

Hamline University

DigitalCommons@Hamline

School of Education and Leadership Student
Capstone Projects

School of Education and Leadership

Fall 2020

Designing a Discussion-Based Social Studies Curriculum

Sara Schmidt-Kost

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.hamline.edu/hse_cp



Part of the [Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Schmidt-Kost, Sara, "Designing a Discussion-Based Social Studies Curriculum" (2020). *School of Education and Leadership Student Capstone Projects*. 571.
https://digitalcommons.hamline.edu/hse_cp/571

This Capstone Project is brought to you for free and open access by the School of Education and Leadership at DigitalCommons@Hamline. It has been accepted for inclusion in School of Education and Leadership Student Capstone Projects by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@Hamline. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@hamline.edu.

DESIGNING A DISCUSSION-BASED SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM

By

Sara Schmidt-Kost

A capstone project submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Master's of Education

Hamline University

Saint Paul, Minnesota

November 2020

Capstone Project Facilitator: Jennifer Carlson

Content Expert: Christine Sanguinet

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE: Introduction	4
Background of Researcher	4
Experience with Discussions	7
Summary	9
CHAPTER TWO: Review of Literature	11
Introduction	11
Connections Between Verbal Processing and Written Work	12
Verbal Processing	13
Metacognition	14
Classroom Discussions	16
Effects on Writing	17
Discussion Techniques in Social Studies	17
Partner Discussion	18
Small Group Discussion	19
Whole Class Discussion	22
Scaffolds and Assessment of Written Work	24
Summary	26
CHAPTER THREE: Project Overview	28
Introduction	28
Overview of the Project	28
School and Students	29
Discussion-Based Curriculum	31

Timeline	33
Summary	34
CHAPTER FOUR: Reflection	35
Introduction	35
Revisiting the Literature Review	35
Challenges and Limitations	37
Implication	38
Recommendations	39
Final Summary	40
REFERENCES	42

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

How can various forms of student discussion before a writing assignment impact the quality of students' written work in social studies? This is the question I answered in my Capstone Project. I researched three core themes for my Literature Review in Chapter Two: connections between verbal processing and written work, discussion techniques and writing in social studies, and scaffolds and assessment of written work. For my Capstone Project, I designed a discussion-based curriculum for 9th grade human geography. The value of discussion-based curriculum is that it taps into the students' verbal processing, allowing students to discuss the material with other students, which in turn helps them craft higher quality arguments and analysis in their writing for essays and other assessments.

Background of Researcher

I graduated with my degree in secondary social studies education in 2011 from St. Cloud State University. For my student teaching experience in the spring of 2011, I was fortunate to be placed at a school in Munich, Germany. I decided to apply to student-teach abroad because as an education major, I did not have enough time in my program to do any prior study abroad experiences. I chose Munich because I had a personal connection to the city. After my senior year of high school, I had visited Munich on a three-week trip to Germany with my high school German class. It was my favorite city that we visited on the trip, and I connected with the German and Bavarian culture when I was there. In addition, when I was in high school, we hosted an exchange student from Germany, and her town was

about an hour outside of Munich. I also chose Munich so I could see my friend, Julia, and her family while I was there.

My student teaching experience at the Munich International School was exceptional. I was able to have an immersive experience with the International Baccalaureate program, which while common abroad, is a less common school program in the United States. I had wonderful mentor teachers, I was able to learn about effective curriculum design, and I created engaging lessons for students. I grew as a young teacher through my time at the Munich International School. Overall, I thought my experience student-teaching abroad was going to open doors for me while applying for my first teaching job back home in Minnesota. However, it did not.

I struggled finding a teaching position for the 2011-2012 school year and ended up substitute teaching, working a paid internship, and working at a pizza place in my college town. It was a frustrating and disheartening year. Again, I had hopes of finding a teaching position for the next year, but once again, it was a painful process sending out applications into the void and having only a handful of interviews. In August, out of desperation not to substitute teach for another year or move home to live with my parents, I applied for the City of Lakes AmeriCorps program and was accepted.

The City of Lakes (COL) AmeriCorps program operates out of the Community Education department in the Minneapolis Public Schools. As a COL AmeriCorps member, I worked with a cohort of 30 other COL members in middle schools across Minneapolis. We provided in-class support and pull-out tutors for long-term English Learners (ELs). Our students were identified as long-term ELs with WIDA scores of 3s and 4s, who had been in public school in the United States from a young age. They had plateaued, or stopped making

progress on their WIDA test, which determines their level of academic language ability. We selected approximately 12 students for our caseload that we would work with in class to support their academic language and pull out of class to work with one-on-one.

I served as a COL AmeriCorps member for two years, and at the end of the two years, I was hired by the school I was serving at to teach Family and Consumer Science (FACS) on a variance. While this was not ideal, as I would be on a variance, and I had no experience with FACS (other than being a decent home cook), I jumped at the opportunity to stay at the school where I had built relationships with the staff and students. I taught FACS for two years before deciding to move on to teach social studies at the high school where I currently teach.

I am proud of the work I did as an AmeriCorps member, and in my early teaching, as it prepared me to build solid relationships with students, work collaboratively with other teachers, and create my own curriculum from scratch. But I am very happy to have moved on to teach the subject I love, social studies.

During my second year teaching social studies at my high school, I was approached by two other teachers about applying as a group for the Hollyhock Fellowship. The Hollyhock Fellowship is a two-year fellowship program through Stanford University's Center to Support Excellence in Teaching. Schools apply to the program in teams of 3-6 teachers, and teachers must be within their first eight years of teaching experience and teach one of the core four subject areas: math, science, social studies, and English language arts. Schools must also be located in a high-needs area with high free/reduced lunch rates and serve diverse, historically underserved populations of students.

As a group, three of us from our school applied to the program--myself, another social studies teacher, and a science teacher. We were accepted, along with almost a hundred other teachers from across the United States, to the 2018 cohort of the Hollyhock Fellowship. We participated in the two-week intensive professional development at Stanford University during the summer of 2018 and again in 2019. A significant portion of the summer professional development at Stanford was focused on the core practices of teaching our subjects which included implementing discussions in our respective content areas.

During the school year, we participated in distance coaching with our mentor coaches from Stanford. We videotaped ourselves leading discussions multiple times throughout the year, and submitted those videos for feedback from our mentor coaches and Hollyhock Fellows within our subject areas. As we progressed through the school year, we saw ourselves and others in our cohort be more successful at leading discussions, and we saw the improvement in our student's participation as well.

The Hollyhock Fellowship showed me the value of discussions and student voice in social studies and prepared me to lead quality discussions in my classroom. It is the inspiration for my Capstone project. I plan to use what I have learned and practiced during my time as a Hollyhock Fellow to craft a discussion-based curriculum for my 9th grade human geography course.

Experience with Discussions

Discussions in social studies class can be easy to implement given that our subject area lends itself to in-depth analysis of engaging topics. However, discussions often take planning and management to be engaging and effective. Prior to my experience with the

Hollyhock Fellowship, I had not attempted many formal, planned discussions, solely because of the management aspects. How could I make sure the discussion did not veer off topic? How could I make sure all students had the opportunity to speak and the discussion wasn't dominated by a few students? How could I make sure the students spoke at all? I had never been trained to design a quality discussion nor to prepare my students for success in discussions.

Prior to Hollyhock, the only discussions that happened in my classroom were spontaneous. Occasionally, a few students would become very interested in a topic and could go on a tangent that became a discussion. Otherwise, I had never conducted a formal classroom discussion. It wasn't in my comfort zone. At Hollyhock, I learned best practices for how to design classroom discussions in social studies, and I learned how to conduct different types of discussions ranging from partner-talk to small-group to whole-class discussions. I also learned teacher moves to facilitate the discussions and get the most out of my students during discussions.

During the 2018-2019 school year after my first summer at Hollyhock, I tried to conduct two class discussions each quarter. As the school year went on, my students became more engaged in discussions, and I was becoming more effective at facilitating discussions. The next school year, after participating in my second summer of coaching and professional development at Hollyhock, I was able to conduct two discussions per unit, one small discussion and one large discussion. I created activities to practice different discussion skills with my students, and I paired discussions with a writing task to help students turn their verbal arguments into written ones.

Anecdotally, I noticed in the past two school years conducting class discussions that my students' writing was improving, which I connected to their verbal processing during the discussion. For some of the discussions, the discussion question was also the question for their essay. I had students gather evidence before their discussions and take notes during the discussion, which they could then use as they wrote their essay. By doing evidence gathering and notetaking, and also by working on skills like how to build on someone's answer, or how to disagree with someone, it led to higher quality writing and more use of evidence in student essays.

For my capstone project, I expanded on the work I've already done incorporating discussions into my current curriculum by designing a discussion-based curriculum for Human Geography. Rather than just adding discussions here and there, I centered the curriculum, units, and lessons on discussions and student voice. I also paired each discussion, whether partner, small, or whole class, with a writing task that will be a formative or summative assessment. The curriculum starts with smaller discussions at the beginning to allow students to practice discussion moves like their claim, building on another student's evidence, asking a follow-up question, or disagreeing or providing a counter argument. I included the techniques, or "moves", for the teacher to facilitate the discussion to the best of their ability.

Summary

In this chapter, I discussed my background as a social studies teacher and how I plan to create a discussion-based curriculum to answer the question: *How can various forms of student discussion before a writing assignment impact the quality of students' written work in*

social studies? My experience with the Stanford Hollyhock Fellowship has prepared me in the best practices of classroom discussions in social studies classes.

Chapter two focuses on the research of connections between verbal processing and written work, discussion techniques and writing in social studies, and scaffolds and assessment of written work. In chapter three, I will discuss the outline and creation of my discussion-based curriculum using a backwards design framework as the guide for creating the curriculum.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of Literature

Introduction

In social studies, students are asked to complete many cognitively demanding tasks to further their thinking about topics and concepts. Teachers ask students to analyze primary source documents to figure out who wrote the document and, more importantly, to answer why they wrote it. Teachers ask students to put primary sources in historical context and to corroborate with other primary sources in order to analyze what other sources say about the same event or topic. Teachers also ask students to close read the primary sources to pick out necessary information and gather evidence that they then use to answer the questions we put before them.

There are four historical thinking skills -- close reading, sourcing, contextualization, and corroboration -- that are foundational for students to effectively understand, analyze, and argue about historic events and topics (Wineburg, 2010). In addition to practicing these skills independently, students in social studies who are asked to collaboratively practice these historical thinking skills through partner, small group, and whole class discussions may strengthen their understanding of the topics or events studied in social studies.

Students in social studies also need to be able to effectively write about the topics or events we study. Writing in social studies ranges from short answers in activities and worksheets, to claim/evidence/reasoning activities, to full essays and papers. The key to effective writing in social studies is the use of evidence from the primary sources. If

students can effectively pull evidence and use it to answer the question or prompt, that's half the battle of quality writing in social studies.

My research question is: *How can various forms of student discussion before a writing assignment impact the quality of students' written work in social studies?* I will create a discussion-based curriculum that integrates various types of classroom discussion with academic writing. The goal of the curriculum is boosting the quality of student writing post-discussion.

In the Literature Review, I will focus on the connections between verbal processing and written work, discussion techniques in social studies, and scaffolding and assessment of written work.

Connections Between Verbal Processing and Written Work

The purpose of this theme of the Literature Review is to explore the connections between student's verbal processing during class and their eventual written work. When students talk about a topic at any level, whether in partners or small groups, or in whole class discussion, does it impact their written work? Rather than listening to the teacher lecture on a topic, or read text on a topic, does the student's verbal processing impact their written work?

In addition to exploring the connections between student's verbal processing and their written work, I am also interested in understanding the role the teacher plays in helping the students verbal processing. What are effective teacher "moves" before or during a discussion that help further student thinking? What types of prompts and questions from the teacher illicit the depth of student thinking? What ways can a teacher metacognate, or verbally process their own thinking, that will help students learn to metacognate?

Verbal Processing. Verbal processing has its roots in classic cognitive development theories that were developed by Jean Piaget (1971) and Vygotsky's (1978) theories of the social formation of the mind. Vygotsky found that "a child's speech is as important as the role of action in attaining the goal. Children not only speak about what they are doing; their speech and action are part of one and the same complex psychological function, directed toward the solution of the problem at hand" (p. 25)

Wilkinson & Son (2010) go further and say that verbal processing promotes active learning by making meaning from a variety of sources including text and images. They argue that verbal processing with other students enables students to co-construct knowledge, consider alternate perspectives, and reconcile conflicts among peers with differing points of view.

Though verbal processing may be arguably positive for developing cognitive reasoning skills, talk between students in classrooms has not always been seen as a positive. In previous decades, proper classroom management for a teacher included making sure students were quiet (Gewertz, 2019). It was thought that the teacher was the expert, and students who talked to each other couldn't possibly be learning. According to John Hattie's (2012) research, teachers talk between 70 and 80 percent of the time, and that teacher talk and effectiveness is an inverse relationship where the more a teacher talks, the less effective they are.

This old-school view of education, with a teacher in front of a classroom lecturing to students sitting in desks in rows is starting to change as a new generation of teachers comes up and more research is conducted about the ways students learn best. One change has been an increase in collaboration and student talk.

According to Mercer (2008), children use language as a tool for thinking, and so it is the role of teachers to help them use language to create knowledge and understanding. Mercer's book, *The Guided Construction of Knowledge: Talk amongst Teachers and Learners*, advocates for increased amounts of student-to-student talk and better quality teacher-to-student talk. While teachers want students to talk to each other more in order to cocreate knowledge and understanding, we also want to facilitate their learning, therefore we should want to have better quality questioning and prompts from teachers to students in order to facilitate classroom learning experiences.

Responsive teaching is a method of making instructional decisions that are authentically in response to student input and participation. Developing that type of teaching to have better quality questioning and prompts takes practice to understand the best ways of responding to student participation in the moment that authentically elicits the best responses, ideas, and learning from students. Kavanagh, et al. (2020) suggests that teachers, and especially pre-service teachers, should practice or rehearse their responsive teaching methods in order to become proficient at making those instructional decisions to elicit student responses.

Metacognition. Metacognition is the awareness of one's own thought process. One way teachers can help students learn how to verbally process is having the teacher model verbal processing through metacognition. A teacher might talk through their own thinking aloud, known as a think aloud, so students can better understand how to think through a problem or a task. Zepada, et al. (2015; 2019) found that higher-quality student learning occurs in classes where teachers use metacognitive strategies to verbally process their

thinking during classroom lessons, while solving problems, and while evaluating outcomes of activities.

Another model for metacognition practice in the classroom is through cognitive apprenticeship. Collins, et al. (1991) says that cognitive apprenticeship is the process of a teacher making thinking visible to students. Examples include verbalizing the known and asking questions about the unknown, or verbalizing through processes like math equations or writing sentences.

Bridging the metacognitive and cognitive apprenticeship practices with classroom discourse are teacher moves, also known as discourse moves (Dwyer, et al. 2016). The term “teacher moves” describes the various techniques teachers do during their lessons that effectively engage students. Some examples of teacher moves are:

- Revoicing or strategically restating what a student said in order to clarify or verify understanding;
- Ask for textual support in order to reinforce appropriate use of evidence;
- Prompt a counter argument in order to challenge student thinking;
- Activating prior knowledge in order to ground students in context, and
- Creating think time which allows students time to process before proceeding with further discussion (Tabach, et al. 2020, Dwyer, et al. 2016, Wei, et al. 2018).

In addition to the various teacher moves that teachers actively do during classroom discussions, teachers should also spend time preparing their classes in order to support engaging student discourse. “Accountable Talk” is one way in which teachers can create

classroom environments that allow for students to rigorously verbally process their learning. Accountable talk has three main facets:

- 1) Accountable to the learning community,
- 2) Accountable to knowledge, and
- 3) Accountable to rigorous thinking (Sohmer, et al. 2009)

The three facets create the basis for structured discussions. In the first, accountable to the learning community, the teacher should make sure that students are actively listening to their peers and building off one another. In the second, accountable to knowledge, the teacher should make sure students are referencing evidence and directing them back to the text if necessary. In the third, accountable to rigorous thinking, the teacher should help students make logical arguments and draw reasonable conclusions (Sohmer, et al. 2009).

Classroom Discussions. Nystrand, et al. (2001) looked at case studies of class discussions and found that of the many things that happen during a discussion, including teacher prompts, uptake, and revoicing, student-generated questions had the most impact on the classroom discussion, furthering the discussion and creating more dialogue. Providing evidence that by improving the quality of the discussion, this can significantly improve student engagement and student learning. Gilles (2010) also found a similar result in their study, when teachers used higher-level questioning during class discussions, their students would develop their own higher-level thinking skills.

Another important consideration for classroom discussions is that they take place in the students “language of comfort” (Metz, 2020). Metz argues that students should not have to produce high academic English in order to engage in a rich discussion. Students should

be able to use their language of comfort, or the style of language students use when they are not consciously producing formal academic English. This could be in the form of slang or other grammatical patterns like African American Vernacular English. When students can have productive discussions in their language of comfort, they may engage more authentically with the text and with each other.

Effects on Writing. With regards to verbal processing effects on student writing, studies have shown that class discussion improves students analytical writing, especially with regards to text analysis and quality of their arguments. There is also improvement in students' use of complex language and sentence structure. Students who have done complex verbal processing of text analysis and argued their points with their classmates, are then better able to write their analysis and arguments. (Davies & Meissel, 2016; Spencer & Petersen, 2018).

Discussion Techniques in Social Studies

As stated in the previous theme, incorporating student voice in the classroom is an important part of the learning process. In a social studies classroom, which may encompass subjects like United States history, world history, geography, civics, economics, and ethnic studies, there is ample opportunity to use student voice and discussion techniques at various points in a lesson or unit.

In this theme, discussion techniques or activities are separated into three categories: partner, small group, and whole class discussions. For each of these categories, there are many types of discussion activities that a teacher can implement. Additionally, each type of discussion activity pairs well with a writing activity in a social studies classroom.

Partner Discussion. Partner discussions are one-on-one discussions between two students. The selection of students may depend on the goals of the teacher. For example, a teacher may number students off at random to assign partners, or they may ask students to talk to their desk neighbor. Partner discussions can be shorter in duration than other types of discussion, and typically require less preparation than discussions with more students participating.

One example of a partner discussion that requires very little time is a turn-and-talk (Walters, 2018). A turn-and-talk could be implemented at the start of class after a new topic is introduced or in the middle of a lesson. The turn-and-talk discussion method is when the teacher poses a question or a prompt and then has students turn and talk to the person sitting next to them for a short amount of time, like thirty seconds or a minute. Then the teacher will bring the class back together to share out what they discussed. A benefit of the turn-and-talk strategy is that it does not take up much class time to create opportunities for students to talk to one another. The turn-and-talk strategy is limited, however, in that it generally does not produce high-quality discussions between partners and does not offer students time to process or write down their answers.

A similar strategy to the turn-and-talk strategy is the think-pair-share. The teacher poses a question or prompt, gives students time to think and write about the prompt, then students pair up to discuss the prompt, and then come back together to share. The difference between a think-pair-share and a turn-and-talk is the think time, which can make a significant difference in the quality of the discussion (Walters, 2018). Modifications can be made to the think-pair-share to make it more student-centered; for example, one

modification is where the students generate the questions for the think-pair share, which allows for more student investment in the activity (Cooper, 2018).

A walk-and-talk is another partner activity where you allow students to get up and move their bodies while discussing the prompt. This is not an activity for every situation, but may work well with modeling and practice so students are prepared to move around the classroom space or even leave the space for a time and return having discussed the prompt (*Walk and Talk*, 2015).

Small Group Discussions. Small group discussions can range in size from 3-4 students, up to groups of 8-10 students. Generally the smaller size allows for more participation from all students. Teachers can make decisions on group size based on the type of activity, the physical space of the classroom, and the make-up of the groups. Small group discussions take longer time to facilitate, and require more management from the teacher (Walters, 2018).

The Diamond Discussion is a structured small group discussion protocol. This type of discussion centers on a piece of large paper with a diamond shape drawn in the center, with lines extending out of the four points that creates four quadrants. Students in groups of four are able to use their quadrant of the paper to write down evidence or support for their answer to the question or prompt. After students are given time to write, the discussion takes place where students share their evidence with their group. At the end of the discussion, the students in the group use the center space to come to a consensus about the question or prompt (Colley, 2016).

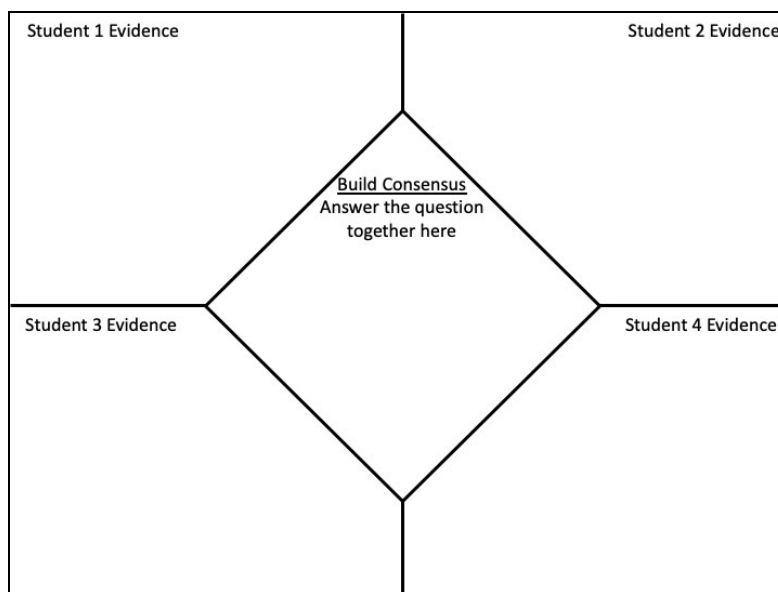


Figure 1 - An example of the diamond discussion graphic organizer. (Schmidt-Kost, 2020)

Blending small-group and whole-class discussion is a fishbowl discussion. During a fishbowl discussion, a small group of students sits in the middle of a classroom and participates in the discussion while the rest of the class observes (Young, 2007). In some variations of fishbowl, students on the outside of the discussion circle are able to tap in and trade places with someone in the inner circle so they may add to the discussion. Other variations also include students on the outside taking notes, gathering evidence from what they hear, or participating in an additional discussion using online discussion forums. Young (2007) also describes ways for students to evaluate themselves and their peers during a fishbowl discussion to keep everyone accountable to each other.

Johnson & Johnson (1988) presented a type of small group discussion in the form of a Structured Academic Controversy (SAC). During a SAC, groups of four students are divided into pairs. The pairs are assigned an opposing position on a controversial topic. For example, one such controversial topic in social studies might be, “Were German citizens as guilty as Nazi soldiers for the atrocities committed during the Holocaust?” Topics should

never lead students to an obviously wrong answer (like “Was the Holocaust bad?”), and there should be the ability to successfully argue both positions.

Groups are then given evidence in the form of text or photo documents, and the pairs use the evidence to argue their position. Once evidence is gathered, the discussion begins. The first side has a chance to use their evidence to argue their side. The pair on the other side listens and takes notes. The second pair is then given a chance to ask clarifying questions. Then the second pair is given a chance to argue their side while the first pair listen and take notes. The first pair is then able to ask clarifying questions. After the discussion, the pairs abandon their positions and work toward a consensus. Building consensus allows students to see nuance in controversial topics and forces students to work together instead of in competition (Johnson, 1988).

Modifications can be made to a SAC to enhance the learning experience. Jacobs (2010) suggests using graphic organizers or mind map style note taking for students as they gather evidence. Another suggestion from Jacobs is before the consensus building stage the pairs adopt the other position, gather evidence again, and then reargue their points for the new side. Pairs could also switch groups during this section so that each pair is arguing with a new pair from a different foursome group.

The drawbacks of a Structured Academic Controversy lie in the controversy part. Controversy is inherently controversial for teachers and students. In social studies, we often shy away from teaching controversy and difficult history. Magda Gross and Luke Terra (2018) argue that difficult history presents a challenge for teachers, students, and parents because it often goes against the narratives of our shared national past. However, teachers should want students to engage with the difficult histories and controversies in order to

press against the white, male, Christian perspectives that have dominated history for centuries. According to Gross and Terra (2018):

Teaching the difficult past in its full complexity carries risks as well. While addressing difficult histories can be fundamental to the development of historical understanding, they complicate one of the traditional functions of history education in modern nation-states—to communicate a shared understanding of a national past to new generations. Ultimately, we want young people to engage with difficult histories without reinforcing ethnic, religious, and cultural divisions on the one hand, or undermining social cohesion on the other. Our hope is that such robust engagement might enable our young people to grow up with the ability to approach the past on its own terms, and a willingness to revise their historical understandings as new information emerges. (p. 56)

Whole Class Discussion. Whole-class discussions can be more difficult for teachers to facilitate as they require more effective classroom management and multiple days of preparation. They can also be less productive and less educational for students as inevitably only a few students dominate the discussion while everyone else sits back and does not participate. There are a few strategies to overcome the lack of participation, including scoring the discussion or using tools like talking chips to encourage more students to speak (Young, 2007).

In order to facilitate whole-class discussions in social studies, the teacher must orient students to each other, to the text, to the discipline of history, and engage students as sense-makers of the documents or topic. One strategy to orient students to each other is to have students sit in a circle in class so they can see and respond to each other, usually in the

style of a Socratic Seminar. Orienting them to the text is important as it provides them with a shared artifact around which the discussion can revolve. Students also need to be oriented to the discipline of history, this includes the historical context for the artifact and the historical question, but also the historical thinking skills needed to make sense of the historical artifact. And lastly the teacher needs to engage students as sense-makers, examining the artifact and the discussion question with logic, interpretation, and ideas (Reisman, 2017; Reisman, et al. 2018).

Socratic Seminars, including the Paideia model of seminars, are one way of structuring a whole-class discussion (National Paideia Center, 2015). A Socratic Seminar involves a teacher selecting a text and a question for students to discuss. Students sit in a circle, or sometimes the fishbowl method could be used for a large class. The open-ended question is posed by the teacher or a student discussion leader, and then students have an opportunity to speak up and answer. There may be natural moments of silence during a socratic seminar where students are thinking or waiting for someone to speak (Griswold, et al. 2017).

In order for students to take on the bulk of the facilitation of a whole class discussion, the teacher should prepare students with techniques to keep the discussion flowing, like how to build upon another student's answer, how to disagree with another student's answer, and how to ask their own questions. When students take on the role of facilitating the discussion, they are able to create more productive dialogue and better quality learning (Koss, et al. 2018).

After a discussion, or in preparation for one, teachers can use writing in order to further the learning for students. For partner discussions or small group discussions, the

writing might be in the form of a quick write, a claim/evidence/reasoning, or a graphic organizer. For large discussions, the writing might be an essay. Using graphic organizers as a note-taking strategy can help students organize the evidence during the discussion as well as produce higher quality written work (Lapp, et al. 2013).

Scaffolds and Assessment of Written Work

Assessing student written work is the final piece of the puzzle of crafting discussions with the aim of improving student writing. As stated in the previous section, writing in social studies might encompass note taking or short answers on worksheets, quick writes to assess student thinking, claim/evidence/reasoning practice, or a full essay.

Scaffolding student writing encompasses not only graphic organizers, outlines, and sentence starters to help students organize their thoughts or get themselves started, but it also encompasses modeling the writing process, marking text, and teaching writing strategies. Higher quality scaffolding and individualized scaffolds can help students write more and in higher quality (Benko, 2012).

Graphic organizers help students organize their thinking on a writing task, visualize their arguments, gather and track evidence, and piece together their claim, evidence, and reasoning. Organizers also help students better understand complex writing, including counter-arguments, which help scaffold them into higher-order analytical thinking and improve their overall writing. The ability to make and evaluate arguments is critical for students' success in the social studies discipline and in the world beyond the classroom (Lapp, et al. 2013).

Support for English Learner (EL) and Special Education (SpEd) students writing in social studies is important as well. EL and SpEd students struggle not only with the writing

but also with the discipline-specific vocabulary in social studies. Color-coded graphic organizers can help students break down complex paragraphs into ideas and evidence, allowing them to decode the meaning of a paragraph without getting bogged down in long sentences or hard-to-understand vocabulary. Color-coded graphic organizers can also work the other direction, allowing students to take ideas and transform them into their own written paragraphs (Ewoldt & Morgan, 2017).

One strategy for writing scaffolding that also involves students' verbal processing is dialogic assessment, or writing conferences with the teacher. When teachers meet one-on-one with students, the students can verbally process their writing with the teacher, and the teacher can offer support, direction and revisions for the student. Dialogic assessments are also individualized to each student's specific needs, and students are able to work through writing challenges with the teacher (Beck, et al. 2020).

Time constraints can be an issue with dialogic assessments, as it does take considerable time to meet with each student, go over their writing, have a conversation about the writing, and work through revisions. One way to shorten the time constraints would be to only go over one section of writing, or have a goal of only working on the “claim” during the conference (Beck, et al. 2020).

When writing in social studies, teachers not only assess students' ability to write in complete sentences, have proper syntax and grammar, but also assess their ability to write for the discipline. Teachers need to assess students' ability to analyse a historical text, explain facts and argue a conclusion, evaluate the source of the text, put the text in historical context, and potentially argue the opposing side. De La Paz & Wissinger (2016)

offer a rubric for this purpose that evaluates students on their ability to analyse historical text on a four point scale.

Another social studies-specific writing assessment is in the form of a History Assessment of Thinking (HAT). The HAT's are short, written responses that assess a particular historical thinking skill: close reading, sourcing, contextualization, and corroboration. In a study conducted by Smith, Breakstone & Wineburg (2019), written HAT's were useful in assessing the historical thinking skill more than a multiple choice assessment. Student responses to HATs in the study had greater evidence of reasoning and analysis and fewer common misconceptions, whereas the multiple choice assessments given in the study were unable to elicit student analysis and were able to draw students away to common misconception answers. The HATs are an effective way to assess short-answer writing for historical thinking skills.

Rubrics are helpful tools for assessing student writing. Teachers use rubrics to assess whether certain standards have been met, and to what degree they've been met. Rubrics do not just have to be used at the end of the writing process for final assessment, however. They can be used during the writing process by teachers and students to determine progress, quality, and aid in student understanding of what the standards are to which they are being asked to meet. When teachers teach students how to use rubrics to assess their own writing, the students are more likely to write more and revise their writing to achieve a higher score (Schirmer & Bailey, 2000, Swain & Friedrich, 2018).

Summary

This Literature Review focused on three elements: verbal processing and its connection to written work, effective discussion techniques to use in social studies, and

scaffolds and assessments of written student work. My research question is: *How can various forms of student discussion before a writing assignment impact the quality of students' written work in social studies?*

In my research, I have found that verbal processing does improve students' understanding of topics and concepts, it improves their ability to analyze and use higher-order thinking skills, and it improves their writing. Verbal processing should be taught and modeled by the teacher so that students can understand how to verbally process most effectively.

Discussion techniques range from partner to small group to large group discussions. Within discussions, students should be taught how to utilize discussion moves in order to keep the discussion flowing, create more discourse and dialogue during the decision, and practice higher-order thinking skills like counter-arguments.

Scaffolding writing includes not only graphic organizers but also modeling the writing process with students. Assessing student writing with rubrics can help students understand what is being asked of them and produce better writing.

In Chapter 3, I include information on the curriculum design I have developed. I developed discussion lessons for social studies that pair with writing assignments. The discussion lessons include partner, small group, and whole class discussions. The lessons also include graphic organizers, note-taking systems, written assessment, and rubrics. My hope is to eventually implement discussion lessons that will improve student writing.

CHAPTER THREE

Project Overview

Introduction

In Chapter Three, I discuss the methods and steps involved in creating a curriculum to address the question: *How can various forms of student discussion before a writing assignment impact the quality of students' written work in Social Studies?* Chapter two focused on the research around student verbal processing, discussion techniques in Social Studies, and assessing student written work. From here, I will outline the school setting and students, methods for creating the discussion-based curriculum, and the planning involved in creating the curriculum.

Overview of the Project

The discussion-based curriculum I designed is for 9th grade human geography. It is a semester's worth of curriculum, centering around five units:

1. Geography Skills & Methods
2. Population & Migration
3. Agriculture & Environment
4. Country Development
5. Urbanization

Each unit contains a number of discussions that will help students prepare for the written assessments. These discussions are in the form of partner or one-on-one talking, small group discussions, and whole class discussions. Each unit contains at least one discussion in each of the size formats, and more than likely more for partner and small group. Each unit also contains a written assessment at the end in the form of a

five-paragraph essay. In order to build up to the essay, there are also a number of smaller written assessments, some of which will be in the form of a HAT or History Assessment of Thinking. (Smith, et al. 2019)

School and Students

I teach 9th grade Human Geography at a high school in Minneapolis. Our students are roughly: 50% African American, 20% Latinx, 15% White, 10% Asian, and 5% Native. 85% of our students receive free/reduced lunch, 25% receive EL support, and 30% receive SpEd support. Our enrollment hovers around 900 students, but because many of our students are transient, and we do have a number who qualify as Homeless/Highly Mobile, our enrollment numbers usually drop as the school year progresses. My four sections of Human Geography range from 25-35 students, with four additional sections of roughly the same number of students taught by my partner teacher.

My school is an International Baccalaureate (IB) school. Each student in 9th and 10th grade is enrolled in the Middle Years Program (MYP) through their core four classes of math, science, social studies, and English language arts. We utilize the IB MYP rubrics and grading scales, which run on an 8-point scale. In Social Studies, which is known as Individuals & Societies in the IB world, there are four categories in which I am assessing students: Knowing and Understanding, Investigating, Communicating, Thinking Critically. Each of these categories has a rubric that I use to assess students ("Middle Years Program", 2014).

The figure below is the IB MYP grading template for my building. All teachers in my building use this grading scale. In addition to the 8-point scale, our grading system breaks down into two categories: Assessments (summative) and Learning Activities (formative).

Our Assessment category counts for 80% of a students total grade, and the Learning Activity category counts for 20% of a students total grade.

Letter Grade	IB MYP Score	Description
F (0-24%)	0	Insufficient evidence
	1	Limited
D- (25-30%)	2	
D-D+ (31-49%)	3	Adequate
C range (50-62%)	4	
B range (63-74%)	5	Substantial
A- (75-86%)	6	
A (87-100%)	7	Excellent
	8	

Figure 2 - The IB MYP Grading Scale used in my building (Cormany, 2018)

This curriculum is designed for primarily 9th grade students, however occasionally I do have upperclassmen who need to take the semester of Human Geography as a graduation requirement. Most often these upperclassmen are either EL students who have taken the sheltered EL Social Studies concepts course in 9th grade, or students who have enrolled late from a different school or district where they have yet to take Human Geography.

My 9th grade students range from high achieving students, to mainstream average students, to EL and SpEd students. Some of my students come into 9th grade with above-average writing skills, others struggle to write full sentences. It is challenging and demanding to create assignments and lessons that are adequately rigorous for my average students, while having opportunities for enrichment for my advanced students, and enough scaffolds for my learners who struggle.

Discussion-Based Curriculum

I used the backwards design framework to create my discussion-based curriculum. Through backwards design, I first determined the learning goals for each unit, then crafted the assessment, and then built the activities and assignments that will help the students achieve the learning goals. I chose backwards design as the framework for designing my curriculum because of its emphasis on the learning goals for students rather than on what is being taught. According to Bowen (2017), “Backward design is beneficial to instructors because it innately encourages intentionality during the design process. It continually encourages the instructor to establish the purpose of doing something before implementing it into the curriculum.” I want to make sure that I establish a purpose for each discussion, each activity, each formative and summative assessment so that the unit builds on itself from beginning to end.

In addition to the backwards design framework, I also used the IB Middle Years Program unit planner as an additional guiding framework required by my school. The MYP unit planner follows backwards design principles, and also grounds the work in the IB MYP. The MYP unit planning process includes picking key concepts and a global context from which to establish the purpose of the unit, as well as crafting a Statement of Inquiry and

Inquiry Questions in the categories of factual, conceptual, and debatable. The MYP criterion for assessment also needs to be decided upon, and then the content of the learning process can be crafted. Each of the five units in the semester use the MYP unit planner form as a guide.

Teacher(s)		Subject	
Unit title		Time of year	Unit duration

Inquiry: Establishing the purpose of the unit

Key concept "Big Idea"	Related Concepts	Global Context
MYP Key Concepts Concepts express understanding that students take with them into lifelong adventures of learning. They help students to develop principles, generalizations and theories.		Global Contexts
Statement of inquiry		
Inquiry questions		
Questions at any level should avoid yes/no answers. If unavoidable, follow the question with "justify" or "explain" you answers		
Factual — Concrete questions that generally have right or wrong answers (Who, why, what, where, when; often focus on recall		
Conceptual —More abstract questions that explore broader meanings, deeper understanding and transferable knowledge		
Debatable — Questions that generate disagreement, engage multiple perspectives, and promote critical and creative thinking		

Figure 3 - Example of the MYP Unit Planner Template for my building (*"Middle Years Program"*, 2014)

Discussions are the primary learning activity in each unit, with readings, notes and lecture supporting the discussions. In the early units, there are partner and small-group discussions with the main purpose being to practice the discussion skills necessary for rigorous whole-class discussions later in the semester. Later units have more small-group and whole-class discussions. All discussions have a document-based question and supporting documents for students to gather evidence to use during the discussion.

Student writing is the main form of assessment for the units. Students use what they learn from their discussions in order to write paragraphs and essays answering the document-based question. Students practice historical thinking skills, like sourcing or corroboration in their formative assessments, and they write claims, use evidence, and show their reasoning on their summative assessments.

Timeline

As stated in the overview section, the discussion-based curriculum that I created is for five units. This is for a semester class, which is 85 calendar days. Each unit will last approximately 15 days, give or take, with buffer days for make up work or other school functions like picture day or assemblies that adjust our calendar.

The first three units: Geography Skills & Methods, Population & Migration, Agriculture & Environment, will take place during the first quarter. The first unit, Geography Skills & Methods will probably be shorter than 15 days, due to the first few days of school being about introducing students to school structures, classroom procedures, and getting-to-know-you style activities. The other two units should be approximately 17 days, with at least two to three days dedicated to discussion, another two to three days dedicated to writing, with the other days activities used to support the discussion and writing through teacher modeling, student research, and group projects.

The other units in the second quarter will follow similarly as far as number of discussions and amount of writing. I expect the Country Development unit and the Urbanization unit to stretch a little longer than 17 days, just with the way things play out in the second quarter with Thanksgiving and Winter Break providing breaks during the Country Development and Urbanization units. Coming back after Winter Break, there is a

shorter amount of days until the end of the semester for the end of the Urbanization unit and other closing activities involving summarizing and make up work.

Summary

In Chapter Three, I have described how I created a discussion-based curriculum for a semester of Human Geography. The curriculum has five units and focuses heavily on discussion and writing as the primary assessment methods. I used backwards design philosophy to create my curriculum and the IB MYP Unit Planner from my building as the guiding structure to write out my units.

My units are approximately 17 days, give or take. Each unit has two to three days dedicated to discussion, and two to three days for writing assessments in the summative and formative. Units also have days of activities that help students learn about the topics in the units and prepare for the discussions.

Chapter Four will examine how a discussion-based curriculum supports the academic writing of students in social studies.

CHAPTER FOUR

Reflection

Introduction

This chapter outlines the curriculum developed to address the question, *How can various forms of student discussion before a writing assignment impact the quality of students' written work in social studies?* This curriculum was not brand new, but rather a purposeful adjustment and reworking of my current human geography curriculum. My question required me to look at my current curriculum and figure out how to transform it into a discussion-based curriculum with an emphasis on student writing as the formative and summative assessments.

Although my current curriculum was not what I would consider to be a discussion-based curriculum, I had already incorporated many discussion elements into my curriculum through my work as a Hollyhock Fellow. The discussion-based curriculum I chose to develop stemmed from the things I learned as a Hollyhock Fellow, and the growing body of research, as discussed in the literature review in Chapter Two, that shows that discussions are effective tools to improve critical thinking, communication, and writing skills in students.

Revisiting the Literature Review

In examining the role the literature review had on my overall curriculum design, I come back to two researchers who have influenced my understanding of discussion in social studies, Abby Reisman (2017) and Sam Wineburg (2010). Both researchers have worked with the Stanford History Education Group (SHEG), which has influenced my lesson planning, and also through the Hollyhock Fellowship Program. I first learned about the

research of Reisman and Wineburg through the professional development at Hollyhock, and that has been the inspiration to create my discussion-based curriculum.

In chapter two, I stated, “There are four historical thinking skills -- close reading, sourcing, contextualization, and corroboration -- that are foundational for students to effectively understand, analyze, and argue about historic events and topics (Wineburg, 2010).” The historical thinking skills that Wineburg details are important to the work we do as social studies teachers. While some historical thinking skills are easier than others to replicate in human geography, they each can be taught to and mastered by human geography students.

Wineburg’s work extends into the formatting of the document sets that I use, which I borrowed from SHEG, as well as the use of Historical Assessments of Thinking (HATs). The use of HATs in my discussion-based curriculum bridges the discussion elements with the writing elements, pushing students to explain and articulate their arguments in their writing.

In addition to Sam Wineburg’s work, his colleague Abby Reisman is also a large influence on this curriculum. As I stated in Chapter Two in reference to Reisman’s work,

“Orienting them to the text is important as it provides them with a shared artifact around which the discussion can revolve. Students also need to be oriented to the discipline of history, this includes the historical context for the artifact and the historical question, but also the historical thinking skills needed to make sense of the historical artifact. And lastly the teacher needs to engage students as sense-makers, examining the artifact and the

discussion question with logic, interpretation, and ideas (Reisman, 2017; Reisman, et al. 2018).”

Reisman’s framework for orienting students to an artifact, to historical thinking skills, to each other, and to being sense-makers, is carried through into my curriculum. Each discussion revolves around an artifact from which students can pull their evidence. Each discussion asks students to be sense-makers of the discussion question, the artifact and their evidence. Each discussion puts them in some group format from which they can orient themselves to each other. Lastly, each discussion is in essence a practice of their historical thinking skills.

Challenges and Limitations

This discussion-based curriculum is not without its challenges and limitations. One of the biggest challenges I faced while creating the curriculum is the realities of teaching during a pandemic. I was constrained by time and life demands that kept me from being as thorough as I would have liked. In addition to the overwhelming amount of time it takes to prep and teach fully distance learning, I am also a new mom and thus I was also struggling to prioritize family time while also carving out time to work on the curriculum.

When it came to teaching during the pandemic, I have not been able to reconcile my ideas for my curriculum with the current reality of teaching online. Had this been a normal year in school in person, I could have tried out different discussion protocols with my students and honed in on ones that worked best while I crafted my curriculum. As stated in chapter three, this discussion-based curriculum is an adjustment and an addition to the curriculum I currently teach. This fall, as I have had to format my current curriculum to fit

the limited, online, distance learning formula for my students, I have lost out on time to perfect my discussion-based curriculum in real time with my students.

In addition to the challenges of crafting the curriculum, I faced challenges when conducting research and writing chapters one, two, and three. I had limited to non-existent guidance and feedback from my professor which left me feeling in a void while researching and writing, lost without much direction. This feeling has extended into the design of the curriculum. In a way, I feel that I could have done much more with my curriculum if I had more direct feedback initially.

While I am happy with the curriculum I produced, it has not lived up to my grandiose ideas. If I had more time to delve deeper into crafting better discussion questions, or more time to explore methods of discussions that would elicit better participation from my students, I think I could craft a truly discussion-based curriculum. As it stands, I feel my curriculum falls just short of discussion-based, and more into discussion-supported curriculum.

Implication

I created this discussion-based curriculum first and foremost for myself and my students. I plan on continuing to make adjustments and additions in the future, especially when we return to school in person. I also plan on presenting the basic ideas from this curriculum, the discussion protocols and the historical thinking skills, with my school social studies department and the district social studies department. I am currently on a curriculum transformation committee with other social studies teachers from around the district who are working to create shared unit plans, lessons, and activities for each of the subject areas within the social studies umbrella. I plan to bring the ideas for more

discussions and utilizing the historical thinking skills to the group as we work on the district curriculum.

In addition to my work at the district, I have also presented some of these ideas to other social studies teachers at the Minnesota Council for the Social Studies annual conference. I presented a workshop at the 2020 conference in February entitled, “Crafting Discourse and Discussion: Utilizing SHEG Resources in the Classroom”, in which I brought some of the SHEG resources and discussion protocols I learned at the Hollyhock Fellowship to other social studies teachers. I hope to present additional workshops on this topic in the future.

For my students and other students in discussion-based classrooms, the implications are positive. I have seen anecdotally that students write better on essays and other written assessments after participating in a discussion. The research I have conducted which I detailed in chapter two backs up this anecdotal observation. Specifically, De La Paz and Wissinger’s research on historical writing of students with learning disabilities showed that students who are taught historical thinking skills utilize more evidence in their writing and analyze that evidence more effectively. (De La Paz & Wissinger, 2016).

Recommendations

Future research should focus on the effects of discussion on student writing. While I did find many sources that made some indications of the effects, I struggled to find concrete evidence and data proving the positive effects of classroom discussion on student writing. Again, I have seen anecdotally in my own classroom the effect of discussion on student

writing, however, I have not conducted any research within my own classroom, taking data on the quality of students writing before and after a discussion.

I think this would be an exciting area on which to conduct research. I have heard for years in professional development at the school and the district level on the positives of student voice in the classroom, that we should be encouraging students to talk more, discuss more, conduct more group projects, etc. However, I do not recall hearing any evidence of the effectiveness of student voice on cognitive achievement or student writing. While I believe this should be something teachers should do more often in the classroom, I would like to see more research into student voice in the classroom and its effects on student writing.

Final Summary

Through the capstone process, I have learned how important classroom discussion is for the subject of social studies. The curriculum design project that I have completed has impacted the way I think about my curriculum. I have developed new discussion activities, considered how to implement discussion at different points in a lesson or unit, crafted new discussion questions, and reworked old lessons to be more effective.

Through the Review of Literature, I have found research to back up what I already knew as a teacher with regards to effective classroom instruction using metacognition and think aloud to guide students' understanding of a topic. I have found new discussion techniques, and better understanding of techniques I already use. I have learned about new ways of assessing student writing and creating engaging graphic organizers.

The curriculum I have created will impact students in the future for years to come. I plan on sharing the curriculum with my fellow social studies teachers at my building and

my school district in the hopes of adopting at least some of the discussion questions, activities, and techniques district-wide. But as with all things in education--lessons, activities, curriculum, even standards--this will be something I continue to work on, fix, tweek, add to, and change over the years. It is not a perfect curriculum, but one I hope to make better and better as I continue my own growth as a teacher. I am optimistic about my continued use of the curriculum, not only in my own classroom, but in other classrooms as well, and I hope to continue working on the curriculum for years to come.

REFERENCES

- Beck, S. W., Jones, K., Storm, S., & Smith, H. (2020). *Scaffolding Students' Writing Processes Through Dialogic Assessment*. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 63(6), 651–660.
- Benko, S. L. (2012). *Scaffolding: An Ongoing Process to Support Adolescent Writing Development*. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 56(4), 291–300.
- Bowen, Ryan S., (2017). *Understanding by Design*. Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching. Retrieved July 30, 2020 from <https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/understanding-by-design/>.
- Colley, Carolyn, (2016). *Discussion Diamond*. Tools for Ambitious Science Teaching. Retrieved July 30, 2020 from <https://ambitioussciencelearning.org/discussion-diamond/>
- Collins, A., Brown, J. S., & Holum, A. (1991). *Cognitive Apprenticeship: Making Thinking Visible*. *American Educator*. Retrieved July 17, 2020, from https://www.aft.org/ae/winter1991/collins_brown_holum
- Cooper, F. (2018). *A Modification of Think Pair Share to Make it More Learner-Centered by Using Student-Generated Questions*. *College Teaching*, 66(1), 34.
- Cormany, S. (2018) *Edison MYP Grading Scale*. Edison Staff Handbook
- Davies, M., & Meissel, K. (2016). *The use of Quality Talk to increase critical analytical speaking and writing of students in three secondary schools*. *British Educational Research Journal*, 42(2), 342–365
- De La Paz, Susan & Wissinger, Daniel. (2016). *Improving the Historical Knowledge and Writing of Students With or At Risk for LD*. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*. 50. 10.1177/0022219416659444.

- Dwyer, J., Kelcey, B., Berebitsky, D., & Carlisle, J. F. (2016). *A Study of Teachers' Discourse Moves That Support Text-Based Discussions*. *Elementary School Journal*, 117(2), 285–309.
- Ewoldt, K. B., & Morgan, J. J. (2017). *Color-Coded Graphic Organizers for Teaching Writing to Students With Learning Disabilities*. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 49(3), 175–184.
- Gewertz, C. (2019). *How Much Should Teachers Talk in the Classroom? Much Less, Some Say*. Education Week.
<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2019/12/11/how-much-should-teachers-talk-in-the.html>
- Gillies, R. M. (2011). *Promoting thinking, problem-solving and reasoning during small group discussions*. *Teachers & Teaching*, 17(1), 73–89.
- Griswold, J., Shaw, L., & Munn, M. (2017). *Socratic Seminar with Data: A Strategy to Support Student Discourse and Understanding*. *American Biology Teacher* (University of California Press), 79(6), 492–495.
- Gross, M. H., & Terra, L. (2018). *What makes difficult history difficult?* *Phi Delta Kappan*, 99(8), 51–56.
- Jacobs, G (2010) *Academic Controversy: a cooperative way to debate*. *Intercultural Education*, 21:3, 291-296, DOI: 10.1080/14675981003771033
- Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (1988). *Critical thinking through structured controversy*. *Educational Leadership*, 45, 58–64.
- Kavanagh, S. S., Metz, M., Hauser, M., Fogo, B., Taylor, M. W., & Carlson, J. (2020). *Practicing Responsiveness: Using Approximations of Teaching to Develop Teachers' Responsiveness to Students' Ideas*. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 71(1), 94–107.

- Koss, M. D., & Williams, C. A. (2018). *All American Boys , #BlackLivesMatter, and Socratic Seminar to Promote Productive Dialogue in the Classroom*. Illinois Reading Council Journal, 46(2), 3–15.
- Lapp, Diane & Wolsey, Thomas DeVere & Moss, Barbara. (2013). *Visualizing the Argument With Graphic Organizers*. IRA E-ssentials. 1-16. 10.1598/e-ssentials.8036.
- Mercer, N. (2008). *The guided construction of knowledge: Talk amongst teachers and learners*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Metz, M. (2020). *Amplifying Academic Talk: High-Quality Discussions in the Language of Comfort*. English Journal, 109(4), 55–61.
- Middle Years Program: Individuals and Societies Guide* (2014) International Baccalaureate Organization.
- National Paideia Center. (2015). *Paideia Seminar*. Paideia Seminar.
<https://www.paideia.org/our-approach/paideia-seminar>
- Nystrand, M., Wu, L., Gamoran, A., Zeiser, S., & Long, D. (2001). *Questions in time: Investigating the structure and dynamics of classroom discourse (Report No. 14005)*. Albany, NY: National Research Center on English Learning and Achievement.
- Piaget, J. (1971). *The theory of stages in cognitive development*. In D. R. Green, M. P. Ford, & G. B. Flamer, Measurement and Piaget. McGraw-Hill.
- Reisman, A. (2017). *How to Facilitate Discussions in History*. Educational Leadership, 74(5), 30–34.
- Reisman, A., Kavanagh, S. S., Monte-Sano, C., Fogo, B., McGrew, S. C., Cipparone, P., & Simmons, E. (2018). *Facilitating Whole-Class Discussions in History: A Framework for Preparing Teacher Candidates*. Journal of Teacher Education, 69(3), 278–293.

Schirmer, B. R., & Bailey, J. (2000). *Writing assessment rubric*. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 33(1), 52–58.

Schmidt-Kost, S. (2020) *Diamond Discussion Diagram*.

Smith, M., Breakstone, J., & Wineburg, S. (2019) *History Assessments of Thinking: A Validity Study*, *Cognition and Instruction*, 37:1, 118-144, DOI: 10.1080/07370008.2018.1499646

Sohmer, R., Michaels, S., O'Connor, M. C., & Resnick, L. (2009). *Guided construction of knowledge in the classroom: The troika of talk, task and tools*. In B. Schwarz, T. Dreyfus, & R. Hershkowitz (Eds.), *Transformation of knowledge through classroom interaction* (pp. 105–129). London, England: Routledge.

Spencer, T. D., & Petersen, D. B. (2018). *Bridging Oral and Written Language: An Oral Narrative Language Intervention Study With Writing Outcomes*. *Language, Speech & Hearing Services in Schools*, 49(3), 569–581.

Swain, S. S., & Friedrich, L. (2018). *A Common Language and Criteria to Boost Students' Writing: An analytic writing rubric helps teachers and students see what's present and possible in a piece of student writing*. *Educational Leadership*, 75(7), 66–71.

Tabach, M., Hershkowitz, R., Azmon, S., & Dreyfus, T. (2020). *Following the Traces of Teachers' Talk-Moves in Their Students' Verbal and Written Responses*. *International Journal of Science & Mathematics Education*, 18(3), 509–528.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Walk and Talk (2015) *Energize Your Meetings* (pp. 70-71) Center for Responsive Schools, Inc.

- Walter, H. A. (2018). *Beyond Turn and Talk: Creating Discourse*. *Teaching Children Mathematics*, 25(3), 180–185.
- Wei, L., Murphy, P. K., & Firetto, C. M. (2018). *How Can Teachers Facilitate Productive Small-Group Talk? An Integrated Taxonomy of Teacher Discourse Moves*. *Elementary School Journal*, 118(4), 578–609.
- Wilkinson, I.A.G., & Son, E.H. (2011). *A dialogic turn in research on learning and teaching to comprehend*. In M.L. Kamil, P.D. Pearson, E.B. Moje, & P. Afflerbach (Eds.), *Handbook of reading research* (Vol. 4, pp. 359–387). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Wineburg, Sam (2010). *Thinking Like a Historian*. *Teaching with Primary Sources Quarterly*, 3(1), 2-4.
- Young, J. (2007). *Small Group Scored Discussion: Beyond the Fishbowl, or, Everybody Reads, Everybody Talks, Everybody Learns*. *History Teacher*, 40(2), 177–181.
- Zepeda, C. D., Hlutkowsky, C. O., Partika, A. C., & Nokes-Malach, T. J. (2019). *Identifying Teachers' Supports of Metacognition Through Classroom Talk and Its Relation to Growth in Conceptual Learning*. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 111(3), 522–541.
- Zepeda, C. D., Richey, J. E., Ronevich, P., & Nokes-Malach, T. J. (2015). *Direct Instruction of Metacognition Benefits Adolescent Science Learning, Transfer, and Motivation: An In Vivo Study*. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 107(4), 954–970.