then repeat them on tests. The passage of educational reforms like Common Core have shifted social studies education more toward using critical discipline-

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specific cognition like historical thinking (Ercikan & Seixas, 2015). However, there is still more room to grow and improve.

There are basic epistemological differences between the disciplines (Nokes, 2017b; Shanahan et al., 2016). Science and mathematics are all about the pursuit of the definitive answer. This is because they are able to recreate their experiments and problems exactly the same way every time, which produce the same conclusion. In history, the ability to recreate and reexperience the whole past is impossible. All the facts of what happened in the past can never be known. Historical inquiry and investigation are dependent upon the individual historians and what types of questions they ask and seek to answer. The subsequent research then is reliant on what evidence is available and historical artifacts are carefully preserved only rarely. Historians depend on often old documents and sources to get a glimpse of the past (Nokes, 2017b). They use these pieces of the proverbial puzzle to piece together their own explanations and answers to questions that they can never know the full answer to. Historians cannot recreate the past; they can only interpret it using their own research and subjectivity.

For too long, historical inquiry has been avoided by many teachers in favor of content knowledge-based education in the social studies (Reisman, 2012). This has led to students thinking history class is boring, not relevant to their lives, and all about remembering important names and dates. Students are usually only required to read out of the textbook, or other secondary interpretations, thinking that these texts are “just reporting the facts” (Wineburg, 1991, p. 501). Instead, students need to understand that their textbooks are their own historical interpretations of the past, full of their own biases and narratives.

Historical inquiry is the equivalent of the scientific method for social studies. It is an active learning process that fosters critical thought and deep understandings of historical content

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in those who participate in it (Stripling, 2009, Van West, 2008). It teaches students to ask important questions, read and critically analyze multitudes of historical documents, and finally craft their own evidence-based answers (Swan & Grant, 2015). Decades of educational research shows that teaching history using this method of inquiry improves student's content understandings, critical thinking skills, and writing abilities (De La Paz, 2005; Shanahan et al, 2016; Wiley & Voss, 1999; Young & Leinhardt, 1998,). Inquiry based education has been proven to be the best and most effective form of history instruction.

The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) is the largest professional development organization in the United States dedicated to social studies education. The NCSS has developed their C3 Framework through years of educational research on the most effective methods of instruction. The C3 Framework's goal is to prepare students for College, Careers, and Civic Life based on the acquisition and application of knowledge (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers [NGA & CCSSO], 2010; National Council for the Social Studies [NCSS] 2013). The framework has students critically read and analyze information in order to make informed decisions, which is an invaluable skill for student's real lives. The ultimate goal of all social studies education to prepare our students for their lives after high school and to be active citizens in our country. The C3 Framework closely mirrors the process of historical inquiry.

The first step in the historical inquiry process is developing important questions (Nokes, 2017a; Stripling, 2009; Swan & Grant, 2015). Historians know that important questions about what happened in the past cannot be answered by Google (Nokes, 2017b). Students learn to ask higher-order thinking questions based on what we do not fully understand about things that happened, questions that interest students and engage them with the content. These questions are

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important by being relevant to student's lives and whose answers can help students better understand the world they live in. The next step in the inquiry process is historical literacy. Students collect and analyze historical documents in search of evidence (Swan & Grant, 2015; Van West, 2008). Each document provides students with a small part of the picture. It is their job to collect enough small parts to develop their own answers. The final step in this process is the communication of student's historical interpretations (Swan & Grant, 2015). This is where students develop and argue their evidence driven answers to their questions (Monte-Sano & Harris, 2012; Nokes, 2017a; Shanahan et al, 2016; Wineburg, 2007).

Throughout this entire historical inquiry process, students are actively engaging with the content. They are constantly asking and answering their own questions, building personal connections, and synthesizing interpretations of complex events. They are developing their critical thinking, analysis skills, and using higher order thinking to build deep understandings. This is the same way the scientific method works in science classes and has been proven to be beneficial to students. Similar to using the scientific method, teacher's use of historical thinking and the historical inquiry process in the classroom is the most effective and beneficial way to teach the discipline for students of all ages.

The C3 framework is made up of four domains that are parallel to the process of inquiry (CCSSO, 2012; NGA & CCSSO, 2010). The first domain is about questioning. Students are to develop the questions they will ask and then plan out their inquiry. The second domain is applying disciplinary tools and concepts. This step can be used in all types of social studies classrooms, but for history, students will use historical thinking and discipline-specific literacy skills to understand the nature of their inquiry (CCSSO, 2012; NGA & CCSSO, 2010). The third domain is gathering and evaluating sources, then developing claims using evidence. This step is

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when students are using their historical literacy skills to read and analyze sources for evidence. Students then piece together their found evidence and synthesize interpretations and narratives (CCSSO, 2012; NGA & CCSSO, 2010). The fourth and final domain is communicating conclusions and call to action. In this last step of the C3 inquiry process, students argue in favor of their interpretation and decide what actions should be taken as a result (CCSSO, 2012; NGA & CCSSO, 2010). Students have pieced together their narrative and now are looking to act in response.

The NCSS C3 Framework has been developed over years of research and studies and has proven to be best practice (CCSSO, 2012; NGA & CCSSO, 2010). This framework is analogous the process of historical inquiry and can be used in any history classroom at any level of education. Students develop their questions, use historical thinking and literacy skills to search for answers and evidence in many different sources, and finally communicate their findings in a persuasive way. The goal of the Common Core education reforms that have been adopted by many states is to introduce more complex thinking processes and skills like historical literacy into classrooms (Ercikan & Seixas, 2015). Many other professional development organizations have endorsed using the inquiry-based approach for social studies education outlined by the C3 Framework, including the National Council for History Education, the American Historical Association, the Center for Civic Education and more (CCSSO, 2012; NGA & CCSSO, 2010).

Social constructivist theory states that learners assemble understandings through synthesizing new and old experiences and interactions with both teachers and their peers (Doolittle & Hicks, 2003; Kohlmeier & Saye, 2019). Students learn to develop historical thinking and literacy skills as a reflection of how they have been taught. If a student shows little to no signs of historical thinking, this does not mean that they are incapable, rather they have not

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learned to use that specific cognitive process. As students grow and develop, they are able to complete cognitive tasks more effectively and efficiently, as Jean Piaget first argued long ago.

According to Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development (as cited in Belland, Glazewski, & Richardson, 2007) students generally develop the ability to think and reason more abstractly around the age of 12 to 13 once they reach the Formal Operational stage of development. This means that typically once students reach middle school, they start to gain the cognitive abilities to create evidence-based arguments in order to support their own hypotheses and interpretations (Belland, Glazewski, & Richardson, 2007). These are skills that develop over time as students practice them more and more in the classroom. This is why implementation of pedagogical styles like the C3 Framework are important. Students need to practice critical thinking skills in schools so that they have these skills to use later in life.

Historical Literacy

When teaching our students about how historians read, we must first look at what historians read. Once historians have a question about an event or person they would like answered, they must find historical sources to find their answers. Historians primarily work with two types of sources, primary and secondary (Monte-Sano & Harris, 2012; Nokes, 2011; 2017; Wineburg & Martin, 2009). Primary sources can be many different things, but what makes it a primary source is that it was made while the event that is being researched occurred or is a first-hand account (in the case of later interviews or memoirs). Newspaper clippings detailing the event from the day before, interviews with witnesses, or photographs and maps of an event are all examples of primary sources. Primary sources are the lifeblood of historical research. They are the purest forms of history and give historians the best tools possible to gather as much information as available to make their own interpretations.

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While primary sources are the best things to find for historical research, they are also often much more difficult to read and interpret (Breakstone & Smith, 2013; Nokes, 2011; Wineburg & Martin, 2009). Often, students struggle to effectively read and comprehend these types of sources at first, because they can be written in a much different vernacular than the students are used to (Van West, 2008; Wineburg & Martin, 2009). For example, reading a textbook that was published three years ago is much easier than reading the famous *Federalist Papers* from the time of the American Revolution. But what makes primary sources difficult to understand for some students, is also what makes them perfect for historians to use. They are the best way for historians to get a glimpse into the past, even if it is only a tiny one (Breakstone & Smith, 2013).

The mere presence of primary sources in the history classroom, however, does not necessarily mean that historical thinking is taking place (Lesh, 2011, p.141). The process of students critically thinking about and analyzing the past will not automatically take place based upon the materials you have them work with. Instead, the ways in which the students question the individual sources is what constitutes the usage of historical thinking and literacy skills (Lesh, 2011, p.141). For history instruction to foster effective higher-order thinking, content and materials that are used must be married with effective pedagogical techniques.

Historians will often also utilize secondary sources during their research. These types of sources were created and written after the event happened, often by other historians themselves. School textbooks, research papers, academic history texts are all examples of secondary sources (Nokes, 2017b). Secondary sources are interpretations of the past made by historians that can be both argued for and against. The strength of these types of sources are that they are often much easier to read and understand for students. This is because whoever wrote the source has

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already gone through the process of crafting a single-narrative and has made sense of what happened (Wineburg, 1991). However, these types of sources are shaped by the author's biases and individual goals for communicating their message (Nokes, 2017b). They possess a narrative and carefully crafted argument within them already. For historians looking to answer their own questions and make their own arguments, primary sources are the better resource.

Once students understand the differences between a primary and secondary source, they can start to research and read. However, reading and analyzing a primary source like a historian is different than reading a novel for enjoyment. This is a skill that will be difficult for students at first, because students are often used to learning “a canonized narrative” (Nokes, 2017b, p. 7). They are usually told to take the given information, often presented through lecture or textbooks, at face-value (Reisman, 2012). Instead, historians approach every source they read with a “healthy dose of skepticism” (Shanahan et al., 2016, p. 243) This means that historians understand that the majority of both primary and secondary sources are biased in nature and created for a specific purpose. Understanding the sourcing information and the ability to recognize present bias is an important skill for students to use and develop. Utilizing this skill allows students to recognize the potential bias in a source and account for it in their analysis and comprehension of the information.

While reading historical sources and documents, students are engaging in five different discipline-specific reading strategies. First, students must pay attention to the sourcing of the document (Wineburg, 2010). This step has the students identify if the source is primary or secondary, who the author is, and has students consider the purpose of the source. This step keeps students from taking what the document is saying at face-value. They are assessing how trustworthy this source can be (Reisman, 2012). Next, students must take note of the context of

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the source (Wineburg, 2010). The context of a source is determined by what going on in the world at the time of its creation. Understanding context is connecting background knowledge to the source which helps form a deeper understanding of the document for students. Now students will actually begin to read the source. In this step, students use close-reading strategies to interpret what the document is saying (Wineburg, 2010). In this step, student can annotate, take notes, and make connections. Students may need to read the source several times in order to comprehend the document as best they can. This step will be the most difficult for students, especially when they start working with older primary source documents for the first time. However, by practicing this skill repeatedly, students will steadily start to improve their reading comprehension and become more efficient readers.

Once students are finished reading, they will need to analyze the source for what was missing. Wineburg calls this reading the silences (2010). This step has students think about what perspectives, events, or ideas the author purposely or coincidentally does not mention. This will force students to make connections back to the sourcing information about who created the source and for what purpose. Students will need to think critically about what might have been left out of the source and why in order to determine its validity and reliability. The final step in reading historically is to look at other corroborating sources (Wineburg, 2010). Analyzing one historical document is not enough to come up with your own unique interpretation of the event or person being researched. Single sources usually only tell part of the story, so students will need to look at several others in order to understand the full scope of available information. Students will need to look at what each document is saying, along with the similarities and differences between sources. By doing this, students will begin to sort out what the verifiable facts in the documents were and what information may be opinionated or untrustworthy. By practicing all

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these steps, students will have the tools to read any type or number of historical sources in order to gather the best information they can to make their own interpretation.

Historical Communication

Historical communication is when students will make their case in favor of their interpretations of their research (Monte-Sano & Harris, 2012; Nokes, 2017a; Shanahan et al, 2016). This could be writing a research paper, making a presentation, talking with an instructor, or just discussing the past with a classmate at the lunch table. In all of these examples, students are using the same process that historians use, only the format of presentation changes. After historians have collected all the data they can from their research and reading, they piece together their own interpretation. They decide, based on evidence, what explanation or answer makes the most sense to them. Historians use evidence and logic to construct their arguments (Shanahan et al, 2016; Swan & Grant, 2015; Wineburg, 2007).

Due to the nature of the discipline, all historical communication, apart from purely informational sources, is persuasive and argumentative writing (Nokes, 2017a). This is an important fundamental difference between history and other disciplines. Science and mathematics are much more black-and white, in pursuit of definitive answers. Since history is interpretative, historians are writing about how and why their interpretation is the best (Nokes, 2017a). They do this by using evidence-based claims to piece together a single narrative in order to persuade others that they are correct.

Many times, while students are preparing to piece together their interpretations, they will realize that they are still missing a few pieces of the proverbial puzzle. Either they may feel like there is part of the story missing or multiple sources give contradicting evidence. This is completely natural, as they can only rely on what their sources tell them. Students must then use

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a “historical imagination” (Shanahan et al. 2016, p. 243) to fill in the blanks in their narrative. This skill is important, because it asks students to think critically about what they have learned and synthesize explanations using evidence (Wineburg, 1991). They must use their historical thinking, inquiry skills, and reading abilities to decide which evidence they believe to be best, which sources they use and, based on that evidence, piece together a narrative (Stripling, 2009).

Using historical thinking, students will understand that, because we can never hope to fully understand the past, that all historical interpretations are contestable and will always be. Different students could look at all the same sources and documents but still come up with different interpretations. For example, everyone who witnesses a car accident has a different perspective about whose fault it is. This is also the reason why historians have been arguing for decades about the causes of World War I, or if it was ethical for the United States to use the Atomic Bombs against Japan to end World War II. Historians understand that their interpretations of history are debatable, the quality of which is determined by the evidence and logic the claims are based upon.

Summary

Historical inquiry is how students develop discipline-specific literacy skills. This process of learning is informed by the student’s ability to think historically. This means that students are able to think about the past in a similar way to historians. Students then plan their inquiry, where they learn to ask questions that are of a historical significance. They begin their research by using discipline-specific reading comprehension strategies. Students look through all types of primary and secondary sources in order to collect enough evidence to make their own interpretation of history that answers to their original question. They must critically analyze each source, looking for bias or existing narrative that may distort that view of the past and take it into

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account when they make their conclusions. Finally, students synthesize their answer using evidence-based logic and reasoning. This is where they are communicating their unique historical narrative that makes the most sense to them, based on the results of their inquiry. This method of historical education is more effective than the traditional, content-knowledge based method that is more prevalent in classrooms today. This is because using historical literacy is a more actively engaging process for students. Inquiry allows students ask and answer their own questions, rather than memorizing the answers to the teacher's. Students build deep connections with the content, which leads to better understanding of broad and complex historical concepts.

Using this method of instruction has proven to improve students' reading comprehension and writing abilities. This is because students are using discipline-specific strategies that require them to close-read a variety of documents and sources in order to find good evidence. Then, students synthesize narratives and interpretations based on the evidence they find. Finally, this method of historical education is endorsed by the National Council for Social Studies and is mirrored by their C3 framework. The NCSS is a professional development organization dedicated to social studies and made up of educational scholars and researchers that understand how and why this way of teaching history is the most effective. Historical inquiry is teaching students historical content by having them think and act like professional historians.

Methodology

The purpose of this study is to explore and examine the historical thinking of students at different age groups. This was done through the analysis of their cognition and use of disciplinary literacy skills in an inquiry process. This study is not a reflection the intellectual

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abilities or capacity for growth of each participant. Instead, this is a study of how different groups of students have been taught and trained to interact with historical content.

To accomplish this, the participants of this study were asked to complete a short inquiry activity about the beginning of the Korean War. The students were asked to answer the central question: "Who started the Korean War?" Each participant was given six documents to use to formulate their answer to this question (see Appendix A). These documents included a variety of sources that students could come into contact within a typical history class. The study was designed so that all groups of students received the same information and were asked the same questions during their participation. Students' cognition, which is a reflection of how they have been taught, can be compared amongst the different student groups. The participant's performance during the study is a manifestation of their experiences in history classes and might showcase how much traditional and inquiry-based instruction they have been exposed to. The audio of each volunteer's thoughts during the inquiry and answers to the researcher's questions were recorded and transcribed for later analysis.

Data Sample

The data sample for this research study was comprised of two volunteers from four different levels of education for a total of eight participants. The four student groups were middle school, high school, undergraduate college, and graduate level college students. One middle schooler was a twelve-year-old sixth grader while the other was 13 and in the eighth grade. The high school students were both sophomores with one being fifteen and the other sixteen. The undergraduate college students were twenty-two years old and both in their final semester of their senior years. One participant majored in history while the other majored in political science. Finally, the graduate students both were pursuing a master's degree in history. One graduate

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student was twenty-three while the other was a thirty-year-old former high school history and English teacher with more than seven years of experience as a full-time educator.

The groups were set up this way so that a broad range of ages and experience in history classes were represented during this study. The groups were not meant to be representative of these specific student populations as a whole. Instead, they were designed to get a snapshot of what students at different ages and experiences have been trained to do. Some participants were referred to the researcher through teachers and family members while others reached out after seeing a social media message requesting volunteers for this study.

Content

The Korean War was chosen as the historical theme for the content of this inquiry activity for a specific reason. It was critical for the design of this study that the participants' cognitive process and use of historical literacy skills was the main thing being assessed. If the content was something that the participants had a high level of familiarity with, then that background information could have affected their responses during the inquiry activity. The Korean War is an often-overlooked conflict in both World and American history classes. Sandwiched between the end of World War II and the Vietnam War, Korea is not widely studied in history classrooms at any age level. This made it perfect to be the content used in the inquiry activity. It was unlikely that the participants had learned much about the beginning of the Korean War before the study so their cognitive process could be assessed without being skewed by previous learning.

Before students examined any of the historical sources, they were given a small amount of background information and context about the beginning of the Korean War. This included

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factual and unbiased information that will give participants a basis on knowledge to work off of during the inquiry activity. The information given is shown in Appendix B. This background and contextual information were given so that each participant would have an idea of the historical context of the start of the Korean War. However, the information given was not so much that their individual perspective or thinking would have been influenced during their inquiry.

Participants were then be given a set of documents to analyze using the disciplinary thinking and reasoning skills that they have been taught to use with the aim of answering the central question of “Who started the Korean War?” These were a compilation of primary and secondary sources specifically about the beginning of the Korean War. Documents A and B are examples of text-based secondary sources. They provide examples of the traditional narratives concerning the beginning of the Korean War from the North Korean and American perspectives, respectively. Document C is a text-based primary source that shows internal communication by the North Koreans regarding the events of June 25th, 1950. Document D is a message to the public from President Harry S. Truman that shows the American argument for intervention in the Korean Peninsula. Documents E and F are visual sources, the former being an American political cartoon and the latter a Chinese propaganda poster that showcase attitudes of the two sides about the nature of the Korean War. These sources can be used to reveal the nuance, perspective, and meaning behind a complex world event, if the student has been trained to effectively scrutinize historical documents using discipline-specific literacy skills.

These historical documents were carefully selected to ensure variety off source as well as variance in difficulty. There were six total sources that included two textbook sources (A and B), two text-based primary source documents (C and D), and two visual documents (E and F). Appropriate sourcing information was also provided to the students along with each source;

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however, it was in small print at the bottom of the back page of each document. This is so that source information is available to students, but they have to look for it if they plan use it in their analysis. Students were also provided with a glossary that contained definitions of words or acronyms that they may find useful while looking over the documents. Finally, Documents C and D, the text-based primary sources, were also rewritten as abridged documents so that they were accessible for participants at all age groups. All documents, sourcing information, and supports are shown in Appendix A.

These handouts were chosen because they outline a broad range of types of primary and secondary sources that a student may have come into contact with during a classroom setting. The selected sources of information purposefully are conflicting with one another. This is so that the participants are forced to decide which source(s) they chose to believe and why. This was part of the assessment of their historical thinking and disciplinary literacy skills.

Participants looked through and analyzed the given sources in order to answer the researcher's questions. Each participant in each group was given the exact same background information and documents to use so that the difference between their responses is shown through their individual cognitive process and historical thinking skills rather than their familiarity with the subject.

Questions

Before participants begin the study, they were asked three questions aimed at understanding of their academic background and familiarity with historical thinking as well as assessing their epistemic stance. The first question was "In your opinion, what is history?" This question was used to try and assess the participant's epistemic stance by asking them to verbalize

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their understanding of the discipline of history. From their response, the participant could have been determined to have an objectivist, subjectivist, or criterialist epistemic stance. Next, students were asked “What do historians do?” to assess their knowledge about and background experience with historical thinking. Finally, participants were asked “What do you know about the Korean War?” This final question assessed their level of familiarity with the topic and if it could possibly skew the results of the inquiry. If a participant had previous experience studying the Korean War, then their responses during the study may have been affected by that background knowledge.

Participants were then asked to use the given sources to answer the central question of the inquiry which is “Who started the Korean War?”. The participants were asked to use a *think aloud* strategy to illuminate their thinking process as they work through each document. This means that instead of working silently or attempting to write their answers or thoughts down, the participants vocalized their thoughts and answers to all questions. This was to allow the researcher to track and analyze their cognitive process as the participants analyzed the sources and answered questions. By using the think aloud technique, the researcher will be able to focus on the contents of the student’s thoughts rather than just being able to look at the conclusions they reach.

For each document, the participants were asked to identify the main ideas expressed in the text or by the picture as well as how the document could be used to answer the central question. Once they did this for each document, they were asked to provide a final answer to the central question based on all the information presented in the inquiry activity. They were then asked several supplemental questions that prompted responses about how they used specific historical thinking and literacy skills. Finally, each participant was asked academic background

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questions aimed at assessing their experiences in their history classes and with inquiry activities. The questions that the researcher asked during the inquiry, as well as their intended assessment, are located in Appendix C.

Participants' responses were recorded and transcribed for further analysis after the inquiry activity was completed. An example of a completed transcript is located in Appendix D. The researcher analyzed student responses for evidence of historical thinking and literacy skills. Ultimately, the researcher compared and contrasted the responses of the participants in order to identify any significant patterns that emerged.

Limitations of the Study

There were several limitations of this study that are related to its methodology. First, the data pool of potential participants was limited to a small geographical area in central Illinois. These participants were comparably ethnically homogenous as seven of eight were white and only one being a from a minority group. This is related to the small data pool as the area these students are from is not very ethnically diverse. Next, the selected data sample was limited as there were only two participants for each student group. The data sample was selected by participants who volunteered for the study and they are not necessarily accurate representations of their respective student groups. Some participants, particularly the middle school students, had very little experience with this form of inquiry activity and a limited historical schema. Some of the older, more experienced participants, had a larger knowledge and experience base to work from which aided them during the inquiry activity. This study was designed to compare the historical thinking skills of the participants at a single moment in time and is not representative of their capacity for growth in this area. Finally, this study was also conducted independently and

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as a result there was no second rater to give their thoughts about the information that was collected from the participants' interviews.

Findings

The participants in this study showcased their epistemological stances with their own personal definitions of history. They were asked the questions “What is History?” and “What do historians do?” before participating in the Korean War inquiry activity. Student responses could have been grouped as either objectivist, subjectivist, or criterialist (Nokes, 2014; Reddy & VanSledright, 2010). An *objectivist* perspective would mean that the participant viewed history as a single and infallible narrative (Nokes, 2014). *Subjectivist* would mean that the student viewed history as having many different perspectives that are all equally true depending upon the historian's viewpoint (Nokes, 2014; Reddy & VanSledright, 2010). Finally, the *criterialist* perspective is defined by the understanding that history is an interpretation of past events that is supported through evidence (Reddy & VanSledright, 2010). Their responses tended to follow the pattern that students with a higher level of experience in history classes (G1, G2, UG2) had a more nuanced and complex understanding about what history really is. They demonstrated their academic accomplishments and training as they articulated that history is an interpretation of events that happened in the past. This pattern of thinking is consistent with those who have a criterialist epistemic stance (Nokes, 2014; Reddy & VanSledright, 2010). The other participants generally said that history was a recording of important events that happened in the past, which would be considered an objectivist stance (Nokes, 2014).

This pattern can be seen in the responses of the participants to the questions “What is history?” and “What do historians do?” Students who are objectivists (MS1, MS2, HS1, HS2, UG1) showed a pattern of responses to these questions that were similar to “Important events

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that happened in the past” (HS1) or “Recording of past people’s ideals and the things that have happened” (HS2). These participants also asserted that the role of historians was to understand the past more (UG1) or research and try to explain the events of the past (MS1). Some of the responses from these participants show elements of the criterialist perspective, however they do not quite exhibit the necessary qualities for that perspective that are present in the responses of the other students. One example of this can be seen in UG1’s interview. When asked about the job of a historian, this participant said, “Maybe question some past history to try to like understand it more or maybe develop new ideas about the past that maybe weren't so accurate and make it more accurate.” This response may sound like a criterialist at first because the participant is saying that the historian is trying to create new ideas. However, the emphasis on the idea that historians are only trying to understand history and trying to make it more accurate shows that this participant is focusing on the reporting of factual information rather than creating new understandings and narratives that are informed by evidence (Nokes, 2014). This student is attempting to use a criterialist perspective, but it falls short of meeting the necessary criteria.

Meanwhile, both graduates and the history major undergraduate students showcased their understanding that history is an interpretation of the past in their own definitions of history. They also identified that it is the job of historians to research past events and create their own interpretations of history. Both of these responses are consistent with a criterialist epistemic stance (Nokes, 2014; Reddy & VanSledright, 2010).

During the post-activity questions, all participants were asked to identify which documents seemed to be the most and least historically significant using their own understanding and criteria for significance (Lévesque, 2005; Lesh, 2011). This is one of the few literacy skills that each student was successfully able to use and provides the opportunity to compare each

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participant's response to the others. The overall pattern in this case was that most of the participants agreed on which documents were the most significant, but the core reasoning behind their responses was different. Many of the participants chose Document C (G1, G2, MS1, HS2, UG1, UG2) as the most significant while they also chose either A (MS1, HS2, UG1, UG2) or E (G1, G2, HS1) as the least significant. While these answers were similar, the reasoning behind much of them varied.

The similarities in the documents selected as the most historically significant can be attributed to one of two main reasons that the participants chose them. Document C was chosen as the most historically significant by the greatest number of participants while Document D was the second most chosen. Some participants even chose both C and D together. This stands out because these were the only two text-based primary source documents used in the inquiry activity. One pattern of explanation as to why Document C was the most significant was that the participant's own definitions of significance would place a high value on primary sources. This is likely because they want to understand what the perspective of each country was, and Document C seemed to be the clearest depiction of what was going on from a North Korean perspective. This is the perspective that a historian would most likely take as well (G2 even references this in their interview). Being able to see directly what the North Korean government was thinking and communicating within itself seemed to provide the most historically significant information because it was "not manufactured" (G2) or meant for public consumption like Document D was.

The other reason that the participants chose Document C was that it seemed to contain the most specific information (UG1) or that it was a "direct quotation" (MS1). This group of participants' definitions of significance could likely be defined as containing the most

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information or details. These participants were trying to determine significance based on their own criteria; however, they have the flawed viewpoint that direct quotes or specific information is the most important aspect of a source. This is an example of unsound historical reasoning (Bickford et. al., 2020). The difference between these two definitions of significance is that one is based on understanding the ways in which historians look at the past. Historians are not necessarily concerned with specific details or looking for only factual information. Often, they are more interested in unfiltered information that gives them an idea of the individual perspectives of those who they are analyzing (Nokes, 2017b). The other definition of significance comes from trying to get the most information out of a text or historical document. This may lead to students thinking that something is more significant simply because it is a primary source or a direct quote from a historical source (Nokes, 2011; Wineburg, 2001).

Two ways in which the responses of the participants differed were the use (or lack thereof) of the historical literacy skills of sourcing and corroboration. In the responses from the participants, there was very little evidence of these skills in many of the participants' responses. Sourcing and corroboration, much like other historical literacy skills, are processes that students are taught how to use and must be repeated multiple times before a student becomes trained to automatically use them when interacting with historical document (Bickford et. al., 2020; Nokes, 2011; 2017b; Wineburg, 2001). The lack of evidence of them in this inquiry activity is most likely due to some of the participants not having much practice using these skills in their own classroom before. This is further supported by the fact that of the few times that sourcing and corroboration were used, they were used by the participants with the most experience in upper level history courses (G1, G2, and UG2).

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The clearest example of using sourcing in the participants interviews came from the interview with UG2:

See, that's using the Korean calendar, I believe the North Korean calendar. So this is probably more sympathetic towards the North Korean cause. Oh, yeah. Well, I didn't see which. Yeah, this is a North Korean history textbook. Okay. Yeah, that makes sense. Yeah, overall, this one obviously being a North Korean textbook. It's going to have a large bias to where it's going to portray them as being the victims and stuff. Whether or not this is true and you know, is debatable. But definitely from their perspective, you know, it's making them seem like the victims.

In this excerpt, you can see that once UG2 saw the sourcing information for Document A, it completely changed the way they interpreted the document. UG2 was able to gain more understanding about the document from that additional information. This use of sourcing would score a 5 on the Criticality Rubric (shown in Appendix E) as cited in Bickford et. al. (2020). UG2 took it a step further for the rest of their participation in the inquiry activity by reading the sourcing information before looking at each document. G1, G2, and UG1 also used examples of sourcing in their responses during their interviews with varying frequencies. G2 had multiple examples while G1 and UG1 only had 1 or 2. The younger students, however, did not utilize the sourcing information of the documents at all. Despite that information being available to them, they all scrolled passed it on their way to the next document. This ultimately hurt the participants' analysis of the documents because some participants made judgements about the credibility or message of the documents without understanding where it came from. This information is critical in order to fully understand a document as it can reveal intent, potential bias, and contextual information of the source (Nokes, 2017; Reisman 2012; Wineburg, 2001; 2010). MS1 used some of the language in the documents to identify the perspective of the source, which is on the right track, but they did not look at the sourcing information which would have made that easier to do. This would be a two on the Criticality Rubric because the participant

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is trying to engage in the skill, but they do not reference the specific sourcing information (Bickford et. al., 2020; Nokes, 2017).

Much of this is also true for the use of corroboration, which is making connections between the documents (Nokes, 2011; 2017a; Sexias & Morton, 2012; Wineburg, 2001; 2010). This skill was used even less than sourcing was. UG2 did this when they compared the bias that was present in Documents A and B, and MS1 did this when they identified that Documents B and C had conflicting reports of who were the first ones to attack the other side. These are the only two examples of participants corroborating information between sources. Those examples would only be scored as fours rather than fives on the criticality rubric because they are limited comparisons between the sources (Bickford et. al, 2020; Nokes, 2017). The other participants would just move on from one document to the next without really taking the time to reflect on the convergences and divergences in the information found. This is especially evident in this particular guided inquiry because the documents were chosen specifically because they conflict with one another. It would have been more effective for participants to corroborate the information found between the sources to try and identify the differences or similarities between them in order to gain a clearer picture of what was happening on the Korean Peninsula in June 1950.

In some of the participant's interviews, particularly with the younger students, they exhibited some logical fallacies when analyzing the documents and constructing their arguments. In the interview with MS2, when I asked them to tell me some of the main ideas or most important points from each document, this participant only repeated chunks of the text back to me rather than putting the information into their own words to showcase understanding. Another fallacy was that in the MS1 interview, they were mostly concerned with "direct quotations" from

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the documents. The presence of said quotes meant that those documents were both more significant and trustworthy to MS1.

In the interview with MS2, they seemed to falsely equate the main ideas of the documents to direct quotes. For much of their participation, when asked about their main takeaways from the documents, MS2 would repeat parts of the document verbatim. This fallacy is similar to the MS1 interview where they thought of direct quotes as inherently trustworthy and significant information. This tendency to look at direct quotes is a fallacy because it is based on the assumption that they are the best pieces of information to look for when identifying the main ideas of a text. A historian or student who is familiar with historical thinking skill understand that this is not always true, especially when working with historical documents (Nokes, 2017a; Sexias & Morton, 2012; Wineburg, 2001). This fallacy is a very simplistic way to analyze text-based sources. It is most likely not a coincidence that these examples of fallacies appeared most prominently in the interviews with the middle school students instead of the high schoolers or college students. The middle school participants (MS1, MS2) have had the most limited and basic experiences with primary source documents which may have caused them to think of direct quotes as the best possible information. They also have probably very limited experience critically looking at a document and utilizing sourcing information, analyzing the language, identifying bias, etc. They are perhaps used to taking whatever text their teacher gives them at face-value and are not well-versed in the historical literacy skills that historians or older students in more advanced history courses use.

The differences in the understandings and responses from the participants about what information they gathered from the visual sources was striking. With the other text-based documents, most of the participants were able to identify similar main ideas or important points.

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However, with Documents E and F, and particularly E, many of their answers and understandings of the most important points about the picture differed. In G1's analysis of Document E, they said:

I think it's like a political cartoon obviously there's like a lot of sarcasm in it, and you have the Soviet guy yelling at North Korean guy telling him that those are the flags of "gangster mobs and millionaires" and all that. And North Korean guy seems like he's not, he's sort of doubting it, but still complying.

While in HS2's response they said:

Well, they're showing the communist country is kind of hiding and looking at the big, strong fortress of those in the Security Council. And so they're showing that they're afraid and that the communist people are afraid of. I mean, not the communist people. The Communist governments are afraid of the strong, I guess, improvement of the U.N.

G1 focused their analysis on the part of the picture with the man with the hammer and sickle on his paper, representing communist countries and specifically the Soviet Union, seemingly bossing the North Korean around. Comparing this to HS2's understanding as they thought that the North Korean was looking scared of the flags of the United Nations and other countries on the horizon. This difference in the participants focused showed in their responses to how the document could answer the central question about which side started the Korean War. G1 said that this picture showed that the Soviet Union influenced the North Koreans to start the war while HS2 thought that this picture showed that the North Koreans would have attacked out of fear. While these were not the only differences in understanding, these two distinct interpretations of the same picture illustrate how visual sources can elicit different responses and understandings from students (Baildon & Baildon, 2012; Callahan, 2013; Foster, Hoge, & Rosch, 1999).

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Discussion

The pattern demonstrated in the participants' individual definitions of history shows that students' perspectives are likely shaped by the type of instruction they are exposed to (Doolittle & Hicks, 2003; Kohlmeier & Saye, 2019). It is not a coincidence that the students who exhibited a criterialist perspective are those with the most classroom instruction from professional historians such as the two graduate level history students and the senior undergraduate history major. The majority of the other research participants either have only been exposed to standard K-12 history classes from social studies teachers with less experience dealing with history than the professional historians that teach the college students. The undergraduate, non-history major had little experience with history at the university level outside of the required general education courses.

The objectivist perspective that the K-12 participants and the undergraduate, non-history major showcased limits the potential beneficial impacts of effective history instruction for students. Seeing history as just a collection of important events that happened and therefore need to be learned about through memorization severely limits the potential for meaningful critical thought which can lead to taking informed action (C3 Framework) in order to create civic minded students (De La Paz, 2005; Shanahan et al, 2016; Wiley & Voss, 1999; Young & Leinhardt, 1998). By utilizing a criterialist perspective, students will be able to ask powerful questions, find and critically examine sources of information using discipline specific literacy skills, and then create their own interpretations and understandings (CCSSO, 2012; NGA & CCSSO, 2010; Nokes, 2014). In history classes, this inquiry process empowers students think and act like historians when interacting with historical content. When these skills are transferred

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outside the classroom, students become active citizens who are prepared with the necessary skills to make informed decisions and take action.

For researchers, this pattern could show the relationship between the epistemic stances of the students and their teachers. More than likely, the students who showed an objectivist perspective were taught by teachers who also have that same epistemological stance. Participants who showed criterialist perspectives had been taught by professional historians who would likely share that point of view. This is because learning in classrooms is socially constructed in students (Doolittle & Hicks, 2003; Kohlmeier & Saye, 2019). They will learn and use only the skills, concepts, and content that they have been taught. This sentiment is echoed in Sam Wineburg's book *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts* (2001). He argues that historical thinking is not a naturally learned process, instead it is the opposite of how humans naturally think (Wineburg, 2001, p.7). Students who are able to think historically and use a criterialist perspective when interacting with historical content will have been taught to do so by a teacher who has learned to do those things themselves.

The pattern that emerged in students' own definitions of historical significance is important because it highlights how students can understand significance differently. This pattern is not limited to any one specific group of students and more than likely there is a large variance in how the individual defines what is significant (Lesh, 2011). These differences could be based on any number of factors as shown by a 2005 study from Stephane Lévesque. In this study, Lévesque showed that students from separate cultural, political, and economic backgrounds had different definitions of historical significance as well as beliefs about what events in their country's history were the most important (2005). Teachers need to understand that these variances change how the individual determines significance. Because of this, there will be many

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different perspectives and interpretations of the same content within a classroom setting. This can be used to a teacher's advantage. If they want to identify how individual students think of significance, then they can ask each student to use their own criteria. However, if teachers would like students to all work from the same starting point when determining significance, then the criteria must be specifically defined for them. Researchers could use the pattern that emerged in this study about how students determine significance to test the effects of increased use of historical thinking and discipline-specific literacy skills through inquiry-based instruction has on student's definition of historical significance.

When analyzing the responses and thought process during the inquiry activity in this research, it was clear that not many participants used certain historical literacy skills such as sourcing and corroboration. For teachers, this highlights how these historical literacy skills are not necessarily used instinctually by students at any age. These are skills that need to be taught and practiced regularly for them to be used effectively (Bickford et. al., 2020; Nokes, 2011; 2017b; Wineburg, 2001). The younger participants paid no attention to the sourcing information and only one of them corroborated information between sources. Utilizing sourcing was a common practice for the older participants but they too showed little evidence of corroborating information between the documents. This is evidence suggests educators need to be conscientious of teaching their students when and how to use certain literacy skills as well as the importance of practice and repetition so that students learn to use them without prompting.

This pattern shows the successes and failures of student's use of historical thinking and discipline-specific literacy skills. Students' successful use of disciplinary literacy skills in the types of close-reading tasks in this inquiry activity shape tremendously what students can do with the information they gathered (Bickford et. al. 2020, .Nokes, 2011; 2017a). In order for

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students to be able to learn to use these skills effectively, they first need to be prompted and supported by their teachers. Researchers should explore what types of scaffolding are most beneficial to students in trying to spark the use of historical thinking in these types of inquiry activities. Types of support will vary across age groups and often among individual students as well.

Evidence of logical fallacies present in some of the responses of the participants of this study may indicate flaws in certain types of instruction used by educators. In this specific case, students who are beginning to interact with historical sources, such as MS1 and MS2, may falsely assume that all primary sources contain reliable information. This is likely because they are not being taught how to critically analyze the sourcing or question the reliability and purpose of a document. This is because much of what younger students do in history class is based on simplistic content memorization rather than more complex critical thinking tasks (Bickford et al., 2020; Monte-Sano & Harris, 2012). They are learning to take information presented to them at face-value which is a bad habit that will later have to be broken by further instruction. Teachers should be aware of the indirect consequences of certain instructional strategies and what types of bad habits students could be developing. Further research may show the link between certain types of instructional strategies and the logical fallacies that are developed as a consequence. With the connections being clearly laid out by research, reliable solutions or adjustments could be found and implemented in the classroom to provide better instruction for students.

The pattern shown by the participants' interpretations and analysis of the visual sources in this inquiry illustrates how individuals may extract different meanings from the same picture. This is important for teachers because it can help them understand how to use visual sources in

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the classroom more effectively. Teachers must recognize that visual sources often have a multitude of different ways they can be interpreted by different students (Baildon & Baildon, 2012; Callahan, 2013; Foster, Hoge, & Rosch, 1999). This may be the teacher's intended purpose of using the visual source, to identify different interpretations of the same information. However, if the teacher wants to use a picture or political cartoon in order to make a specific point to the class, then they will need to provide extra scaffolding or go through the analysis of the image with the students. This makes sure that there is a common base of knowledge for students to work from. This will enable all students to extract the same meaning from the picture, which is the desired outcome in this instance. Researchers may find that many different factors affect how a student interprets a visual source. Some examples may include age, educational background, personal experience, gender, social class, or any number of other characteristics that differentiate students from one another.

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Appendix A**Document A**

“Upset by the fast and astonishing growth of the power of the Republic, the American invaders hastened the preparation of an aggressive war in order to destroy it in its infancy....The American imperialists furiously carried out the war project in 1950....The American invaders who had been preparing the war for a long time, alongside their puppets, finally initiated the war on June 25th of the 39th year of the Juche calendar. That dawn, the enemies unexpectedly attacked the North half of the Republic, and the war clouds hung over the once peaceful country, accompanied by the echoing roar of cannons.

Having passed the 38th parallel, the enemies crawled deeper and deeper into the North half of the Republic...the invading forces of the enemies had to be eliminated and the threatened fate of our country and our people had to be saved.”

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Doc A Word Bank:

The Republic: Another name for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea or North Korea.

Imperialists: People who practice imperialism. Imperialism is the control of one country by another. Example: Before the American Revolution of 1776, the British were imperialists to the American colonists.

Juche calendar: North Korean Calendar. Years start with the birth of North Korean Leader Kim Il-sung.

38th Parallel: The boundary line that divided North from South Korea.

Source: North Korean History Textbook

Textbook Publishing Co. (1999). *History of the revolution of our great leader Kim Il-sung: High school*. Pyongyang: North Korea.

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Document B

“On June 25, 1950, North Korean forces swept across the 38th parallel in a surprise attack on South Korea. The conflict that followed became known as the Korean War.

Within a few days, North Korean troops had penetrated deep into South Korea. South Korea called on the United Nations to stop the North Korean invasion. When the matter came to a vote in the UN Security Council, the Soviet Union was not there. The Soviets were boycotting the council in protest over the presence of Nationalist China (Taiwan). Thus, the Soviets could not veto the UN’s plan of military action. The vote passed.

On June 27, in a show of military strength, President Truman ordered troops stationed in Japan to support the South Koreans. He also sent an American fleet into the waters between Taiwan and China.

In all, 16 nations sent some 520,000 troops to aid South Korea. Over 90 percent of these troops were American. South Korean troops numbered an additional 590,000. The combined forces were placed under the command of General Douglas MacArthur, former World War II hero in the Pacific.” (p. 817-818).

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Doc B Word Bank:

38th Parallel: The boundary line that divided North from South Korea.

United Nations: An international organization that was formed after the end of WWII whose goal was to maintain worldwide peace and security. Abbreviated as “UN”

UN Security Council: The most important decision-making group of the United Nations.

Nationalist China: Fought against and lost the Chinese Civil War (1927-1949) to the Chinese Communists. Forced to retreat and live on the island of Taiwan.

Source: American History Textbook.

Danzer, G. A. (2007). *The Americans*. Evanston, IL: McDougal Littell.

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Document C

"Report of the DPRK Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Early on the morning of 25 June 1950, troops of the so-called 'army of national defense' of the puppet government of South Korea began a surprise attack on the territory of North Korea along the entire 38th parallel. Having begun a surprise attack, the enemy invaded the territory of North Korea to a depth of one or two kilometers north of the 38th parallel in the area west of [Haeju] and in the areas of [Geumcheon] and [Cheolwon].

The DPRK Ministry of Internal Affairs has issued an order to security detachments to repel the attacks of the enemy, which has invaded the territory of North Korea. At the present moment, the security forces of the Republic are stubbornly resisting the enemy. Security detachments of the Republic have repulsed attacks of the enemy, which has invaded the territory of North Korea in the area of [Yangyang]. The government of the DPRK has charged the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic with warning the authorities of the puppet government of South Korea that if they do not immediately halt their reckless military operations in the areas north of the 38th parallel, decisive steps will be taken to subdue the enemy and that they will bear full responsibility for all the serious consequences of these reckless military operations."

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Doc C Word Bank:

DPRK: Abbreviation for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. This is the formal name for North Korea.

Puppet Government: A government that appears to be in power, but is really controlled by an outside force or government.

38th Parallel: The boundary line that divided North from South Korea.

Kilometer: Metric unit of measurement that is 1,000 meters. Approximately 0.62 miles.

Haeju, Geumcheon, Cheolwon, and Yangyang: Cities in North Korea.

Ministry of Internal Affairs: Police force in North Korea.

Source: Internal message from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) on June 25th, 1950.

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Document C (Abridged)

“Report of the DPRK Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Early on the morning of June 25th, 1950, troops of the ‘army of national defense’ of the puppet government of South Korea began a surprise attack on the country of North Korea along the border at the 38th parallel. After the start of the surprise attack, the enemy invaded two kilometers into our country in the area to the west of the city of [Haeju] and near the cities of [Geumcheon] and [Cheolwon].

The North Korean Ministry of Internal Affairs has issued an order to the military to defend our country against the invasion from the South Koreans. At the present moment, the military of North Korea are fighting against the enemy. The military has so far successfully defended the invasion from the South Koreans. The government of North Korea has put the Ministry of Internal Affairs in charge of warning the South Koreans that if they do not stop their attack on our country, then we will be forced to fight back in war. We will hold the government of South Korea fully responsible for their reckless actions.”

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Document D

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JUNE 27, 1950

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

“In Korea the Government forces, which were armed to prevent border raids and to preserve internal security, were attacked by invading forces from North Korea. The Security Council of the United Nations called upon the invading troops to cease hostilities and to withdraw to the 38th parallel. This they have not done, but on the contrary have pressed the attack. The Security Council called upon all members of the United Nations to render every assistance to the United Nations in the execution of this resolution. In these circumstances I have ordered United States air and sea forces to give the Korean Government troops cover and support.

The attack upon Korea makes it plain beyond all doubt that communism has passed beyond the use of subversion to conquer independent nations and will now use armed invasion and war. It has defied the orders of the Security Council of the United Nations issued to preserve international peace and security. In these circumstances the occupation of Formosa by Communist forces would be a direct threat to the security of the Pacific area and to United States forces performing their lawful and necessary functions in that area.”

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Doc D Word Bank:

Security Council of the United Nations: The most important decision-making group of the United Nations.

38th Parallel: The boundary line that divided North from South Korea.

Render: to provide or give.

Communism: Political theory created by philosopher Karl Marx, anti-capitalism. The Soviet Union, China, and North Korea were communist governments at the time.

Subversion: the undermining, or to lessen, the of power of a government.

Formosa: Another name for the Nationalist Chinese government of Taiwan.

Source: Press Release by US

President Harry S. Truman, June 27th, 1950.

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Document D (Abridged)

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JUNE 27, 1950

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

“In South Korea, the military forces that were armed to prevent boarder attacks and preserve security, were attacked by invading forces from North Korea. The Security Council of the United Nations called upon the invading North Koreans to stop their attack and return to their country.

The North Koreans have not done this. Instead, they have continued with their attack. The Security Council has called upon the members of the United Nations to give assistance to the South Koreans during this time. I have ordered the United States air and sea forces to aid the South Korean military.

The attack upon South Korea makes it obvious that communism has now decided to use military force and war to conquer independent nations. It has ignored the orders of the United Nations, which was created to preserve international peace and security. In these circumstances the occupation of Formosa (Taiwan) by Communist (North Korean) forces would be a threat to the security to the Pacific and to the forces of the United States which are present in that area.”

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Document E Country Flags

From Right to Left: Philippines, United Nations, Thailand, New Zealand, Turkey,
(can't see after that).

Symbol on the paper of the man on the left is the Hammer & Sickle, symbol of
communism and the Soviet Union.

Source: Political Cartoon published in the Washington Post,
1950.

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Document F

Source: Poster from Chinese People Defending World Peace and
Against US Aggression Association, East China General
Branch, 1951.

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Appendix B

Korean War Background Information for Study Interviews

- Korean War happened from June 1950 to July 1953
 - Fought between the Soviet-backed North Koreans and the American-backed South Koreans
 - China (another communist country) entered on the side of the North Koreans in November of 1950 as well
- 1st major military action to occur during the Cold War
 - Political tension between The Soviet Union (Russia) plus allies (communists) and the United States plus allies (democracy) after the end of World War II in 1945.
- United Nations
 - International Peacekeeping body formed after WWII
 - UN Security Council, main decision-making body of the UN, includes US, GB, France, Soviet Union, and China.
- Major Names
 - President Harry S. Truman
 - 33rd American president from 1945 until January 1953
 - Containment Policy
 - Kim Il-sung
 - Leader of DPRK from 1948 until his death in 1994
 - Father of Kim Jong-Il ('94 to 2011) and Grandfather of current leader Kim Jong-un
 - Chairman Mao
 - Leader of Communist China
 - Defeated the American-supported Chinese Nationalist Party in the Chinese Civil War
 - Explain relationship to Taiwan/Formosa

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Appendix C**Inquiry Questions**

Before: “What is history?” (Epistemic Stance)

“What do historians do?” (Historical Thinking)

“What do you know about the Korean War?” (Background Knowledge)

During: Prompting students to vocalize their thoughts

Ex: “How did you come up with that conclusion?” or “What made you say/think that?”

After:

Prompting Historical Thinking Skills:

“Which document did you consider to be the most trustworthy or credible? Which was the least? Why?” (Sourcing)

“How did you decide which document was more credible when two seemed to be saying different things? (Sourcing and Corroboration)

“Which documents seemed to be arguing similar perspectives?” (Corroboration)

“How did you use the background information provided to make sense of the documents and answer the central question?” (Contextualization)

“Which document(s) seemed to be the most historically significant? Which were not as significant? Why?” (Historical Significance)

“Is there any piece of information that you felt was missing that would make this question easier to answer?” (Reading the Silences)

Academic Background Questions:

“Which document was the easiest for you to interpret/analyze? Which was the most difficult?”

“Have you ever done this type of activity in your class? Or something similar?”

“What types of things do you read in your history classes?”

“Did you like doing this type of activity? Why or why not?”

“Does doing this activity about the Korean War make you want to ask more questions or learn more about the event?”

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Appendix D

G1 Interview Transcript

Aaron: Recording now, so the first question I want to ask you is, in your view, what is history?

G1: I guess like a measured attempt to better understand the past. Not the best answer, but it works.

Aaron: That works perfectly fine. Second is, what do historians do? What is their job?

G1: Basically, they just do basic academic analysis of past situations and events in an attempt to better understand them.

Aaron: All right. And lastly, I wanted to ask you, how much do you know or what's your level of knowledge about the Korean War?

G1: Not a lot.

Aaron: Not a lot?

Aaron: I know about Cold War politics, but not about the Korean War.

G1: So if you had to rate it from a scale from 1 to 10, what would you say?

Aaron: Like 5.

Aaron: 5? I gotcha. Yeah. All right. So this the content of this is about the Korean War. And so I'm just gonna give you a couple of bullet points of information giving you the context and some of the major important things you might encounter.

(Reads background information).

Do you have any other questions or anything that you might need better explaining or should you feel you feel comfortable?

G1: I feel comfortable. Yeah.

Aaron: OK. So the central question I want ask you to answer is who started the Korean War? And so each of these documents give information about a particular perspective about who started the Korean War. So as you go through, kind of at the end of each document, kind of give me a couple of main takeaways and then how that document could be used to answer who started the Korean War? And at the end them and ask you to just give your answer based on everything that you've read in the background. So whenever you're ready, you can go ahead.

G1: And just start reading the first one?

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Aaron: Yeah. Yeah. You don't need to read out loud or anything like that. Just read at your own pace.

G1: All right. And just interest the questions or just so according to this document, who started the Korean War?

Aaron: Well, what were kind of your main takeaways from it?

G1: Well, this one (Doc A), I think, would obviously say that the American started the Korean War, but I don't think it comes from an American perspective just because some of the language used in it.

Aaron: Yeah,

G1: Definitely. Maybe I don't want to say North Korean, but definitely somebody not necessarily friendly to us. Interesting.

Aaron: The source information for all these documents is on the second page.

G1: Oh, OK. So, yeah, this one would be the American. OK. North Korean history textbook. Yes. This one would blame the Americans for the Korean War for sure.

Aaron: Once you feel like you've gotten everything out of it, you can just move on. Move your at your own pace.

G1: All right. Sounds good. Ok, this one (Doc B) definitely sounds like the North Koreans started the Korean War and likely it comes from some sort of American or Western perspective. All right. And then I just move on to the next one?

Aaron: Yeah. Yeah.

G1: And then this one (Doc C) would blame probably the South Koreans and then the Americans, I guess, by proxy.

Aaron: Well, what in the document would make you say that?

G1: Well talk about how the army of the "so-called Army of National Defense" began a surprise attack on the territory of North Korea, along with 38 Parallel. And then referring to them as the enemy invading and then the "puppet government", like they said, and then just war talk of invasion, which usually invasions, put some responsibility on the invaders.

Aaron: That's the abridged version if you don't need it.

G1: Oh ok. Sorry. This one (Doc D) would then put the blame on North Korea. I think. This talks with them avoiding, sorry. Ignoring the United Nations calls to stop what you're doing and

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then invading and having raids and trying to keep the South Koreans from preserving internal security.

Aaron: Okay. Gotcha.

G1: This one (Doc E), I think, would put the blame on to the Soviet Union. Or at least argue that the Soviet Union is sort of leading the North Koreans against the Western powers in the United Nations.

Aaron: What what about the picture makes you think that?

G1: Well, I think it's like a political cartoon obviously there's like a lot of sarcasm in it, and you have the Soviet guy yelling at North Korean guy telling him that those are the flags of "gangster mobs and millionaires" and all that. And North Korean guy seems like he's not, he's sort of doubting it, but still complying.

Aaron: Good.

G1: And then this one (Doc F), I think probably put the blame on the US because you have the North Korean guys sort of keeping the US from encroaching on their lands and stuff. Now it looks like South Korea is sort of a buried wasteland compared to the North. So.

Aaron: Yeah. Yeah, on the right is the North Koreans, on the left is the Chinese.

G1: OK. Okay. Yeah.

Aaron: Yeah, I can definitely see how you would say that. All right. That's all the documents.

G1: OK.

Aaron: So if you had the answer, the question using these documents, who would you say started the Korean War?

G1: I guess I would say it was pretty complicated, but if I had to pick somebody, North Koreans, I guess.

Aaron: Just because that's what you feel or is there anything that really stuck out to you?

G1: I think it might have just been the language used by the documents sort of putting blame on the North Koreans. They were much less like aggrandizing and using less colorful language.

Aaron: OK. Gotcha. So now I have a handful of questions I want to ask you just about how you made some good decisions and stuff.

G1: Okay sounds good.

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Aaron: So which document did you consider to be the most trustworthy, or credible? And which one did you think was the least trustworthy or credible?

G1: The least trustworthy, I think would probably be. The the North Korean picture. And then I guess.

Aaron: When you say North Korean pets, you mean the last picture (Doc F)?

G1: Yeah, yeah. And then I guess Document D would probably be the most credible.

Aaron: What makes you say that?

G1: The language is just for the most part, the most like basic. It's not necessarily trying to make you go one way or another, at least in the first paragraph. But then the second paragraph, there is a little bit of that when it's first talking about the communist forces going forward and stuff.

Aaron: Okay. So the documents are set up so that they clearly argue two different sides. So which documents seem to be arguing the same thing?

G1: Ok. It's a document, document A would argue for the North Koreans. And then the picture (Doc F) as well. And then Document C.

Aaron: And so one side is A C and then F?

G1: Yeah. And that would be that the Americans were to blame.

Aaron: Yeah.

G1: The rest would be that the North Koreans or in the case of the one political cartoon, the Soviets were to blame.

Aaron: Right. So how did you decide which document seemed to be more credible when they were arguing two different sides or conflicting versions of the story?

G1: I guess, like I said, I just looked at the language and I looked at the language that seemed more like straightforward and less attempting to spin the story, I guess. Less attempting to evoke emotions in the reader.

Aaron: Okay. Which documents seem to be the most historically significant, in your opinion, and which one was the least significant?

G1: Least significant I think would be the cartoon (Doc E), the Soviets and everything and the flags and then the most significance would probably be the ones from the Republic of Korea. Document C.

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Aaron: So you said the least significant and being E, the political cartoon, and then C would be the most significant?

G1: Yeah.

Aaron: OK. So is there any piece of information that you felt was missing? That you would have liked to see to help you more clearly answer who started the Korean War? Like you could if you could find like a piece of information that would help you more clearly answer the question what what would you like to see?

G1: I guess maybe just like an American like textbook account, like timelines and dates and things like that.

Aaron: Ok, so just like an account with more like a factual information?

G1: Yeah. Yeah.

Aaron: Right. So which document was easiest for you to interpret or or analyze and which was the most difficult?

G1: The easiest are probably the two pictures I think they're pretty straightforward. And the hardest to analyze would probably be Document D. Because you got a little bit of like that sort of language against communism, but then there's also a lot of straightforward writing, so you could go either way.

Aaron: So in your own history classes, have you ever done kind of this type of activity or something similar? And if so, how often? I would say from like your undergrad history classes up to now with your graduate level classes.

G1: So not high school then?

Aaron: Yeah.

G1: Oh, yeah. Pretty often. Very often. In most of my classes.

Aaron: Ok. What types of things do you read in your history classes? Again, in college. Like what types of sources that you mostly read?

G1: A lot of first hand accounts. Honestly, most of it is just like diaries, letters, things like that. Because I think people want to get more like that sort of working class or social history. And then a little bit of documents like that's a little bit of like government issued documents and sort of analyzing.

Aaron: So much more like primary sources?

G1: Yeah. Yeah.

ANALYZING STUDENTS' HISTORICAL THINKING

Aaron: Do you ever read like secondary sources like textbooks?.

G1: Yeah. Yeah, of course. Of course. Usually in undergrad would be like one textbook for the class and then maybe a couple of other books that in graduate school, obviously it's a lot of individual books and stuff and then a lot of articles and things like that. Trying to analyze how different historians go about this and different historiography and the different perspectives in the historiography and things like that.

Aaron: So for your own research in history, what kinds of things you read more and more primary or more secondary?

G1: More secondary, yeah.

Aaron: All right. Did you enjoy doing this type of activity? Like compare this to your undergrad or maybe even high school.. Would you like to have done something like this in your younger history days or did you think that was boring or something like that? Just like this type of activity, not this specific one.

G1: If the source material was interesting, I really enjoyed it. Yeah, I don't I interest in like basic American history. So I if that would come up it would be sort of boring.

Aaron: It was it's more of a matter of, you like the structure? But content has to be right.

G1: Yeah. Of course.

Aaron: OK. All right. And the last one. After doing this type of activity about the Korean War, has it kind of piqued your interest or make you want to ask more questions or learn more about the Korean War at all?

G1: Yeah, definitely, because I think it really just sort of made me realize, I don't know, like the details of it at all. Gotcha. I know like the broad narrative and things like that but certain dates.

Aaron: Yeah, yeah, OK. Right. So that's all my questions for you. Anything else you want to add or anything else?

G1: I think it was good. Th would be good to use in a high school or undergraduate classroom for sure.

Aaron: All right. All right. Great. I'm going to stop recording.

G1: All right.

ANALYZING STUDENTS' HISTORICAL THINKING

Appendix E

Criticality					
Level	Sourcing	Contextualization	Corroboration	Historical Significance	Continuity & Change
1	Student does not write about the source of the document.	Student does not attempt to contextualize the document	Student does not attempt to corroborate claims	Student does not attempt to determine either figure's historical significance	Student does not attempt to connect similarities and differences
2	Student mentions source but does not use source information to evaluate document or in written argument.	Student mentions the context but does not use context information to bolster written argument	Student superficially attempts corroboration by simply citing multiple documents	Student attempts to determine a figure's historical significance through an evidence-based claim	Student attempts to connect similarities or differences between goals or resistances
3	Student mentions source and evaluates the document using ahistorical reasoning or does not use source information in written argument.	Student attempts to contextualize the document using ahistorical elements or unsound reasoning	Student attempts to corroborate a claim by citing multiple documents but uses ahistorical or unsound reasoning	Student attempts to determine both figures' historical significance but uses ahistorical or unsound reasoning	Student connects similarities and differences between goals and resistances but uses ahistorical or unsound reasoning
4	Student critiques documents using source information and historical reasoning but sometimes uses faulty logic and does not use source information in written argument.	Student attempts to situate the document in the proper context but overlooks key detail(s) in connecting the document to a time, place, or person	Student effectively corroborates a few claims using an area of convergence between documents using sound reasoning	Student attempts to demonstrate each figures' historical significance through multiple, single sentence, evidence-based claims	Student connects similarities or differences between goals or resistances including some contextual details
5	Student critiques document using source information and uses critique to strengthen their written argument.	Student skillfully situates the document in the proper context and uses contextual clues to strengthen written argument	Student effectively corroborates many claims using areas of convergence between documents using sound reasoning	Student demonstrates both figures' historical significance by contextualizing and integrating multiple, detailed evidence-based claims	Student thoroughly develops and contextualizes similarities and differences between goals and resistances