

Exploring the Final Step of Teacher Education: A Study of Student Teachers' Use of New Practices

by

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Dedication

To my beautiful wife, Emily, and my children, Finney and Mabel

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Table of Contents

Dedication.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
List of Figures.....	vii
List of Tables.....	viii
List of Appendices.....	ix
Abstract.....	x
Chapter One: Framing the Challenges of Student Teaching.....	1
Chapter Two: What Challenges Do Pre-Service Teachers Face in Student Teaching?.....	12
Chapter Three: Methodology.....	33
Chapter Four: Participants and their Student Teaching Context.....	97
Chapter Five: Student Teachers' Self-reported Views of Practices.....	143
Chapter Six: Engagement In Content: An Invisible Problem to Pre-Service Teachers.....	170
Chapter Seven: Student teachers' Perceptions of Influential People.....	215
Chapter Eight: Discussion and Conclusions.....	272
Appendices.....	286
References.....	316

List of Figures

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework.....34

Figure 2: Key Concepts for challenges and supports.....84

List of Tables

Table 1: Structure of the Rounds Project.....	42
Table 2: Opportunities for student teachers to learn about use of disciplinary texts.....	59
Table 3: Opportunities for student teachers to learn a Concept Formation lesson.....	59
Table 4: Opportunities to learn Central Questions and Hooking Lessons.....	66
Table 5: Concerns with my study and steps taken in response.....	73
Table 6: A visual representation of the focus of contextual data.....	79
Table 7: A visual representation of the focus of focal data.....	82
Table 8: The survey 1 and 2 questions and their topic.....	86
Table 9: Interview 1 questions, topic and focus.....	89
Table 10: Interview 2 questions, topic and focus.....	89
Table 11: Results of survey questions about Concept Formation	145
Table 12: Results of survey questions about Central Questions.....	158

List of Appendices

Appendix A. Student Teaching Syllabus.....286

Appendix B. First Semester Literacy Course Assessment.....288

Appendix C. Advancing Adolescent Literacies Project rubric.....293

Appendix D. Survey 1, given at the beginning of student teaching.....294

Appendix E. Survey 2, given at the end of student teaching.....298

Appendix F. First interview protocol.....302

Appendix G. Second interview protocol.....307

Appendix H. Syllabus from second semester course Educational Psychology.....315

Abstract

The final semester in teacher education, known as student teaching, is arguably the most difficult time in the professional training of teachers. Research suggests that student teaching is a clinical experience filled with conflicting visions, competing practices, and insufficient guidance that can undermine the essential aims of teacher education programs. This experience can hinder student teachers' use of newly learned knowledge and skills in the field classroom.

This dissertation addresses how student teachers use, modify, or disregard practices they learned in their teacher education coursework. Through case studies of seven secondary history/social studies student teachers in an innovative teacher education program seeking to bring coherence between the field and the university, this study sought to understand how pre-service teachers see and experience challenges and supports in using new practices as they enter a traditional student teaching semester. The practices include (a) building lessons around central concepts or big ideas, (b) using historical/historiographic or social scientific problems to launch and organize lessons and units, and (c) employing lessons to hook secondary students in historical or social science content.

A central finding of this dissertation is that regardless of the coherence they experienced in previous semesters, these student teachers perceived a breach between their field experience and their teacher education program during their student teaching semester. They described challenges in using new practices, often with insufficient support from both the field classroom and from the university, to mediate these challenges. My study suggests that some of these challenges affect whether student teachers would use, modify, or disregard the practices they learned. This analysis revealed specific hindrances to teacher education, such as a lack of capacity to effectively support novice teachers in the field and tensions between giving student teachers codified instructions for practices and helping them use practices creatively and malleably. To improve teacher education, this dissertation calls for a more intentional design of the student teaching semester to ensure a more coherent experience for novice teachers. Further, this study calls for the formal training of cooperating teachers in the methods and theoretical foundations of the teacher education programs.

CHAPTER ONE: FRAMING THE CHALLENGES OF STUDENT TEACHING

The essential aims of teacher education are to enable pre-service teachers to “develop their knowledge and understanding of subject matter, children, teaching strategies, and the school curriculum, and to help them draw upon this knowledge in the shaping of their classroom practice” (Calderhead, 1991b, p. 1). Thus, a teacher education program must prepare novice teachers to manage content, students, strategies and curriculum (and be able to access that knowledge as they lead classrooms). While this may be easy to articulate, it has proven difficult to carry out.

Most teacher education programs require pre-service teachers to “acquire the knowledge, beliefs, and skills that will enable them to teach in ways that are fundamentally different than how they were taught” (Borko & Mayfield, 1995, p. 502). Consequently, most of these programs must challenge the “partial view” of teaching and learning with which the novice entered (Britzman, 1986, p. 446; Korthagen & Kessels, 1999; Lortie, 1975; Zeichner, Tabachnick, & Densmore, 1987). Also, teacher education programs must develop pre-service understandings and practices in a relatively short time frame—usually a year to eighteen months—and must do so in spite of the fact that novices often do not have an urgency to learn new educational principles and practices (Katz, Raths, Mohanty, Kurachi, & Irving, 1981; Korthagen & Kessels, 1999), particularly those they have not seen work in

classrooms (Britzman, 1986; Eraut, 1994; Korthagen & Kessels, 1999; Korthagen, Loughran, & Russell, 2006).

Such challenges for novice teachers and teacher educators are particularly salient during the student teaching semester, when the novices enter a full-time field placement. For the pre-service teacher, the student teaching semester is a dramatic shift in allocation of time and authority from previous terms in their professional program. During this term, one that most teachers and teacher educators hold as a valuable part of teacher education (Guyton & McIntyre, 1990; Lortie, 1975; Salzillo & Van Fleet, 1977), the pre-service teacher spends all day every day (rather than a few hours per week as in previous semesters) in a K-12 classroom. While the amount of time the pre-service teacher spends in their university coursework diminishes significantly, teacher education faculty continue to exert power and authority over the pre-service teacher. Additionally, with the increase in time spent in the K-12 classroom, there is a sharp increase in the power, authority and responsibility of the mentor teacher over the pre-service teacher's development and success. Such a culminating clinical experience, similar to other professional programs, holds great promise, yet research suggests that the student teaching semester is a clinical experience filled with conflicting visions, competing practices, and insufficient guidance that undermines teacher education programs' essential aims to "develop their [novice's] knowledge and understanding of subject matter, children, teaching strategies, and the school curriculum, and to help them draw upon this knowledge in the shaping of their classroom practice" (Calderhead, 1991b, p. 1). There is a rich literature framing the problems and long-standing failure of the student teaching experience that argues it "washes out" what teacher education programs teach or forces novices into a sink or swim

situation where they end up either concretizing their naïve, undeveloped practices or encourages them to blindly imitate the practices of the cooperating teacher (Borko & Mayfield, 1995; Browne & Hoover, 1990; Griffin, 1983; Tabachnick, Popkewitz, & Zeichner, 1979; Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1981).

This dissertation addresses how novice teachers adapt to this new situation in their professional education or at least how they see the challenges of using what they have learned at the university in the K-12 classroom. Central to this study are Eraut's (1994) arguments that in professional education learning knowledge and learning to use that knowledge are not separate processes, but different parts of the same process.

Hammerness and Darling-Hammond (2005) echoed this claim: "modern learning theory makes clear that expertise is developed within specific domains and learning is situated within specific contexts where it needs to be developed" (p. 403). With these in mind, I consider the student teaching semester a novel and challenging experience, where student teachers must simultaneously perform in two decidedly different spaces -- their K-12 field placement and their university program -- working with two different and often conflicting norms and expectations under the supervision of two different authorities.

However, different from student teachers in many other teacher education programs, those in my study learned through an experimental program called the "Rounds Project."¹ The Rounds Project is a teacher education structure based on a medical rounds model of instruction, with the central purpose of "building coherence among participants (interns, attendings, field instructors, and faculty members), spaces (subject-area major

¹ For more information on *The Rounds Project*, see Bain and Moje (2012).

courses, education courses, and K-12 school settings), and concepts (disciplinary substance, practices, and literacies)” (Bain & Moje, 2012, p. 65). At the time of my research, the Rounds Project made strides in the first two of three semesters yet had done little to align the final semester, or student teaching, with the first two semesters. Essentially, then, this study asks, “What happens when secondary student teachers from the Rounds Project enter the field full time into a more traditional student teaching model? How do they see and utilize their previous professional instruction, particularly the practices they learned in their disciplinary methods class?”

Through case studies of seven secondary history-social studies pre-service teachers in their student teaching semester, this study seeks to understand how pre-service teachers see and experience challenges and supports in their student teaching semester, particularly how they use, modify, or disregard learned practices. My study explores whether student teachers still feel the effects of the “different worlds” between the university and the field and how they manage their experience while learning to utilize their teacher training. To improve teacher education, teacher educators need an understanding of the processes pre-service teachers go through to integrate their new knowledge into their field experiences. Without the knowledge of how novice professionals “apply, disregard, or modify their initial training . . . attempts to plan or evaluate professional education are liable to be crude and misdirected” (Eraut, 1994, p. 40). If teacher educators do not understand clearly where the problems lie, attempts to fix the problems will be unsuccessful. How are student teachers applying practices in the field? Which, if any, of the practices are they disregarding? Which practices are they modifying and what is their understanding of the modifications they are making? My investigation

hopes to fill a gap in the understanding of the student teaching semester by looking more closely at the ways history/social studies pre-service teachers use the practices they learned in their education courses.

To focus my study on the pre-service teachers' use of knowledge during the student teaching semester and how they mediate the two "worlds" in which they simultaneously exist, I examined practices that formed some of the central features of the pre-service teachers' history/social studies literacy courses and their methods class, specifically (a) building lessons around central concepts or big ideas, (b) using historical/historiographic or social scientific problems to launch and organize lessons and units, and (c) employing lessons to hook secondary students in historical or social science content. For this study, I define the general term *concept* as categories with which we group phenomenon to make it easier to sort through and remember large numbers of living beings, objects, and events (Beal, Bolick, & Martorella, 2009). Concepts have key characteristics that determine whether the new phenomenon fit into the category. In addition, historical concepts have characteristics based on the time period and the culture of that occurrence of the concept (Aberg, 1966). Examples of historical concepts include *imperialism* or *democracy*. I define a *historical/historiographic* or *social scientific problem* as a question or puzzle that engages students into historical or social scientific content and requires them to use that content in cogent ways to find solutions. An example of an historical problem that could drive a lecture on the decade leading up to the American Revolution is to start with the statement: "The American reaction against British taxation was illegal, unjustified, and fundamentally unnecessary" (Stacey, 2009, p. 277). Because this statement goes against much of what

students had always learned, they can be engaged to determine whether they agree with this assertion or not.

Both of these practices mirror the work done by historians, who use historical/historiographic problems and concepts to drive their inquiries and to select, organize and structure historical facts. In the same way, history teachers can use these disciplinary tools as educational strategies to help students “organize data and direct their inquiries and studies” (Bain, 2005). Engaging learners in content is also something historians must consider; yet, history teachers must engage learners who are often filling a credit requirement rather than learning history based on interest. In order to learn more about how student teachers use strategies of engagement, I explored how they attempted to hook their students into the content and the unit problem and how they helped their students see the value of the content they learned. The primary audience of this study is teacher educators, as I seek to illuminate some challenges and supports pre-service teachers face in transferring knowledge from the teacher education classroom into the field classroom.

As a dataset, I designed and created cases of seven history-social studies student teachers during the final semester of their teacher education program. Open-ended survey responses, field observations, and interviews helped to illuminate the relationship between what the pre-service teachers learned in teacher education and how they perceived and enacted this learning during their student teaching experience. Focusing on these interconnected practices, I ask:

1. How do student teachers use, modify or disregard these practices in designing and then enacting instruction?

2. What contextual, conceptual/cognitive or procedural challenges do student teachers face in planning and implementing these practices?
3. What contextual, conceptual/cognitive or procedural supports influence student teachers' planning and implementation of these practices?

My purpose and interest in this study is twofold. First, as a teacher educator committed to professional education, I have concerns about the future of teacher education as an area of professional training in the university. Opponents of teacher education have questioned the very existence of these programs. Consider in 2002 when former U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige declared that there “was little evidence that education school course work leads to improved student achievement” (Levine, 2006, p. 13). More recently, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan’s speech to Columbia’s Teachers College stated that the nation’s colleges of education are doing a “mediocre job” of preparing teachers for “the realities of the 21st-century classroom” and need “revolutionary change—not evolutionary tinkering” (Field, 2009). In a 2010 survey of 716 teacher educators from four-year colleges and universities, half agreed “teacher education programs often fail to prepare teachers for the challenges of teaching in the real world” and only seven percent believed “that institutional accreditation is a guarantee of quality” (Farkas & Duffett, 2010, p. 7). Specifically related to the student teaching semester, a recent study of 134 teacher education institutions by the National Council on Teacher Quality (2011) found that teacher education institutions exceeded school districts’ capacity to provide quality mentors for student teachers and that many elements of the student teaching semester are “left to chance” rather than carefully accounted for (p. 22). Finally, the rise of alternative certification paths, such as Teach for America, has been a cause of great concern for schools

of education. In a national study, an estimated 59,000 individuals were issued teaching certificates nationwide through alternative pathways during the 2005-2006 school year, up from the 39,000 certificates issued for the 2003-2004 school year. Currently, an estimated one third of all new teachers come through an alternative certification route (Unruh & Holt, 2010). With declining numbers of students entering schools of education for professional training, the future of these institutions is unclear. As a teacher educator who thinks that professional schools have a major role to play in preparing teachers, like they do in the preparation of doctors, lawyers, and nurses, it is important to improve the clinical features of these programs to respond to valid criticisms of their failure to prepare effective teachers.

Second, my interest in this research comes from my own twenty years of experiences as a student teacher, classroom teacher, cooperating teacher, and teacher educator. As a student teacher, the only models of teaching I observed from my cooperating teacher were the ones I had always known as a student, either teacher-centered, authoritative lectures or silent student work. When I began the lead teaching portion of student teaching, I distinctly remember my cooperating teacher watching me the first day and saying, "Francis, you are fine. You probably won't see me again until the midterm," and I did not. The experience with my cooperating teacher included no help in lesson planning, no help with writing or implementing assessments, and no help with classroom management. Also, I did not see my teacher education professor in my classroom more than two or three times over the semester, and I received little to no guidance from him in any way. On his semester ending review, he wrote "time on task" was all I needed to

become a more effective teacher. Again, I received no help in planning or implementing lessons or in management.

Both these mentors relayed the same message to me about teaching: I would get better with time. In some ways, they were right. My lectures became more dynamic, and I wrote my silent work for students more clearly. Yet, throughout my ten years of experience, my teaching was almost identical to the teaching I received as a high school student – lecture and silent work. My teacher training and career are a prototypical example of the difficulty in teacher education of challenging the views about teaching and learning with which pre-service teachers enter their program (Britzman, 1986; Korthagen & Kessels, 1999; Lortie, 1975; Zeichner et al., 1987). Was my teacher training “washed out” by student teaching as many people claim is a result of student teaching (Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1981)? These experiences, enlightened by my new understanding of teacher learning, drive my desire to explore the student teaching semester.

As a cooperating teacher, I also took this “hands-off” approach to mentoring, and viewed student teaching as a time when pre-service teachers “sink-or-swim” in the profession. I neither provided proper training to the student teachers placed under my tutelage, nor helped them to understand the thinking behind my teacher moves. I received no formal training on mentoring novice teachers and had no knowledge about the importance of doing so. I never asked the student teachers the kinds of methods they learned, and, as a result, never helped them integrate new practices in my classroom. Often the only guidance I provided to my student teachers was how to deal with emergencies. Additionally, I rarely spoke with the field instructor, who came in occasionally to observe a lesson. The only communication I had with him was to turn in my formal evaluation of the

pre-service teacher at the midpoint and the end of their student teaching. As I reflect back on these experiences, I realize that these student teachers were following the same patterns of teacher learning I experienced during my teacher training: using either teacher-centered or silent student work, and receiving the very little feedback from the cooperating teacher or the university instructor. In the process, these student teachers just floundered to do their best, eventually became certified teachers and, I assume, carried on this limited view of teacher education.

Currently, as a teacher educator, I have learned the potential student teaching holds to be an actual educative experience in professional learning, rather than an exercise in survival as I once viewed it. Through my explorations of teacher education research, work with professors of teacher education, and observing student teachers' experiences in the field, I was challenged and disabused of my simple understanding of teacher education. Student teachers need their initial views about teaching and learning to be challenged and complexified. They need clear instruction concerning the performances and practices to be developed, by expert teachers who make their thinking visible, with frequent opportunities for practice with continuous formative feedback and coaching (Darling-Hammond, 2005). Clear instruction and feedback about their practices, hearing expert teachers talking about the choices they have and moves they are making, and frequent opportunities for practicing methods that they scarcely saw during their schooling are critical attributes of an educative student teaching experience.

Because of the perceived and real failures of teacher education to meet its essential aims and my personal experiences, it has become clear to me that teacher education needs deeper understandings of how pre-service teachers use, modify or disregard practices

seemingly acquired in professional training, particularly during the student teaching semester. Such is the essential aim of this dissertation.

CHAPTER TWO: WHAT CHALLENGES DO PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS FACE IN STUDENT TEACHING?

What is student teaching, how do pre-service teachers experience the student teaching semester, and how does the experience impact pre-service teachers? This review of literature analyzes these fundamental concerns and problems with the student teaching semester by (1) identifying how the literature discusses the effects of the student teaching semester on pre-service teachers knowledge and understanding of teaching and (2) describing what the literature suggests are the challenges student teachers face in using this intensive clinical experience to develop their instructional skills and ideas.

Problems in Teacher Education and Impact on Student Teaching

The dominant, most common model of student teaching, Britzman (1986) explained, is grounded in an “implicit theory of immediate integration,” where “the university provides the theories, methods, and skills; schools provide the classroom, curriculum, and students; and the student teacher provides the individual effort; all of which combine to produce the finished product of professional teacher” (p. 442). This model implies that there is a two-step process of knowledge acquisition and use where acquisition essentially begins in the teacher education classroom and is followed by application in the field classroom (Feiman-Nemser & Remillard, 1995; Korthagen & Kessels, 1999). Over the past

thirty years, scholars have become critical of this relationship where “[t]he hidden curriculum of teacher education tends to communicate a fragmented view of knowledge, both in coursework and in field experiences . . . knowledge is ‘given’ and unproblematic” (Ben Peretz, 1995, pg. 546; See also Carter, 1990; Wideen, Mayer-Smith, & Moon, 1998). This model of teacher learning “has failed to change, in any major way, what happens in our schools and universities” (Korthagen et al., 2006, p. 1038). Bain and Moje (2012) described the failure of teacher education programs to bridge the divides between the university, including courses in Arts and Sciences *and* Schools of Education, and the field as “fault lines.” These fault lines charge novice teachers with the task of making meaning, connecting and using knowledge and practices acquired or at least experienced in these three different spaces (or “continents”). In most teacher education programs, “there is little to help pre-service travelers navigate within and bridge across” (Bain & Moje, 2012, p. 62).

The failures of this model of teacher education are particularly noticeable during the student teaching semester, a capstone experience where pre-service teachers cross “the ritual bridge between the student's world and the teacher's world” (Britzman, 1986, p. 442), a professional “rite of passage” into the teaching profession (White, 1989). Teacher education programs, and in-service and novice teachers typically consider student teaching the most valuable part of teacher education (Guyton & McIntyre, 1990; Lortie, 1975; Salzillo & Van Fleet, 1977) and Conant (1963) called it “the one indisputably essential element in professional education” (p. 142). Yet, there are increasing reports that the experience has not lived up to these intentions, and at times, actually undermines the pre-service teachers training.

For example, some scholars claim that during the student teaching semester there is a “transfer problem” such that student teachers have difficulty transferring or using the knowledge and practices they learned in professional courses into the specific field classrooms in which they work for a semester (Korthagen and Kessels, 1999; see also Broudy, 1956; Calderhead, 1991b; Copeland, 1978; Eraut, 1994; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Korthagen, et al., 2006). Other scholars see a more pernicious effect of the student teaching experience claiming that it “washes-out” out the attitudes, beliefs, knowledge and practices that novice teachers acquired during teacher education courses (Fuller & Bown, 1975; Zeichner, 1980; Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1981). Looking across the entire teacher education process, Zeichner (1980) asserted that student teaching fosters a dramatic shift in attitudes and beliefs about the purpose of schooling and nature of learning. He found that many student teachers become increasingly more progressive or liberal in their attitudes towards education during their coursework, and then shift to opposing and more traditional views as they move into student teaching and in-service experiences. These pre-service teachers seemed to have the beliefs and attitudes that teacher education institutions were attempting to instill in them “washed-out.” Similarly, Hoy and Rees (1977) found that student teachers moved from a view of schooling and teaching that “emphasiz[ed] . . . an accepting trustful view of pupils and an optimism concerning their ability to be self-disciplining and responsible,” to one that “stress[ed] . . . the maintenance of order, distrust of students, and a punitive moralistic approach to pupil control,” a process they referred to as “bureaucratic socialization” (pp. 23-24). Schools as institutions have strong socializing power, particularly on novices who enter these large organizations as neophytes seeking quickly to earn acceptance as professionals. Student teachers, then,

entering schools with idealistic goals to improve instruction as they seek professional status often find the “only alternative open . . . is to reaffirm those traditional values and behaviors of the group to which he is seeking membership, thus mitigating any possibility of his becoming a healthy change agent” (Salzillo & Van Fleet, 1977, p. 29). Such research is calling into question the value of student teaching in developing professionals, possibly making it “the largest unvalidated segment of professional education programs” (Salzillo and VanFleet, 1977, p. 28).

What makes it so difficult for student teachers to use the knowledge and the practices in the field classroom or to sustain attitudes and beliefs instilled during teacher education? Some scholars have argued that novice teachers bring to their professional education simplified ideas of teaching acquired through their “apprenticeship of observation,” ideas and beliefs that, as Lortie observed, developed over the 13,000 hours of direct contact that most people have with teachers before college (Lortie, 1975; see also Britzman, 1986; Korthagen & Kessels, 1999; Zeichner et al., 1987). Developing an understanding of instructional practice through such lived experience rarely generates an understanding of teachers’ hidden intentions, or the personal or professional reasons for teaching moves. Pre-service teachers form these ideas through personal and intensive interactions with teachers *as students*, rarely getting the chance to observe teaching “from the wings.” Through these interactions, pre-service teachers develop “an intuitive and imitative view of teaching . . . based on individual personalities rather than pedagogical principles” (Lortie, 1975, pp. 61-63). These interactions over such a long period fail to provide insight into teaching’s “technical knowledge,” often encouraging people to attribute teaching moves to “personality or mood.” Further, this exerts a “potentially powerful

influence which transcends generations” and does “not favor informed criticism, attention to specifics, or explicit rules of assessment” (Lortie, 1975, p. 63). These views often undermine teacher education’s attempts to develop pre-service teachers’ technical knowledge and practice, particularly when teacher education does not intentionally surface to explore these deeply held (and often culturally-held) views of teaching. Thus, student teachers might enter the field with their pre-professional school ideas of teaching essentially intact.

A related, but slightly different, problem is what Katz, Raths, Mohanty, Kurachi, & Irving (1981) called the *feed-forward problem*, a problem that emerges from the picture of teaching pre-service teachers developed by their 16 years of interactions with teachers. In short, with an understanding of teaching developed from the point of view of being a student, pre-service teachers typically do not understand the instructional problems they will face as they enter the field full-time *as teachers*. Problems of teaching and of being a teacher are not simply the flip side of problems of learning or being a student. Thus, most pre-service teachers have little sense of urgency to learn how to mediate these problems of teaching practice since they were not privy to the problems their teachers faced. Pre-service teachers then often resist learning about a specific practice and then later “[protest] that the same learnings had not been provided, should have been provided, or should have been provided in stronger doses” (Katz et al., 1981, p. 21). Failing, therefore, to really learn what teacher education was teaching makes student teachers particularly susceptible to using their existing view of teaching or the practices and culture of the field when the problems of teaching become “urgent.”

Another line of concern about pre-service teacher education with particular relevance for student teaching is the gap between what teacher education programs provide novices and what the novices need as well-started beginners (Britzman, 1986; Clark & Lampert, 1986; Eraut, 1994; Korthagen & Kessels, 1999). Such scholarship has less to do with the resistance from the pre-service teacher than it does with the kind of knowledge provided by teacher education courses. Clark and Lampert (1986) argue that “a priori knowledge identified by researchers about the relationship among particular decisions or actions and their outcomes is of limited worth” to pre-service teachers because they need more immediate and practical knowledge. More recent studies have shown the limited worth problem of their learning in practical aspects such as the lesson planning taught in schools of education (John, 2007).

The accusation that teacher education coursework is too theoretical is not uncommon (Eraut, 1994). Novice teachers desire “practical things, automatic and generic methods for immediate classroom application. They bring to their teacher education a search for recipes . . . work which does not immediately address ‘know-how’ or how to ‘make do’ with the way things are, appears impractical and idealistic” (Britzman, 1986, p. 446). Novice teachers working in classrooms need “quick concrete answers to situations in which they have little time to think” and such “action-guiding knowledge is rather different from the more abstract, systematized and general expert-knowledge that teacher educators often present to student teachers” (Korthagen & Kessels, 1999, p. 5). Most studies agree on the importance of “conceptual explanation about pedagogical approaches tied to direct opportunities for inquiry and application” (Darling Hammond, 2005, p. 403). Such a gap between what teacher education teaches and what student teachers need in the tumult of

teaching adolescents encourages them to seek immediate answers to immediate problems rather than trying to figure out how to make the teacher education taught knowledge, theory, or practice fit their immediate situations.

Challenges and Supports in the Student Teaching Semester

Teaching is a complex activity. Secondary teachers have to balance the efficiency of teaching required content and the finesse of making content understandable for a range of learners. Beyond other instructional expectations, which include managing and assessing students, teachers must also meet the expectations that come with their position in a hierarchical, bureaucratic organization within nested state, local, and professional formal and informal obligations and responsibilities.

The classroom work of student teachers is likewise complex as is their role within the school system. However, student teachers have the added challenge of working within two other hierarchical settings: their mentor's classroom and the university's program. Student teachers must continue to manage their normative responsibilities in the university program as they learn new roles and responsibilities in their field site. A modest body of research has identified how navigating in these two contexts presents challenges and possible supports for student teachers trying to learn how to teach. Below, I discuss these in three categories based on the source of the influence: placement, university, and personal.

Placement Influences

One of the most powerful sources of influence on student teachers is the placement school. Many view the education novice teachers receive as unrealistic, and, as a result, not useable. Teacher education programs often prepare pre-service teachers for the "best of all

nonexistent worlds and then toss them into public schools where, quite frequently, the antithesis of everything the college program is trying to teach is an accepted, operating norm” (Berg & Murphy, 1993, p. 252). The influence of the field placement on student teachers echoes Becker’s (1964) *situational adjustment*, or the theory in which “individuals take on the characteristics required by the situations they participate in” (p. 41). Since pre-service teachers are not prepared to integrate new knowledge and practices into their field classrooms, they often take on the characteristics of the field placement. What are the sources of this influence in the schools? The primary influences in placement schools are the cooperating teacher, the students, and the culture of the school.

Cooperating teachers. The cooperating teacher has a central role during student teaching (Friebus, 1977; Glickman & Bey, 1990). No person spends more time, has more dialogue, or has more of an opportunity to watch the student teacher and provide feedback for them than the cooperating teacher. As a result, no person has as much potential to enable student teachers to have opportunities to utilize the training they receive in teacher education or to adapt to the situation of the class. The influence of cooperating teachers is found primarily in their usage of target skills and the quality of feedback and coaching given to the student teacher.

Cooperating teachers have an influence on the use of the skills and practices student teachers learned in their education courses. Some student teachers believe their role in the field is to merely to imitate their cooperating teacher. Cooperating teachers facilitate this view by “encourage[ing] imitation rather than exploration” (Pape, 1992, p. 59). Student teachers’ use of a target skill can be directly dependent on the use of that skill by the cooperating teacher. In his study of target skill utilization in 32 student teachers, Copeland

(1978) found that student teachers' use of a skill related directly to the cooperating teachers' use of the same skill. His findings support the notion of situational adjustment of the student teaching semester, concluding that if cooperating teachers did not use the target skill, the student teachers' use of the skill declined. However, when the cooperating teacher actively used the target skill, not only could student teachers watch the skill enacted in a classroom, but it also became "an acceptable, appropriate and functional part of the classroom's ecological system" (p. 98). More recently, Rozelle and Wilson (2012) found that pre-service teachers follow their cooperating teachers much like a "template for *practice*" in both teaching methods and practical aspects of the classroom, such as management. They found that the more pre-service teachers were successful in using these templates, the more likely they were to experience a shift in beliefs and behaviors that matched this template. From these findings, it is clear that the cooperating teachers' use or non-use of practices poses a direct challenge or support to student teachers' use of the same skills or practices. If teacher educators want student teachers to come to understand and utilize certain practices and methods, it is critical to find cooperating teachers who are open to student teachers' exploration and are currently using or willing to learn and use the same practices.

The feedback cooperating teachers give to student teachers also exerts a powerful influence. Cooperating teachers are the primary source of feedback referenced by student teachers, serving as a sources of ideas, information about teaching, encouragement and performance evaluation(Friebus, 1977). Feiman-Nemser (1987) stated that effective student teacher/cooperating teacher relationships include feedback about specific lessons, suggestions about new ways to think about teaching and learning, and encouragement to

reflect on practice. Research has suggested links between “direct and effective supervision in improving teaching behaviors” and student teachers finding the “climate and support necessary to attempt use of the target skill, find success and be reinforced” (Copeland, 1978, p. 154). Also, cooperating teachers’ feedback and support are a source of legitimacy for novice teachers, making them feel like part of the profession (Cuenca, 2011). Some studies suggest that pre-service teacher learning is less likely when cooperating teachers leave them to “sink or swim” in their field experiences (Britzman, 1991; Darling-Hammond, 2005). Quality feedback from a cooperating teacher is an important part of the learning process for student teachers and has a positive effect on student teachers in many areas of their professional growth.

Often, however, cooperating teachers do not give the consistent and high quality feedback that student teachers need. Research suggests that the feedback they give is often lacking direction and honesty about the student teachers’ practice. These “conversations rarely included in-depth exploration of issues of teaching and learning” (Borko & Mayfield, 1995, p. 515) and are filled with “well-meaning praises from cooperating teachers” (Feiman-Nemser, 1987, p. 272). Though the cooperating teachers often have the desire to “maximize comfort and minimize risks” for the student teacher (Borko & Mayfield, 1995, p. 515), this kind of feedback sends a message to young teachers that the lessons they enact are flawless. Another critique of cooperating teachers’ feedback is that it focuses on classroom management rather than on teaching practices (Feiman-Nemser, 1987, p. 272). Feiman-Nemser (1987) claimed “without guidance, they [student teachers] cannot be expected to recognize that management skills may be necessary to teach classroom groups but are certainly not sufficient for teaching content” (p. 272). Fledgling teachers need

conversations that move beyond their feelings and the practical aspects of teaching; they need an exploration of in-depth teaching moves and dilemmas teachers face.

Some researchers have expressed the need for cooperating teachers to receive training in teacher education (Borko & Mayfield, 1995; Feiman-Nemser, 1987). Because of the limited time and resources of the university supervisors, more resources need to be used to train the cooperating teacher, the one who has the most access to the student teachers. Borko and Mayfield (1995) recommend that instead of providing feedback to the student teachers, the university supervisor should use their time “to help cooperating teachers become teacher educators.” The field supervisors can then “model ways of observing student teachers and strategies for conducting conferences that focus on teaching and learning and help student teachers to become reflective about their practice” (Borko & Mayfield, 1995, p. 517). Without this modeling and training in feedback, many agree cooperating teachers will remain an area of untapped potential in the student teaching semester.

Cooperating teachers have the potential to pose integral challenges and supports for student teachers as they enter the field full time. The centrality of cooperating teachers’ influence on the student teachers’ experience through both their feedback and use of target skills makes an exploration of their influence a vital part of my study.

Students. A second influence on student teachers within the placement school is the students in their classroom. A small body of research shows that students have a powerful influence on student teachers, offering them frequent and significant sources of professional legitimation and generating a sense of success or failure for the student teacher as an instructor (Friebus, 1977). Also, student teachers’ experience with students

was the dominant source of knowledge reorganization about planning for instruction. Their knowledge of planning went from a simple concept, including only planning lessons and obtaining materials, to a more complex concept, including lesson planning, maintaining classroom management, and meeting students' needs (Jones & Vesilind, 1996). Other research considered the influence student teaching had on novices' views of students. Through this semester, student teachers grew in a personal sense of efficacy and confidence to motivate and teach students (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1990).

This body of research shows that students are a source of influence on student teachers' experiences. Because of this, students offer potential challenges and supports as student teachers bring new practices into their student teaching classroom. Surprisingly, I found no studies that suggest students have any impact, either posing challenges or supports, on the use of particular teaching methods. Regardless, I included questions about the ways student teachers perceived students' views of the practices, students' understanding of the content and practices, and students' engagement into the practices. This helped me explore the way student teachers' perceptions of their students were challenges or supports as they brought these practices into the classrooms.

School Culture. Another potential influence from the placement on student teachers and their use of practices is the school culture (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1990; Salzillo & Van Fleet, 1977; Zeichner, 1980). Most research suggests student teachers' attitudes and beliefs about school change through their experience in student teaching, becoming more "bureaucratic" during their field experience. Though many student teachers enter the field with ideas of change and innovation in teacher education, "the school bureaucracy quickly begins to impress upon student teachers the value of conformity, impersonality, tradition,

subordination, and bureaucratic loyalty” (Hoy & Rees, 1977, p. 25). Also, student teachers’ views toward teaching and their role as teachers seems to change through student teaching (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1990). During education courses, students often adopt a “humanistic orientation” toward school, or they view school as “an educational community in which students learn through cooperative interaction and experience.” Student teachers’ view of teaching is closely related as they “desire a democratic atmosphere with open channels of two-way communication between students and teachers and increased self-determination” (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1990, p. 294). During student teaching, however, these “ideal images” give way to the “instrumental necessities of maintaining order and running a smoothly functioning classroom” (p. 294). As a result, through their final semester, student teachers showed significant increases in custodial and controlling orientations towards school.

Because of the effects of school culture on student teachers, I considered if and how the views student teachers have toward the newly learned practices changed throughout their time in student teaching. The nature of these practices in my study align more closely with a “humanistic orientation,” as they consider students’ thinking and attempt to engage students in a dialogue about content. Because of this, it seems that the student teaching semester has the potential to change their view about learned practices from high-quality history instruction to practices that are not practical. Some additional aspects of schools that seems to hold potential as a challenge or support include class period length, informal and formal teacher collaboration (such as professional learning communities within schools), and the degree of focus on standardized testing.

University Influences

Another source of influence on student teachers is the university they attend. Though student teachers spend the majority of their time in their placement schools, ultimately they are responsible to the university for their accreditation. As a result, universities have the potential to be a challenge or support to student teachers in their final semester. University influences include the field instructor, expectations from the university, and the teacher education program the student teacher attends.

Field Instructor. The most often referenced, and seemingly important, influence from the university is the field instructor. Research suggests that the field instructor ranks a close second to cooperating teacher in areas of influence such as “coaching” the student teacher, and fourth out of ten sources providing “legitimation” for the student teacher as a professional (Friebus, 1977). As the “watchdog for the completion of university requirements” (Zimpher, deVoss, & Nott, 1980, p. 14), field instructors help student teachers maintain a structure for the requirements, evaluation, and assessment of student teaching, and ensure sufficient progress of the experience (Zimpher et al., 1980). Also, the field instructor maintains the key relationships of the semester. They are “the facilitator of relationships among students, teachers, and principal, and the personal confidante of anyone in the triad who chooses to confide” (Zimpher et al., 1980, p. 14). Additionally, the field instructor shares with the cooperating teacher the task of helping the student teacher understand the complexities of the classroom. The field instructor “can help the student teacher relate the specifics of the classroom to larger frames of reference such as disciplinary knowledge, societal mandates, research on teaching, a broad view of learning

to teach” (Feiman-Nemser, 1987, p. 272). Most agree that the field instructor is in a unique position to help student teachers. Staton and Hunt (1992) concluded that

increasing the amount of interaction university supervisors have with both student teachers and cooperating teachers, prior to and/or during field placements, would improve teacher preparation. Furthermore, increased communication would have the added benefit of improving the articulation between the coursework and fieldwork portions of students’ education program. (p. 120)

Field instructors are uniquely positioned to be a central figure in teacher education and to be a support to student teachers to more successfully integrate their knowledge into their field placements.

Regardless of this potential, however, field instructors often have little or even a negative impact on student teachers. The time student teachers have with their field instructors is limited (Shulman, 1987). They are “occasional visitors who mark observation forms” (Feiman-Nemser, 1987, p. 272). Additionally, the feedback that student teachers receive from their field instructor lacks substance (Griffin, 1989; Shulman, 1987; Zeichner & Liston, 1985), and is “neither helpful nor constructive for [a student teacher’s] growth as a professional teacher” (Shulman, 1987, p. 26). Often the meetings between field instructors and student teachers are “rushed,” filled with conversations “based on insufficient data” (Borko, 1995, p. 515) and contain little reflection and only superficial analysis of the observed lesson (Griffin, 1989; Zeichner & Liston, 1985). According to Borko (1995):

in many cases, student teachers learned not to expect much out of their relationships with cooperating teachers and university supervisors. They primarily

wanted the opportunity to practice and to learn by doing. They hoped for some suggestions and feedback, but they learned to be satisfied with very little (p. 515). One study found no significant difference between the classroom performance of student teachers who received supervision from a field instructor and those who did not, except in their self-ratings and their rapport with the cooperating teacher (Morris, 1974). Bowman (1979) asserted that university supervisors are often an ineffective means of measuring student teachers because the observations are not an accurate measure of what is happening in the classroom. He claimed

the kids are warned of the consequences of imperfect behavior. Occasionally there develops a friendly conspiracy between the cooperating teacher and the student teacher, which prevents the supervisor from knowing what is taking place. Under these conditions, can a supervisor arrive at a valid assessment? (p. 30)

Though the field instructor has potential to be a powerful part of the student teaching semester, often times they do not reach this potential. In my interviews, I included questions about the challenges and supports that student teachers perceive from their field instructor and what feedback student teachers' field instructor commonly gave them in regards to using the practices I am exploring.

Teacher education programs. In this category of university influences, I am including programmatic and administrative offices of teacher education programs and teacher educators who are not field instructors. First, teacher education programs are often fragmented, incoherent, and lack vision (Berg & Murphy, 1993; Darling-Hammond & Goodwin, 1993; Zeichner et al., 1987). The incoherence lies in the three central aspects of teacher training: content knowledge, "professional" teacher knowledge, and field

experiences. This incoherence “may reinforce teachers’ conceptions that content and theory have little utility in the ‘real world’ of the classroom” (Darling-Hammond & Goodwin, 1993, p. 33). Another effect of the programmatic incoherence is a lack of purpose in the field placements for student teachers. These placements are often “haphazard and idiosyncratic experience[s],” chosen for administrative convenience rather than educational value to the novice and assigned to whichever cooperating teachers volunteer (Darling-Hammond & Goodwin, 1993, p. 33).

Additionally, tensions exist between the expectations of teacher education programs and student teachers. A difference in expectations for the field placement is the root of these tensions (Bolin, 1990; Borko & Mayfield, 1995; Wideen, Mayer-Smith, & Moon, 1998). Teacher educators expect student teachers to apply the knowledge they learned on campus, examine non-traditional teaching methods, and reflect on their experience (Borko & Mayfield, 1995; Griffin, 1989; Onslow, Beynon, & Geddis, 1992). Student teachers, on the other hand, expect to be able to face the realities of student teaching in their field placement, rather than try to integrate unfamiliar practices (Bolin, 1990). Pape (1992) explained that one of the causes of the tension was teacher educators’ focus on the “why” of teaching, and student teachers focus on the “how.”

My study will utilize these findings by asking student teachers questions about the expectations placed on them by their teacher education program. I will compare these expectations of their placement or cooperating teacher. I will explore how the student teachers dealt with any tensions these expectations created, and look for coherence across student teachers’ content and pedagogical content knowledge preparation and their field experiences based on the ways that they describe them.

Personal Influences

To this point in the review of the literature I have considered sources external to the student teacher, from both the field placement and the university. Considering only these influences external to the student teacher, however, “views them as a ‘social puppet’ totally at the mercy of the social, material, and ideological constraints” imposed by schools and universities (Zeichner, 1980, p. 48). It is vital, therefore, to a study of student teachers to consider the influences they bring with them to teacher education.

Many researchers agree that the pre-conceptions about teaching that novice teachers bring into their program affect their experience (Adler, 1984; Borko & Mayfield, 1995; Britzman, 1986; Calderhead, 1991a; Lortie, 1975). In 1975, Dan Lortie (1975) identified the “apprenticeship of observation,” or the 13,000 hours of direct contact most students have with teachers by high school graduation (p. 61), as the cause of novice teachers’ adoption of an incomplete version of teaching:

They are not privy to the teacher’s private intentions and personal reflections on classroom events. Students rarely participate in selecting goals, making preparations, or post mortem analyses. Thus, they are not pressed to place the teacher’s actions in a pedagogically oriented framework. They are witnesses from their own student-oriented perspectives. (p. 62)

Because of their experiences as students, pre-service teachers bring preconceptions into their teacher education programs. These preconceptions of teaching often do not agree with their teacher education courses (Korthagen & Kessels, 1999) and can impact what the pre-service teachers find relevant and useful in courses and how they analyze their own and others' practice (Calderhead, 1991a). These experiences in compulsory education form

values in pre-service teachers that “coalesce in one's institutional biography,” and, can “propel the cultural reproduction of authoritarian teaching practices and naturalize the contexts which generate such a cycle” (Britzman, 1986, p. 443). Feiman-Nemser (2001) claimed that these experiences form images and beliefs in pre-service teachers that serve as “filters for making sense of the knowledge they encounter” and “barriers to change by limiting the ideas that teacher education students are able and willing to entertain” (p. 1016). All novice teachers have experiences with schooling that give them preconceptions about teaching which, if unchallenged, impede teacher learning.

Novice teachers' pre-conceptions often involve their understanding of teaching, learning and content matter. For example, novice teachers commonly think that teaching is simply passing on knowledge from teacher to students and that learning involves memorizing information and practicing skills (Cohen, 1988; Cole, 1993; Feiman-Nemser & Remillard, 1995). Also, student teachers' conception of subject matter knowledge is often “technological rather than scientific, that is, oriented toward formulaic approaches rather than complex analysis” (Darling-Hammond & Goodwin, 1993, p. 33). Student teachers often lack in-depth understanding of content matter. In a case study of one beginning teacher, her lack of content specific pedagogical knowledge “increased her dependence on the district curriculum and may well have contributed to her feelings of insecurity and the difficulty she encountered visualizing a desirable teaching role” (Bullough, 1992, p. 249). Hashweh (1985) asserted “teachers with a richer understanding of the content were more likely 'to detect student misconceptions,' to utilize opportunities to ‘digress’ into other discipline-related avenues, to deal effectively with general class difficulties, and to interpret correctly students' insightful comments” (as cited in Wilson, Shulman & Richart, 1987, p.

109). Often, teacher education programs inadequately prepare novices to teach subject matter, as much of what they learned about their content comes from their elementary and high school preparation (Ball & McDiarmid, 1990).

It is critical for my work, then, in studying novices' use of practices to consider how their experiences in history/social studies affect their views of teaching, learning and content. Additionally, it is vital to determine if student teachers' learning experiences have challenged their pre-conceptions about teaching, learning and content knowledge and if student teachers have adopted views aligned with their teacher education program. These areas will drive my inquiry to explore student teachers' past learning experiences through interview questions and consider if their current views about teaching, learning and content seem to be more consistent with those of their teacher education courses.

Conclusion to Potential Challenges and Supports of Student Teaching

The central goals of teacher education are to help pre-service teachers adopt more sophisticated understandings of teaching, learning, and subject matter, and help them integrate these understandings into their teaching. Yet these goals have often proved difficult to obtain; not only because of the complexity of teaching, but because of the different visions of teacher education, when "local school systems, the university, and the neophytes each compete to establish their own agendas for admittance into the profession" (White, 1989, p. 178). The student teaching internship is the pinnacle of the complexity and conflicting visions of the teacher learning experience.

Through this review of the literature, I identified many of the potential influences on student teachers in the placement school, the university, and the biography of the student teachers. Through my study, I examined these influences and considered the effect they

had on student teachers' use of practices they learned during their teacher training. Specifically, I explored how these influences seem to lead student teachers to apply, disregard, or modify the practices they learned in their teacher training.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Helping novice teachers learn and then use new practices in their classrooms has been an enduring concern in teacher education. This study examines how pre-service teachers use, modify, or disregard the practices they learned in their teacher education program. In this chapter, I describe the conceptual framework for the study, the programmatic context in which I conducted my research, the two practices I am studying, and the methodology I used to collect and analyze the data.

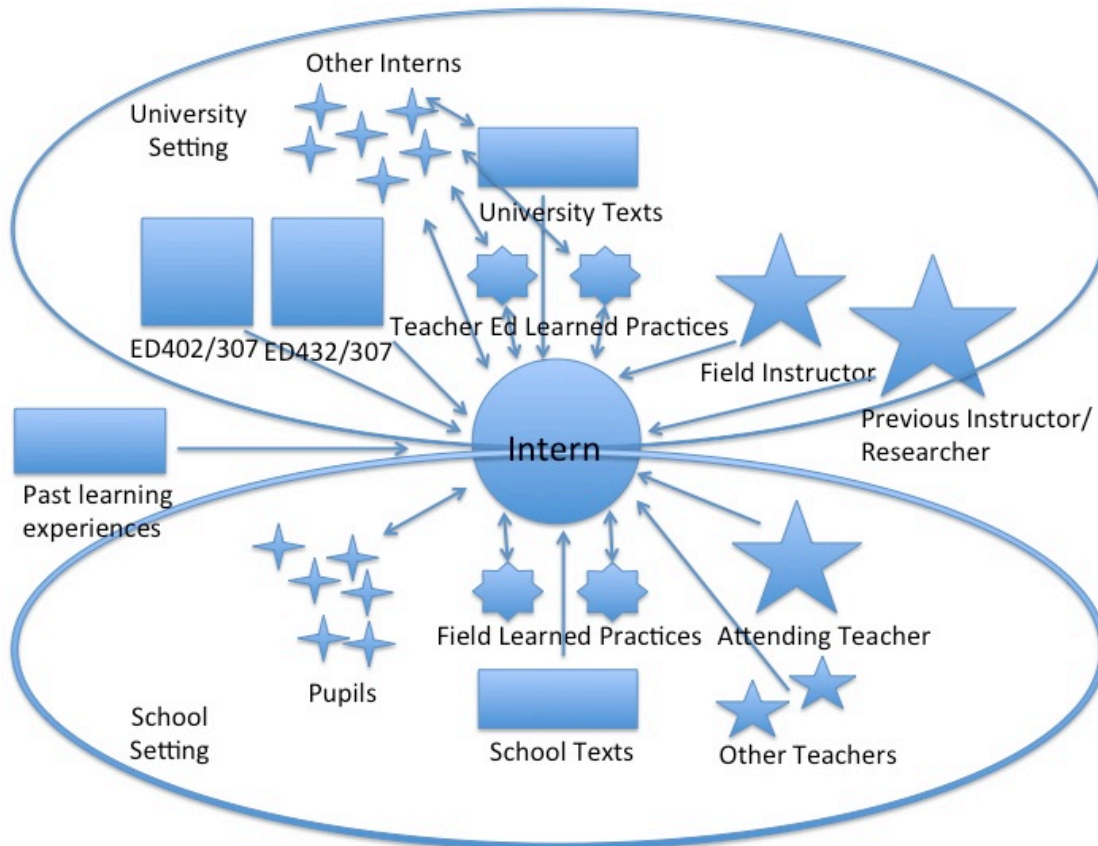
Conceptual Framework

During the final semester of teacher training, pre-service teachers become student teachers. This change in role includes a dramatic shift in time commitment, effort, and responsibility in which they have nearly the same responsibilities as a full time teacher, yet are working under the watch of a cooperating teacher. Also, they are still responsible to their university for assignments, attendance to a weekly seminar, and other duties. The student teachers in my study, much like most student teachers, were responsible to both the university and the school. In both of these spaces, the student teachers had a variety of different influences that posed potential challenges or offered them support in their work. In the field, there was the cooperating teacher, other teachers in the building, students in their class, school texts, and the practices they learned in the field experience. From the

university, there was a field instructor, other instructors, their learning from past courses, other student teachers in their cohort, university texts, and practices they learned from the university. In each of these worlds, the student teachers had duties they were responsible to complete, practices they had to enact, cultures they needed to uphold, and different people with different expectations. Additionally, students brought with them past learning experiences that create preconceptions of teaching, learning, and the content knowledge. These duties, practices, cultures, people and experiences have the potential to contradict one another, to have little effect on one another, or to work powerfully in concert with one another. My study sought to examine how student teachers perceive aspects of these two decidedly different worlds as potential challenges or supports as they utilize practices originating from one or the other world. Figure 1 shows a graphic representation of the conceptual framework.²

² It is necessary to note that as a researcher and former instructor of these student teachers, I too am a part of the conceptual framework, and therefore, a potential challenge or support to them as they enact the practices they learned in their program. As much as I attempted to maintain a neutral stance in questioning and analysis (represented by the small portion outside of the circle), I was very much a part and representative of the university. A later section in chapter three explains my role in the research in more detail.

Figure 1. A graphic representation of the conceptual framework.



Context for the Study

In order to explore the question of how student teachers apply, disregard or modify the practices they learned in their student teaching classrooms, it is critical to understand the context they received their education training, specifically the learning experiences for the practices I am studying. This section will examine two aspects of the context of this study: first, the structure of the student teachers' program; and second, the opportunities student teachers had to learn the practices I chose to study.

Context of the Student Teachers' Education Program

The student teachers in my study received their teacher training in a program called the "Rounds Project" at the University of Michigan (referred to hereafter as "the Rounds"). The Rounds is a collaborative effort to restructure a teacher education program by Robert Bain and Elizabeth Moje, working with clinical faculty and graduate student instructors at the University of Michigan. The work of the Rounds began in 2005 in the History/Social Studies Teacher Education Certification Program at the University of Michigan and is an attempt to mediate an enduring problem of teacher education. Rather than a cohesive and focused learning experience for novice teachers, teacher training is often a series of disjointed learning experiences from which pre-service teachers must create a coherent knowledge base of teaching (Darling-Hammond, 2005; Bain and Moje, 2012). According to Bain and Moje (2012), the required sequence for many pre-service teachers comprises ill-organized sets of educational experiences in different spaces (e.g., history seminars, education classes, high school classrooms), for different purposes (i.e., to learn history, to learn to teach history, to observe classrooms), and led by people who don't work with one another (history professors, education professors, and cooperating teacher mentors) and may never even have met. (p.62)

Novice teachers must then assemble their learning from these separate, often conflicting, sources and implement it into their new profession.

The central purpose of the Rounds is to bring coherence to the under-connected parts of teacher education. According to Bain and Moje (2012), they wanted to build a "navigational system that connects these [different areas of teacher education] for novice teachers" (p.62). The project sought to utilize aspects of the medical model of instruction to

develop a more effective learning experience for novices and for others involved in the learning process, such as the students in the class. For instance, the Rounds adopted a discourse that more clearly reflects the roles and responsibilities of professional training. Like the medical field, pre-service teachers became “interns,” and cooperating teachers became “attending teachers.”³ This discourse represents the approach the Rounds takes toward pre-service teacher field learning. Rather than allowing interns to “sink or swim,” which puts both the students and the interns in danger of an inferior learning experience, attending teachers are more actively engaged in the needs of both their students and the student teacher.

The Rounds implemented two changes that closely correspond with my study: (1) revising the required course sequence and (2) applying a structure of clinical rotations to the field experiences for student teachers. Before the implementation of the Rounds, pre-service teachers at the University of Michigan took four education courses over the course of three semesters, had one field experience per semester, and one seminar accompanying the field experiences. It was difficult for instructors to create a coherent learning experience for pre-service teachers as some of them took the required courses out of sequence. Pre-service teachers went into the field in two-person groups twice each week and observed a single classroom and teacher all semester, for a total of six hours. In many cases, the cooperating teachers had little knowledge of the educational concepts and practices the novice teachers brought to the field. As a result, cooperating teachers rarely

³ Though Rounds project members now refer to mentor teachers as “attending teachers” and pre-service teachers as “interns” to reflect the change in discourse; in order to minimize confusion, I have decided to maintain the more commonly known titles of “cooperating teacher” for the mentor teacher, “pre-service teacher” for any novice teacher involved in teacher education, and “student teacher” for any novice teacher during the final semester of their teacher training program.

practiced the methods the pre-service teachers learned and could seldom help them enact the methods in the field classroom. Also, pre-service teachers had few structured requirements during their field placement, limited often to basic professionalism in the field classrooms and only one experience per semester that bridged the field and the university classroom. This lack of organized course structure and expectations created a situation that varied substantially between pre-service teachers, often dependent on the involvement of the individual cooperating teacher and novice themselves.

The Rounds implemented a required course structure for all student teachers that opened up opportunities for scaffolded learning experiences and enabled communication between instructors of different courses and different semesters. As a result, pre-service teachers must successfully complete two teacher education courses during their first semester before they can move on in the program. The first course, “Education in a Multi-cultural Society,” focuses on the importance of effective and equitable education with an emphasis on the teacher’s role in attending to the cultural differences of students through planning and instruction. The second course, “Using Literacy to Teach and Learn History and the Social Sciences in the Secondary Schools,” examines the “possibilities and challenges for students as they use and produce texts in the disciplines” and acquaints student teachers “with information about reading and writing processes—especially those that are important for reading in the social studies—and with pedagogical approaches that help students use texts to learn and become critical readers.”⁴ This literacy course gives interns the tools to utilize texts and disciplinary reading and writing within their courses

⁴ Taken from University of Michigan course (EDUC402) syllabus, Fall 2010, Appendix B.

effectively. The literacy course also provides interns with many of the skills they will need in subsequent education courses and student teaching.

Interns must successfully complete their next two courses during the second semester of the program in order to move on to student teaching. The course, “Educational Psychology and Human Development,” explores “concepts, theories and issues related to development, learning, instruction, motivation, assessment, and classroom management for secondary teachers.”⁵ The second course, “Teaching Secondary History and Social Science Methods,” challenges student teachers to understand and define the purposes of learning history/social studies in schools, to learn methods of teaching these disciplines, and to understand how students learn the different disciplines.

Rounds faculty and graduate students also make a concerted effort to create a more structured and cohesive learning experience for interns, both from semester to semester and between courses and field experiences within the same semesters. To help with consistency across semesters, faculty and participating graduate students shared the central concepts and assignments of the disciplinary literacy course in the first semester and the content methods course during the second semester. They then used these concepts to structure the seminar and field experiences in the program, redeveloping course assignments to reflect this comprehensive structure. They adopted a system of “hand-overs,” or a report from one instructor to the next, to inform them about the concepts taught in the course and the progress, strengths, and weaknesses of the incoming interns.

⁵ Taken from University of Michigan course (EDUC 391) syllabus, Winter 2011, Appendix H.

The Rounds implemented a second change that included a system of “clinical rotations” designed to increase consistency between the field experiences and the teacher education courses. Pre-service teachers are now in the classroom of an attending teacher who understands the content focus, as well as the university’s expectations for that rotation. In the first semester, pre-service teachers have three rotations, going in groups of four to three different schools. In the second semester, interns have two rotations, in groups of three to two different schools.⁶ This structure gives them the opportunity to observe over twice as many attending teachers in as many different types of schools (urban, rural, exurban and middle and high school).

In addition, each rotation has a central teaching concept or practice. The attending teachers know the point of emphasis for that rotation, as well as the University’s expectations for the interns. The Rounds chose attending teachers specifically for their understanding of the central concept and for their personal strengths and knowledge. In the first semester, the focal points for the rotations were a text study, a student study, and a study of lesson planning. In the second semester, the focal points were teaching with concepts and assessing student learning (for a visual of the layout of the Rounds Project three-semester structure, see Table 1).

At the time of my study, the work of the Rounds had made some progress in the student teaching semester. First, the Rounds included all of the student teaching field instructors in weekly meetings and discussions. This was an attempt to give all field instructors a competent understanding of the vision and construction of the Rounds and the learning experiences of pre-service teachers throughout their program. In addition, the

⁶ In some cases, due to circumstances such as numbers of students or availability of placement teachers, the Rounds project members had to alter this basic structure.

Rounds project identified and integrated six “elements of high-quality social studies instruction”, or high leverage practices of history/social studies instruction, into the student teaching semester. These “elements of high-quality social studies instruction” were a culmination of what Rounds student teachers should be prepared to enact (see Student Teaching syllabus, Appendix A). At the time of data collection, the six elements included: problem framing and purpose setting in lessons and units, Concept Formation and its use, teacher selection and use of text, student production of text, probing and using student knowledge, and assessing student understanding.

Regardless of the progress the Rounds made in the student teaching semester, in many ways the Rounds still maintained a traditional student teaching structure. Rather than the Rounds personnel carefully choosing the cooperating teachers and placement schools as they had done for the two semesters previous, the general teacher education office chose the placements for the seven participants as they had done since long before the implementation of the Rounds. As a result, most of the cooperating teachers in the study had little knowledge of the Rounds or the student teachers’ learning and teaching experiences and had little to no contact with Rounds personnel before this semester. Also, student teachers were the only teaching interns in the classrooms. After two semesters of Rounds instruction, a logical continuation might have been an experience that aligns more closely to the Rounds structure, such as paired student teaching (Bullough et al., 2003; Nokes, Bullough, Egan, Birrell, & Hansen, 2008). Instead, the final semester of the Rounds project turned into a more traditional model of student teaching: one student teacher and one cooperating teacher. Was two semesters of Rounds enough to for these student teachers to re-enter a traditional student teaching model? Would these student teachers

experience the same challenges of student teachers discussed in research? One of the purposes of my study, then, is to explore this “drop-off” of purposeful coherence in the teacher learning experience and the re-entry of these novice teachers into a traditional student teaching model.

Table 1

Structure of the Rounds Project

	Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 3
University Courses	Education in a Multi-cultural Society	Education Psychology and Human Development	Student Teaching Seminar
	Using Literacy to Teach History and Social Sciences	Teaching Secondary History and Social Science Methods	
	Field Seminar	Field Seminar	
Field Placements	Field Practicum: Groups of 3 or 4 2 days 6 hours total/ week	Field Practicum: Groups of 2 or 3 2 days 6 hours total/ week	Field Placement: Student Teaching
Rotations with content focus	3 Rotations, 4 weeks each: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Text study 2. Student study 3. Study of lesson planning 	2 Rotations, 6 weeks each: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teaching with concepts 2. Assessing student learning 	In the field all day, everyday. Lead teaching

DEFINING HIGH-QUALITY HISTORY INSTRUCTION

A popular caricature of history instruction comes from the movie *Ferris Bueller’s Day Off* (1986). The scene shows a history teacher standing at the front of the classroom repeating the words, “Anyone? Anyone?” as he waits for sleeping, uninterested, or unengaged students to respond to his questions. Sadly, this stereotype is not far from many students’ reality. History instruction often emphasizes the memorization of inert knowledge, in the form of facts, dates, and events, rather than engaging students into

meaningful historical work (Bain, 2000; Caron, 2005; Holt & Wolf, 1990; Levesque, 2008; Wineburg, 1991). Students rarely have opportunities to explore and test their assumptions about history. Bain (2006) asserted that history texts and teachers often reverse the historian's logic of questions and answers; they "*first* definitively and confidently provide answers and *then* pose the questions" (p. 2081). As a result of this instruction, many students lack skills in historical thinking. Wineburg (1991) found that a group of eight high school students lacked the ability to read historical documents actively and critically because they were searching "for the right answer and becoming flustered in the face of contradictions" (p. 510). Likewise, Lee (2005) found that students had misunderstandings of basic historical concepts. For example, students often view change as a singular event and, as a result, "the idea of gradual, unintended changes in situations or in the context of actions and events is not available to them" (p. 44). Poor history instruction has not only left students bored, it has failed to help them build effective habits of mind to understand the world in which they reside.

What then constitutes high-quality history instruction? While many attributes could be included, four of the most prominent are: (1) engaging students in historical content and inquiry, (2) creating conceptual coherence from instructional objectives; (3) helping students be meta-cognitive learners of history, and (4) using and producing historical texts. The first three of these principles are adaptations of the three principles of learning from the book *How People Learn* (Donovan & Bransford, 2005). The final principle explores disciplinary ways of reading and producing texts.

Engaging students

Engaging students into history is one of the central tasks of a history teacher. I consider engaging students in two dimensions: when teachers make students active inquirers into history and when they engage students' pre-conceptions. Students need to be engaged as active participants into an historical inquiry, rather than onlookers who memorize the finished historical narratives presented to them in textbooks and lectures. It is the history teachers' responsibility to create history lessons that students find engaging, relevant, and meaningful. Bain (2005) asserts, "if historians are driven to learn content by their questions, so, too, might students find history engaging, relevant, and meaningful if they understood the fundamental puzzles involved" (p. 181). Engaging students in historical inquiries also helps them remember much of the factual knowledge they need for critical areas of schooling, such as standardized tests, since "memory is the residue of thought" (Willingham, 2009, p. 41).

Engaging students in the work of history means not only using problems and puzzles they will find interesting and meaningful, but also using their preconceptions and misconceptions in teaching. According to Donovan and Bransford (2005), "new understandings are constructed on a foundation of existing understandings and experiences" (p. 4). When teachers engage learners' preconceptions in historical content, they can more effectively understand and appropriate new understandings of history. One attribute of high-quality history instruction, then, is when teachers can engage students in meaningful historical problems and utilize their preconceptions to help them learn.

Creating Coherence in Content

A second attribute of high-quality history instruction creates conceptual coherence from instructional objectives and the seemingly unconnected facts of history. States and school districts give teachers seemingly endless and unwieldy lists of content objectives for students to know. Because of this, it is easy for teachers to take an approach that stresses content coverage, making sure to mention every part of the standards. This approach, however, does little for students understanding and memory of content. High-quality history instruction, on the other hand, stresses the importance of both the facts of history and the conceptual framework on which those facts reside. According to Donovan & Bransford (2005), one of the three basic principles of learning is that factual knowledge must be placed in a conceptual framework to be well understood and concepts have meaning through multiple representations that are rich in factual detail. Bruner (1960) agreed, asserting, “unless detail is placed into a structured pattern, it is rapidly forgotten. Detailed material is conserved in memory by the use of simplified ways of representing it” (p. 24). Without creating a conceptual framework, the multitude of historical facts remains nebulous to students, unconnected and forgettable, and of little or no value to their learning.

Giving students opportunities for meta-cognition

A third aspect of effective history instruction is to take a “metacognitive” or self-monitoring approach to learning. This meta-cognitive approach helps students “develop the ability to take control of their own learning, consciously define learning goals, and monitor their progress in achieving them” (Donovan & Bransford, 2005, p. 2). Students need opportunities to learn about themselves as learners and to check their own

understanding throughout the learning process. Lee (2005) described students being meta-cognitive in history as “knowing what questions to ask of sources and why caution is required in understanding people of the past” (p. 32). He argues that historical meta-cognition is when students have a sense of what counts as “doing” history, and will therefore be more careful and purposeful in their approach to historical accounts and sources. Bain (2005) created history-specific metacognitive tools to read primary and secondary sources based on modified reciprocal teaching procedures (Palinscar & Brown, 1984). He claimed, “by modifying reciprocal teaching procedures to reflect the strategies historians use when reading primary sources, I established reading procedures that enabled a group of students to read and question sources together in ways they did not on their own” (Bain, 2005, p. 203). Students need tools and opportunities for meta-cognition in order to know how to learn difficult historical concepts and also to measure their own understanding.

Using Disciplinary Literacy Practices

A fourth aspect of high-quality history instruction utilizes disciplinary literacy practices, or helps students effectively read and produce historical texts. This rarely taken disciplinary approach to texts moves beyond the idea of “every teacher a teacher of reading,” and highlights specific comprehension strategies used by the disciplines to read and interpret texts (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008, p. 40). I consider texts from a broad perspective, as anything in a classroom that “can be interpreted or is seen as carrying meaning” (Bloome & Egan-Robertson, 1993; Moje, Stockdill, Kim, & Kim, 2011, p. 454). In the history classroom, then, texts may include the textbook, primary documents, photographs, and audio recordings (such as songs, speeches, or lectures). Students have

difficulty using texts with historical literacy skills. For instance, students have trouble interrogating texts for meaning beyond what is written (Wineburg, 1991) and often accept texts as having unquestioned authority (Bain, 2006). High-quality history instruction helps students utilize historical texts more effectively, using such intellectual tools as corroborating and sourcing, to gain a more sophisticated view of the text's meaning. Also, history teachers have the task of motivating students to utilize difficult texts. According to Moje (2006), readers bring specific abilities, challenges, background knowledge, and motivation to the classroom; "wherever youth sit on the spectrum of adolescent literacy development, it is critical that their motivation to read and write particular kinds of texts be carefully considered" (p. 13). Teachers need to utilize students' interests, knowledge, and skills, a deep disciplinary knowledge and "special knowledge of how to maintain student engagement when turning to lengthy print texts" (Moje & Speyer, 2008, p. 200).

In addition to using texts, high-quality history instruction encourages students to produce texts, or participate in disciplinary writing. Through disciplinary writing, students "can gain a better overall understanding of documents; learn how to interpret documents appropriately and select excerpts for use as evidence; note author credibility in selecting evidence; and, finally, situate evidence in a historical context that clarifies its significance" (Monte-Sano, 2010, p. 560). When students learn to produce historical texts, they learn history content and historical thinking, and also become better writers (Monte-Sano, 2012). Overall, high-quality history instruction includes disciplinary literacy practices such as the effective use and production of historical texts.

The Practices and Pre-Service Teachers' Opportunities to Learn

To understand student teachers' use of knowledge and how they mediate the two "worlds" in which they exist simultaneously, I examined practices embedded within history problem-based instruction. First, I examined a method of instruction that brings historical concepts central to a lesson called "Concept Formation." Second, I examined student teachers' use of problems in their instruction. Specifically, I examined their use of questions that represented the problems of their units, as well as the initial lesson they used to engage students into these problems, which are also called "Hooking Lessons." I chose these practices for three reasons: (1) because student teachers had multiple opportunities to learn and integrate these practices during their methods course; (2) because the principles of high-quality history instruction undergird these practices; (3) because they are related to, and carry the some of the same benefits for teachers and students as, practices used by historians in their work. In this section, I will give an overview of history problem-based instruction. Then I will explain each practice I observed, student teachers' opportunities to learn them, and how they relate to the principles of high-quality history instruction. Finally, I will explain how these practices relate to the work done by historians and how they carry many of the same benefits for teachers and students.

History Problem-Based Learning

One way to improve education is to support teachers in the construction and enactment of lessons that enable students to inquire actively in the content; this is also called problem-based learning. Barrows (1996) created one model of problem-based learning used by instructors in medical schools. Through these medical methods, Barrows established six core characteristics of problem-based learning. First, problem-based

learning needs to be student-centered. “The students must take responsibility for their own learning, identifying what they need to know better to understand and manage the problem on which they are working and determining where they will get that information” (Barrows, 1996, p. 5). Second, learning must occur in small student groups, usually five to eight people, in order to give them practice working effectively with different people. Third, teachers do not take the usual role as transmitter of knowledge, instead the “role is better understood in terms of metacognitive communication. The tutor asks students the kinds of questions that they should be asking themselves to better understand and manage the problem” (Barrows, 1996, p. 5). Fourth, problems organize the content and are the stimulus for learning. Fifth, the problems represent authentic problems and serve as a vehicle for students to develop real life problem-solving skills. Finally, students need to acquire new information through self-directed learning, during which “students work together, discussing, comparing, reviewing, and debating what they have learned” (Barrows, 1996, p. 6). This format allows students to learn from accumulated expert knowledge by virtue of their own study and research.

When Barrows (1996) introduced his program of problem-based learning to high school teachers

The immediate interest in [problem-based learning] shown by teachers after seeing it demonstrated, and the excitement shown by students and teachers who become involved, caused rapid dissemination. The method is perceived as the solution to many problems in education, such as the current tendency to produce students who cannot think or solve problems and who are bored with education. (p. 10)

This model of teaching from the medical field seems to hold promise for many teachers to improve instruction and student learning.

The principles of problem-based learning are not new. For centuries, theorists and teacher educators have encouraged teachers to make learning a more active inquiry (Cohen, 1988; Dewey, 1902; Fenton, 1966; Oliver & Shaver, 1966). Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1760) emphasized, “learning by doing with the teacher's role being that of presenting problems that would stimulate curiosity and promote learning” (Duffy & Cunningham, 1996, p. 175). Early in the twentieth century, John Dewey (1902) also called for teachers to restore instruction back into an experience for the learner. He stated the subject matter should be “psychologized; turned over, translated into the immediate and individual experiencing within which it has its origin and significance” (p. 117). Over fifty years later, many educational experts still pushed for problem-based learning through curriculum movements of the post-Sputnik era, such as the New Math, New Social Studies, etc., (Fenton, 1966; Oliver & Shaver, 1966; Wilson, Shulman, & Richert, 1987). More recently, Engle (1989) asserted “topics or episodes that cannot be conceived as problematical should be omitted from the curriculum” (p. 187) and Mergendoller, Maxwell, and Bellisimo (2006) stated that problem-based learning is “an appealing instructional strategy. Rather than reading or hearing about the facts and concepts that define an academic field of study, students solve realistic (albeit, simulated) problems that reflect the decisions and dilemmas people face every day” (p. 49). In each instance, problem-based learning offered a way to improve education by engaging students in the material.

An aspect central to problem-based instruction is that students must be deeply rooted in the subject matter. It requires students to “acquire a knowledge base of facts,

vocabularies, concepts, theories, algorithms, and other conventions necessary to conduct rigorous inquiry” (Newmann, King, & Carmichael, 2007, p. 4; Newmann & Wehlage, 1993; Savoie & Hughes, 1994). In history/social studies, problem-based instruction enables students to engage in problems that are both relevant and personal in order to help connect to the “larger social context within which [they] live, . . . to address real-world public problems” and “use personal experiences as a context for applying knowledge” (Newmann & Wehlage, 1993, p. 10). By using content knowledge in problem-based inquiries, students are more likely to understand, remember, and be able to transfer the knowledge from school (Willingham, 2009).

Problem-based learning, however, is not easy for teachers to integrate into their classrooms for various reasons. First, few teachers have had opportunities to learn in classrooms that utilize problem-based learning, in both their current schools and in their past experience in schools (Lortie, 1975; Onosko, 1992; Saye, 2004). Without demonstrations that show the “workability and effectiveness, teachers are unlikely to entertain new practices” (Saye, 2004, p. 351). Additionally, teachers face a “bloated curriculum that often necessitates superficial coverage of ideas, events, issues, generalizations, and theories and limits ‘learning’ to the memorization of fragmented bits of knowledge” (Onosko, 1992, p. 193). Finally, typical classroom aspects, such as large class sizes and fact-oriented textbooks, inhibit the integration of problem-based learning (Onosko, 1996). Difficulties such as these reveal the importance of initial teacher training in problem-based instruction that includes specific ways to integrate and opportunities to practice these types of lessons. The next two sections describe each of the problem-based

practices that student teachers learned and the opportunities they had to learn and practice each one.

Teaching concepts as problem-based learning

One aspect of history problem-based learning is teaching concepts. Concepts enable communication between individuals because “they can exchange information rapidly and efficiently without any need for explaining in detail each item discussed” (Beal et al., 2009, pp. 160-161). Concepts involve more than simple observations, as they summarize and group together multiple observations into categories on the basis of shared characteristics (Sunal & Haas, 2011). Teaching concepts to students, however, is complicated by the fact that concepts have both “personal dimensions,” or unique individual associations we have accumulated in relationship to the concept, and “public dimensions,” or shared dimensions that allow for quick and easy communication (Beal et al., 2009, p. 161). Historical concepts also have characteristics of both the time period and culture from which they originate, which add additional complexity. For instance, the Michigan High School Social Studies Content Expectations (2007) requires world history teachers to teach the historical concept *imperialism* in different temporal and cultural contexts. According to these Content Expectations, the instruction students receive should enable them to compare the “British policies [of imperialism] in South Africa and India, French polices in Indochina, and Japanese policies in Asia” of nineteenth century imperialism (p. 27). Also, subsequent instruction in the same course should enable students to analyze the “political, economic, and social transformations” that occurred because of twentieth century imperialism in Japan and twentieth century economic imperialism in the United States (p. 29). Another historical concept in the Michigan Content Expectations is *industrialization*. Students

should be able to “analyze the origins, characteristics and consequences of industrialization” and “compar[e] and [contrast] the process and impact of industrialization” (p. 26) in Russia, Japan, and one of Britain, Germany, United States, or France. In order for students to be able to understand historical concepts, discern between the different cultural and temporal occurrences, and complete complex tasks relating to each occurrence, they need purposeful instruction from teachers who both understand and can effectively teach concepts.

Teachers need to treat concepts as “big ideas,” helping students group phenomena into organized conceptual frameworks or “hooks on which we can hang new information” (Beal et al., 2009, p. 161). These frameworks aid in student memory and retrieval and provide ways for students to see singular events as cases of certain phenomena. By learning these organized frameworks of knowledge, students can understand which characteristics of a concept occur across all cases, and which make each occurrence distinct from others. Additionally, learning concepts as “Big Ideas” also helps students transfer their knowledge into new and unfamiliar situations. Bruner (1960) called this “non-specific transfer,” and explained, “in essence, it consists of learning initially not a skill but a general idea, which can then be used as a basis for recognizing subsequent problems as special cases of the idea originally mastered” (p. 17). According to Wiggins and McTighe (2005), transfer is one criteria of true understanding. Hiebart and Carpenter (1992) state that when

encountering problems that differ from those for which a procedure was initially learned, the related conceptual knowledge may detect useful similarities and differences between problems, and subsequently, inform the procedure regarding

appropriate adjustments. In this way, conceptual knowledge extends the procedure's range of applicability. (p. 78)

In short, helping students think of facts or events in more general terms increases their memory and makes their knowledge more applicable to other situations.

Teaching concepts in history/social studies classrooms, however, is difficult. Students often find using concepts in new, but similar, situations challenging (Ehrenberg, 1981) and rarely think about how to *use* the concept, as opposed to simply learning it (Parker, 1986). Fenton (1966) said that many historical concepts, such words as *democracy* and *socialism*, “have been handled so carelessly [by teachers] that they are often more confusing than explanatory” (p.203). Because of the difficulty both students and teachers have with concepts, teachers need explicit ways of teaching concepts that actively involves students, can help them transfer their understanding to other conceptually related examples, and can help resolve the personal vs. public dimension problem by clarifying the public dimensions.

The practice “Concept Formation” gives teachers a specific method to teach concepts in ways that makes students active learners, transfers their understanding, and clarifies the dimensions of concepts. Additionally, teachers can use a very similar model of lesson to clarify the historical dimensions of a concept or to “define terms according to the time and place in which they were used” (Fenton, 1966, p.204). Concept Formation allows students to come to a deeper understanding of a concept by helping them see key characteristics of a concept and test their understanding of those characteristics with examples, non-examples, and ambiguous examples (Beal et al., 2009; Ehrenberg, 1981; Parker, 1986). These lessons uphold the four dimensions of high-quality history instruction

because, when planned properly, they engage students into an inquiry about a historical concept, provide students with a conceptual structure in which to organize events and facts, have a metacognitive component, and give students an opportunity to exercise literacy practices of history by evaluating sources and creating their own “definition” of a concept.

An example of a Concept Formation, similar to the one I use for pre-service teachers in their social studies methods class, is a lesson on the concept “civil disobedience.” The teacher engages the students into thinking about the concept by watching a short clip of the movie *Gandhi* (1982). After some questions about what students saw in the movie, the teacher gives the students three purposefully crafted excerpts that explain prototypical cases of civil disobedience. For instance, one of the excerpts could read

In 1960, four black college students sat in protest of Woolworth’s segregated lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina. This act defied the Jim Crow laws of the American South, established by the precedent of “separate but equal” in *Plessy v. Ferguson*. Over the next few weeks, more and more students joined the protest, until one day 45 students were arrested and charged with trespassing.

The students have time to determine characteristics that occur in both examples. The teacher then guides a class discussion to determine the key characteristics of the concept, or to reach similar public dimensions of the concept. The key characteristics for “civil disobedience” the teacher guides the class to include a breach of law that is public, conscientious, non-violent, and communicates a message (Rawls, 1971). The students then determine if a series of teacher constructed scenarios are examples or non-examples, such as, “The boycotting of stores that refuse to serve black people in the Jim Crow South.” This, for instance, is a non-example, as boycotting a store is not a breach of the law. Finally, the

students have an opportunity to produce an example and non-example of their own and explain to the class why their examples match or do not match the key characteristics of the concept.

Student teachers' learning experience for Concept Formation included engaging in one as a learner, reframing the experience as a teacher, and learning and practicing the lesson structure throughout the program (Table 2 shows the opportunities to learn and practice a Concept Formation lesson). During the first semester, pre-service teachers read scholarship (such as Afflerbach & Vansledright, 2001; Moje et al., 2011) and discussed selecting and teaching with texts. Specifically, pre-service teachers learned about purpose setting for texts and activities and about editing texts for different types of learners. Also, during the first semester rotations, pre-service teachers worked with their cooperating teachers to select and edit texts, planned a lesson with texts, and learned to use knowledge of the learner to guide planning and instruction.

During the second semester, student teachers participated in and learned an actual Concept Formation lesson. The methods instructor⁷ gave student teachers two opportunities to be student-participants in a concept formation lesson without their knowledge. First, student teachers learned the difference between "facts," and "concepts." Then, they unknowingly participated in a Concept Formation activity on "professionalism" in the field. The instructor gave the student teachers three texts from prototypical professions that establish criteria of professionalism.⁸ The pre-service teachers determined

⁷ I am explaining this course in the third person, though I was the methods instructor on record for the students. The reason my use of the third person here is because all Rounds instructors, including myself, consistently use this method of teaching Concept Formation.

⁸ The Fall, 2011 cohort used the "Principles of Medical Ethics" by the American Medical Association, the American Bar Association "Mission and Association Goals," and the American Nurses Association's "Statement of Purpose."

the “key criteria” for professionalism. After a class discussion about these criteria, the student teachers determined whether some behaviors by student teachers in the field were professional or not, based on the criteria they created. Immediately after this exercise, the instructor of the course “reframed” the activity as a method of teaching concepts to students using texts called “Concept Formation.” The instructor then provided the following steps for a Concept Formation lesson:

Step 1: Teacher provides 3-5 prototypical examples of a concept in the form of carefully selected and edited texts. Each text should contain all of the pre-selected key characteristics of the concept.

Step 2: Students look at examples provided and note similarities across examples, looking for critical attributes or key characteristics. Students construct an initial definition of the concept based on their findings.

Step 3: Teacher and students work together to construct a commonly held definition of the concept based on key characteristics.

Step 4: Students test more examples and non-examples provided by the teacher and/or have students create some.

Student teacher rotation groups then chose a concept with the attending teacher of their field placement. They chose and edited texts that are prototypical cases of their concept and planned and enacted a Concept Formation lesson to their peers in a fifteen-minute modified micro-lesson teaching structure.⁹ After the micro-lesson, each student received feedback from their peers and an instructor. Student teachers’ rotation groups then

⁹ According to Allen (1967), a micro-lesson “constitutes a real teaching encounter, not one which is simulated; it is only reduced in terms of students and time” (p.109). While the micro-teaching in which this cohort participated was reduced in time, the students were peers of the cohort and one instructor instead of small groups of high school students.

compiled the individual micro-lessons into one full length Concept Formation lesson, choosing the most effective texts and other components of any of the micro-lessons from their rotation group. The rotation groups then enacted the full Concept Formation lesson in their field classrooms with high school students and completed a final reflection about the experience. Additionally, they turned in all texts, lesson plans, and the reflection as one of the two major assignments for the semester.

During the student teaching semester for the Fall 2011 cohort, the student teachers constructed and enacted a full Concept Formation lesson in their field placement, as it was one of the six “elements of high quality social studies instruction” in which they must show competence.¹⁰ The questions the syllabus asked to help student teachers think more deeply about Concept Formation were, “What are the key concepts in your discipline? How do you convey these concepts to your students in relevant and engaging ways? What kinds of texts might be useful in this process?” To show competence in this element, student teachers had to plan a full concept formation lesson (including choosing and modifying texts) and enact it in their classroom. Acting as researcher and field instructor, I observed, video taped, and wrote comments/questions about the lesson. After the observation, I interviewed the student teachers about their experience in planning and teaching and then watched the videotape with them as they commented on their teaching. At the end of the interview, I offered the students my observations and gave feedback about their teaching.

¹⁰ Taken from the Fall, 2011 syllabus for EDUC304, Student Teaching course, University of Michigan.

Table 2

Opportunities for student teachers to learn about disciplinary texts during first semester¹¹

Course	Using Literacy to Teach and Learn History and the Social Sciences		
Rotation	One	Two	Three
Focus	Text study; Selecting and using texts	Lesson planning; Planning for instruction	Student study; learning about students as individuals and literate persons

Table 3

Opportunities to learn and practice a Concept Formation lesson during the second semester

Course	Teaching Secondary Social Studies Methods course				
Section	Week 2/3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 9	Week 12
Learning Experiences	Participate as a learner in two Concept Formation lessons	Micro-lesson Concept Formation in methods class	Concept Formation lesson in field classroom	Micro-lesson in methods class	Final Unit Plan Project
Practice Experiences	n/a	Student teachers plan and enact Concept Formation lesson for methods class	Student teachers plan and enact Concept Formation lesson in field	Student teachers plan and enact a second Concept Formation lesson for methods class	Student teachers submit final unit plan; can include one Concept Formation lesson
Feedback on Lessons	n/a	Peer/ field instructor	Peer/ field instructor	Peer/ methods and field instructor	Methods instructor

Central Questions and Hooking Students as Problem-Based Learning

Teaching history to high school students should follow many of the same principles used by professionals in the field. Historians create scholarship around historical problems and questions as they seek to learn more about the past. Bain (2005) explained, “Historians

¹¹ Table 2 and 3 represent possible structures of student teachers’ experiences. Because of the nature of the Rounds, some students may have learning experiences in a different order within the semester. All experiences, however, are the same across semesters and courses.

frame and build their historical research around problems emerging from a complex mix of personal and professional interests, unexamined and underexamined questions, gaps in established literature and knowledge, and recurring puzzles and issues". For example, in *The Failed Promise of the American High School*, Angus and Mirel (1999) explored the history of American schools as they sought to provide equal educational opportunities to all children. They explained that virtually all who had considered the history of the high school before them had built their research on two questionable assumptions: first, the central issue was whether schools should be primarily academic, vocational, or a combination of the two, and second, that by 1930, the nature of the high school had been established. Angus and Mirel challenged both of these previously held assumptions and added a new dimension to the history of American high schools. They wrote, "We find that in addition to the academic and vocational aspects of high schools a third, perhaps even more important aspect, a custodial mission, has profoundly shaped the modern history of the institution and its question for equal educational opportunity" (p. 3). They explained that this shift marked a "fundamental change in the social and economic function of the high school" that transformed the nature of the institution. Through their research, Angus and Mirel not only proposed this new strand for understanding our school history, they provided implications for policy and practice, such as moving to more rigorous and demanding high school graduation requirements.

A second example of a historian's problem is in *The Struggle for the American Curriculum, 1893-1958* (Kliebard, 2004). Two issues with the existing literature drove Kliebard's historical inquiry. First, Kliebard explained that he was "bothered by the imbalance in historical studies" that focused on the students who went to school rather

than on what happened once those children “walked inside the schoolhouse” (p. xviii). Also, Kliebard was puzzled by the many references to “progressive education” in other historical works. He said this term “encompassed such a broad range, not just of different, but of contradictory, ideas on education as to be meaningless” (p. xix). Through his research, Kliebard concluded that there was not one progressive movement, but several educational reform movements during the first half of the twentieth century, each with a distinct agenda for education. He concluded that though each won victories, no individual reform movement was overall triumphant. He claimed that it is this “ambiguous outcome of the struggle that accounts for much of the diversity in interpretation that has surrounded the course of American education in the twentieth century” (p. xx). Historical problems, such as these listed, drive the work of historians to engage them in and help them understand the past.

In much the same way, historical problems can drive the work of history/social studies teachers (Bain, 2005; Caron, 2005; Onosko, 1992). Just as historians begin their research with questions and curiosity, teachers can draw students into history with engaging problems. Bain (2005) states, “If historians are driven to learn content by their questions, so, too, might students find history engaging, relevant, and meaningful if they understood the fundamental puzzles involved” (p. 181). Also, as historians are able to make sense of the endless historical data through problems, teachers can both make sense for themselves and help students sift through the seemingly endless facts and established standards of their history courses. Historical problems enable teachers to determine the significance of information and avoid fragmented and superficial knowledge (Bain, 2005; Caron, 2005; Onosko, 1992; Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). Problems enable teachers to

organize the content and make it more coherent and understandable. Bain (2005) states, “Well-crafted historiographic problems provide links across objectives to connect the multiple scales of instructional time that teachers and students share: activities, lessons, units, and courses” (p. 183). Historical problems have the potential to structure lessons and units that help engage students and organize content in meaningful ways.

Additionally, historical problems offer benefits for student learning. They provide frameworks for students to attain a conceptual understanding and have ownership over their own learning through opportunities to construct and defend their positions. Historical problems enable students “to better organize and interrelate existing knowledge, as well as acquire new information” (Beal et al., 2009, p. 173). Also, using problems in history instruction helps create a classroom environment where students are active learners, rather than passive recipients, of knowledge. Teachers who use historical problems effectively “abandon the role of ‘information transmitter’ and instead assume the role of ‘inquiry facilitator’” (Onosko, 1992, p. 194), helping students become actively engaged in their own learning. Examples of historical problems, in the form of Central Questions which drive unit inquiries, include questions from professional scholarship on history instruction. Caron (2005) provides numerous examples of questions that act as historical problems to drive units from different historical eras, such as “Did World War I make ‘the world safe for democracy?’” and “Was the New Deal successful in addressing the goal of relief, recovery, or reform?” (p.57).

However, the potential of using central questions to engage students and cohere content is not automatic. This requires a concerted effort by classroom teachers to craft or choose the historical problems for student inquiry and purposefully engage students in

these inquiries (Bain, 2000; Seixas, 1993). Student teachers especially need specific and intentional instruction and rehearsal in both writing historical problems for units and engaging students into these inquiries. The remainder of this section explains student teacher study participants' opportunities to learn how to choose and integrate historical problems into their unit and lesson inquiries (table 4 shows the opportunities to learn and practice Central Questions in their instruction).

Pre-service teachers began learning about the “problematic” nature of history and “historical thinking” in their first semester literacy course. Pre-service teachers read and discussed articles that explored high school students' lack of historical thinking (Wineburg, 1991; Lee, 2005), the value of historical thinking and inquiry in high school history (Bain, 2000), and reading and writing in the discipline of history (Monte-Sano, 2010). Additionally, the pre-service teachers examined resources, such as the website <http://historicalthinkingmatters.org/>, to help them understand and utilize historical thinking in their teaching. Simultaneously, they began to learn about creating historical problems of inquiry for students to become active learners in history. In their social studies methods course, I provided examples of unit problems for them to think about, such as, “Did the U.S. stray from its own ideals during the age of Imperialism?” and “Did the costs of the Vietnam War outweigh the benefits?” After pre-service teachers discussed these examples and how they could use them in their classroom units, they had opportunities to work with this practice.

During the second semester methods course, student teachers continued learning about the discipline of history and its value in instruction through re-reading and discussing articles, such as Lee (2005) and Bain (2000). Additionally, student teachers read

and reflected on articles that further explained the value of problem-based history instruction, gave multiple examples of Central Questions for history, and gave examples of criteria for effective questions (Bain, 2000, 2005). Caron (2005), for instance, encouraged teachers to examine the Central Questions they wrote, asking, “Does the question represent an important issue to historical and contemporary times?” and “Is the question debatable?” (p. 53). Student teachers had opportunities to construct sample Central Questions around which they could plan a unit or lesson, shared these questions with their peers and instructor, and received feedback from both.

Finally, in groups of 3-4, student teachers prepared a two-week unit plan around a Central Question. The student teachers planned their units according to the “Backward Design” model of planning (Wiggins and McTighe, 2005). They planned in three stages, determining meaningful goals (Stage 1), designing assessments (Stage 2), and designing lessons and activities (Stage 3). During each stage of planning, the instructor challenged student teachers to think about the central question and problem of the unit. For instance, during Stage 1, student teachers had to work together to determine the central question for the unit, the “enduring understanding” of the unit (Wiggins and Mctighe, 2005), and the learning objectives developed from state standards. The students submitted the unit to the instructor and received feedback. In most cases, the student teachers wrote multiple iterations of the central questions as they learned more about the content, planned assessments and lessons, and had discussions with peers, instructors and attending teachers.

Student teachers also learned about “Hooking Lessons” during the second semester, or the initial lesson of a unit that engages students into the inquiry. They read one article,

“They thought the world was flat: Applying the principles of how people learn in teaching high school” (Bain, 2005), that showed an example of hooking students into a unit problem and the content by using a common historical misconception held by students. Student teachers learned other means of hooking students including using visuals, quotes, and simulations. After this class session, each student teacher planned a micro-Hooking Lesson in order to have practice and receive feedback.

During the student teaching semester for the Fall 2011 cohort, problem-based history instruction was on the list of six “elements of high quality social studies instruction.”¹² The element titled “Problem Framing and Purpose Setting in Lessons and Units”, asked the questions, “How do you as a teacher frame a lesson or unit around problems in your discipline? How do you decide on and convey to students the purpose of your lessons and units? How do you make these problems and purposes relevant to and engaging for your students?” To show competence in this element, student teachers had to plan and teach a minimum of two units in one class during the semester based on a content appropriate Central Question. For my study, I observed the hooking lesson for the unit they planned of the semester.

Table 4

Opportunities to learn and practice central questions and hooking lessons during the second semester

Course				
Teaching Secondary Social Studies Methods course				
Section	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6-9	Week 12
Learning experiences	Student teachers read articles and discuss problem based	Micro-lesson in methods class	Student teachers continue to create unit plan based on a unit problem/ Central Question	Final Unit Plan Project based on a Central Question/Unit plan; can include a hooking lesson

¹² Taken from the Fall, 2011 syllabus for EDUC304 (Appendix A), Student Teaching course, University of Michigan.

	instruction and hooking students into instruction			
Practice Experiences	Student teachers discuss in groups the Central Question for their unit	Student teacher plans and enacts a hooking lesson in methods	Student teachers submit draft of unit plan two times during these weeks for feedback	Student teachers submit final unit plan based on a Central Question/Unit plan; should include a hooking lesson
Feedback	n/a	Peer/ methods and field instructor	Peer/ methods instructor	Methods instructor

How Practices Relate to the Work of Historians

The practices in this study reflect some of the work done by historians as they build historical research, and as a result, provide some of the same benefits for students if used properly by teachers. Historians frame their research around problems. Like “detectives” working on solving a mystery, they use problems that direct and give meaning to their scholarship (Bain, 2005, p. 181). These problems provide a driving force for historians as they explore their areas of interest and gaps in research. Additionally, historical problems and concepts provide coherence to historians’ work, helping them “select, organize and structure” the multitude of historical facts with which they must work (Bain, 2005, p. 181).

In the same way, historical problems and concepts can help history teachers provide their students with more effective instruction. First, problems help teachers engage students into historical work. Without historical problems, teachers and students often work with the polished final products of history in textbooks. These products make it “very difficult to model or practice forms of historical thinking that are not immediately evident”

(Bain, 2000, p. 333). According to Levesque (2008), teaching history as finished narratives “has typically failed to promote historical thinking because of its persisting (and often, dogmatic) focus on the transmission of memory-history, largely in the form of meta-narratives” (p. 27). Using historical problems can help teachers create meaning for students out of content and engage them in intellectual activities like that of historians, such as using evidence from primary sources to back claims. Teachers can use problems for unit planning or to drive daily lessons. For instance, Stacey (2009) reports that using problems in historical lectures gives the facts “immediate meaning” and “provides constant opportunities for the teacher to interact with the class to foster students’ authentic incorporation of the material into preexisting knowledge” (p. 276). Rather than simply providing a chronology of events and emphasizing “memory-history,” historical problems can help teachers instruct students in more meaningful and engaging ways.

Also, historical problems and concepts help teachers create coherence in the content. Teachers are responsible to teach, and students are expected to know, seemingly endless and unrelated lists of content standards and expectations. Without strategies to cohere this content, teachers can do little more than give loosely related bits of information and students memorize those lists of historical information that seem to be “one damn thing after another.” However, teaching with historical problems and concepts enables teachers to place the content into a more manageable and memorable conceptual structure. Like historians who determine the significance of facts and data based on their inquiry and the argument they make, teachers place emphasis on historical facts and concepts as they reside within a problem-based unit.

Historians and history teachers both use the practices I examined through this study, though to varying degrees. The historian does so as part of his or her trade, in order to create new knowledge for an ever-expanding field. Teachers, on the other hand, can use these practices skillfully to craft meaningful experiences for their students. Interestingly, the benefits of these practices for the historian and the history learner are similar: making history engaging and meaningful and creating conceptual coherence out of the myriad of historical data. This does not imply that history teachers use these skills to create “little historians” out of their students. Rather, they can use these tools to create more engaging and intellectually valuable experiences for students.

Research Design

Two research traditions guided the design of this study. First the “case study” tradition was the primary model of the study. Additionally, because my study relates closely to the “action research” tradition, I faced and needed to mediate some of the same dilemmas action researchers face. As noted earlier, I sought to understand what happens when student teachers bring the practices they learned in their coursework with them into the field. My research questions were

1. How do student teachers use, modify or disregard three practices of history instruction in designing and then enacting the lessons?
2. What contextual, conceptual/cognitive or procedural challenges do student teachers face in planning and implementing these practices?
3. What contextual, conceptual/cognitive or procedural supports influence the student teachers’ planning and implementation of these practices?

In the following discussion, I will explain the features of the “case study” research tradition and why I found it appropriate for addressing my research questions. Also, I will explain how my study faced some dilemmas of “action research,” and how I mediated these dilemmas as much as possible.

Case Study

The case study method was the most appropriate for this work because it has the ability to examine phenomenon in their natural context. Yin (1994) explained a case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (p. 13). Based on one of the central assertions of my theoretical framework about professional learning, that learning and using knowledge are not separate processes but different parts of the same process (Eraut, 1994), it is critical to examine how novices are taking up their learning in the “real-life context” of the student teaching classroom. Additionally, case studies “take the reader into the setting with a vividness and detail not typically present in more analytic reporting formats” (Marshall and Rossman, 1999, p. 159). Therefore, in an attempt to get a detailed and vivid understanding of novices’ experiences and learning during their student teaching semester, a case study analysis seemed to be the best choice.

Yin (2006) states that there are three steps in designing case studies: define the case under study, decide whether the case is a single case or a set of cases, and determine whether to use theory development to construct the study. First, the case I chose to study, one cohort of the Social Studies Teacher Education program, was a logical choice based on my training as a teacher educator and my curiosity about an enduring problem in teacher

education. Additionally, however, these seven student teachers represent a convenience sample. I knew them prior to the study, had access to them, and knew the program in which they trained. Second, this study is a holistic case study with embedded subcases. The holistic nature of this study is the fact that it represents all the student teachers in a single semester cohort. Some of my conclusions, then, are generalizations about the whole, or most of, the cohort. On the other hand, there are some instances where one pre-service teacher's circumstances are important outliers, being either extreme cases of challenge or support to their experience in the field. Therefore, I will also include events about single subcases within the holistic cohort case study. Finally, I utilized some "theory development" within my interview protocols and surveys. I explain this thoroughly in the "focal data" section below.

Criticisms of the case study method. Common criticisms of the case study method include the lack of rigor in the studies and the fact that they provide very little basis for scientific generalization (Yin, 1989). One suspected problem with case studies is that researchers allow "equivocal evidence or biased views to influence the direction of the findings and conclusions" (Yin, 1989, p. 21). I have taken steps in an attempt to mediate this situation. I have deliberately excluded ambiguous evidence while conducting my study. Also, I have triangulated the data of my study using observations, surveys, and interviews. Finally, I have asked similar questions over the course of the semester. These multiple data points provide some protection against anecdotal situations, such as a bad day in the classroom, a minor conflict with a cooperating teacher, etc. I will only make assertions based on student teachers' consistent perceptions or descriptions that they repeated

throughout the semester. I will discuss the mediations I made regarding biased conclusions more in the following section that talks about the “action research” tradition.

Case studies also receive criticism because they often provide little basis for scientific generalization. It is true that case studies are not generalizable to populations or universes, as they do not represent a “sample.” Yet, they are generalizable to theoretical propositions. In a case study, the “investigator’s goal is to expand and generalize theories (analytic generalization) and not enumerate frequencies (statistical generalization)” (Yin, 1989, p. 21). This is my goal with this study. I did not expect my conclusions to be applicable to all student teachers; rather, I intended to learn the experiences of these student teachers. I discovered how they understand the methods they learned and how they used, modified, or disregarded them while working in the field under the guidance of cooperating teachers who may or may not have received the same training. I will take the understanding I gained from this study and utilize it in subsequent semesters with other groups of student teachers. In short, this case study represents the beginning of my exploration into the student teaching semester. This exploration can help both the University of Michigan Rounds Project understand more about student teachers’ field experiences and provide guidance for other institutions seeking to improve the student teaching semester. A case study such as this one gives a closer look at individuals’ experiences and can help teacher educators to foresee the potential challenges and supports of the student teaching semester.

One difference that sets case studies apart from other types of research is that the case studies allow researchers to simultaneously collect and analyze data. This makes it possible to change the data collection if necessary as the research is underway (Yin, 2006).

Throughout my study, I had the opportunity to fine-tune my survey and interview instruments and go into more depth about two of the findings that were emerging through the first round of my data collection. I discuss this further in my data analysis section.

Action Research

Many researchers credit the origins of action research to the 1930s with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology professor, Kurt Lewin, and his attempts to help social workers use research of their own practice to further social change (Noffke, 1990). Though there were periods of re-emergence throughout the twentieth century, action research has struggled to earn legitimacy. There is now a “general agreement that action research has an identity of its own and should not be spoken about in terms of traditional forms of research” (McNiff & Whitehead, 2002, p. 1). While different conceptions of action research exist, one simple and concise definition is a “reflective inquiry undertaken by educators in order to better understand the education environment and improve practice” (Grady, 1998, p. 43). This definition pertains to my study in that educators perform action research for the purpose of understanding and improving their own practice.

My study resembles action research in specific ways. First, the aim of my research is to understand student teachers’ perceptions of their field placements in order to better understand and improve the experiences of future student teachers. This is a reflective inquiry because I am studying my own practice as a teacher educator. As their methods instructor, I was responsible for their learning of practices and their competence in the planning and enactment of these practices. In this study, I was principle investigator. As a result of this dual role, my study is closely related to action research and, therefore, shared some of the same validity issues.

Concerns with action research and attempts to mediate. One issue embedded in action research that could weaken the validity of a study is in collecting data about one's own teaching. Instructors who study their own teaching have difficulty "encouraging pupils to critique one's professional practice" (Elliott, 1991, pp. 58-59). They have "temptations to suppress, restrict or structure the critiques of pupils [that] tacitly communicates a protectionist and conservative message: namely, that the exercise of authority should be questioned only under the terms and conditions established amongst the authorities themselves" (Elliott, 1991, p. 59). In other words, teachers have difficulty hearing about their own practice and the practice of other instructors. Another problem with action research is that students of the researcher may have difficulty speaking freely about their experiences. Whether students fear retribution for their critiques or fear that their comments may hurt their instructor in some way, students may have difficulty speaking openly about their experiences to their instructors.

Both of these are potential issues with my study. Few people want harsh criticism of their work, therefore, the potential for me to not probe deeper about my teaching exists. Additionally, student teachers may have thought their progress in the teacher education program could be inhibited by the responses they provided or by my observation of their teaching performance. There is also some concern that they would not be able to speak honestly about the instruction they received in my course or the program I represent because of my previous relationship with them as an instructor.

I have attempted to mediate these potential problems by making statements and asking carefully worded questions to disarm the students and show that my study hinges on the openness of their responses, including critiques of the teaching practices, my

teaching, or of the program. For instance, at the start of every interview I made the following statement:

Thank you very much for agreeing to meet with me today and for being part of this study. During this interview, I am going to ask you a number of questions about your experiences in student teaching thus far and then we are going to talk about the lesson I observed in your classroom the other day and the meeting with your cooperating teacher. Remember, what you say in this interview will not affect your grade in any way and it is best if you can just be honest. Please know that I am not here to judge you, rather to look at how student teachers are able to use the lessons we taught them. Do you have any questions?

With this statement, I attempted to remind the student that the basic premise of the study is about their experiences and that nothing they said in their interview would affect them in any way. Additionally, I attempted to set the tone of the interview with questions that gave the student teachers freedom to speak honestly about both my teaching and the structure of the Rounds and teacher education program. For instance, I posed a question to the student teachers in the following manner:

So, I have been wondering a lot about the ways that you learned to do these practices in your methods course, such as micro-lessons. And I have a lot of questions about the value of what we do in your methods course – such as the mini-lessons, unit plans, and rounds assignments. What is your opinion about the ways that your methods class, and all of your teacher education courses, prepared you for student teaching? (If they gave a general response, I pushed for further explanation)

My intent for this question was to help student teachers realize that I was trying to improve my work as a teacher educator and teacher education as a whole. I probed their responses to this question in another attempt to prompt honest, complete opinions about their experiences.

Finally, I focused my study and questions away from topics that would make student teachers feel judged about the work they were doing in the field. Because this study was not specifically on the amount of use of the practices (though I covered this briefly) or on the quality of the instruction they received during their pre-service training, student teachers would not feel forced to elaborate on difficult or self-incriminating information. Rather, the project focused on the student teachers' experiences in the field and the challenges and supports they faced. This is something student teachers would have little reason to exaggerate. As a whole, I believe I was successful in my efforts to elicit candid feedback because of the honest critiques I received regarding the practices I taught in my classes. When I asked one student teacher (Amanda) what was most challenging about Concept Formation, she said, "You said I can be honest . . . I don't like the concept formation lessons at all." Jeff also admitted he was "not a fan" of Concept Formation. They also openly admitted that they altered one of the lessons I taught them in order to make it better fit into their experiences. Jeff said he did not use daily Central Questions and Anthony explained that some of his units were more activity based and not based on a question, something I recommended against during their teacher training. Because the student teachers gave critiques and spoke openly about changing their instruction from what I taught them, I think my approach was successful and allowed them the freedom to speak openly.

Another concern with action research and, therefore, my dual role in the study is the personal bias in the data analysis that comes with an instructor studying their own students. According to Corbin and Strauss (2008), “data collection and analysis have traditionally called for ‘objectivity.’ But today we all know that objectivity in qualitative research is a myth” (p. 32). Undoubtedly, I have vested interest in the success of these student teachers as they are a product of both the program that I represent and my work in teacher education. Trying to separate myself from the role as their instructor and approach the research with an unbiased perspective was difficult, yet I took steps to reach properly warranted assertions from the data and candid answers from the student teachers.

One way to help ensure quality action research is by consulting alternative perspectives about the conclusions the work asserts (Altrichter, Posch, & Somekh, 1993). Altricher, et al. asked, “Are the understandings gained during a research process confronted with the perspective of other persons concerned or other researchers?” (p. 75). Through the work of my doctoral committee, all of the assertions I make about my collected data were peer-reviewed and revised to more accurately explain the data. This committee of expert researchers will help me only reach sufficiently warranted conclusions.

Another way to help ensure quality action research is for the researcher “to use a range of techniques which will enable one to look at what is going on from a variety of angles or points of view” (Elliot, 1991, p. 76). As mentioned before, I have chosen to utilize three sources (surveys with open-ended questions, interviews, and observations) in order to triangulate the data. By approaching the work from multiple data sources, I will be able to verify the consistency of their responses across sources and ensure that each assertion is properly warranted. Additionally, I will ask many of the same questions multiple times at

different points in the study. I will carefully review previous data before interviews in order to track changes in responses. For instance, if the student teacher said in the first interview that their cooperating teacher was undermining attempts to utilize the practices, I looked for evidence of this during the second observation and specifically asked about it during the second interview. In one of the second interviews, I asked the question: "During the first interview you said that your cooperating teacher seemed to think that the practices you learned in teacher education were not usable in a real classroom. Do you still think your cooperating teacher feels this way? Why or why not?" As I searched through the corpus of data looking for trends on which to make assertions, I made sure that each assertion had sufficient evidence across multiple forms of data. Anytime I spoke about an occurrence in only one of the data sources, I made sure to explain this as the case. This triangulation of data and use of warranted assertions also decreased the likelihood that I would come to desired conclusions, rather than properly warranted conclusions.

Though my role as previous instructor and participant in the Rounds program created situations that I needed to mediate for, it offered one notable support to my study. According to Corbin and Strauss (2008),

as researchers move along in the analysis, it is their knowledge and experience (professional, gender, cultural, etc.) that enables them to respond to what is in the data. When we speak about what we bring to the research process, we are not talking about forcing our ideas on the data. Rather we are saying that our backgrounds and past experiences provide the mental capacity to respond to and receive the messages contained in data. (p. 33)

My experience teaching high school, my knowledge of the material as their social studies methods instructor, my experiences in the Rounds, and my knowledge of the participants as students and pre-service teachers offered some added dimensions to my work: I was in a unique position not only to analyze the data, but also to give rich, open-ended conversational interviews. I entered the interview process with a standardized interview protocol but often deviated from that protocol in order to probe more deeply into a topic using my background knowledge. Without my knowledge and experience base, the interviews I performed would have been much less informative.

Table 5

Concerns with my study and steps I have taken in response.

Concerns	Steps to mediate
Lack of rigor with case study method	Triangulated the data of study through different methods and over time to provide protection against anecdotal situations.
Case study method provides little basis for scientific generalization.	Do not make over-generalizations about student teachers; consider only the experiences of these student teachers in this program.
Collecting one's own data in action research study weakens the validity of the study as researchers have difficulty hearing about their own practice and participants have difficulty speaking about the practice.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make statements to disarm participants and show how study hinges on respondents' openness. 2. Make statements that purposefully open up interviewer's teaching and practice for critique. 3. Focus conversation away from topics that would make student teachers feel judged about the quality of their work.

Dataset

In studying student teachers' integration of these teaching practices, I employed both contextual and focal data. The sources of contextual data are student teachers' transcripts from the University of Michigan, work samples from the first two semesters of

their teacher education program, and student teachers' responses to my interview questions. The three sources of focal data are surveys, interviews, and observations of lessons in student teachers' field classrooms. The remainder of this section explains the sources of both the contextual and focal data gathered during my study.

Contextual Data

In order to understand the context of each of the participants of my study, I employed four sources of data (see Table 6 for a visual representation of contextual data).

Table 6

A visual representation of the contextual data

Contextual Data Source	Contextual Data Pre and Post assessments and Memo-to-self	Student teacher Academic Transcripts	Interview Data
Information Provided By Source	These provide baseline data about student teachers' understanding of history as a discipline and the epistemology of historical knowledge.	These provide all courses student teacher took in college relevant to their current placement.	These provide self-characterization of past learning experiences in both college and high school.

The first source is the unofficial transcripts of the participants from the University of Michigan. With the participants' permission, I retrieved and examined their transcripts for all the content courses directly related to the lessons I observed. For all seven participants, I included the title of all history courses and an overall view of the content of these courses. For one participant, I included his economics courses because one of the two classes I would observe was an economics lesson. I calculated grade averages in these courses using the website <http://thegpacalculator.appspot.com/college/umich>.

As the second source for contextual data, I used work samples from student teachers' teacher education courses from their first and second semesters in the program.

First, I reviewed an assessment that the student teachers took at the beginning and end of the first semester of their teacher education program in their “Using Literacy to Teach and Learn History and the Social Sciences in the Secondary Schools” course (Appendix B). The purpose of this assessment was to show student teachers’ growth in understanding through their first semester in historical disciplinary literacy, the use of texts in history/social studies classrooms, and planning and teaching history and the social sciences. A second work sample came from assignments written by student teachers during their second semester methods course. The main work sample from the second semester is a “Memo-to-Self.” The instructions for the assignment were:

Write a journal entry entitled “Memo to My Future Self.” In it, include things about teaching social studies you want to remind yourself of when you’re student teaching or have your own classroom. To prepare for this entry, please read through your journal (and class notes) across the entire semester; use a highlighter to highlight entries or ideas that strike you. After reading and highlighting your notebook, write for about 15 minutes.¹³

In some cases, however, student teachers’ Memo-to-Self lacked details about their growing understanding. In these cases, I examined other assignments from the second semester, such as journal entries about course readings, to find the data. My purpose in using these work samples was to set the context of student teachers’ understanding of the discipline of history and the value of this understanding for pedagogical purposes, as well as to show the starting point of their understanding and how it developed throughout the program.

¹³ I took the Instructions for the Memo-to-Self from the “Teaching Secondary Social Studies Methods” syllabus, week 12.

I scored both of these work samples using a rubric (Appendix C) from the University of Michigan research project entitled *Advancing Adolescent Literacy Learning in the Disciplines* (7/05 – 7/08).¹⁴ This rubric categorized responses of discipline-specific conventions, rationale and practices ranging from “uninformed novice” to “expert professional” based on subjects’ descriptions of disciplinary substance and practices in the field of history. I used this rubric to score student teachers’ descriptions of their planning and teaching and their analysis of texts, particularly in using disciplinary practices in their planning and teaching.

The third source for contextual data was student teachers’ interview responses to questions about their past experiences in both teaching and learning history, a self-characterization of their content knowledge, and other experiences that the student teachers feel influenced their teaching. For instance, to understand how student teachers learning experiences in college were influential, I asked recipients: “Of the courses that you have taken since starting college (non-education courses), which of those—you’re welcome to mention as many as you think are relevant—do you feel have prepared you well for the types of knowledge, skills, and practices that are necessary for success in teaching your discipline?”¹⁵ I also asked questions about the student teachers’ learning in high school and how it compared to what they learned in their teacher training.

¹⁴ This research project received funding through the Carnegie Corporation Grant and was led by Professors Elizabeth Birr-Moje and Robert Bain. The group also included adjunct faculty and graduate students.

¹⁵ For a complete list of interview questions, see Appendices F and G.

Focal Data

The focal data I used for my analysis came from three sources: surveys, interviews, and observations of lessons in the student teacher’s student teaching classroom (See table 7 for a graphic overview of the focal data).

Table 7

A visual representation of the focal data

Focal Data Source	Survey 1 (Before Semester)	Observation 1 (During 3 rd or 4 th week)	Focal Data Interview 1 (During 3 rd or 4 th week)	Observation 2 (After 7 th week)	Interview 2 (After 7 th week)	Final Survey (After semester)
Challenges and supports	Baseline data for knowledge of practice and anticipated challenges or supports of practices	Observation in classroom to watch them enact a Concept Formation lesson	Questions about challenges and supports of both methods and about their experience planning and enacting Concept Formation	Observation in classroom to watch them enact a hooking lesson	Questions about challenges and supports of both methods and about their experience writing a central question or problem	Review of challenges and supports from the semester

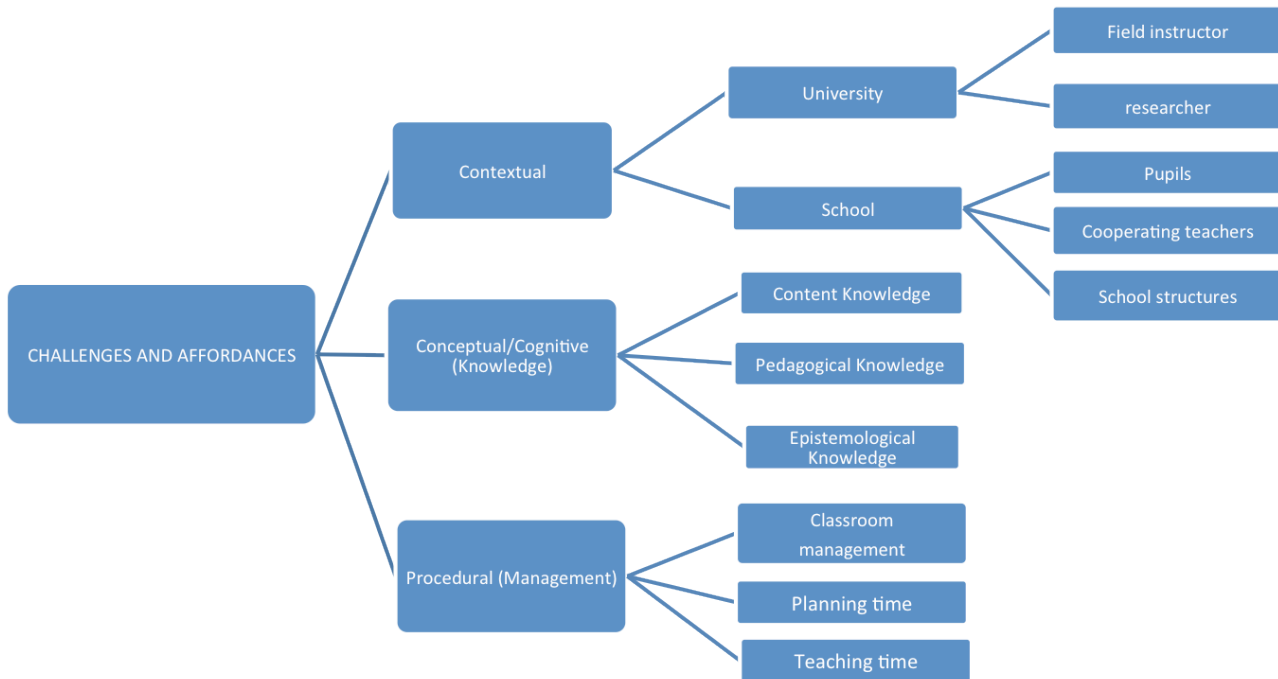
In my initial construction of the interview protocols and survey questions, I considered three key concepts of challenges and supports in fieldwork: contextual factors, conceptual/cognitive factors, and procedural factors. Contextual factors include aspects of student teaching that make their experience in classroom, school, or school personnel more or less challenging for the student teacher. Examples of contextual factors include a field instructor who intervenes in a conflict with the cooperating teacher (support) or a class of students where many have difficulty reading primary sources (challenge). Conceptual factors are those that challenge or support the student teacher in their thinking of the content and the planning of lessons and units. For example, a student teacher might have

mentioned a course they took that provided them with resources and knowledge on a topic (conceptual support) or they may have explained the trouble they had writing a Central Question for a unit problem (conceptual challenge). Procedural factors include those that positively or negatively affect the actual execution of planning or lessons. Examples of procedural factors include a class of students who engage in the lesson and are interested in the topic (support) or interruptions in teaching time, such as a fire drill in the middle of class (challenge). This deliberative approach allowed for more structure in the data collection and analysis, without stifling creativity (Erickson, 1986). While exploring the data using these concepts, I kept in mind the reality that they overlap and a single factor could present both challenges and supports to the student teacher.

The basis for my selection of these three key concepts (and their examples) was primarily experiential, both my personal experience in teaching and teacher education, and the experiences of my committee members. Experiential data aided my data collection and analysis as it not only added “theoretical sensitivity but [also] provide[d] a wealth of provisional suggestions for making comparisons, finding variations, and sampling widely on theoretical grounds” (Newmann et al., 2007, p. 11). Figure 2 presents these key concepts along with some examples of each, shown as sub-concepts, in the graph below.

Figure 2

Key Concepts for challenges and supports



Surveys. The first source of data for my analysis came from two surveys. I administered these surveys at the beginning and end of their student teaching semester during the weekly seminar (See Table 8 for a visual representation of the surveys). These surveys had two overarching purposes. The first was for student teachers to explain the contextual, conceptual/cognitive, and procedural challenges and supports they faced during student teaching. Survey 1 explored the challenges and supports they anticipated facing during student teaching (taken at the beginning of their student teaching, see Appendix D) and Survey 2 explained the ones they actually faced as they reflect back on their student teaching (given at the end of their student teaching, see Appendix E). I began each question with a Likert scale survey question covering different components of the concepts (such as “I think my cooperating teacher will be open and supportive of me using

the practices I learned in the teacher education program (1=strongly disagree . . . 5=strongly agree).” I also wrote some of the questions in the negative (such as “I think the students in my class will **NOT** be open to the practices I learned in teacher education. (1=strongly disagree . . . 5=strongly agree). My intended purpose for these Likert questions was to force the student teacher to take a solid position. The questions then asked student teachers to explain why they took this position in a corresponding extended-response question.

The second purpose of these surveys was to gauge student teachers’ understanding of the two practices in this study from the beginning of the semester to the end. Specifically, I looked for evidence of their understanding of the prescriptive method and the value of each practice. To gauge their understanding of the prescriptive method of each study, I asked the students to explain the different steps of the method and then to explain the value of the lessons (questions will include, “I understand how to teach a Concept Formation lesson” and then “I understand the value of a Concept Formation lesson”). Again, these questions had a Likert scale question followed by an open-ended response question. Through this line of questioning, I searched for evidence of changes in their understanding and value of the two practices throughout the student teaching semester.

Table 8

Survey I and II questions and their topics

Survey	Question	Topic	Focus of Question
Survey 1	1 – 7	Concept Formation	Understanding and value of practice Challenges and supports
	8 – 12	Central Questions and Hooking Lessons	Understanding and value of practices Challenges and supports
	13 – 14	Cooperating Teacher	Openness to practices
	15 – 16	Students	Openness to practices
	17 – 18	Student teacher's knowledge	Amount of knowledge needed
	19 – 20	Frequency of use	How often student teacher will use practice
	21 - 22	General challenges and supports	What challenges and supports they anticipate
Survey 2	1 – 8	Concept Formation	Understanding and value of practice Integrating lesson in unit; challenges and supports they experienced
	9 – 15	Central Questions and Hooking Lessons	Understanding and value of practices Integrating lesson in unit; challenges and supports they experienced
	16 – 17	Cooperating Teacher	Openness to practices
	18 – 19	Students	Openness to practices
	20 – 21	Student teacher's knowledge	Amount of knowledge needed
	22 – 23	Frequency of use	How often student teacher will use
	24 - 25	General challenges and supports	What challenges and supports they experienced

Interviews. Two interviews with student teachers given over the course of the semester made up the second source of focal data for my analysis of the student teaching semester (for interview protocols, see Appendix F and G). I used standardized open-ended interview questions, which use a predetermined wording and sequence of open-ended questions (Patton, 2001). A standardization of questions allowed for comparisons across respondents and open-ended responses enabled me to understand the world as the respondents see it (Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Patton, 2001). I wrote the questions based on the key concepts listed above, which further enabled comparisons across respondents and over the course of the semester.

I performed the two interviews according to when the student teachers enacted the two lessons that I observed. In every case, there was at least six weeks between Interviews 1 and 2. I coupled each interview with a recent observation (the interview occurred within 72 hours). I divided the interviews into three main sections: general questions, questions about their teaching with a co-viewing of the video from their lesson, and feedback from me about their teaching. For the first interview, I began with a series of questions focused on the context of the participant. The next series were general questions about the student teachers' experience in the classroom and some of the challenges and supports they had (such as, "So how is student teaching going?" and "Are you facing any specific challenges?"). I then asked questions that targeted specific challenges or supports, such as their cooperating teacher or field instructor. After I had received the initial response from the student teacher, I encouraged them to elaborate on examples of key concepts they did not mention (such as, "I am curious about your class period length. Does that have any effect on your ability to perform these lessons more effectively?"). I asked student teachers to give

specific examples from their experiences. Finally, I also asked questions about their use, or non-use, of the practice that was not the focus of that interview (for example, during the hooking lesson interview I also asked about Concept Formation). If they had not used the other lesson type in their classroom yet, I asked them to elaborate on why they had not and what constraints or challenges were preventing them from doing so. If they had used it, I asked about the planning processes they experienced, what challenges they faced in planning and using Concept Formation, and what had supported them in their planning thus far.

I focused the second section of the interview on the lesson I recently observed in their classroom (see observation section below). I asked questions about that type of lesson (how often they used it and how their cooperating teacher felt about it) and then we watched the video of the lesson together. While watching the video, I asked questions based on portions of the lesson that seem to lend to the challenges or supports of the classroom context or to their understanding of the practices. I also asked them a series of questions about the planning of the practice itself (such as, “How did you decide that this would be your central question?” and “How did you decide which concept to choose for this Concept Formation lesson?”). I encouraged the student teachers to talk through their actions and decisions throughout the lesson.

The final section of the interview was the feedback portion. After I asked all the interview questions and we watched and discussed the video in its entirety, I gave the student teachers feedback about what I saw and how they could improve their lesson. This portion of the interview was primarily to help the student teacher improve their teaching. I did not report back to the field instructor any of my feedback nor was any of the feedback

documented for any purpose other than my study. I did include some of the data from the feedback section of the interview in my study as I tried to determine what feedback seemed to help them the most.

Table 9

Interview 1 questions, topic and focus

Question	Topic	Focus of Question
1 – 2	Student teachers past learning experiences	High schools and college history courses, other learning experiences
3	Learning experiences in methods	Opening up student teacher to critiquing the program and my teaching
4	Current placement; general questions	About classes, general challenges and supports, use of practices
5	Cooperating teacher	Challenges or support, feedback, understanding of methods
6	Students	Challenges or support, reaction to methods, classroom management
7	School Structures	Challenges or support
8	Planning time	Challenges or support
9	Central Questions	How often used? Any challenges?
10 - 14	Concept Formation	General questions about practice, value of practice, planning and enactment of the lesson cooperating teacher's feedback on lesson

Table 10

Interview 2 questions, topic and focus

Question	Topic	Focus of Question
1	Current placement; general questions	About classes, general challenges and supports
2	Cooperating teacher	Challenges or supports, feedback, understanding of methods

3	Students	Challenges or supports, reaction to methods, classroom management
4	School Structures	Challenges or supports
5	Planning time	Challenges or supports
6	Student teacher knowledge	Content, disciplinary or pedagogical knowledge student teacher needs
7	University Personnel	Challenges or supports
8	Concept Formation	Frequency of use, challenges or supports
9 - 17	Central Questions	General questions about practice, value of practice, planning and enactment of the lesson cooperating teacher's feedback on lesson

Central People Discussed in Focal Data

In addition to the student teachers' experiences, methods used, and experience in planning, I focused some of the interviews around the student teachers' interactions and experiences with the central people of the student teaching experience: the cooperating teachers, the field instructor, and myself as researcher and acting field instructor. This section will explain the context of each of these.

Cooperating teachers. My study includes student teachers' statements that describe a total of 10 cooperating teacher/student teacher relationships; all seven student teachers had a primary cooperating teacher and three of the student teachers had a second. The second cooperating teacher was necessary because of a scheduling conflict or a situation where the primary could not allow the student teacher to teach a specific class, such as an Advanced Placement course. I will refer to these cases as cooperating teacher1 and cooperating teacher2 of some particular respondent, such as Phillip's cooperating teacher1.

Field instructor. All seven student teachers had the same person as a field instructor. For the student teaching semester, he had multiple roles in their professional growth and preparation. First, their field instructor observed them in the field four times over the semester. During his observation, he was paying particular attention to the high-leverage practices laid out by the Rounds. This role included managing any significant difficulties they encountered in the field. The field instructor also ran a weekly seminar with the whole group of student teachers. During this seminar, they would address any difficulties they were experiencing and discuss their planning together. Additionally, during almost every seminar meeting, the student teachers had weekly “case conferences” around what they were facing in the field. According to the syllabus, the case conferences would be used to “diagnose” the cases as a group of professionals, using both readings and personal experiences. Finally, the field instructor helped the student teachers to assemble a professional electronic portfolio to help them in their job search.

My role as researcher and acting field instructor. During this project, my role was primarily that of a researcher. I collected survey data during the first seminar of the semester. I observed their use of two high leverage practices. I interviewed them about their experience in using the practices. Finally, I collected one more survey at the end of the semester during the final seminar. I also had the role of field instructor for the two practices included in my study. I observed them teach the two practices and then had an interview with them about their experiences. At the end of each interview, after the student teachers had made all comments and I had asked all questions, I spent about ten to twenty minutes giving them feedback about their lesson and how they could improve it.

Observations

I observed the student teachers enact both the Concept Formation and a Hooking Lesson one time each during the student teaching semester. According to Marshall and Rossman (1999), “observation is a fundamental and highly important method in all qualitative inquiry: It is used to discover complex interactions in natural social settings” (p. 107). The primary purpose of the observations was to watch the student teachers actually planning for and utilizing the practices in the field, rather than relying solely on student teachers’ perceptions of their teaching. The observation data also informed the interviews through stimulated recall of portions of the class. Combining observations with interviews allows “the researcher to understand the meanings that people hold for their everyday activities” (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 110). I planned the day to come to their classroom according to when they were teaching the prescribed method and planned the interview within 72 hours of the observation.

As I watched the video, I looked for two aspects of their teaching. First, I examined the class period for any challenges or supports that occur during implementation that student teachers had not mentioned previously (such as an involved or absent cooperating teacher). I then asked the student teachers about these during the interview and how they dealt with these challenges or benefitted from the supports.

Data Analysis

My primary data corpus consisted of the two interview transcripts, and the field notes and video recordings of the two lessons I observed. I looked at the data across all seven cases and the semester as a whole first. I then considered the observations I performed at specific points in the semester, looking at how student teachers used each

method specifically. Additionally, I examined each student teacher longitudinally as an individual sub-case (looking for trends of change over time). I also used the two focal data surveys in an attempt to find growing or changing understandings of the practice, though the answers some student teachers provided lacked detail about their understandings, rendering these of less value than I originally anticipated.

I began my analysis with a careful transcription and reading of all interview transcripts, field notes, and surveys. I also watched the videos of the observations multiple times. During the first phase of transcription (after observation and interview one), I performed some initial data analysis, as consistent with the nature of case studies I mentioned previously (Yin, 2006). I made some slight changes to the direction of the study. First, I changed my focus from an equal focus on all of the potential challenges/supports (such as students, cooperating teacher, field instructor, class period length, etc.) to placing more emphasis on the cooperating teacher as the central challenge or support. This was the central influence on a student teacher as determined by both the literature I examined and the emerging data for the first half of the semester. I changed the study to focus more on the cooperating teacher in the questions and spent more time in the interview probing their perception of their cooperating teacher. I still asked questions about some of the other factors with which I began the study, but through the student teachers' responses, I found them to be less influential and, therefore, placed less emphasis on them.

I made another change to the study in the initial data analysis when I realized that student teachers did not clarify why students needed to know the content they were learning; what I call the "value-of-content." It was unclear to me whether the problem was that student teachers' did not know the value of the content, or if they knew it and were not

making it clear in their teaching. Because of this, I inserted two questions into the Interview 2 protocol to try to determine the extent to which they could articulate the value of content and the extent to which they felt they were making this knowledge clear. I asked, “Why is this question/unit problem important for students to be able to explore/answer?” and “How clear do you think you made the importance of this unit to them as you taught your hooking lesson?” I believe these questions allowed me to get a much richer picture of what became one of the central parts of my analysis.

After I collected and transcribed all the data from the second interview and observation, I moved to the full data analysis. I entered all data into the qualitative program “Dedoose” (see <http://www.dedoose.com/>) to make the data more manageable during analysis. I began again with a thorough reading of all transcripts, keeping memos of any emerging codes from the data. During my initial reading, I took an open coding approach, looking for any patterns that could “open up” my inquiry (Strauss, 1987). During this time of open coding, however, I also used a form of “axial coding,” or an “intense analysis done around one category at a time” (Strauss, 1987, p. 32), based on the key concepts on which I built my interview protocols and surveys (contextual, conceptual, and procedural factors). Axial coding enabled me to go through the whole corpus of data focused on one concept at a time and look at all events from that standpoint. I focused on one of the axial codes, cooperating teachers, because student teachers repeatedly mentioned them. Cooperating teachers became a key linkage to my study. While some researchers prefer to approach data with no prior expectations, I chose this more deliberative method because it enabled a more powerful and succinct analysis yet did not limit the potential for new categories to emerge during data analysis (Darling-Hammond, 2005).

Another area that was central to my study is when I identified the “value-of-content” as a potential problem area during the first read-through of the data. I changed the interview protocol and collected my second phase of data, and then used “value-of-content” as an additional axial code. With this axial coding established, I went back to the data and moved into selective coding, returning to the data sets and reading and rereading the data with a focus on two specific aspects of my study: (1) the challenges and supports that cooperating teachers provided for the student teachers in their planning and teaching and (2) the ways student teachers expressed the value of content in their lessons and in their interviews.

Once I finished selectively coding these two broader categories, I used constant comparative analysis (CCA) to analyze the data (Strauss, 1987). CCA is when the researcher “compares incident with incident in order to classify data . . . as the researcher moves along with analysis, each incident in the data is compared with other incidents, for similarities and differences. Incidents found to be conceptually similar are grouped together under a higher level descriptive concept” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 73). Through this CCA, I identified categories of phenomenon, such as the three basic categories of the value-of-content that student teachers utilized in their teaching: value-for-school, value-beyond-school, and value-within-content. I was then able to consider all the data through these categories.

I base my analytical frame for this study on both student teachers’ perceptions and a blend of their perceptions and the reality of them enacting the practices in their classroom. Any explanation of other “actors” involved in the student teaching semester, such as their field instructor or their cooperating teachers, comes from interview data with student

teachers. The others were not present for their explanation. Therefore, any conclusions or assertions are solely from student teachers' perceptions. Though I was present for some of the debriefing meetings between cooperating teachers and the student teachers and for some of the seminars held by the field instructor, I am only concerned with student teachers' perceptions of their experiences. In looking at the enactment of the practices and how student teachers use, modify or disregard the practices, I consider both the observation data (what I saw and recorded in the classroom) and the student teachers' perception of the classroom (from their explanation of their experiences).

CHAPTER FOUR: PARTICIPANTS AND THEIR STUDENT TEACHING CONTEXT

This dissertation consists of a fifteen-week study of seven student teachers from the University of Michigan School of Education. This sample includes every member of the history and social science cohort from the fall semester of 2011. This was the final semester of a three-semester program of their education training. The student teachers were in the classroom from September 2011 to December 2011. In the sections below, I will provide context for my study by giving a brief overview of the following for each study participant:

1. A list of every history course that the student teachers took for college credit, including Advanced Placement (AP) courses in high school and the collective grade point average in those courses.
2. An explanation of some of the learning experiences in history (and in one case, that of Phillip, economics) for both their high school and college courses. I prompted the participants to explain which of their high school history learning experiences and courses in college they found most helpful in their learning to teach history.
3. Student teachers' self-reflection of their current knowledge of content.
4. Other learning experiences that student teachers noted as helpful in their learning to teach.

5. A general description of each student teacher's understanding of discipline specific pedagogy of history.
6. A brief description of the teaching experiences (field placements) of the student teacher throughout their time in the education program, with specific emphasis on their current student teaching placement.

I used a variety of data sources to contextualize my study. For the history courses and grades received by the student teachers, I used their unofficial transcripts from the University of Michigan. For the explanations of learning experiences in high school and college, student teachers' description of their own content knowledge, and other learning experiences that were helpful in their teaching, I used the student teachers' explanations from interviews 1 and 2, with most of the information coming from prompts designed into the interview questions (see Appendix F and G).

The description of the student teachers' understanding of discipline specific pedagogy of history came from assignments the student teachers did throughout their time in the education program. Specifically, I used data from three sources. The first two sources come from student teachers' responses on a Pre-Service Teacher Assessment (Appendix B) they took as they started the three semester program (called the "pre-test") and at the end of their first semester (called the "post-test"). These assessments required student teachers to respond to prompts in three areas of teaching: planning for instruction, using historical texts, and responding to student work. Additionally, I used journal entries from the latter portion of student teachers' second semester methods class. For the most part, I took only one piece of data, the final journal entry, a "memo-to-self," that encouraged student teachers to explore their learning and write a memo to their future self. In some cases,

particularly if the student teacher did not write much about their discipline specific pedagogy in their final entry, I retrieved data from other journal entries such as responses to specific articles assigned in class. I scored each of these data sources using a rubric (Appendix C) from the University of Michigan research project entitled *Advancing Adolescent Literacy Learning in the Disciplines* (7/1/05 - 6/30/08).¹⁶ This rubric categorized responses of discipline-specific conventions, rationale and practices ranging from “uninformed novice” to “expert professional” based on subjects’ descriptions of disciplinary substance and practices in the field of history. I used this rubric to score student teachers’ descriptions of their planning and teaching and their analysis of texts, particularly in using disciplinary practices in their planning and teaching. The following is a description of each of the student teachers in my study with some conclusions about this data following all descriptions.¹⁷

Anthony

History Content Knowledge and Learning Experiences

At the time of the interviews, Anthony was on track to receive a Bachelor of Arts Education with distinction in History and Psychology. Anthony came to his undergraduate education with eight credit hours of AP history from high school. Once in college, Anthony took 23 credit hours of history, or six courses, received nothing lower than a B- and achieved a 3.44 GPA in them.¹⁸ Anthony took two American history survey courses, one

¹⁶ This research project received funding through the Carnegie Corporation Grant and was led by Professors Elizabeth Birr-Moje and Robert Bain. The group also included adjunct faculty and graduate students.

¹⁷ Most of the information about past field placements and their current placement for student teaching comes from their explanation during interviews 1 and 2. The statistical information about the schools and school districts in which they are student teaching comes mainly from the Michigan Government website, <https://www.mischooldata.org/>.

¹⁸ I calculated grade point averages (GPAs) with <http://thegpacalculator.appspot.com/college/umich>.

world history survey course, one era specific world history course, two world region history courses, and one American region history course. The titles of the courses Anthony took are:

- The Writing of History: Pre-Automotive Detroit
- History of the Pacific Islands
- United States to 1865
- United States, 1865 to the Present
- World History: The World Since 1492
- History Colloquium: Immigrants, Exiles and Emigration

Anthony explained that through his AP courses in high school, he “had a very good history education in high school.” He explained that the biggest limitation of his high school courses was that he did not use enough history sources to read and understand different historical points of view. He explained, “in terms of exposure to the amount of sources, in an AP history course in high school, you use a [text] book and you probably read *Huckleberry Finn*, *The Jungle*, and *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. So you get influential books, but you don’t get current historians looking back on things that happened. But in college you do.”

Anthony said the opposite about his courses in college. He said that the best things about his courses in college were “the broad exposure to sources” and learning different perspectives of history. One example he gave was his Pacific Islands history course. He said,

I felt that there was a perspective being taught, but it was a very transparent perspective. . . . it was neat that he [the instructor] had no problem saying, ‘I am here making an argument. You are welcome to disagree with me.’ He really wanted us to make a more lively class. But it was hard to do because his breadth of knowledge

was so much greater than ours.

Through his college history courses, Anthony's perspective and understanding of the discipline of history began to grow.

Anthony explained that currently he had a "pretty good" knowledge of content, though he said he felt that he had not taken enough history courses. He said, "I haven't taken the sheer volume of history classes at the university that people in my cohort have. . . . I think that is a disadvantage." He explained that though it might only be a lack of confidence, he felt he would graduate feeling that he needed more content knowledge than he had currently. He said, "I just feel like I should know more if I am put in front of these students. Like, 'Hey here is someone who is supposed to kind of be an expert.'" Anthony thought once education students came to the School of Education they almost stop taking history courses. They think, "I need to graduate. Here are the requirements, I can't squeeze any more history classes in."

He explained that his lack of content knowledge affected his student teaching, as he was not prepared to teach middle school social studies. He said, "I know if I was teaching a U.S. History class or even a high school level World History class, I have stuff I would use." He used his knowledge of Michigan history as an example and the pre-automotive Detroit course was the only exposure he had to the history of the State of Michigan. He said, "I still feel like a lot of my students know more about the state of Michigan than I do." He explained, however, that because the seventh grade curriculum was not as detailed and dense as a high school curriculum, it might be easier for him to prepare than it would be otherwise. He said, "At least teaching 7th grade I haven't had to relearn a whole lot of things. I don't know how much I would have to re-learn to teach in a high school." Because of

Anthony's placement in middle school, it was difficult for him to gauge his own content knowledge.

Other learning experiences. Interestingly, Anthony did not list any of his history courses as the most influential on his teaching. Rather, he stated that his courses and experiences in Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) were the most helpful for him in the classroom. He said his ROTC courses helped, "as far as classroom leadership, preparation and management. Those more than anything else because there is so much overlap between that type of leadership [and teaching leadership]". He also explained that the mentality he learned in ROTC helped him think about the work of teaching more effectively. He compared having to come to school long before students get there and stay long after they leave to his experiences in ROTC. He said, "They tell us after your platoon goes to sleep, you are going to be up a long time, and you will be up long before they get up." Finally, Anthony explained that he received quite a bit of content knowledge about warfare and leadership directly from his ROTC classes.

Discipline Specific Understanding for Pedagogy

Throughout the program, Anthony exhibited a growing understanding of the discipline of history and how he can use this knowledge pedagogically. On the pre-test at the beginning of the program, Anthony was in the category of "personal novice" in discipline specific conventions because he made only brief references about the nature of history. In the "planning for instruction" section of the assessment, Anthony stated that he "would need to know about the primary documents available" before he taught. Also in his discussion of the purpose one of the texts, the "Alien & Sedition Acts," he said it was "to keep the Federalists in power and suppress attacks on the Federalist power." This showed

that he understood the basic purpose of the text and could articulate it, but described the purpose more as a reader rather than from any disciplinary perspective.

During the post-test and into the second semester, Anthony began to display a more sophisticated understanding of history, putting him in the category of “tentative professional” perhaps bordering on “developing professional.” On the post-test, Anthony wrote that the “Alien and Sedition” texts

have a very authoritative tone and teach history as an event instead of history as an account (Bain). This can make it very difficult for students to think critically and critique the text. However, the textbook does help provide the narrative context that students will need to understand history and place different accounts in their broader context.

His explanations of the authority of texts and its usefulness in history instruction explicitly represent his awareness of disciplinary practices. Additionally, in his journal during the second semester, Anthony created an outline for an assignment based on the 1960s “sit-ins” that utilized specific historical concepts such as historical empathy and use of evidence. Though Anthony displayed awareness of these practices, his explanation lacked the detail and specificity that would firmly place him as a “developing professional.”

Teaching Experiences And Current Placement

Before student teaching, Anthony had field placements in two high schools in exurb districts in Michigan and one urban high school in Michigan. Anthony’s student teaching placement was in a small exurb village district in Michigan. The district serves about 3,500 students, has two K-2nd elementary schools, one 3-4th grade elementary school, one intermediary 5-6th grade school, one middle 7-8th grade school, and one high school

placement. At the time of data collection, 100% of schools in this district met federal Adequate Yearly Progress goals and the district had an 89.6% 4-year graduation rate. The middle school in which Anthony student taught served about 550 students, with 54% of these students receiving free or reduced lunch.¹⁹ In his student teaching, Anthony taught a Medieval Europe elective class once per day to a mixed of 7th and 8th graders and taught a required social studies class to 7th graders four times per day.

Jamie Lynn

History Content Knowledge and Learning Experiences

At the time of the interviews, Jamie Lynn was on track to receive a Bachelor of Arts Education with distinction in History and German. In college, Jamie Lynn had 28 credit hours, or eight history courses, received nothing lower than a B in any of her history classes and achieved a 3.42 total GPA in them. Jamie Lynn took two U.S. History survey courses, one world history survey course with an accompanying one-credit hour discussion section, three world-region and era specific history courses, and one history colloquium course. The titles of the courses are:

- United States to 1865
- United States, 1865 to the Present
- World History Topics: The Holocaust
- Zoom: A History of Everything
- Pedagogies in History (Discussion for Zoom course)

¹⁹ Most of the information on the schools in this study came from www.mischooldata.org. I was unable to retrieve the free and reduced lunch percentages from this website, however, as the number they provided was “Free/Reduced Lunch Participation by Eligible Students.” This number was not the actual percentage of students who received aid from the school; rather it was the number of students who received out of those who qualified. The numbers I included in this paper came from calling the schools directly and asking for the information and represents the 2012/2013 school year data.

- Asian History Topics: Legacy of the Samurai
- East Asia: Early Transformations
- History Colloquium: The Global Spread of Secret Knowledge

Jamie Lynn began her affinity for history during high school, yet when she came to college her understanding and love for the work of history changed. Jamie Lynn said her history learning experiences in high school were “so different” than what she learned in college: “My history class in high school sucked. Dittos out of the book every single day, and a little bit of instruction, and movies, that was it. No question. I liked it because I asked the question, ‘how did it all connect?’ That is why I studied it.” She also stated that there was “no teaching of primary sources” in high school. Her most memorable teacher in high school was her AP U.S. History teacher. Jamie Lynn explained that this teacher “just lectured every day. We just took notes, but for some reason it was fun.” She admitted that the main part of why she liked the course so much was not because of the content, but because she liked her teacher and the people in the class. She also said that she was very successful in that class.

In college, however, Jamie Lynn grew to enjoy history for more than just her personal success or for the people in the class. She explained that college history courses helped her to think about history differently. She said, “It was the first time that I got challenged on how to think outside of the high school curriculum.” She gave an example from one of her college courses that piqued her interest:

Did you know that there were more lynchings [sic] in Pennsylvania than there were in the South? Things like that, that you don’t see, these other perspectives—other accounts, essentially—to challenge our way of thinking about the good old American

history. So that was the first time that I remember having these eye-opening, 'Oh my gosh, there's another way to think about this.'

In one course, her history colloquium entitled "The Global Spread of Secret Knowledge," Jamie Lynn said that she felt she was finally "experiencing" history. She explained that they had to write a thesis and finally felt what "it was like to do hard-core research as an historian on one particular topic."

Currently, Jamie Lynn said she felt "really limited" in her content knowledge and it made her "feel kinda weak." She felt that there were pockets of history she felt much more comfortable with than others and this was very transparent in her placement: "When I start teaching about the Reformation and Renaissance, which they've already learned, students might know more than I do, because [her cooperating teacher] just taught it to them two weeks ago. So, you know, I feel weak on that." She did not feel that that she was behind other student teachers as "nobody walks out of college knowing everything about world history." She thought that was "the unique part of getting a history major. You can have ten of 'em [history majors] in a row, and they all know something different." Jamie Lynn said she would be much more confident teaching U.S. history.

Jamie Lynn explained that teaching was helping her content knowledge. She said, "I think now I'm remembering more things just because I'm teaching them. . . . I'm becoming a master of this content right now, and things are starting to come together." Jamie Lynn gave an example of this in her teaching Chinese history, where she was making connections that she did not understand before: "I'm like, 'Oh yeah there was that huge political war with seventh and eighth century, and that's why the Mongols are so keen to re-establishing

the Silk Road.” She said teaching history was like cleaning off the “dusty shelves in [her] brain.”

Other learning experiences. Jamie Lynn explained additional learning experiences that influenced her learning to teach. She talked about one of her favorite Pastors and seeing how he taught the cultural differences between American and ancient Hebrew culture. She said when he explains the differences in eating that he “lays down, literally acts it out. We can visualize what it was like at the Last Supper.” She said he is “animated, recapping, reminding us key points, just putting up bullet points on the screen or whatever.” Jamie Lynn explained that this helped her think about her history teaching and how to be more animated with her students. Additionally, she learned from him about connecting the learner back to the last session: “This is good for me. I haven’t been to church in a week, and he’s reminding me what I learned last week.” She explained that this was helpful to her because the kids she will be teaching have six different classes a day and she needs “to remind them what we did yesterday. They’ve got so much going on in their lives. They need to remember. I can’t expect them to, just ‘cause I know I’ve done it eighteen times today doesn’t mean they will.”

Discipline Specific Understanding For Pedagogy

Jamie Lynn displayed a growing understanding of the discipline of history and of how she can use her historical knowledge for pedagogical purposes. On the pre-test, Jamie Lynn made statements that placed her in the high end of “personal novice” category. She talked about using texts with the specific purpose of helping students understand the perspective of people in the past, or use historical empathy. She said, “I would use my college textbooks and especially the primary sources I received in college as well as

biographies and novels from the time period. I find that novels and stories written in any given time period display a lot about that time and thus, one can learn a lot about it.” Also, in her text analysis of the “Alien & Sedition Acts,” Jamie Lynn mentioned the antiquated language and the background historical knowledge one would need to understand it, but said very little about the differing perspectives of document. Because this answer identifies the content area, but had little discussion of discipline specific practices or substance, it reinforces her as a “personal novice.”

On the post-test at the end of her first semester, Jamie Lynn seemed to move into the “tentative professional” category. The questions Jamie Lynn said she would have if she were just hired into a district to teach U.S. History include, “Do they teach the difference between history as an account and history as an event? . . . Do they shape their units around BIG historical problems or thematic investigations?” Additionally, Jamie Lynn talked about the problems with textbooks written “with great authority.” She said, “This does not give room for students to think critically, thus I would want to supplement my students with different types of reading material.” Jamie Lynn gave an example of this in her text analysis of the “Alien and Sedition Acts.” She wrote, “In regards to the tone, students might struggle to challenge the constitutionality of these acts because it comes off as so authoritative. . . . I would argue that the same authoritative tone in these documents might prevent students from challenging them or thinking critically about the rightful use of these acts.”

Additionally, in her journal responses during the second semester, Jamie Lynn identified many of the key concepts of historical thinking in the readings in the course and explained how they are relevant to teaching history. Each of these points shows that Jamie Lynn was developing an understanding of the discipline of history and its value for the classroom.

Because she discussed these concepts in ways that begin to represent relationships among disciplinary concepts, she seemed to be moving into the “tentative professional” category.

Teaching Experiences and Current Placement

Jamie Lynn’s field experiences included two high schools in exurb districts, one high school in an urban district, and one middle school in an exurb district. She observed a ninth-grade U.S. History course, a tenth-grade civics course, an eleventh-grade AP U.S. History and world history and a sixth grade social studies course. Currently, Jamie Lynn was student teaching at the single high school in an exurban district in Michigan. This district served about 6,200 students in five K-4 elementary schools, one upper elementary, one middle school, and one high school. The high school itself served about 2000 students, with .082% of the students on free or reduced lunch. The school has an International Baccalaureate program and a series of AP course offerings for students. At the time of data collection, 88.9% of the schools in this district met federal Average Yearly Progress with a 92.2% four year graduation rate. Jamie Lynn taught three classes of eleventh-grade world history, spanned between two different cooperating teachers. She also observed an AP European course but did not teach it because she did not have the credentials to do so. One difference between Jamie Lynn’s experience and others is that one of her cooperating teachers attended the same teacher education institution as Jamie Lynn and had similar learning experiences in her teacher training. This difference is obvious in the section concerning feedback that student teachers receive.

Amanda

History Content Knowledge and Learning Experiences

At the time of the interviews, Amanda was on track to receive a Bachelor of Arts in History, with a certification for history and psychology. Amanda transferred two history courses from other institutions for a total of six credit hours. The first, U.S. 1865 to the Present she took at Jackson Community College, the second was a Roman History Through Its Monuments course she took at Lorenzo de' Medici Italian International Institute in Rome, Italy. Once at the University of Michigan, Amanda took a total of 29 credit hours of history, or 8 courses, received nothing lower than a B+, and achieved a 3.63 GPA in them. In total, Amanda took two U.S. History survey courses, two era and region specific U.S. History courses, one world history survey course, four region specific world history courses, and one history colloquium. The titles of the courses Amanda took are:

- United States to 1865
- United States, 1865 to the Present
- World History: The World Since 1492
- Modern East Asia
- Roman History Through Its Monuments
- Origins of Nazism: Ideology, Practices, and Judgments
- Problems in Roman History: Augustus and the Early Roman Empire
- American Revolution
- History Colloquium: Honor Sexuality & Law in Latin American History
- NY Modern History: Cultures of the Great Metropolis

Amanda explained that her history courses in high school were much more traditional than what she was learning through her college history courses. She explained that “in high school, it came out of a text or there was one straight answer it seemed like.” She said, in college courses “they [instructors] allow you more to create your own opinion on history.” It was learning history in college made her want to become a history teacher. She said, “when I took history at the college level, it was a lot different than when I took it at the high school level. . . . I just want to go back to high school and show them how I learned history at the college level, which is a lot more than just [a] textbook.” One class she used as an example was her history colloquium in which she did a lot of “explaining and writing about history.” This helped her think about how to teach history.

One experience in particular that influenced Amanda was when she studied abroad in Rome. This was the source of her love for history: “I fell in love with ancient Roman history, but unfortunately, you don’t really teach that nowadays, but that’s when I really fell in love with history.” In the course Roman History Through Its Monuments, she learned about different monuments and then she went and visited them. She said “it was like having your own tour guide.” This love for history grew through other courses, but it was not until she came to the School of Education that she really began to understand what it meant to teach history.

Amanda said that what she was learning through the School of Education was much closer to her college history courses than to her high school history courses. She said, “I think that’s kind of what the School of Ed[ucation]’s teaching us. It is to let the kids kind of develop their own idea about what happened in history, especially with the questions that are debatable. It’s not one straight answer.” In high school, Amanda said history “came out

of the text or there was one straight answer it seemed like.” Amanda preferred history instruction that allowed the learner to “have [their] own opinion more, and work with constructing [their] own knowledge through primary sources.” One example Amanda gave for this was learning to question students about images. Though she learned to love the use of images in her college courses, she did not learn to teach with them until her school of education experience. Amanda thought this was very helpful as she was learning to teach the way she wishes she had learned in high school.

Amanda characterized her current content knowledge in terms of eras and regions with which she was most comfortable. She said, “I think that I definitely can tell where my strengths and weaknesses are when I’m planning, like what I know about and what I don’t. But I think it’s helpful, because I know where my strengths are.” In particular, Amanda talked about her strengths being in the areas of college courses that she enjoyed. She said, “I say that my best content knowledge history is with ancient Roman history. . . . because that’s where my passion was.” On the other hand, Amanda explained that world history is her biggest area of weakness because the world history course she took did not interest her. The professor taught the course based around ocean travel. Amanda explained, “We never talked about world history outside of that context. . . . I just didn’t see how it would be super-relevant for me to teach. Like, I could take points from it, but I’m not going to teach a world history class in a high school talking about trading.”

Discipline Specific Understanding for Pedagogy

Throughout the program, Amanda exhibited a growing understanding of history as a discipline and how she could use this knowledge pedagogically. On the pre-test, Amanda seemed to fall into the category of “uninformed novice.” There was nothing in her

responses about planning for instruction that clarified she was talking about history instruction beyond a mention of history class. Additionally, her responses in the text analysis portion were very much that of a reader, with no analysis of the text at all. For instance on the “Alien and Sedition Acts” text, Amanda wrote, “The tone is very anti-foreigner and positive towards the American Government. The key ideas are that the government can deport any person who was not born in the United States without giving them a trial.” Though Amanda listed two key ideas, she never paid attention to the subtext of the sources by interrogating them further than surface meaning.

On the post-test, Amanda seemed to grow in her understanding of the discipline as her responses came in to the “personal novice” category, at points entering into “tentative professional.” In the section about planning for instruction, Amanda mentioned specific content this time: “For example, do they expect me to have just finished teaching about the Civil War by the end of the first semester?” She also mentioned some discipline-specific substance and practice when she asked, “Does the textbook show multiple perspectives of history? Does the textbook just regurgitate straight facts, or does it sometimes tell narratives? Is it an authoritative text that will be hard for the students to challenge?” During the “Second President” text analysis, Amanda discussed the problem of the authority of textbooks. She thought that readers may not question the textbook: “They may take everything that the text claims as fact and may not question that it may only be telling one side of the story and not represent other viewpoints that could be beneficial to fully understanding these events.” This understanding of multiple narratives of history and the authority of textbooks shows growth in her understanding of history.

During the second semester course journal entries, Amanda again displayed evidence that she more firmly in the “tentative professional” category by briefly discussed disciplinary practices. In her “memo-to-self,” she referenced Bain (2000) and the terms “history as an account” and “history as an event.” She stated that these “terms” were beneficial to “help further students’ understandings about challenging and questioning their sources.” She continued, “I think that using these terms will help students to understand that there is not one ‘true’ account of an event and that they need to read beyond the surface level of any document that they encounter.” Though her mention of these historical thinking concepts was brief, Amanda seemed to have some understanding of the concepts of history as account vs. history as event and why they are helpful for students to understand this aspect of history.

Teaching Experiences and Current Placement

Before student teaching, Amanda had placements in two exurb high schools, one private school, and one urban high school. She observed an AP U.S. History class of tenth and eleventh graders in one exurb district, a tenth-grade world history in the other, a world history class in a private school, and a ninth grade U.S. History class in the urban school. Amanda was student teaching in a small city district in a college town that has twenty elementary schools, one K-8 open school, five middle schools, three comprehensive high schools, and three alternative high schools. The total number of students in the district at the time of data collection was around 16,500. The district had a four-year graduation rate of 83.6%, and 90.6% of the schools in the district met federal Adequate Yearly Progress. The school in which Amanda student taught is a public magnet school that serves approximately 480 students, with about 10% of the students receiving free or reduced

lunch. This school is purposefully missing many aspects of a traditional high school, such as a bell between classes, cafeteria, hall passes, or athletics. In this school, students experience an open campus environment and design their own experience as a learner (per school's website). In her current placement, Amanda taught two block classes of U.S. History (9th – 12th graders) and assisted in teaching a Model United Nations course with her cooperating teacher. Additionally Amanda led a Forum class with her cooperating teacher, which was like a homeroom for students. In the Forum class, Amanda and her students participated in community service, had a camping trip, watched the news, and played games.

Hans

History Content Knowledge and Learning Experiences

At the time of the interviews, Hans was on track to receive a Bachelor of Arts Education with distinction in Social Studies and Mathematics. Hans transferred three history courses from other institutions for a total of nine credit hours. The first, Medieval, Renaissance and Reformation Europe, he took at Eastern Michigan University. The other two, U.S. History 1865 – Present and U.S. History: Cold War Era, he took at Mott Community College. Once at the University of Michigan, Hans took a total of 12 credit hours of history courses, or three courses, received nothing lower than a B- in any of them, and achieved a 3.45 GPA in them. Hans took three U.S. history survey courses, two regional history courses, and one era specific world history course. The titles of the courses that Hans took are:

- Medieval, Renaissance, and Reformation Europe
- U.S. History: Cold War Era
- United States to 1865
- United States, 1865 to the Present

- Africa to 1850
- Topics in History: The Global Cold War: History and Aftermath

Hans explained that through his learning experiences in high school history he gained “a lot of factual knowledge” that he was able to apply elsewhere. For example, he said he was “very fortunate to have taken the course Great American Conflicts” in high school. Through this course, he knew a lot about World War I, World War II, the Revolutionary War, and the U.S. Civil War. He also explained that though he had “good instructors” in his high school history classes, he lacked understanding of what history really was until much later. He said, “I feel like I am one of those kids that came through high school not knowing what history was. I was in year five of my college career before I knew what it was.”

Hans explained that once he came to college, he began to take courses that were more “inquiry driven.” In his community college course, *Atomic America*, Hans first experienced this style of learning history. He defined “inquiry-based history” as, “a lot of discussion” based on the instructor posing questions to the class. He said that his professor “was able to coerce discussion out of his students and [he] found that really meaningful.” Hans explained this was before he began to understand the discipline of history, but these experiences started to expand his understanding of the discipline. He said, “before I knew how to ‘do history’ it helped me to wrap my head around what we were talking about.” Hans explained the “rude awakening” he experienced about his lack of understanding of history in a course he had on the Revolutionary War at the University of Michigan. He said he “bombed” all the exams with a B or B-. He said, “At the time, I hated the course. I thought, ‘What am I doing wrong? Like, what is going on here?’ It wasn’t until after the course that I had it figured out.” Hans explained that that was the point where he began to understand

what historical thinking was.

When I prompted Hans to explain “historical thinking,” he said “at bare minimum, it’s being able to take a stance on an argument and be able to support your argument with evidentiary support.” Hans reported to have accepted this as a criteria of good history instruction: “I am a firm believer in that and I didn’t get that education in high school or even previously. That’s rough. Once you figure it out you feel like you have been robbed. That’s how I feel.” Hans explained that his high school history courses were “completely different” than what he has been learning in his history and teacher education courses. He said, “I just wish everybody was doing what we are doing. I don’t know why something like this has not caught on. . . . I want to be one of those teachers.” Hans explained also that after learning about historical thinking, he understood some of the things his past instructors in college were doing more clearly. He said, “I can now say, ‘Well, she [his college instructor] did that.’ Now I can put a name to it because I just learned it. . . . I can remember how they presented materials. How they conveyed material.” Hans reported being able to understand more clearly what his history professors were doing because of his learning in the School of Education.

Currently, Hans said he felt that he had “very broad knowledge” of history. He explained that the students in one of his classes called him “a walking Google.” Hans thinks his “broad and resourceful” knowledge base helped him as a social studies teacher as it gave him “more stuff [content knowledge] to draw upon” and helped him “make stuff relevant” to his students. He did explain, however, that his knowledge was “spread thin in areas.” As an example, he said he knows more about the Cold War than he does about the Spanish American War. Specifically, he said, “my knowledge of history, as far as U.S. History,

is very thick through the turn of [the century], right after the industrial era. I feel very confident.”

Discipline Specific Understanding for Pedagogy

Hans seemed to begin the program with some of the most advanced and discipline specific knowledge in the cohort, and he continued to show evidence of growth throughout semesters one and two of the program. On the pre-test, Hans would be in the “personal novice” category, at some points even seeming to enter into “tentative professional.” In the planning for instruction, he mentioned needing to know what “era” he would be responsible for so that he would know what he would be required to teach, clearly identifying his area of teaching as history. Also in planning for instruction, Hans seemed to show an advanced understanding of the value of the textbook and other texts in history instruction. He wrote

If there is a primary textbook, I would use it as a ‘skeleton’ for my lesson and unit plan(s) while ‘fleshing out’ main ideas from the primary text with supplements accompanying the text, primary source documents, audio/video relevant to the period being studied etc. . . . I would have to formulate a way to logically and comprehensibly link the texts together in order to convey the content requirements of the specific era I would be teaching to my students.

Additionally, in the text analysis, Hans identified some specific undertones of the author in the “Alien and Sedition Acts” text. He wrote: “The authors’ tone is protectionist and defensive,” and that the Alien Act sought to “protect the United States from aliens affiliated with nations at war with the US,” and the Sedition Act was “designed to keep citizens from writing, speaking, conspiring etc. against the US government.” Also in his review of the

textbook section, Hans identified an intent of the author writing, “The tone of this particular text seems to be simple in tone i.e. I feel like [I am] getting the absolute basis of what really happened. Being a high school text, I imagine, that is the authors’ intention.” In each of these cases, Hans seems to be looking through the text and seeing some purposes in the sub-text.

On the post-test, Hans was clearly in the “tentative professional” category, at points bordering a “developing professional” by explicitly representing his awareness of disciplinary practices. He wrote:

I think it would also be important to know how the textbook is written. Does it appear authoritative in nature? If so, I would still use the text in my classroom, but teach my students that the text can be interrogated; that it is not some sort of supreme authority on history. . . . Textbooks tend to write history in clean-cut, linear events. In my classroom, I would want to challenge that notion presented by the textbook with multiple accounts of whatever idea is described in the text.

In the text analysis, Hans again discusses the tone and purpose of the “Alien and Sedition Acts,” as having a “preventive tone” and that “they were written to prevent upheaval in the newly founded United States, so they’re demanding in nature.” This shows that Hans considers the purpose of a document and how context affects the document, representing his awareness of these principles.

In his second semester journal, Hans seemed to be in the same category that he was at the end of the first semester, “tentative professional” with some of his work bordering on “developing professional.” In his memo-to-self, Hans was very brief about what he learned, writing little more than a mention of disciplinary understanding. He wrote that he learned

to “Corroborate, Source, and Contextualize” texts and that “the textbook is NOT the authority on content. It can be interrogated and make sure students see this too.” When he explained what he learned from Bain (2000), however, he showed a much more nuanced understanding of the value of the discipline of history for pedagogy. Hans wrote, “Bain treats history as practice rather than mere content. He uses historical practices to ‘re-key’ the textbook, removing the authoritative standing the textbook has traditionally held in the classroom.” Also, Hans explained why this was beneficial the learner: “students benefit from history because it’s the discipline where students learn to not only think and read critically, but also challenge sources and debunk the ‘generally accepted view’ represented in textbooks, by the teacher, and by students’ own beliefs.” This explanation shows that he was able to discuss some disciplinary practices in ways that explicitly represent his awareness of them and their value in instruction.

Teaching Experiences and Current Placement

Hans had field placements in an exurb middle school in a 6th grade social studies, an urban high school in a ninth grade U.S. History classroom, and two exurb high schools, one in a tenth grade world history classroom and one in a ninth grade U.S. History classroom. Hans was student teaching in an exurb district that has four elementary schools, one middle school, a traditional high school and an alternative high school. The district serves about 5,200 students. The district has a 4 year graduation rate of 90.4% and 85.7% of the schools met federal Adequate Yearly Progress. The school in which Hans was student teaching was the traditional high school of the district. At the time of data collection, the high school served about 1,800 students, with about .09% of the students receiving free or

reduced lunch. Hans taught two classes of U.S. History for much of the semester, and began teaching his cooperating teacher's world history course for the last 3 weeks of the semester.

Phillip

History Content Knowledge and Learning Experiences

At the time of the interviews, Phillip was on track to receive a Bachelor of Arts in History with certification for both Social Studies and History. Phillip transferred one economics class, *Principles of Economics I*, from Kalamazoo Valley Community College for 3 credit hours. Once at the University of Michigan, Phillip had two classes of economics, totaling 7 credit hours. He received nothing less than a C- in these courses with a GPA of 1.86.²⁰ Also at the University of Michigan, Phillip took 12 history classes, totaling 41 credit hours, more courses than any other student teacher, and received nothing lower than a C+ in these courses, achieving a 3.19 GPA in them. Phillip took two U.S. history survey courses, three world history survey courses, three world regional survey courses, three world regional era history courses, and one local history colloquium. The titles of the courses that Phillip took are:

- Principles of Economics I
- Principles of Economics II
- International Economics
- Writing of History: Holocaust & Aftermaths: History, Memory, Politics
- United States to 1865
- United States, 1865 to the Present: Issues in Race and Ethnicity
- Zoom: A History of Everything

²⁰ Phillip was the only student teacher who taught a class other than history that is part of this study. The class he taught was Economics. Because of this, I am briefly describing the economics courses he took while in college.

- Europe-1945: Europe in the Age of War
- Russia and the Soviet Union: Survey of Russia
- Ireland to 1603, Medieval Irish Christianity: Saints and Scholars
- Japan to 1700
- The World Since 1492
- Discovery of the Universe
- History Colloquium: Michigan in the Era of Industrialization
- Mideast Studies: Evolution of Books in Near East

Phillip explained that his high school history courses had a very traditional history-learning environment “almost every day.” He used his International Baccalaureate (IB) history class as an example. He said it was, “just a powerpoint of information. Just facts and what was happening. There was no connection to the day before.”

Phillip explained that through the IB course he approached history as a single narrative. However, they often worked with primary and secondary documents, a normal practice in IB history courses. He explained that this is where he learned to analyze texts in a format he called OPVL: the origin, value, purpose and limitation of each document. Phillip said that he felt his high school stressed this OPVL framework: “Whenever you are looking at historical documents . . . every picture that you use, give the source, where you got it from. And if need be, you should give them what is the limitation on it.” Phillip said he began to learn in high school the value of choosing documents for a purpose. However, the idea of using historical problems in history instruction, however, was “completely new.” He said, “I feel like in my history courses, it was like, ‘Here it is. Here is the information. Just read the book and answer the questions in the back of the book. . . . And here are some

questions you can answer with it.” Phillip explained that he felt that his learning in high school was a hindrance to his ability to use driving questions in his instruction. He felt that he learned a lot of content in high school, but did not know how to put it into practice: “I know all these things. Now for me to put this into the classroom, I have to figure out what way am I going to show this content to the students for them to do, what I would like them to do.” He said it would be more helpful if he would have seen some of the practices he is learning in high school, “I think it would be easier if you see the good practice as something to follow. . . . I feel like I wish I had more stuff to build upon.” Phillip understood the challenge he had in trying to learn modes of instruction in his education training through which he never learned.

Phillip explained how two of his courses in college began to give him a different view toward history and history instruction: his *Discovery of the Universe* and *Big History* course. Phillip explained that through his *Discovery of the Universe*, he could see connections between historical scientific debates and societal changes, something he had never experienced before: “you can see why a certain telescope that is at a women’s college is that type of telescope because of the time period it is in.” From these courses, Phillip’s understanding of history and the purpose of history began to grow.

Through his *Big History* course, Phillip explained two distinct aspects of history he learned. He said that was the first class he “learned about perspective and lens; like taking a lens and looking in very closely and then taking a step back and then looking outward in. It was a different way to look at what history is all about.” Additionally, Phillip said that in this course he began to see specific debates in history, using humans becoming bipedal as an example. He said,

The whole historical debate about that is something new to me and I would never think of that as falling under the scope of history. . . . to have it in historical context was very new. Why did we all of a sudden start walking? Some people said it was so we could see above the shrubbery. Some people said it was so we could run.

Different arguments like that.

Additionally, Phillip explained that the *Big History* course helped him learn more about an aspect of history instruction that he began to understand in high school, purposefully choosing historical sources for instruction. Phillip explained when his instructor gave them a source from a “Portuguese explorer or prisoner.” Phillip said, “It was kind of a weird paradox. The guy [the Portuguese man] is very surprised at all the features of the city [in China], but he kind of still looks down upon the people. It is a weird thing he has going on in his writing.” Phillip said this influenced him to be specific about choosing texts and what he chooses “needs to be there for a reason. Some of them [teachers] can just kind of throw it out there because, oh, this is interesting.” Instead this course helped him see how the choice of text highlighted what he was learning.

Phillip explained his content knowledge as, “Fair, could be better. Not good, but not bad.” He said it was “very shocking” to him when he thought of all the content he knew in “terms of facts and that type of stuff.” He explained that his content knowledge was very wide, as he purposefully tried to have one class in each area of the world. He explained that his strategy to hit every area of the world was not as helpful as he thought it would be. He said it was, “hurting me now. For world history it might be good. But I am teaching U.S. History and there are certain things about U.S. History that I am researching even the night before my lesson so I can give some type of spice to my lecture.” Also, Philip’s cooperating

teacher asked him to join another teacher for the first hour of the day and teach an economics course, another area in which Phillip felt unprepared. He said he wished he “had a summer to prepare.” Phillip did not like the idea of “cramming a bunch of information” before he could create a unit. Phillip said, “That hindered my planning because I felt like I couldn’t create lessons that were as interesting as I want. Because here I am trying to figure out what it is myself . . . so I think the lessons got hurt because of not knowing the content and not being able to create lessons around content that I know as well.”

Discipline Specific Understanding for Pedagogy

On the pre-test, Phillip seemed to be in the category of “uninformed novice,” but approaching the “personal novice.” There was nothing in his responses about planning for instruction beyond a mention of history. Additionally, during the text analysis portion of the assessment, Phillip wrote little more than a report on the information of the text. He describes the text, “It is a new nation that is seeing difficulty in its government and citizens therefore these acts set up guidelines to stabilize the government and avoid uprisings.” At one point, Phillip approaches “personal novice” as he begins to set the context of the text: “This is written in 1798 so obviously it comes about by the U.S. protecting them as a new nation.” This was not enough, however, to move him firmly in the personal novice category.

During the post-test, Phillip showed evidence that he had moved into the “personal novice” category. Though he gave evidence of some knowledge of the discipline, he did not provide a “nuanced or interconnected representation of discipline-specific substance (SUB) and/or (PRAC)” (taken from the rubric in Appendix C). He wrote that texts that are too “authoritative” do not “allow for historical thinking.” He asked, “Are there text[s] in my classroom that will challenge the students’ historical thinking of historical event (only

textbook) vs. historical account (primary documents, non-textbook).” He did not explain what he meant by this in detail, and it is unclear whether he was simply restating these disciplinary concepts from an article or whether he actually grasped them. During the text analysis, Phillip again simply mentioned disciplinary concepts: “the tone is authoritative and it is more like history as an event.” At one point, Phillip seems to show a more complex understanding of the concepts, “The text also limits any exploration into the subject matter because of the authoritative style.” While this displays growth, it does not appear to be enough to move him into the “tentative professional” category.

In the second semester journal, Phillip began showing signs of a “tentative professional” as he began to introduce “discipline-specific practices (PRAC) in a way that explicitly represents their awareness that these are disciplinary practices.” His explanations often lacked clarity and again seemed like he simply rewrote what the author of the article was arguing rather than synthesizing his own understanding. One example of this was when Phillip was reviewing Bain’s (2006) “Rounding Up Unusual Suspects: Facing the Authority Hidden in the History Classroom.” Phillip wrote that the activity in the article “allowed the students to practice the discipline of creating their own thoughts of what the textbook *should* say about the time period (emphasis added).” By saying that students could construct what the textbook *should* say, missed one of the points of the article about narratives being correct or incorrect. At the end of the second semester, on the “memo-to-self,” again Phillip showed that he understood many of the practices and concepts he learned and that he was aware that these are disciplinary concepts, but at points lacked clarity. He wrote

The other thing that I noticed in the notes was how to be both a historian and

educator. This is a skill that is important for all teachers. The historian will come along with the studying of content, but to give the students glimpses into how to be historians and to give them the possible tools to become interested into the historical content. Giving the students the opportunity to 'play' historian and have authentic assessments they will be more likely be engaged in your class. The piece by Bain gives examples of an assessment as well as the way the students can become historians briefly.

It is also important to note that Phillip had a beginning understanding of the pedagogical value of utilizing the discipline for pupil engagement. Again, however, his explanation does not clarify whether he understands why utilizing the discipline of history would help with pupil engagement.

Teaching Experiences and Current Placement

Phillip had field placements in an exurban high school observing a junior world history course and a sophomore U.S. History course. He also was in an urban high school observing a freshman history course and in a private high school observing both world and U.S. History. Phillip was student teaching in a large public exurb district in the Midwest. The district served about 18,400 students and has three traditional high schools, one alternative high school, five middle schools, and sixteen elementary schools. At the time of data collection, 88% of the schools in the district met federal Adequate Yearly Progress goals and had an 85.6% 4-year graduation rate. Phillip taught in one of the three traditional high schools that served around 2040 students, with about 26% of students receiving free or reduced lunch. He had an 11th grade economics class for the first period of the day and two 10th grade U.S. History classes later in the day.

Jeff

History Content Knowledge and Learning Experiences

At the time of the interviews, Jeff was on track to receive a Bachelor of Arts Education with High Distinction in Social Studies and a minor in Earth/Space Science. At the University of Michigan, Jeff took a total of four history courses totaling 16 credit hours, received nothing lower than a B+, and had a 3.75 GPA in these courses. Jeff took two U.S. History survey courses, one world history survey course, and one world region specific survey course. The titles of the courses that Jeff took are:

- United States to 1865
- United States, 1865 to the Present: Issues in Race & Ethnicity
- Indian Civilization
- The World Since 1492: Oceans in World History

Jeff explained that he went to a very small high school and his history learning experiences in his two history courses were not very satisfying. In his U.S. History class, the teacher “literally . . . would read the book in front of the class.” Also, he thought his teacher used texts poorly: “we would watch movies . . . we watched *Dances with Wolves* (1990) literally twice in the same class. Because Native Americans came up twice, so why not watch the movie [twice]?” He also said, “we watched *Titanic* (1997), the full length *Titanic*. I’m not joking. I can’t make this stuff up.” Also, Jeff thought his experience with assessment was disappointing as the tests were “strict dates and people’s names.” Interestingly, his experience in high school was so bad that he decided to run for the school board of his hometown, an office he won and was still a sitting member of at the time of the interviews.

Jeff said his experiences in high school with history “couldn’t be more different”

than what he experienced in his college courses: “In college classes you’re more listening to someone give their version of history.” He said that this new experience was difficult for him because of his learning in high school, but he adapted and was successful. He said, “they’re the experts; you better learn how to learn from them or else you’re going to fail.” He explained some specific experiences in the courses he took in college. In his U.S. History course, 1865 to the Present, he began to experience active learning in history. He said rather than “writing papers about random topics and things at a very surface level,” his course instructor would have them go out and explore for themselves. He “went to the local historical museum, looked at an exhibit, and tried to figure out how to interpret history through the exhibit and through the different sources.” Jeff thought this experience was applicable to his teaching history.

Instead of rehashing history from some textbook or some other book . . . we have to go out, look at the sources, kind of corroborate between them, and try to fit the story that way. You know, we’re making our own argument based on various pieces of documents and evidence, speeches, things like that, and that’s how we make the argument.

Jeff said that when his teacher originally gave the assignment, he was not excited for it because it was different from anything he had done before. He said, “I can write a paper about anything, just look on the internet . . . But this, you actually had to walk to the museum, take a tour of it, jot down notes, what the sources are saying . . . and figure out what argument you can make.” After these history courses and his teacher training, Jeff said he knew much more about teaching history. He said

I think that’s what teaching is about. . . . Don’t take the textbook face value. Yes, it’s

gonna be a little more work for the student and the teacher. . . . Truly learning in a sense that you are not memorizing a list of facts and dates and boldfaced words out of the textbook. Rather, you're interpreting history from primary sources, from people's accounts that were actually there. To me that's truly learning, because you are doing the construction of it or analyzing the sources. You are not just taking what someone else says at face value and taking it and memorizing it and feeding it back.

Jeff said he felt that he currently had "limited content knowledge" to teach a history class. He said he did not have enough history courses to be prepared to teach, "because you only have to take three history classes. . . . It's like, now that I'm in there I have no idea." He explained specifically with the courses he was teaching in his student teaching. He said, "I'm teaching right now U.S. history from Reconstruction to the first war and I don't remember any of this. I'm literally learning the content in one night and trying to write a unit plan the next. It's just overwhelming. For whatever reason, I took the courses, I got A's in them, and you know, I've got nothing going." He said one thing that was saving him was going through his notes and textbooks from his college history courses, as the textbook and materials he had from the teachers were insufficient. He said if he only used the materials he had from his placement he would "have all of five minutes to talk about a war or something. You know, because it just doesn't go into detail." Jeff talked about the importance of using more than just the textbook in constructing lesson plans: "I think the students miss out if the teacher only uses the material out of the book."

Discipline Specific Understanding for Pedagogy

Jeff exhibited a growing understanding of history as a discipline and using this understanding for pedagogical purposes throughout the program. By the end, Jeff seemed

to be one of the more advanced student teachers of discipline specific pedagogy in the cohort. On the pre-test, Jeff was in the “personal novice” category because he made it clear that history was the content area in planning for instruction. He said, “I’m a strong believer that both primary and secondary sources are crucial for teaching/learning history. I would likely use the main textbook as the course’s guide and supplement the lessons with a primary source compilation text.” Also, in the text analysis Jeff identified history, but adds little beyond a mention of the substance and practices of history. He wrote, “This document is a very direct and rigid text. Written in legislative language, it comes off as being unapproachable to the average person.”

On the post-test, Jeff showed signs of reaching the category of “developing professional” by discussing discipline specific concepts and practices in ways that represent with specificity the relationships among them. In the planning for instruction section, Jeff introduced the idea of using multiple forms of text and gave examples from a classroom he observed: “As Bain stresses [2006] using multiple forms of texts (i.e. video clips, diaries, art etc.) is essential to allowing students to critically think and analyze history as something that can be debated. . . . This type of exposure to multiple forms of text will be a key aspect of my teaching.” Additionally, Jeff’s discussion of school textbooks shows his grasp of disciplinary practices and substance. He asked several questions about the challenges of using a textbook in his history course, and about using other forms of texts to give students opportunities for historical thinking:

Does it present a strong bias from the author? Does it perpetuate the white mainstream way of thinking that many texts present (Delpit [1988], I think discussed this)? Or, as Bain [2006] argues, does it present an authoritative tone

which makes questioning the author challenging for students? These types of questions are important for me to explore when I examine the textbook that the district provides me . . . the textbook should not be used as the driving force of the class because it generally does not allow for historical questioning (Paxton, [1999]) . . . using primary sources and other forms of texts will allow student to think like historians and it will give the opportunity to challenge the students' preconceived notions about history only having one side.

Based on this quote, it appears that Jeff showed a sophisticated understanding of some disciplinary processes of history.

In the memo-to-self, Jeff seems to fall into the category of “developing professional” as he clearly discusses the pedagogical value of discipline-specific practices in ways that represent with “specificity relationships among ideas or concepts” and “clearly recognizes the unique nature of disciplinary practices.” Jeff wrote

One of the most reoccurring patterns throughout this semester is . . . that we need to present students with the opportunity to explore a variety of texts in order to create an overall understanding of an event. The historical thinking process, where by students analyze and question sources, is one of the most important elements of an effective history teacher . . . However, this historical thinking process is unnatural . . . We need to implement this idea at the very beginning and build upon it over time until it becomes a regular part of the students time in the classroom. Also, facts are not always a bad thing. Teaching too many facts is however. The factual information is the foundation upon which critical thinking builds.

From this explanation, Jeff seemed to have a grasp of the relationship between sources, historical thinking, and the role of historical facts within his role as a history teacher. One thing that Jeff's discussion lacked that kept him from an even higher category is specificity of these relationships.

Teaching Experiences and Current Placement

Jeff had field placements in an exurb high school observing a junior world history course and a sophomore U.S. History course. He also was in an urban high school observing a freshman history course, and in a private high school observing both world and U.S. History. Jeff was student teaching in a public exurb district in the Midwest. The district serves about 7,000 students and has one high school, two middle schools, six elementary schools, and two schools for students of special needs. At the time of data collection, 100% of the schools in the district met federal Adequate Yearly Progress goals and had a 94.3% four-year graduation rate. Jeff taught in the high school, a school that served about 2,200 students, with about .046% of the students receiving free or reduced lunch. Jeff had 3 classes of ninth grade U.S. History with two different cooperating teachers.

Ned

History Content Knowledge and Learning Experiences

At the time of the interviews, Ned was on track to receive a Bachelor of Arts in History with certification for Social Studies and History. Ned transferred two AP history courses from his high school, AP World History and AP U.S. History, totaling eight credit hours of history. Once at the University of Michigan, he took ten history courses, totaling 39 credit hours, received nothing lower than a B in any course, and achieved a 3.59 GPA. The titles of the courses that Ned took are:

- AP U.S. History
- AP World History
- Russia and the Soviet Union: A Survey of Russia
- The Vietnam War, Referencing Iraq
- Southeast Asian Civilization: Issues in Race & Ethnicity
- World War II in the Pacific: History, Culture, Memory
- United States, 1865 to the Present: Issues in Race & Ethnicity
- United States to 1865
- History of the Pacific Islands
- Europe – 1945: Europe in the Age of War
- The World Since 1492: Oceans in World History
- History Colloquium: People of the Book in Egypt, 640-1517

In high school, Ned took a number of history courses. First, he took a required ninth grade world history course. He then went into the AP U.S. History program as a sophomore, AP European history as a junior and continued on with AP Government as a senior. Ned had one teacher for his freshman year course and then one for all three of his AP courses. Ned explained that the freshman year world history teacher did a lot of things that he was learning in his teacher training, such as “looking at sources, using different technologies, using different assignments/assessments, having us do videos of things, like as an end project of such and such topic of your choice with your group.” His three years of classes with the AP teacher, on the other hand, were: “Here is a Powerpoint with sixty questions for the unit, we are going to go through them day by day.’ Like as a class, read textbook, do homework, answer questions . . . in class, he would only do one thing. He would show up

and we would be asked questions about the material . . . day after day after day after day. And that was just how the class ran.” Ned said about this teacher’s assessments: “He used tests that he probably used in 1980. Like I am not joking. Like he has cardboard boxes in the back of the room year after year that he just pulls out and it is just the same stuff.” Ned said that all three of the AP classes he had with this teacher were exactly the same format.

Ned knew that this instructor would be a “bad teacher” according to the standards he learned in his teacher education courses, yet he raved about how much he learned in these classes. He said, “His teaching style works for him and for what his purposes are, preparing you for the AP tests and for learning and doing things.” Ned explained that this teacher was largely responsible for making college very easy. He said, “I felt he prepared me best for UM [The University of Michigan], more than any of my other teachers in high school.” This was mainly because this teacher required him, “to manage a heavy workload, especially as a sophomore in high school.” Ned would not emulate his AP teacher, unless he had to teach an AP U.S. History course, “then he would be the first person [Ned] would go and talk to.”

Though Ned explained that he had a strong factual knowledge base in high school, once in college he learned more about teaching history through his courses. Ned specifically mentioned his United States to 1865 course as one of the more beneficial courses for teaching history. Ned said, “We looked at things from so many different angles.” Ned described an example:

With a topic like racism, we never looked at it just from pro- or anti-slavery. We never looked at it just from an abolitionist or free-soiler or any of the other various parties. We got text and material about each of the opposing viewpoints. Usually it

was a whole class period devoted to a specific viewpoint about that issue. And it made it so much more enriching.

Ned also found his Graduate Student Instructor in that class very helpful. Ned explained that “he helped connect the ideas that we were talking about . . . The way he presented material was really good for me, it really helped me understand the purpose of the class.”

As Ned explained this course, he made more than one reference about how his United States to 1865 was so much better than his United States, 1865 to the Present. When I asked him to explain, he said in 1865 to the Present they “mostly just read from the textbook.” And this was a textbook in which Ned did not like the author. He said that the author presents too much of a “biased” perspective: “He is kind of a socialist. . . . Like, ‘unions are the greatest thing ever,’ like ‘viva la revolution.’ I had experiences with him [the author] in high school and I just never got over my hatred of his perspective.” He continued: “That class to me was mostly just show up to lecture, do tests, get a good grade in class. . . . It was just what a boring history class looks like.”

Another learning experience of Ned’s was with the “greatest historical professor on this campus.” Ned had him for two different courses, and wanted to have him for more but could not fit any other courses in his schedule. Ned described his experience:

Take the World War II class, we got the American perspective, we got the Japanese perspective. We got secondary and primary sources. We saw film clips from both sides of the war, we saw even cartoons from both sides, we saw propaganda from both sides. It was fantastic. . . . It was one of the classes that I said, I am not missing that class. No matter how sick, I am getting up and going to it.

From these descriptions, Ned placed great value in historical thinking and seemed to like

the classes that pressed him in this direction.

Ned characterized his content knowledge as “good.” He said “I have a very strong base in history . . . but there is always more you can learn.” Additionally, he explained that he felt prepared to do the research necessary to teach history. He said, “Even if I don’t know what it is about, I feel that I have been taught the skills where I can learn very quickly.” Ned felt that was given the tools to be able to “recognize good sources” and “relate good information from bad information, historically accurate information from historically inaccurate information.” His example of this was:

Like if I just Googled the Crusades, there are certainly some that are written from Jihadist perspective and the Christian extremist perspective. I might use those in a lesson, but I wouldn’t use them if I wanted to find out what actually happened. If I was going to teach general knowledge, those might be sources that I would use if I was going to use, ‘those guys say this, these guys say this, what actually happened here?’ If I was looking for information to find out what happened, those are not things I would use. Just learning how to properly source and how to locate information quickly, so knowing where to go.

Interestingly, when asked about his content knowledge Ned also considered research tools as part of this question. He was the only student teacher who included this area in his thinking of content knowledge.

Discipline Specific Understanding for Pedagogy

On the pre-test, Ned would probably have fallen into the “personal novice” category, though he showed some flashes of a more sophisticated understanding of secondary texts as accounts. For much of the planning for instruction section of the assessment, he asked

very general information about students and their classes and made only brief mentions of history. About the texts, however, Ned said he would need to “know what texts you have, research the authors of the textbook to see any possible biases or tendencies, how the book(s) are broken up, what topics are covered, which are left out, how in-depth the text covers particular topics, useful resources within the textbook to find information quickly.” Here he shows that he understands the textbook as merely an account of someone who holds a point of view, a view that shows some advanced understanding of history as a discipline. It seems that Ned’s experiences with the textbook author from high school have informed his understanding about potential biases by authors.

On the post-test, Ned again seemed to identify as a “personal novice” for the “planning for instruction” section, but shows signs of “tentative professional” in the “text analysis.” For much of the planning for instruction section, he made almost no mention of history as the content area of the course he was teaching in the plan, placing him in the “personal novice” category. In the text analysis portion, however, he showed a discipline specific understanding that would place him in the “tentative professional” category, and arguably showing signs of a “competent professional.” Ned identified the antiquated language and stated that it was “the actual proper language of the time (the late 18th century).” When talking about the challenges that students would have, he wrote, “Without framing these documents, the students might be lost in the information. Without proper sourcing and contextualization the students may not understand the ideas and concepts in the Alien and Sedition Acts.” Additionally, Ned said the textbook excerpt “Second President” presents

a very “cookie-cutter” version of history. As Bain [2000] would argue, I as a teacher

should complicate this story for my students. The text is very much written with the idea of history as event in mind. . . . Our students should be exposed to conflicting viewpoints, other opinions, and analyze for themselves what happened. The textbook here is basically the authority, passing down its information to the students and I would want to change that.

Through Ned's statement about this text, he began to show signs of a tentative professional. He included responses about the text that "analyze strengths and weaknesses of the text in relation to the larger disciplinary question, problem, or context under study" (taken from the rubric in Appendix C).

In his second semester journal, Ned seemed to reinforce the notion that he is at least in the "tentative professional" category, and perhaps in the "competent professional" category. In his review of Wineburg (1991), Ned wrote

I think this gets right to extending my understanding that history is a place of inquiry, thought and investigation. Students should be allowed to explore their interests, learn the tools of the trade, and have fun with it. I hope that all of my students begin/will see history as this process.

In his review of Bain (2000), however, Ned missed a very important argument of the article that utilizing the tools of the discipline of history will not automatically create authentic student engagement and interest in history. Ned wrote, "The idea of mediation of thought through classroom artifacts strikes me as particularly useful because it allows teachers (and students) to ask questions that shed light on how historians think and use information to create/mold their understanding." Ned's explanation explicitly represents his understanding of these processes for teaching, but also seems to reveal a lack of nuanced

understanding that would bring him to a higher category.

Teaching Experiences and Current Placement

Ned had field placements in an urban high school class teaching ninth grade U.S. History, at an exurb high school observing an AP U.S. government eleventh and twelfth grade course and an eleventh grade world history course, and in a private middle school observing an eighth grade world regions class. Ned was currently student teaching in a private Catholic school in a suburb of a large mid-western city. This school is “the largest co-educational Catholic high school” in its state, with 99% of the graduating seniors attending college and 1% going into the armed forces.²¹ In his student teaching, Ned taught three tenth grade world history classes and an eleventh grade American history class.

Conclusion

As a whole, the student teachers in my study had a wide range of learning experiences that seem to impact their understanding of teaching and learning. These learning experiences ranged from typical high school history learning to unique personal learning experiences. Almost without exception, these student teachers’ understanding of history instruction seemed to become substantially more sophisticated through their college history courses. In these courses, they began to utilize historical thinking tools such as multiple perspectives, evidentiary claims, and use of varied texts. Many of them credit their teacher education courses, which had an emphasis on discipline specific literacy practices and pedagogy, with helping them to understand what their history professors were doing in the classes. In addition, student teachers seemed to be excited about learning how they might appropriate the same tools used by their history professors in their own

²¹These statistics are according to the school’s website.

courses. This is an encouraging development as it shows some valuable overlap and reinforcement of the learning in both the content coursework and their teacher education, a rare development with great potential for teacher training (Mirel, 2011).

Also encouraging is that all student teachers in my study seem to have grown in their disciplinary understanding and disciplinary pedagogical knowledge of history through their coursework and in the Rounds Project. As evidence of their learning in the Rounds, all student teachers seemed to utilize the framework of high-quality history instruction they learned in the Rounds project when gauging and describing their previous learning experiences in history. They pointed out what they saw as weaknesses in their previous U.S. and world history courses, including an over-emphasis on textbooks, limited use additional texts, a lack of overall conceptual coherence in the instruction with a focus on factual knowledge, and limited opportunities for student engagement in inquiry. Inversely, student teachers saw high quality history instruction as that which utilized multiple texts and perspectives and engaged students in the learning experience. Student teachers attributed this growth in understanding to both their college history courses and their learning in the Rounds project. This growth in understanding also seems to be evident when considering their responses on the surveys they took throughout their time in the Rounds courses which suggest that all student teachers in my study exhibited growth in the their understanding of the discipline-specific pedagogy of history throughout the program.

Overall, my work seems to indicate that with these seven student teachers, the work of the Rounds seems to have been successful in mediating their past learning experiences and in helping them adopt a framework of high-quality history instruction. Considering the wide variety of experiences with which student teachers come to teacher education

programs, it is vital that they adopt new understandings about history instruction and a framework to think critically about their past experiences and their own teaching.

CHAPTER FIVE: STUDENT TEACHERS' SELF-REPORTED VIEWS OF PRACTICES

Student teachers have trouble utilizing the practices they have learned in their teacher education program in their field placements (Broudy, 1956; Calderhead, 1991b; Copeland, 1978; Eraut, 1994; Feiman-Nemser, 2001). In this chapter, I describe the ways that student teachers view Concept Formation lessons and using Central Questions in their instruction.²² The questions I explored in this section are: How often are student teachers reporting using these practices in their student teaching? How do they report their understanding of each? What procedural, conceptual, or contextual challenges and supports did student teachers report to have faced in the planning/enactment of each practice? The data I used for this section is from three sources: Likert-style questions on the entrance and exit surveys, fill-in responses from the surveys, responses from both interviews. Throughout this chapter, I describe student teachers' self-reported views of their experiences and offer conclusions to these views.

²² In the survey, I asked about using Central Questions in their instruction as representative of Problem-based instruction. "Central Questions" was the language the student teachers often used in the methods class under my tutelage and what they were accustomed to.

Concept Formation

How Often Did Student Teachers Use Concept Formation?

Rounds instructors identified Concept Formation as one of the “high-quality elements of social studies instruction” student teachers in the Rounds should know and implement during student teaching. Therefore, as a requirement for successful completion, student teachers had to teach at least one Concept Formation lesson. Any additional use of this practice was voluntary. Based on the student teachers’ explanations in the interviews, I learned that before the observation only one student teacher (Ned) reported to have used a Concept Formation lesson. Six student teachers explained that they had not had the opportunity to teach one yet. After the first observation, only two student teachers explained that they used Concept Formation again: Jamie Lynn with the concept “Machiavellian thinking” and Anthony with the concept “chivalry.” Throughout the semester, only three student teachers utilized this practice more than the one required time. The reason given by all four of the other student teachers (Amanda, Hans, Jeff, and Phillip) for not using this practice was that they had not come across a concept that warranted this much time and attention in their classroom. For instance, Hans stated that he had not found a concept that was “really broad” and “overarching” across historical eras. Likewise, Amanda said, “I haven’t really come across a term yet that I feel really fits. I don’t wanna go for it until I really feel like, ‘Hey, that should go there.’” I did not review student teachers’ calendars to determine all the different concepts student teachers covered throughout student teaching, yet their perception was they had not covered a concept that they could use for a Concept Formation lesson. I conclude that if student teachers did not

perceive a Concept Formation to be a warranted lesson for the content they were covering, they would not use this practice if not required to do so.

How Well Do Student Teachers Think They Understand Concept Formation?

My analysis of this question uses the self-reported data of the student teachers' understanding of a Concept Formation lesson on the Likert scale survey questions at the beginning and end of student teaching (for results, see table 11; for questions, see Appendices 4 and 5). The first question stated, "I understand how to teach a Concept Formation lesson." All seven of the respondents answered that they understand with a 4 (agree) or a 5 (strongly agree) in both the initial survey and the ending survey. Five cases stayed consistent throughout the semester, seeming to suggest they did not feel that they gained a better understanding through student teaching. Only two changed their responses between the two surveys: Jeff went from a 5 to a 4, and Anthony went from 4 to a 5. From this information, it seems that student teachers perceive themselves as proficient at using the practice and experienced little gain in understanding through teaching the practice.

Table 11

Results of Likert-Style Questions About Concept Formation on Surveys.

	Understands the practice		Practice is valuable		Practice is Challenging	
	Entrance	Exit	Entrance	Exit	Entrance	Exit
Amanda	4	4	4	4	3	3
Anthony	4	5	5	4	3	3
Hans	4	4	4	3	2	5
Jami Lynn	5	5	5	5	4	4
Jeff	5	4	5	3	4	5

Ned	4	4	5	4	3	3
Phillip	4	4	4	4	3	4

How Valuable Do Student Teachers Consider a Concept Formation Lesson?

On the Likert-style survey data, student teachers initially reported Concept Formation as valuable, but their responses decreased through the student teaching semester. All student teachers began the semester with a favorable view of the practice, with four of them answering 5 (strongly-agree) and three with a 4 (agree). At the end of the semester, three student teachers' opinions dropped by one point and one by two points. Only one student teacher still expressed "strongly agree" at the end of the semester. Implementing this practice in the field seemed to lower some of their opinions about the value of Concept Formation.

In the interview, however, two student teachers (Anthony and Phillip) explained that they found Concept Formation more favorable after implementation. For instance, Phillip said before implementing he "thought it was breaking it [learning a concept] down so much where it almost taking it too long, or just overkill." After implementation, he saw more value: "I need to remember that the average student is not excited about school and to keep in mind what they are going to be interested in. And the fact that reiterating things like three or four times is a good thing." Likewise, Anthony thought his second attempt was more valuable: "I think it was placed in the right time. I think they had something that they could see where it actually mattered."

On the other hand, two student teachers explained that they understood the value of Concept Formation but did not think they were realistic as a lesson plan. Hans explained

that he knew concepts were difficult to teach and help students understand because “concepts themselves are not clear cut . . . it is like trying to nail Jell-O to a wall.” He was able to clearly explain the value of a Concept Formation lesson as mediating these problems with teaching concepts. Regardless of his understanding, however, Hans did not consider this practice valuable, giving it only a 3 on the survey at the end of semester (down from a 4 at the beginning). Like Hans, Jeff articulated a clear understanding of a Concept Formation: “I like giving the students the characteristics . . . as opposed to just the five-word definition in the book. Like, getting them to understand that this idea is much more complex than your book leads on. It’s debatable. It’s complex. It’s not straightforward.” Regardless of his understanding of the practice, he did not feel that it was a realistic option for his classroom. He said,

I think they’re valuable, but I don’t know. I’m not a fan. . . . In my opinion, I think they’re something that they’re good in theory, in a school of education. . . . Like, they’re great to play around with when you don’t have the time constraints and the real issues facing you, like student disruptions and timing, . . . but I’m never gonna do this again.

Interestingly, in these two cases the student teachers demonstrated an understanding of both the performance and value of a Concept Formation lesson, but did not find them valuable for instruction.

How Challenging Do Student Teachers Consider Concept Formation Lessons?

Student teachers seemed to find this practice somewhat challenging to enact in their teaching, with three student teachers finding it more challenging after implementation. One student teacher disagreed that Concept Formation was challenging, putting a 2 (disagree)

on the entrance survey, four began the semester with a 3 (in-between), indicating that the practice was somewhat challenging, two with a 4 (agree), agreeing that the practice was challenging. By the end of the semester, the one person (Hans) who disagreed initially that the practice was challenging with a 2 (disagree) changed to a 5 (strongly agree). Two of the student teachers (Phillip and Jeff) both went one answer higher, finding it more difficult than they originally thought, and four student teachers answered the same. No student teachers found the practice less difficult through implementation. This implies that student teachers had more difficulty planning and enacting a Concept Formation for their classroom than they expected. This seems to indicate that the practice seemed more tangible to them in a controlled environment of the teacher education classroom, but changed when they entered a real classroom.

Self-Reported Challenges and Supports to Concept Formation

Self-reported Challenges. The most often named challenge to implementing Concept Formation, named by all seven participants, was the procedural challenge of the amount of class time these lessons take. For instance, Hans said,

We don't have time to do it. We can't devote a whole lesson to concept formation.

We just don't have that luxury. . . . I mean, I see the benefit in it, but I don't think the benefit outweighs the amount of time you gotta put into it.

Jeff agreed: "I'll probably never spend another 45 minutes on a single concept, because I don't have time. I'm trying to cram so much in, you know, with these students, it's just kind of unrealistic." Because of the amount of content these student teachers felt they needed to cover, they had trouble devoting a whole class period to one concept.

The second most commonly named challenge to using Concept Formation, named by six of the seven student teachers, was a conceptual challenge in planning these lessons. Five student teachers talked about how difficult it was to find good examples. Amanda, for example, had trouble finding examples and non-examples that “challenge the students, that were ambiguous enough or would have them debating, thinking a lot about it.” She qualified her claim, however, in her next sentence: “I think that was my problem, ‘cause I think I may have made it a little too obvious.” Jeff talked about how important it is to find effective resources, though he found the task difficult. He said, “In my opinion, the Concept Formation is only as good as the sources that are used, so it's imperative that I find excellent sources.” Hans explained the difficulty he had in finding good resources also, but said, “Once I found the right resources, it wasn't bad. It was putting the pieces of the puzzle together.” Finally, two student teachers (Hans and Jami Lynn) specifically referenced their lack of content knowledge as a challenge to planning Concept Formation.

Three student teachers (Amanda, Ned, and Hans) had difficulty planning a Concept Formation lesson due to a contextual challenge, or the expectations placed on them by the School of Education made it an unnatural practice. All three of them felt that they just settled on a concept because they of the requirement to do so and showed disappointment in their lesson. Two of the three student teachers explicitly blamed the requirement of the School of Education for this problem, as they had only a six-week window in which to plan and teach a Concept Formation Lesson. Ned said, "I think it might be challenging to fit a lesson in if all I need it for is to be observed by the School of Education and my field instructor. There are times when it is needed and there are times when it isn't. I do not

want to use a day where I don't actually need to do a concept formation lesson to do one just to satisfy the university." Hans agreed, noting

I think it [Concept Formation] has its place, but I think this was forcing it. This wasn't really natural. The way we practiced it. Like when we learned it last semester, that came naturally. It was clear to me, the deductive portion anyway. This wasn't organic at all. I had to work at it to get it to work. As far as I am concerned, if you have to force things to work, they end working maybe but not their full capacity.

Amanda also felt that the expectation was problematic. She felt forced to use a concept, *industrialization*, which she would not have used otherwise and was displeased with the overall result of her lesson. She explained that if she had the opportunity to use a different concept, she would have more effectively planned the lesson. She said, "I think it would have been more interesting. I think I would have come up with better examples and non-examples." Additionally, Amanda felt constrained by an expectation to use a prescribed practice. She said

I don't always remember the exact step-by-steps that you guys want us to do when we did that concept formation. I remember the points they're supposed to get out of it, but then, I guess I just like to do things my own way. Doing it step-by-step, having it a specific way, yeah. . . . that was a little hard for me, 'cause I like to be creative. Do it my own way rather than being told, 'You have to do it this way.'

Amanda felt limited by the structure of the lesson though she claimed to understand the practice and the meaning behind it. Amanda felt that this structure was something "you guys" (the people of the School of Education) wanted her to do, not a structure with utility and value.

A final challenge, noted by two student teachers (Hans and Anthony), was the conceptual challenge of envisioning how this lesson fit in with the overall unit structure they were creating. Anthony said he had trouble placing it within his unit, unsure whether it was better near the end or the beginning of the unit. He said he realized that the way he placed it the first time he used the lesson, near the end of a unit, was not ideal. Hans expressed concern with using a Concept Formation lesson in the structure of a problem-based unit. He said, "How often do you use this thing? Only when it fits. I feel like if I were to force it in, I'd be building my unit around a concept formation lesson as opposed to an intellectual problem to be answered." Hans admittedly did not understand how to fit this lesson in to a problem-based unit, and rather than become part of the conceptual structure of the unit, he thought it distracted from it.

Self-reported Supports. The most commonly named support, a conceptual support mentioned by five student teachers, were outside sources for content knowledge. These included internet search engines, a social studies methods book, a book about historical concepts, U.S. Government web sites, and the University of Michigan library. One student teacher (Jeff) found an actual Concept Formation lesson on *imperialism* (the concept he did for his lesson) posted by another teacher. He was able to rearrange parts of it and use it in his classroom. The second most often named support was student teachers' work from their methods class last semester. The experiences from this course provided conceptual support in planning their lesson. Four student teachers (Anthony, Amanda, Jeff, and Phillip) talked about the multiple opportunities they had to practice a Concept Formation lesson. Additionally, these student teachers discussed the four-step lesson procedure laid out for them in their methods class as helping them in this task.

The third most often named support was the conceptual support I gave them in my role as field instructor. After I observed their lessons and interviewed them about their experience, I gave them my view of the lesson and some advice to improve their lesson. Three student teachers' (Amanda, Hans and Anthony) named the feedback from me as a support in their use of the practice. All three of them explained that the advice I gave them to make the lesson more engaging gave them a more favorable view of the lesson. Amanda, for instance, said, "after you're getting the feedback it changes. . . . I like them more now than I did then, but that's mainly from understanding them more." Amanda understood more about the dialogue and engagement in a Concept Formation, what she called "the whole hot topic debating," she "didn't really grasp that" before. Hans found helpful the advice I gave him about choosing concepts and integrating Concept Formation. Likewise, Anthony attributed his growth in understanding of Concept Formation to the feedback I gave him. He claimed to see a difference between the first time he enacted a Concept Formation lesson to the second time. Anthony said that these lessons "can create so much student engagement when the students actually see the point behind it." Anthony said this because the central part of my feedback to him was making clear to the students why the concept mattered. He explained how this feedback informed the second time he attempted a Concept Formation lesson. He said, "When it came time to plan the next one, it was, 'Ok, let's put this together, and let's show them why this matters' . . . they saw a point behind learning what it was." When I asked Anthony why his use of the practice changed, he reflected on the interview we had: "I think part of it is we spent about two hours getting to the bottom of it, which . . . really helps." All three of these participants benefitted from the feedback I gave them about their Concept Formation.

How Do Student Teachers Use, Modify or Disregard Concept Formation?

Learning and using new practices is a fundamental aspect of teacher education. Eraut (1994) claimed that these are two parts of the same process. Exploring the procedural, conceptual and contextual challenges and supports student teachers experienced in using a Concept Formation lesson provides some insight into their potential to use, modify or disregard these practices. First, student teachers experienced conceptual challenges in using Concept Formation, such as finding appropriate concepts with which to build a lesson and finding “good examples” and resources. Student teachers also faced two main procedural challenges: using the practices as a program requirement and planning a Concept Formation lesson in the service of a larger unit, rather than as a stand-alone lesson. Student teachers reported to have received conceptual supports of books and other resources, their field instructor’s advice, and the work from their methods class, such as the clear four-step lesson structure that Concept Formation provided.

The interplay of the challenges and supports student teachers faced seems to reveal some tensions inherent in the teacher learning process. First, teacher educators want student teachers to use the practices they learn in the field so they can attempt them in real time with real students and receive feedback from a knowledgeable mentor. At the same time, both student teachers and teacher educators want an organic experience learning to teach. An experience in which student teachers can make their own professional decisions about planning and enacting the lessons that they feel are appropriate for the situation and content.

In my study, some of the student teachers seemed to have an inorganic experience in practicing the method Concept Formation due to the tension between a necessary

conceptual support, advice from a knowledgeable field instructor, and a procedural challenge, planning as a requirement. The student teaching semester is a finite time period (10 – 12 weeks) within a specific classroom and curriculum. When their teacher education program required a discrete practice during which they must be observed, the student teachers felt that they lost freedom to plan as they felt the content and situation dictated. All of them planned the lesson as required by the program, but for many of them the lessons felt forced and unnatural. As a result, some of the student teachers felt that they were unsuccessful in this attempt. The tension this reveals in practice-centered teacher education, then, is this: student teachers need to utilize specific practices in the field (in order to have practice planning and enacting them). They also need detailed feedback from a knowledgeable source (in this case, myself as field instructor). The only way to provide that feedback is within the finite timeframe of student teaching, on a scheduled day when a field instructor could be there. One tension for teacher educators, then, is between requiring student teachers to utilize the practices they are learning in planned classroom situations (in order for them to get opportunities for detailed feedback from a field instructor) and allowing them the freedom to plan as they deem appropriate for their content, classroom, and situation. My study reveals a need for further exploration to ease this tension between requiring student teachers to utilize specific practices and allowing them to make their own teaching decisions.

Another tension my study revealed is between a conceptual support, the clear and codified steps of the Concept Formation practice, and some of the conceptual and procedural challenges student teachers faced in planning their lesson. On one hand, most of the student teachers in my study appreciated the support that the specific lesson type with

clear and concise steps provided for them. They were able to access previous models and the specific directions for a Concept Formation and utilize them in their planning. Additionally, these codified instructions for the practice added the extra benefit of an objective means of assessing student teachers' understanding. Student teachers also found the multiple opportunities to practice the lesson the previous semester a conceptual support. Yet, my study suggests that these conceptual supports may have had negative consequences for the learners. First, student teachers had difficulty using this practice within a cohesive, problem-based unit. Throughout their learning, they saw Concept Formation as a singular lesson and did not have opportunities to practice fitting it effectively within a larger problem-based unit structure. Also, student teachers did not seem to understand the fluid nature of planning and instruction with a codified lesson structure, such as a Concept Formation, and the agency they had as the creator of the lesson. They saw the Concept Formation lesson structure as static and rigid. This is clear from their comments about not being able to find "good concepts" and thinking they did not have enough time to devote whole lessons to single concepts.

To student teachers, concepts were appropriate or inappropriate for the lesson structure, rather than appropriate for different purposes, to different degrees at different times. Also, a concept formation was a type of lesson structured in a specific manner and requires a whole class period. Student teachers had not considered how they might repurpose this practice and its component parts to fit the content, the unit, and the available time. Concept Formation is a lesson student teachers either used or did not use. They seemed reluctant or unable to modify the lesson, and therefore, seemed less likely to use the lesson in the future. It is probable that the source of these problems came from the

instruction they received from me during the second semester of their program. I gave student teachers opportunities to see and practice Concept Formation as a singular practice with only one type of application, the one they practiced. They had few, if any, opportunities to consider alternatives. Though they saw this instruction as a conceptual support, it seems to be the cause of a procedural challenge.

My study revealed tensions between conceptual supports and procedural challenges with the practice Concept Formation. These tensions have the potential to limit the use of, perhaps even cause novice teachers to disregard, the practice Concept Formation once it is no longer a requirement. This study revealed a need for teacher educators to give novice teachers opportunities to learn a more fluid approach to lesson structures like Concept Formation, without taking away the conceptual support of the codified structure. After they understand the purpose and usefulness of the component parts of practices such as this, they need opportunities to deconstruct and utilize the components of the practice in different ways. They also need opportunities to see and plan these practices in the service of a larger unit problem.

Central Questions

How Often Did Student Teachers Use Central Questions?

I explored student teachers' use of Central Questions to drive problem-based instruction in both whole units and daily lessons. All seven student teachers reported using Central Questions as unit problems in almost every one of their units. The only exceptions were Anthony's unit on mapping labs, which he claimed were "driven more on the activity, not the content," and Phillip's economics unit on supply and demand, as he reported difficulty writing a question for that content. Though the Rounds did not require student

teachers to plan every unit with a problem or inquiry, they seemed to keep this practice central to their teaching.

Four student teachers reported using problems to facilitate their daily teaching. Hans said he used questions, “Everyday, every lesson, every unit” and Ned said that he usually tied the inquiry of the day into the bell work “so that it launches the instruction for the day.” Jeff, on the other hand, did not use daily questions. He began the semester with questions each day, but this practice changed as he found his students more confused than helped by them. Anthony almost never used daily questions because most of his units were only a few days long and it did not make sense to him to use questions each day.

How Well Do Student Teachers Seem to Understand Central Questions?

To analyze the student teachers’ understanding of Central Questions, I looked at their self-reported understanding of Central Questions on likert-scale survey questions (See Appendix D and E for questions and Table 4 for results of the survey). The first question asked how well student teachers understand planning and teaching using Central Questions.²³ All seven respondents answered 4 (agree) or 5 (strongly agree) on the first survey, indicating that they started their student teaching thinking they understood using questions in problem-based instruction. By the end of the semester, two student teachers answered 4 (agree) and five with a 5 (strongly agree). This shows that all students feel that they understand the use of Central Questions in planning and teaching problem-based units, with three of them thinking they gained a better understanding through their student teaching semester.

²³ The original wording I chose for this question was “I do NOT understand how to plan and teach using central questions.” For ease of description and understanding, I explain the results in the reciprocal.

Table 12

Results of Likert-style questions about Central Questions

	Understands the practice		Practice is valuable		Practice is Challenging	
	Entrance	Exit	Entrance	Exit	Entrance	Exit
Amanda	4	5	5	5	3	1
Anthony	4	5	5	5	1	3
Hans	4	4	5	4	2	4
Jami Lynn	5	5	5	5	2	1
Jeff	5	5	5	5	3	2
Ned	4	5	4	5	2	2
Phillip	4	4	4	5	2	2

How Valuable Do Student Teachers Consider Central Questions for Instruction?

On the Likert-style survey data, student teachers reported Central Questions as having considerable value for their instruction. All student teachers began the semester with a favorable view of Central Questions, with four out of five answering 5 (strongly-agree) and two with a 4 (agree). At the end of the semester, six student teachers answered with a 5 (strongly agree) and one with a 4 (agree). These responses suggest the student teachers in my study thought planning with Central Questions was a valuable part of their instruction.

In order to uncover what student teachers found valuable about Central Questions, I examined their responses to the open-ended survey and interview questions, framing them through three benefits of using Central Questions: cohesion in content, engaging students,

and helping student understanding/thinking/meta-cognition. Additionally, I explored their responses to identify other ways in which student teachers explained the value of Central Questions. Based on the responses that student teachers gave about the value of Central Questions, their understanding of this practice seems to be a conceptual support for them.

Cohesion in content. In this category, I included any student teachers' response that talked about the role of Central Questions in making content more cohesive, one of the four criteria of high-quality history instruction. Six of the seven student teachers described this as a benefit of Central Questions. Jamie Lynn had a concise way of explaining the ways that Central Questions cohere content. She said,

It is futile to teach students everything in U.S. History or World history. Thus, designing a course on a central question gives a course focus and direction. This breaks the mold of teaching dates and times, but rather big concepts and ideas and connections. All of the units feed into the central questions by supporting, challenging or extending the argument.

With this claim, Jamie Lynn articulated not only the value of content cohesion but also how Central Questions further the dialogue of history. Likewise, Hans said, "Central Questions make the content cohesive, coherent, and whole. They provide a common thread to drive instruction."

Five student teachers (Anthony, Jamie Lynn, Amanda, Ned, Jeff) referred to questions as the "focus" or a "lens" that drives instruction. Jeff gave a concrete example of this, "The last unit I taught was the Progressive Era, and this is a unit on imperialism. They're happening at the exact same time. But because of the question, we're looking at the same time period through different lenses." The five student teachers that referred to

Central Questions providing a lens for instruction seemed to understand how questions change the approach teachers take to content and how these questions foreground and background facts into more coherent conceptual structure.

Related to the content cohesion, five student teachers (Anthony, Phillip, Hans, Amanda, and Ned) said that Central Questions made their planning either “easier” or “more organized.” Anthony, for instance, related using Central Questions to his military training:

I’m kind of putting this in army terms, our whole thing should have a, you know a mission, should have a purpose, a method, and an end-state. You get your purpose with the question. You get your end-state once you’re able to answer the question for yourself.

As his words suggest, Anthony related using Central Questions to having a purpose and endpoint in his instruction. In the same way, Ned talked about Central Questions providing a pathway through the content:

After I think about where I want kids to go, that is the next step. Once I have them where I know I want them to be, okay, so what’s my question? So how am I going to get them there? . . . Without a central question to guide me, I think that I would basically just teach a lot of interesting lessons that don't connect to one another. The fact that I have learned about Central Questions and how they work has really provided me with a great starting point for all of my plans.

Student teachers seemed to agree that planning with Central Questions cohered the content for student use, but also helped teachers manage content in their planning.

Engaging students. I included in this category any time a student teacher explained that a question increased the interaction between the students and the content in any way.

All seven of the student teachers at least mentioned student engagement in their interviews or their surveys. Five student teachers discussed how Central Questions make the material more engaging to students. Jamie Lynn argued that “it brings students in, catches their eyes and attention.” Amanda claimed that the questions make the content more engaging because they give students a voice: “it interests them more than just learning facts and knowing that they have a say, basically.” Though she did not expand on this, Amanda seemed to think about students’ desire for their voice to be heard in history, rather than having static narratives for them to memorize. Hans described questions as a catalyst of thought and articulated the power that they bring to instruction: “I guess it goes back to the power of the questions. I feel like humans naturally want to answer questions. You pose somebody with a question, they’re gonna be able to answer it.” These student teachers seemed to understand the importance of engaging students in historical content. This assertion was one of the main thrusts of their instruction through the Rounds. While student teachers seemed to know and be able to talk about engaging students with Central Questions as objects of inquiry, this proved to be more difficult than students may have understood. Chapter six describes some of the specific challenges students had as they sought to engage students into problem-based inquiry.

Helps with student understanding and teacher assessment. Only four student teachers (Jeff, Amanda, Ned, and Hans) addressed this aspect of Central Questions. All three talked about the students engaging with a question and, as a result, understanding and being able to articulate it more clearly. For instance, Jeff said, “it helps the students understand how the material is related and it allows the students to take evidence and formulate their own opinion or argument.” Also, Amanda said, “I think they can kind of like

create their own knowledge or I think they really have to know the content in order to be able to really argue their point.” In addition to student understanding, three student teachers (Jeff, Amanda, and Ned) explained that Central Questions helped them assess their students’ knowledge. Jeff said, “the central question is also a great tool to use as a final assessment because the students can integrate material from across the unit to formulate an argument that answers the question.” Likewise, Amanda said, “I think it lets you know if they have a really solid knowledge about the content.” These student teachers saw the value of Central Questions as a benefit to both students and teachers: students understood the curriculum and could argue more effectively, and teachers could use these arguments to assess student understanding.

However, the responses student teachers gave in this area did not quite reach the final two criteria of high-quality history instruction. Student teachers could articulate the opportunities for students to “understand” and have “solid knowledge” about the material, they never discussed opportunities for students to reflect on the growth of their own understanding or produce texts that reflect this greater understanding. Also, student teachers knew that Central Questions give powerful opportunities for assessing student understanding, yet they did not articulate these in concrete terms such as describing the texts students produce as evidence of student understanding. This data suggests that though student teachers understood these benefits of Central Questions, they did not understand them within the four criteria of high-quality history instruction and concrete teaching practices. As a result, the value of Central Questions for student understanding and teacher assessment remained somewhat vague to them.

How Challenging Do Student Teachers Find Using Central Questions in Their Instruction?

Finally, there was a wide variance in how student teachers perceived the challenge of posing and enacting Central Questions (see table 4). Five student teachers began the semester reporting that they disagreed that Central Questions were challenging to enact: four with a 2 (disagree) and one with a 1 (strongly disagree). Two student teachers answered this question with a 3 (in-between). These responses indicate that the student teachers in my study began their semester not thinking Central Questions were difficult to enact in their instruction. At the end of the semester, five student teachers found enacting Central Questions less difficult through the semester: two student teachers disagreed that Central Questions were challenging with a 1 (strongly disagree), three student teachers disagreed with a 2 (disagree). Two student teachers found enacting Central Questions more difficult through student teaching: one student teacher going from a 1 (strongly disagree) to a 3 (in-between) and one going from a 2 (disagree) to a 4 (agree).

Self-reported Challenges and Supports.

Challenges. While most of the student teachers thought that enacting Central Questions was easier than they expected, they described two challenges about enacting Central Questions in their teaching: the conceptual challenge of writing effective Central Questions and the procedural challenge of being explicit with the questions in their teaching.

Student teachers did not seem to recognize the conceptual challenge of creating/choosing Central Questions as representative of historical problems in the first part of the semester, yet by the second interview and survey this played a role in their

thinking. During the first part of the semester, only two student teachers mentioned Central Questions as a practice with variable value—dependent on the teacher. Jeff said, “It should also give the students a sense of motivation because the question *should be* engagingly debatable” (emphasis added), and Phillip said, “*Making a good central question is important to help make a good lesson*, and when teaching around the central question the material presented will be much more intriguing to the students (emphasis added).” While the other student teachers may have understood this, their responses seemed to show Central Questions as engaging naturally. For instance, Amanda said central questions give you “a rationale. If the kids are like, ‘Why are we learning this?’ ‘Well, because it’s important to know this in order to answer this.’ I think it’s just super-helpful.” While she understood that questions helped with engagement, she did not think about the work teachers had to do to get students engaged.

By the end of student teaching, five student teachers (Amanda, Jeff, Ned, Anthony, and Phillip) considered the conceptual challenge of writing effective questions one of the largest they faced in using central questions. Jeff said that writing the question was the “hardest part” of Central Questions: “Crafting an engaging and debatable question that elicits students' interest is difficult. It's challenging to encapsulate the multifaceted points of view of a unit within a single question.” Also, student teachers seemed to see the difficulty in effectively carrying out Central Questions as historical problems. Amanda said, “The biggest challenge I had was making the questions debatable and aimed towards better answering the unit question.” Ned agreed, “I think that just finding and implementing an appropriate central question was the biggest challenge for me. At times, I think I made them too easy and other times I stretched their ability a little too thin.” From these

responses, it appears that student teachers began to see the complexity of this practice by the end of their student teaching semester. Interestingly, only two of the seven considered Central Questions more difficult on the second survey, but student teachers articulated the difficulty in crafting appropriate and engaging questions and then carrying them out through a unit. As with the first practice, it is difficult to determine if this conceptual challenge was due more to content knowledge, knowledge of the practice, or a combination of the two. Regardless, this was a conceptual challenge that most of the student teachers realized by the end of the semester.

The second most often mentioned challenge, named by five student teachers (Ned, Jamie Lynn, Anthony, Phillip, and Jeff), was the procedural challenge of being explicit with students about the relationship between the questions, the rationale for questions, and the activities tying into the questions. Though they seemed to understand Central Questions and the benefits for teaching, they had difficulty carrying these out in real time in their classroom. For instance, Phillip explained that he learned through his field seminar to “be as explicit with the students as possible. Just tell them, have it written up on the board.” Jamie forgot to write the question on the board for students to see until her field instructor reminded her. All five of these student teachers also reported difficulty in integrating these questions as driving their lessons and units. While the student teachers wrote the questions and implicitly used them to drive their units, these five student teachers needed help procedurally making the questions explicit to students throughout their teaching.

Supports. Through the interviews, student teachers mentioned two conceptual supports and one procedural support in using Central Questions. The first conceptual support, mentioned by two student teachers (Anthony and Hans), was their textbook.

Anthony explained that each textbook chapter had its own guiding questions that he could use as the unit Central Question. Likewise, Hans said the textbook questions “offered a starting point” as he created questions of his own. A second conceptual support in writing the questions, named by Jamie Lynn, was the Professional Learning Community in her high school. The teachers of the department of her placement school worked as a group to write questions, activities and assessments for each teacher to use as a basis for their units. Each of these conceptual supports worked directly with the conceptual challenge student teachers had in writing strong Central Questions.

Two student teachers (Jamie Lynn and Phillip) described one procedural support in using Central Questions, the field instructor. Jami Lynn said he reminded her to make the question explicit to her students. As soon as he did, a “light bulb went off in [her] head” as she finally realized she was not making the question explicit to the students. Phillip said he was not effectively using questions in his classroom: “I don’t think I implemented them well enough. . . . I feel like I wasn’t explicit with the students.” He reported a growth in understanding from his methods course (2nd semester) to his student teaching seminar (3rd semester). In the methods class, he got the impression that instructors said, “You guys should use it, but not for the students.” Then in his student teaching semester seminar, it was “Be as explicit with the students as possible. Just tell them, have it written up on the board.” In both of these cases, the field instructor provided a procedural support that directly addressed the procedural challenge student teachers faced.

How Do Student Teachers Use, Modify, or Disregard Central Questions?

My data suggests that every student teacher found Central Questions to be a useful and effective teaching practice. Unlike Concept Formation, no student teacher seemed to

ignore using Central Questions when not being watched by a university representative. Student teachers were able to explain the value of Central Questions in terms of two criteria for high-quality history instruction, and they showed signs of a beginning understanding of the other two. Every student teacher used Central Questions, though to varying degrees, in the units they planned. Their use of this practice seems voluntary and based on their view of the usefulness of Central Questions. Student teachers seemed to feel the freedom to modify the practice of Central Questions, such as eliminating daily questions or using Central Questions for mini-units. These results seem to indicate that student teachers were knowledgeable about Central Questions and the value they brought to their teaching. Additionally, unlike with Concept Formation lessons, no inherent tensions emerged in my research between the procedural and conceptual challenges and supports that student teachers faced. In fact, the procedural supports seemed to directly address the procedural challenges and the conceptual supports directly addressed the conceptual challenges.

However, my results also uncover some areas of need pertaining to student teachers' use of Central Questions. The first is that student teachers need to concretely tie student understanding and teacher assessment to the production of student texts. These student teachers spoke in vague terms about Central Questions helping student understanding and making assessment more focused, but they never carried this understanding into their actual practice of collecting evidence from students. While it is important for student teachers to see the value of Central Questions as benefitting student understanding, without specificity, this has the potential to never carry into their practice. Also, though it is encouraging that student teachers see the benefits of using the Central Questions in their

assessments, without concrete examples of how Central Questions affect their assessment and opportunities to practice this may not affect their classroom. This data shows that student teachers need explicit opportunities to carry thinking about Central Questions and student understanding and teacher assessment into actual practice.

Another area of need is planning and teaching with Central Questions as a driver of student inquiry. Many student teachers described using, crafting, writing, or choosing Central Questions for their units, but they seemed to conflate the question with the inquiry. More clearly stated, because they planned according to a question, they thought students would automatically engage in rich and educative inquiry. Student teachers did not talk about integrating Central Questions throughout their unit or as a larger inquiry, nor did they discuss the challenges they had in creating a series of activities within the structure of a unit problem. This seems to imply that these student teachers did not have an understanding of Central Questions as an entryway into an historical inquiry. They seemed to view the question as the inquiry itself, rather than as the vehicle of the inquiry. This suggests that student teachers need more of an opportunity to think about how a teacher integrates Central Questions throughout a whole unit and through a series of activities. In learning this more comprehensive view of Central Questions, student teachers can more completely see their role in using Central Questions and how these questions provide structure to a whole unit.

These findings may not be a reflection of the student teachers, but more of an indicator of the instruction they received during their methods course and with my approach to using Central Question during this study. During the methods course, I spent many hours teaching them what Central Questions were, showing them different ways of

wording them, and providing them many different examples from different time periods. The student teachers then had opportunities to write questions in class and to co-plan one unit based on a Central Question. During the unit planning, again, student teachers spent more time and attention determining the Central Question than actually bringing that question to bear through meaningfully planned inquiry-based lessons. Additionally, the questions I asked through my interview pointed their responses toward crafting questions and did little to unearth their experience in planning inquiries around these questions. My data suggest that student teachers need more purposely structured experiences in embedding Central Questions throughout a unit with explicit opportunities to plan inquiries over multiple class periods and within different assignments, to engage students in metacognition, and to craft assessments specifically around the inquiry. More concrete and cohesive experiences with problem-based instruction will help student teachers not only know the value of Central Questions, as they seem to demonstrate in my study, but also be able to tie that value directly into their practice.

CHAPTER SIX: ENGAGEMENT IN CONTENT: AN INVISIBLE PROBLEM TO PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS

High-quality history instruction engages students, creates content coherence, gives students opportunities for meta-cognition, and uses disciplinary literacy practices. One way to facilitate powerful and engaging history instruction is to link the strategies teachers use for creating coherence (or the unit inquiry) with the ways teachers engage students (hooking activities or lessons). According to Beal, Bolick, and Mortella (2009), “unless a teacher has organized material in a way that arouses students’ initial curiosity *concerning the problem*, they are not likely to attend to the problem” (p. 177). Explained another way, units are most effective when teachers engage or hook students directly into the strategies they use to bring content coherence. However, it is no easy task to create units and lessons with this degree of conceptual coherence. This takes a sophisticated understanding of learners, content, and pedagogy, something many student teachers lack. Through my study of these student teachers, it became clear that creating strategies with potential to engage students into an inquiry represented a conceptual and procedural challenge to student teachers.

In this chapter, I consider student teachers’ attempts to engage students into the content or unit inquiry, a challenge that overarches both Concept Formation and Central

Questions. The data for this analysis comes from observations of both Hooking and Concept Formation lessons and the corresponding interviews. I consider engagement in two ways: the strategies student teachers used to engage students and the ways that student teachers described and portrayed in their lessons the content's value to students. Through my observations, it appears that the student teachers in my study had moved into some sophisticated notions of engaging students, as they were beyond using "neat ideas" or making decisions only for classroom control (Feiman-Nemser, 1987).²⁴ However, student teachers experienced both procedural and conceptual challenges in thinking about and teaching with engagement strategies and the value of the content. In this chapter, I explore these challenges and make recommendations to mediate student teacher learning in these areas.

Challenges in Relating Engagement with Unit Inquiry

Through my analysis, it appears that student teachers faced procedural and conceptual challenges in creating coherence between their Central Question and their engagement strategies. They faced four challenges: (1) student teachers had difficulty integrating the texts they chose; (2) student teachers chose methods of engagement conceptually related to the content that did little to engage students into the unit problem; (3) student teachers chose methods of engagement directly related to the unit problem, but which failed to make explicit the relationship between the problem and the engagement strategy; and (4) student teachers chose engaging and conceptually related methods of

²⁴ On only one occasion did a student teacher use a hook that was unrelated to the content. As students walked into Jamie Lynn's Concept Formation lesson on "empires," she played the song "Empire State of Mind" (2009) by the artist Jay Z. She said, "everyone knows the song. Everyone knows the title," and she stopped the song as soon as class began.

engagement, but they did not integrate other activities into the same problem of instruction.

Trouble implementing texts. Student teachers used a variety of texts in their classrooms, such as videos, pictures, written texts, etc. While all student teachers seemed to make purposeful choices about the texts they used and what they thought would engage students, they experienced some procedural challenges in integrating these texts into their lessons. Often, then, the way student teachers used texts did not add to the coherence of the lesson and the content. In some cases, the text had the potential to become a distraction to the lesson or the unit problem. One example is the text Anthony chose as one of three prototypical examples in his Concept Formation lesson on a “siege.” The text he used was a five-minute clip of the *Lord of the Rings, The Two Towers* (2002) in which an army of orcs were laying siege on a human fortress. Anthony thought that the students’ interest and familiarity with the video would increase their interest in the video and enable them to more easily point out the key characteristics of a siege. He stated:

The reason why I chose it is because they were big into it. . . . I tried to look around for some other ones. As a video clip, there was this and there was an old Robin Hood clip on YouTube. This conveyed the intensity of it [a siege] a little better. There are lots of individual elements they can pick out, the ladders, the battering ram.

It is encouraging from a teacher education standpoint that Anthony discerned between two texts using both the potential engagement of the text and its usefulness for his key characteristics. Anthony experienced a procedural challenge in integrating the text into his lesson. In the following dialogue, Anthony was attempting to help the students consider the different aspects of the video that matched the key characteristics of the concept.

Anthony: That is basically how it happened. Large amounts of people running towards walls and very few of them actually making it there. And then a desperate attempt to set up the ladders. [student 1]?

Student 1: I would also like to say that orcs are like zombies. I remember at one point my dad explained to me that orcs are a bunch of dead people put together again that dies at war, so that is why they have a thirst for it.

Anthony: That makes sense. But in real life, it was usually just common people that had been rounded up by the king and they could be conscripted to serve in that army that was attempting to siege the castle . . . Some things to look at here are the techniques the orcs use to siege the castle. . . .

Student 2: Can we watch the rest?

Anthony: Nope. That would take like five these classes just to get through one of these movies.

Student 3: We could watch the non-extended version.

Anthony: It would still take an entire week to get through it.

Student 4: Can we do that?

Anthony: No. I am sorry. So, within that video, what were the defenders inside?

Student 2: Elves and people.

Anthony: No.

Student 2: They were elves in there, that is what all the archers were. They were elves.

Anthony: No, WHAT were they inside. Not WHO were they inside, what? Once again, don't overthink it . . .

Student 1: I don't think they were trying to get the ring, I think they were just trying to kill as many people as possible cause Sauron wanted the people to be scared of him.

Anthony: Okay, you know a little more about the backstory on these than I do.

Student 1: A little?

Anthony: You know A LOT more about the backstory on these than I do. I am glad you are able to provide all this information for the class that I can't. So we have a couple more examples we are going to look at as we build the siege definition.

Clearly, the students were interested in the text. Yet, they lost interest in the point of the activity because of the "seductive detail" of the movie clip, or the details of the text that enhance student interest, but do not help students remember important and intended points of the lesson (Garner, 1992). Anthony was aware of this problem during the class and was admittedly frustrated. While watching the video during the interview, he said, "I think this [the video] almost turned into distraction. . . . I thought it would be helpful since they already had familiarity with it. . . . I think the rest of what I was doing was not compelling enough for them to want to pay attention." Anthony recognized the procedural challenge he faced in properly introducing and utilizing the text as his attempt to engage students into the content.

In another example, Phillip used a part of the movie *The Matrix* (1999) to show an example of "opportunity cost." Phillip used the scene during which Morpheus gave Neo the

choice to take the red or the blue pill, a scene that illustrated “opportunity cost” by a person faced with a choice that had a cost whatever they decided. Phillip faced a similar procedural challenge as Anthony, as his introduction to the movie did not clarify what students should look for or why they were watching the movie. After students watched the clip, Phillip asked them which pill they would have taken. Phillip still had not clarified how this movie clip related to the content or what they were to understand from the clip. Only two students raised their hands to give a response. In the interview, Phillip thought the movie clip would both speak for itself and engage them into a debate about opportunity cost. To his surprise, it did neither of these things. It seems that though Phillip chose an appropriate video to illustrate opportunity cost, he did not integrate the text effectively by setting his purpose and making that clear for students. By his admission, this text did not clarify the concept “opportunity cost” to any of the students.

Both of these student teachers attempted to make choices about texts that included student interest and conceptual coherence to the lesson. However, though both student teachers chose appropriate texts, they faced a procedural challenge in implementing the texts. Their use of these texts did not help, and perhaps even detracted from, the coherence of the lesson. From these examples, it seems that student teachers need more opportunities to set the purpose of a text within actual lessons within classrooms.

Engaging activity related to content, but unrelated to unit problem. Another scenario, in four classrooms I observed, was student teachers facing the conceptual challenge in choosing engagement activities related to the content, but not specifically related to the unit problem. As a result, the engaging activity had the potential to divert students’ attention from the unit problem, the strategy they used to make content more

coherent. The first example was during Jeff's Hooking lesson on a unit covering World War I and the 1920s. Jeff's question for the unit was "Was the US better off after winning World War I?" Jeff stated in the interview that this unit is important

because the United States is significantly different than it was before the war. The process of getting to that difference, the government dramatically increases in its role and scope and then decreases in its role and scope at the end. So I think it's important students understand how the government once trampled on the rights of citizens, how it pulled itself back, and the events that led up to The Great Depression.

In short, Jeff's classes would examine the changes the US underwent through World War I and would determine whether the nation was in better condition because of these changes.

Jeff chose to use an engagement activity that involved students looking at pictures of a soldier with gruesome injuries on his face from World War I. The students saw initial pictures of the injury, and then saw pictures showing the progression of his healing through a series of surgeries. The students journaled about what they saw, what would cause these types of wounds, and how these wounds could impact this person. After these activities, Jeff read aloud what an unidentified historian wrote about the man in these pictures: "Wearing the plate or mask, however unconvincing, could be seen as part of the social contract or social agreement not to offend society, not to be obtrusive or noticeable. Covering the disfigurement serves to lessen the obtrusiveness of the disgrace." Jeff asked the class after he read, "How would this person offend society and how would these injuries be a disgrace?" He then led a discussion about how injuries such as these were a disgrace for the whole nation.

Near the end of this class discussion, Jeff introduced the unit question and connected it to the pictures of the soldier. He said,

So was the United States better off after winning the first war? Like, did they achieve it? Is the United States proud of this after the war? Or are they going to do, essentially this, and try to cover up the scars that were left behind? So that's what we're going to try to be answering throughout this entire unit.

As Jeff introduced the unit question to the class, he explained to them that the purpose of the unit was to show students the difference in the U.S. before and after the war, and the hooking activity pointed out how, at least in this one case, the government attempted to deal with the scars caused by the war.²⁵

In the interview, Jeff stated that these pictures were the hooking part of his lesson for the students. He thought that students would be engaged in "the visual, and then exploring and talking about how did he get this [injury]? Why is he covered up? What does this mean about American Society and War?" Jeff said the "image is so shocking that you can't help but to want to learn about it. Like, you're not gonna keep carrying on your conversation when you see this half-faced man in front of you." Jeff used students' reactions in his class as evidence of the effectiveness of the hook. He said, "You hear people literally stop talking and say, "Whoa. Wow. Is this real?" Like, "Can he see? How does he breathe?"

This hooking activity, while it seemed to engage students into the pictures, had the potential take student thinking away from the unit question. Jeff never actually connected this hooking activity to the unit problem. As Jeff watched the lesson on the videotape, he recognized that he did not relate his activity to his unit question. He said, the activity

²⁵ It is noteworthy to include the fact that Jeff did not know what country this soldier was from. He didn't talk about it or know that when I asked him.

“introduces them to the idea that war has significant consequences that, even if you try to cover them up, are still very real and have extreme consequences for both the people and society.” He admitted that no dialogue occurred about the unit question. He explained that, with this engagement activity, he was looking at only one of many aspects of the impact of the war, the human consequences. It was obvious in the interview that Jeff understood the purpose of his unit and the limitations of this lesson as he talked about the need for students to look through the whole unit to answer the question. His hooking lesson, however, lacked the kind of conceptual structure that he seemed to be trying to induce with his unit question, that is, to give the students pieces of conflicting evidence to debate and make a judgment about the condition of the U.S.. Because of this, Jeff’s lesson, though closely conceptually related to the unit question, did not sufficiently introduce and adhere to the problem he was setting out for the students.

Another example of a student teacher’s engaging activity related to the content but not specifically related to the central question of the unit was Amanda’s hooking activity on the Progressive Era. The central question she chose was, “How do the social movements of the progressive era have positive and/or negative effects on governmental policy?” Amanda explained that the rationale for this question is “about the people trying to change things, and I think they’re [her students] seeing this connection, seeing how people are trying to make differences and stuff like that.” In short, this central question explored a period of U.S. History when citizens banded together and forced change in many areas of the US that were in need of improvement because of the Industrial Revolution.²⁶ This inquiry, as Amanda pointed out to her students, relates easily to many of the issues of today,

²⁶ For more about how Amanda constructed this question, and the potential discrepancies between the wording of the question and the rationale, see chapter 7.

such as Occupy Wall Street.

Amanda began the lesson with an activity for students to “write about an issue in society today that you would be really passionate about changing.” Student responses included HIV/AIDS awareness and gay rights in the US. The class then watched a five-minute trailer of the movie *Fast Food Nation* (2006). This, as Amanda explained, was a modern day attempt to change what one man thought was a serious injustice to the American people, the mistreatment of the workers of the fast food industry and the poor conditions from which their food comes. Amanda introduced the movie clip to the class by saying, “It’s trying raise your awareness about issues that are gonna be addressed, so I want you to watch, read on the screen, and look for the issues.” This activity did not highlight the work the author did to expose these issues, as her unit problem directed. Rather it focused on specific changes that *Fast Food Nation* was trying to encourage. The next activity, a group activity on the book *The Jungle* (1906), followed the line of thinking she started with the movie clip and took the class further off task from the intent of the unit question. The focus during *The Jungle* activity was about the Meat Packing industry. Amanda had the students get into small groups and read excerpts of *The Jungle* and create short presentations about these excerpts.

Amanda thought these two activities, and drawing parallels between *Fast Food Nation* and *The Jungle* were the most hooking part of her lesson. She said,

This was supposed to hook them by grossing them out, and seeing this is also happening during my lifetime, and I didn’t even know it was happening. It was supposed to get them interested, like there’s these problems out there people are addressing that I don’t even know about.

By using these activities as the hooking part of the lesson, Amanda de-emphasized the problem she originally meant for the unit: people creating change in the nation. Though the conversations about “gross things” and about the problems with meat packing plants that still exist in the U.S. seemed to engage the students, it did so with the potential for diverting attention from the unit problem that Amanda had planned for. While it is encouraging that Amanda was able to engage students in primary sources from the early twentieth century for a large portion of the class period, Amanda needed help utilizing these resources to suit the larger conceptual purpose of the unit into which she was trying to engage students.

Phillip’s hooking lesson was another example of student teachers using engagement strategies that did not align clearly with unit problems. Phillip introduced a lesson that spanned US Imperialism and World War I. He chose the unit question, “Was the US foreign policy between 1890 and 1920 justified?” Phillip said he chose this question because, “This is the time period when we finally start kind of showing a little bit more strength as a world power.” Phillip also linked the idea of American world power and justifying US actions in a foreign country in a current context. He said, “Why do we do things abroad? How is the US a world power? And taking a deeper look into imperialism in general and it being justified or not. I think is just an important question in general for them to ask.” However, when Phillip attempted to hook students into content, he did not use this same justification.

Phillip began by presenting students with a scenario where they saw a fight between a friend and another student. The students had to choose what action they would take: ignore the fight, intervene on the side of their friend, intervene on the side of the bully, or punch out both students. Phillip said this activity would engage them “with the idea of a fight going on at school, with isolationism and imperialism. I thought it was a fun idea for

them to see the four different actions for Foreign policy: Isolationism, collectivism, imperialism, and the other one.” After the students decided what choice they would make, Phillip attempted to explain the value of the activity to the students. His explanation lacked clarity and at least one student made his lack of understanding clear to Phillip.

Phillip: So the reason why I made you take a look at that, you guys are probably starting to think, why does this fight really matter? We are first going to learn about why I had you answer that. Either you guys could turn away and leave, which would be known as isolationism. But first we are going to learn about foreign policy, I apologize. I want you to write this definition down. Foreign policy, is how a country interacts with other countries. So any interaction a country has with another country is known as foreign policy. Hence, foreign means, other nations, and policy would be interactions or decisions they have with other countries...

Student: “What are we doing?”

Phillip: “What are we doing? [pause] So if you take a look at the top of this sheet, these are four kind of categories of foreign policy that we have kind of created. There is a loner, a team player, a world policemen and a world bully. And now we saw the scenario of students fighting, we are going to focus it on the larger level of actual countries dealing with each other. More specifically we are going to look at the US and what our foreign policy has been. First, the first four foreign policies were, Mitch, can you read the first one of the loner?”

Phillip neither explained the purpose of this activity nor linked it to the unit problem. When he realized his explanation was not clear, he tried to go back and explain a definition that he thought the students needed (foreign policy) and then came back again to the analogy.

When the student asked what they were doing, Phillip seemed not able to respond. Therefore, he ignored the student's question and moved on. I asked Phillip in the interview what he thought about the student's question, "What are we doing?" He only answered, "I don't know." Phillip made no connection between the opening activity and the content they would be learning about or the problem that Phillip was using to bring coherence to the content. Phillip admitted that he had a limited understanding of the purpose of this unit question and limited content knowledge about the era.

As Phillip watched the opening activity, he knew there was a problem with his instruction. "I should have been more explicit. Like maybe as the question to the students of who picked the first option to be a loner. 'Ok if you were a country and the two other people fighting were other countries.'" Phillip thought the problem was how explicit he was with connecting the choices the students made with the content they represented. Phillip had a sense of problem but could not solve it. As a whole, Phillip did not make close and explicit connections between the "fight activity" and the unit problem he chose to engage students.

Another example of an engaging activity that related to, but was not parallel with the unit problem was in Hans' unit on the New Deal. In this case, Hans's discussion took the students in a direction that did not relate to the central question he chose. The Central Question that Hans chose was, "To what extent was the New Deal successful in addressing the problems caused by the Great Depression?" Hans also had a daily or lesson question, "In what ways did the federal government respond to the hardships caused by the Great Depression?" Hans explained in the interview the importance for students

Because of the impact the federal government has on, whether they know it or not, their lives today. The New Deal forever changed the role of the federal government in American lives and it impacts us still today. It is a question that comes up today. . . . what is the role of government? How big should government be? With this new legislation, the government became huge. . . . It shows at least the roots of why the federal government is the way it is now.

Hans did not explain the importance of the content in terms of his unit question, “to what extent the New Deal was successful.” Instead, he stated the importance of this content in terms of what he thought was most important for students to know, the change in the role of government because of the New Deal. There was a bifurcation in conceptual coherence between what Hans thought was important for his students, the size of government, and what his Central Question suggested, the success of the New Deal.

Hans’ hooking lesson reflected this bifurcation of purpose, in the introduction, a video he showed, and in a follow up dialogue. When Hans introduced the mini-unit to the students, he said

We talked about the causes of the GD in the last unit. We have this new question, “To what extent was the New Deal successful in addressing the problems caused by the Great Depression?” We learned the causes, now we are going to see how the government reacts to fixing things. That question asked how successful was it, this question asked, what was the government response. It was a big time in U.S. History because the role of the federal government changes forever. It impacts the lives of every citizen, whereas it wasn’t necessarily the case before the great depression.

Right in the middle of this introduction, Hans shifted between these two ideas, what he thought would interest the students and the question he actually chose. Next, Hans showed a three-minute video that highlighted the shift in government purpose.

Finally, Hans had a dialogue with the class based on the question, “should the federal government provide safety nets for its citizens?” This dialogue engaged the students in a discussion about the responsibility of the government to the people. Hans’ students had a “substantive discussion,” or student-student conversation with at least three inputs about the same topic (Newmann et al., 2007), something with which he was very pleased. In the interview, Hans stated, “I had never seen a conversation like this. There was a little bit of debate there between [student] who sits right there and [student] who sits over there. There has never been anything like that in that classroom before. That is the first that I have ever seen it.” This successful conversation centered on what Hans thought the students would find interesting, not on what the Central Question for the unit was.

Hans said in the interview that he planned to hook his students this way all along, though he knew it did not match his unit question. Interestingly, Hans’ case of this lack of cohesion between the inquiry and the hook did not seem to be because of a lack of understanding, rather because of his cooperating teacher’s reliance on the textbook. It seems that the limitations he had due to the placement and his cooperating teacher made him choose one central question and highlight something different in his teaching. Regardless of why this happened, however, this caused a conceptual bifurcation that instead of bringing coherence to the content, potentially had the opposite effect.

In each of these cases, student teachers seemed to understand the content and the unit problem that they chose for the content, yet they faced a conceptual challenge of

hooking students into the problem. When they created a hooking lesson for the content, these student teachers did not choose something that engaged the students in the unit problem. Rather they chose related activities that were far enough from the problem to have the potential to divert students' attention.

Trouble making the consistency explicit. In four cases, the student teachers faced the procedural challenge of not making the connection between the unit problem and the engaging activity clear, even though they understood and could articulate these connections in the interview. Because of this challenge, the lessons appeared disjointed from the Central Question, though there actually was conceptual coherence.

The first example was Anthony's hooking lesson on the Sahara and the Sahel regions in Africa. The central question that Anthony chose for this unit was, "How do people adapt to living in the Sahara and the Sahel?" In the interview, Anthony said this unit and hooking activity

sets up the differences between . . . how they live here [Michigan] and how they live there...instead of comparing the two, comparing their culture to another culture and making a judgment, it shows, 'Ok, what you're doing in here is an adaptation to the environment you live in. What they're doing is an adaptation to the environment they live in.'

Anthony explained how this activity and unit fit in with the "major goals of the course," which was to help students become more aware of other cultures in the world. He said this unit would help them understand the people of the Sahara and Sahel regions and the adaptations they made because of their environment. During the hooking lesson, however,

Anthony did not make this connection clear and his lesson had the potential to seem like loosely related activities.

Anthony began the period with the question, “What adaptations do you have to make for living in Michigan?” After two minutes to work on this question in groups, the students responded with answers such as various changes people need for constantly changing weather, people in Michigan’s peculiar food tastes, and others. In the interview, Anthony stated that he designed the activity for students “to see adaptations that they make so that when we’re looking at this other culture they see what they’re doing as adaptations.” From this statement, it is clear that Anthony knew the purpose behind the activity and that this activity matched his unit problem seamlessly.

The problem, however, was not with the activity itself, but how Anthony transitioned from this opening activity to the rest of the class period. Anthony said to the class

Alright, so we looked at those adaptations this week. If you remember from last week, you did your African mapping lab, and you remember learning a little bit about the Sahara and the Sahel, right? So having learned about those, we are going to look at adaptations for living in these two areas. So that brings us to our question of the week, which is, “How do people adapt to living in the Sahara and the Sahel?” Anthony never made the connection between what they were doing with the opening activity and what they were doing for the unit clear to the students. In the interview, as Anthony and I watched the video, I asked him how clearly he connected the opening activity to the unit problem. He said,

I don't think I ever made that connection completely clear to them. Like the idea was there, but I wasn't explicit in saying, 'Ok, so some of the stuff you do here, it's not stupid. You do it, 'cause you live in Michigan. This week we're gonna look at some of the stuff that they do in the Sahara, and it might seem different, but it's not dumb. It's what they do to survive.'

Anthony recognized this lack of coherence and the need to make it more explicit to students. He was even able to explain how he could have made these connections more explicit while watching the video. Anthony explained that he was thinking about his goal of helping the students understand other cultures while he was teaching. He said, "I had the same goal in mind, but I never, you know. I think I was being way too subtle with presenting that to them when I should have told them, 'Hey, this is it.'" Anthony's case represents a pedagogical challenge students have in making the engaging activity explicitly connect to the content.

A second case of this was during Ned's hooking lesson on the Middle Ages. Though a conceptual connection exists between what Ned did and what he was trying to do with the unit, the explicit connection between the hooking lesson and the unit problem was not clear. The question Ned chose for his unit was, "Did the Catholic church do more harm than good during the Middle Ages?" He explained his reasoning for this unit because,

the church is often seen as this all good all powerful divine great influence, and as we have discovered, history is messy. . . . Especially since going to a Catholic school, they may have some interest in it already in seeing how it would all play out, and being able to argue one way or another.

Ned chose to hook them by exploring one aspect of the Catholic Church that had the potential for good or harm, the power of the church during the Middle Ages.

Ned began the lesson with the journal question, “What groups hold the most power in today’s world?” In the interview, Ned said he was hoping “to engage them by having a modern kind of topic that they could argue about . . . then we could bring it back to, ‘We have all these ideas of power today, what was power like back then.’” Students shared many different answers about who holds power such as China, rich people, countries with nuclear power and others. After a conversation about the various reasons why the US holds power in the world, Ned transitioned into the Middle Ages topic:

We see a lot of different opinions about who holds power in today’s world. So, in the last unit . . . we left off in Europe . . . Today we are going to see who holds power in this time . . . We are going back to the start of the Middle Ages. And we are going to see the influence of Christianity.

Ned began the class with an activity on a painting of the crowning of Charlemagne of France by Pope Leo III. The class discussed the power dynamic between the pope and the king and the potential problems. Ned directed the class to two handouts that contained a correspondence between King Henry VI of England and Pope Gregory VII that show some conflicts between a king and a pope. The class discussed this conversation between the King and the Pope. Ned then introduced them to the unit problem. He said

We are going to reexamine Charlemagne and why the pope is directly involved. . . . This is kind of going to be the big question we are going to look at, the question that everything is going to be centered around. Did the Catholic church actually do more harm than good during the middle ages? So for a lot of us, we see the church as kind

of this all powerful good force in the world. But as you can see here, there is a lot of conflicts that are happening during the Middle Ages. What we are going to look at, did the church do more harm than good, did it overstep its boundaries, was it right to do so?

This was the first time in the hooking lesson that Ned introduced the unit problem. Thus far, they had only talked about power, beginning with the journal question, then in the painting, and then on this final activity. In the interview, Ned said he used the Charlemagne picture because it “brought the idea of power to the forefront. And it brought the relationship between the church and the emperor right there.” Ned did not reference the unit problem at all. When I asked him why he waited so long in the class to introduce the unit problem, he said

Because I felt like I needed to draw out this idea of power. If I took the unit problem and gave it to them right off the start, they would have instantly been biased in thinking. They may have gone right away to the church did the most good because they are the ones who are responsible for the emperors, or they have taken it to the negative right away, this is a pope excommunicating an emperor. I didn't want to cloud their judgment either way right off the start by giving them the choice right away.

From the start, Ned's unit and engaging activity seemed to have an unclear purpose. The lesson was mainly about the power dynamic between the kings and the popes, but there was something about the harm and/or good the church did. Though related, the lack of clarity made the direction of the lesson seem confusing rather than cohesive. In this case, it

seems that the student teacher had some knowledge of the connection he wanted to make with the unit problem, but in carrying out the unit, the engaging activity lacked cohesion.

There were two additional instances when student teachers used a hooking activity that matched the problem, but their teaching failed to make the coherence of their unit clear. The first was when Hans began his Concept Formation lesson on *imperialism* by showing the students a three-minute clip of the movie *Avatar* (2009), where the director of the company told the doctor that they needed to “win the hearts and minds of the people.” Hans told the students to think about this statement and repeated it a few times throughout the lesson. When I asked Hans why he stressed this quote so much, he stated that this was a “recurring theme” in history. He said, “I think this phrase right here sells the point that these natives have something these people want, and they are willing to do anything they want to get it.” Yet, his purpose in using this clip did not carry through the whole lesson. Hans explained the concept of “imperialism”: “the idea of a stronger nation influencing a weaker nation economically, politically, or culturally.” This definition included the key characteristics of Imperialism. It was never clear how the “winning the hearts and minds of the people” was central to this concept, however, and it seemed to be more of a distraction than helping make the lesson cohesive.

A final example of an engaging activity not matching the Central Question was during Jeff’s Imperialism hooking lesson. Jeff chose the question, “Is imperialism a positive policy for the U.S.?” Jeff chose the question “to create something that was debatable.” Jeff also seemed to have the purpose of exposing the hypocrisy of the U.S. during the Age of Imperialism. He explained about the many “unincorporated islands” of the U.S., such as Puerto Rico, territories that do not have a vote, “yet they are at the mercy of U.S.

constitution.” Jeff said, “Remember the term no taxation without representation? . . . And what are we doing now?” Later in the class, during a lecture on Hawaii, Jeff again seemed to focus on U.S. hypocrisy. He said,

It is interesting actually that President Clinton when he was in office put it out in a formal apology. ‘Hawaii, we are very sorry that we overthrew your queen that we took advantage of your crops, and imposed our beliefs on you.’ At that point, Hawaii was already a state. They are a voting state. What is the point? Why make yourself feel better Bill Clinton?

Jeff explained in the interview how the direction he took maintained the debate he wanted. He said, “Is getting economic advantage while diminishing the rights of the natives positive? Maybe it is to you.” Again, though Jeff stated that his purpose was to make the content more debatable and created the question to do so, the lesson appeared to take the students in a different direction. This had the potential to detract from the Central Question and point he originally had in an attempt to make the content debatable.

These four cases represent a procedural challenge that student teachers had in making explicit the connection between the engaging activities they used and the problems they chose to make their content more cohesive. These findings seem to indicate a need for pre-service teachers to have explicit opportunities to practice teaching the activities they create to engage students in the unit questions. This practice should emphasize transitions, introductions, and conclusions of lessons in order to build their ability carry out these sophisticated lessons.

Maintaining emphasis on unit problem. In two other scenarios, student teachers faced a procedural challenge in making the conceptual relation between the hooking activity and the rest of the class period clear and explicit. This resulted in the class period seeming like disjointed pieces, rather than a cohesive whole. In other words, in both cases the student teachers divided the class period into two sections, a hooking activity and an accompanying lecture. When they transitioned from the hooking activity into the lecture, the class period seemed to part from the unit problem, as the student teacher did not make explicit enough connections with the unit problem. Because of this, the different parts of the lesson came off as stand-alone and loosely related activities, rather than the conceptually cohesive parts they were.

The first occurrence of this was Jamie Lynn's mini-unit on European Exploration. The central question for her unit was "Explain the emergence of the modern world system and key transitions that helped bring it about." Jamie Lynn explained that during the unit, the class would explore three periods of exploration that helped bring about the modern world system: Renaissance, Reformation, and Exploration. Jamie Lynn was beginning the Exploration portion of the unit with this hook, or the third section. Jamie Lynn had the daily question, "How did European exploration begin?"

Jamie Lynn's hooking activity began by separating the students into groups representing different continents organized throughout the room. On each of the tables, the "continents" had papers representing indigenous ingredients for spaghetti. The students began the activity with a brief writing assignment about the basic ingredients of spaghetti, and the region of the world they think of when they think of spaghetti. Jamie Lynn explained in the interview that she was attempting to work with their misconceptions

about spaghetti being only Italian. After a short discussion, the students walked around the classroom and “traded” ingredients from their “continent” with ingredients from other “continents” with the goal of making spaghetti. They traded ingredients two times, once representing pre-1492 trading and again post-1492. The students traded with people, but only the way people could at the time because of limitations in travel. Jamie Lynn explained they were to discover “they could not make spaghetti. If they were in Americas, they could only get peppers or tomatoes. If they were in Africa or Eurasia, they could get everything except peppers and tomatoes.” The second time they traded, post-1492, the students were to figure out that they could trade throughout the world.

Jamie Lynn stated that through the hooking activity she wanted them to know that spaghetti is a product of exploration, but this activity was also an introduction into exploration. Jamie Lynn designed the hooking activity “to challenge their misconception and then surprise them . . . ‘Oh, it is really from America. Wow, how did it get there? How did it get to Italy and how did it get to make a cuisine?’” She thought the activity would get them asking more questions such as “What else did exploration do?” and “What were other impacts of exploration?” This hook matched what Jamie Lynn wanted the students to learn and engage with through the chapter: European exploration “profoundly and permanently” changed the world around them.

Jamie Lynn then transitioned from the opening activity into the rest of the class period, a content-heavy lecture. She transitioned by saying

So what you guys experienced here was one effect of exploration, and that was just a basic effect of food. This is called, in bigger historical terms, the Columbian Exchange, because after Columbus sailed the ocean blue in 1492, there’s tons of exchanges of

food, diseases, animals, and ways of life, and it completely changed our world. So welcome to the age of exploration, and we're going to look at now, to help answer our big question: How did European exploration begin? Please write down your responses now, your guess. Write down notes. Guys, this is the title of our lecture. How did European exploration begin? Please write down your guess underneath it. We'll be talking about it as a class in a couple minutes.

She then began a 40-minute lecture on the formation of the Spanish Empire. The topics of the lecture included the marriage between Ferdinand and Isabella, the Reconquista, the strengthening of the Catholic Church in Spain, and the beginning of Ferdinand and Isabella's beginning efforts for exploration. In the beginning of the lecture, she stated the title two times: "How did European exploration begin?" However, Jamie Lynn did not remind the students about the content and the purpose of the lecture until the very end, almost 30 minutes later. She did not construct the lecture to make the connection to the purpose of the unit and hooking activity explicit. Though Jamie Lynn chose a hooking activity and lecture that related closely with the content and the central question for the unit, this connection was not explicit and seemed to get lost.

Another case where the student teacher did not make the connections explicit between activities was Jeff's hooking lesson on Imperialism. Jeff began the opening activity of having the students draw a "map of the land that was under the control of the United States" to draw out students' misconceptions about the U.S. control ending at the continent. Next, Jeff led the class in a short Concept Formation lesson on "imperialism." Finally, he began a lecture on the takeover of Hawaii by the U.S..

Jeff structured his class in three sections, with a conceptual thread running throughout each of them. This is an encouraging feat for a student teacher. However, Jeff did not make a clear connection between these three sections, particularly between the concept imperialism and the take-over of Hawaii as a case of imperialism. Because of this, the lesson had the potential to seem like three separate and unrelated sections of the same class. Jeff said the transition could have been “a bit more clear.” Jeff explained the problem: “Getting up there are talking you think, ‘Oh crap, now I’m done with this. I have to start my Hawaii lecture, let me run over across the room and get my notes. What am I gonna say now? Whatever comes to the top of my mind.” Though Jeff understood what he was doing, the procedural challenge of transitioning between different parts of the class made the coherence of his lesson difficult to see.

These two cases represent the procedural challenge student teachers had making explicit the conceptual coherence they planned, starting with the hooking lesson and carrying into subsequent activities of the unit. In both of these cases, student teachers understood and could see this issue when I pointed it out to them in the meeting. From this, it seems that pre-service teachers need more practice in order to mediate the procedural challenge of making explicit their carefully planned units.

Value of Content

Up to this point in my work, I have made a case that the practices the student teachers learned in their teacher education program, Concept Formation and Central Questions, have value to students as intellectual tools. While these practices are important for students, history has more value for students than just as tools. The content of history itself has value for students. Bestor (1955) stated that history “is indispensable to education

for intelligent citizenship” (p.129) as it is concerned with “illuminating the social realities” and “bring[ing] to the task of enlightenment the whole of human experience, past as well as present” (p. 133). Likewise, Lee (2005) said,

History offers students (albeit at second hand) strange worlds, exciting events, and people facing seemingly overwhelming challenges. It shows students the dark and the light sides of humanity. It is one of the central ways of coming to understand what it is to be human because in showing what humans beings have done and suffered, it shows what kind of creatures we are. (p.71)

This is not, however, the way most students view history. Rather than seeing these fiery lessons about humanity, students often hear only outdated stories that contain little relevance to themselves, their community, and their nation (Harper, 1937; Schug, Todd, & Beery, 1982; Shaughnessy & Haladyna, 1985). If students cannot understand the lessons embedded in the historical events, than history appears to be little more than “one damn thing after another.” In this section of my analysis, I explored how student teachers considered and represented the value of history content in their lessons. My argument here is that student teachers need to think carefully about the value of the content for their students. In addition, they should be able to express the value of the content for students, both in a verbal description of a lesson and explicitly in teaching that lesson.

I began my exploration of the value of historical content by looking at how student teachers presented the value to the students during the class periods, and then compared this to how they explained it to me in the interview. I used the concept “value beyond school” or the contents’ “[c]onnection to the world beyond the classroom” (Newmann et al., 2007). According to Newmann et al. (2007), lessons can have value beyond school success

by: “a) addressing an actual public problem of some contemporary significance; b) building on students’ personal experiences to teach important ideas in the disciplines; and c) having students communicate their knowledge to others beyond the classroom in ways that assist or influence others” (p. 44). Value beyond school was a starting place for this exploration because it related to the teacher training these student teachers received. During the methods class in the previous semester, we spent time thinking about how history content relates to students and how teachers can use this in their teaching to engage students into content. We discussed how historical problems can help students find the content meaningful and relevant. I showed the student teachers examples of helping students see larger patterns, or cases, of human struggles throughout history. My intention was to help student teachers understand how to design lessons and units to enable students to make these connections and better understand the history they are learning. I will call this conceptualization “value-beyond-school.”

In order to find out how student teachers understood and used value-beyond-school, I explored observations, my field notes, and interview transcriptions. I considered the following questions: How, if at all, were student teachers representing the value-beyond-school in their lesson and during the interview? How clearly were they articulating the value-beyond-school to students? How else did student teachers consider the value of the content to students? Through my study, I learned student teachers faced conceptual challenges in knowing the value-beyond-school, and some procedural challenges in constructing and enacting the lessons they constructed to explicitly represent the value. Additionally, I learned student teachers used different approaches to show students the

value of the content, including value for success in school and value for other historical content.

Through this section, I consider the different ways student teachers show the value of the content to students. I show how student teachers attempted to use value-beyond-school in their lessons, some challenges they faced in doing so, and the kind of direction it took to help them think about this dimension of history instruction. I end this section with a framework that emerged out of this analysis to help student teachers think about and clarify the value of the content in their lessons and units.

Other Conceptualizations of the Value of Content

My first exploration was if and how student teachers used value-beyond-school in their lessons. Through my exploration, I concluded that student teachers always included some kind value of the content in their teaching, though not always value-beyond-school. They represented the value of content in two additional ways: value-for-school and value-within-content.

Value-for-school. One way that student teachers showed the value of the content was for students' schoolwork or a future goal in school, what I call "value-for-school." In three of the classes that I observed, the student teachers expressed this to students. In each of these cases, the student teachers did not express value-beyond-school in any way to the students, nor to me in the interview. During Anthony's Concept Formation lesson, he said in the beginning of class, "Today we are going to keep exploring what is a siege. So today we will be creating a class definition of what a siege is *so you can begin your plans of your siege of my castle.*" Anthony reiterated this at the end of his lesson, stating, "Now that we have firmly established the definition of a siege, tomorrow all of you will begin your siege on my

castle.” It seems that Anthony expressed to the students that they needed this definition in order to complete this school activity. When I asked him how he decided on this concept, Anthony reiterated this to me in terms of the activity. He stated, “It has been part of a really broad unit on medieval warfare; started with castles, moved on to weapons, then moved on to sieges. It will end with them planning a siege as a group on a castle.” When I asked Anthony to explain the importance of the concept “siege,” and the siege activity, he said it was “the culmination” of the unit on castles, “they really need to understand what the objectives are behind the war. Your goal is not to knockdown the castle. They have been asking since they built the castle, ‘Do we get to knock them down?’” Again, Anthony expressed the value of this concept only in terms of the school activity.

During the Concept Formation lesson by Amanda on “industrialization,” she opened the activity expressing only value-for-school. She said, “Our essential question today is, so by the end of today we want to be able to answer, ‘Why was the U.S. able to be so successful at industrializing in the late 1800s and the early 1900s?’ You might think you know the answer but, we are going to go into more depth.” Amanda then gave instructions to the students about the Concept Formation, and they went to work. Throughout the lesson, Amanda gave no indication about the value of the concept to the students or the activity within the larger body of content. The class consisted of Amanda giving the students the instructions for the Concept Formation, and them doing the activity. It was little more than a school activity.

In the interview, I asked Amanda how important this concept was within the unit. She explained it in terms of its centrality within the content: “Because the whole unit is supposed to be about the Industrial Revolution, and so they need to know what it means to

industrialize in order for them to really know what it means to have an industrial revolution.” Again, Amanda spoke in very general terms about the concept. She did not try to anchor the importance of the concept for students beyond school or even within the historical value of the concept. Rather, she expressed the importance of the concept within school terms.

Value-within-content. A second way that student teachers expressed the value of the content, used by four student teachers, was within the larger body of content, either within the specific time period or as having enduring historical significance. Often these cases included both value-for-school and the value-within-content. Student teachers who utilized the value-within-content seemed to have more of a grasp of the importance of the content knowledge, but they still were not thinking in terms of the value specifically for students.

One example of this was Jamie Lynn’s Concept Formation lesson on the concept “empire.” She opened the class:

Today we are going to begin an investigation about empires. In order to do that we have these focusing questions, ‘What’s an Empire?’ That is what we are going to figure out today. As well, upon that we are going to look at these more specific questions. ‘What is the purpose of knowing what an empire is in this world history class?’ and ‘What impact have empires had on globalization?’

This opening statement shows that she planned the lesson with both value-for-school and value-within-content driving her lesson. Jamie Lynn attempted to help students see why the concept “empire” was valuable in their world history class as a whole through the first question, “What is the purpose of knowing what an empire is in this world history class?”

Additionally she was attempting to frame the concept beyond their class and onto a larger theme of world history through the second question, “What impact have empires had on globalization?”

Jamie Lynn reiterated to the class later in the period the value of the concept “empire” in terms of its importance within the breadth of world history content. She said, “Also, this empire, this concept . . . transcends all of our units . . . So there is this aspect that, the world is divided up into different empires. So, we should figure out what empires are in order to figure out how the world is divided up.” Here again, Jamie Lynn tried to help her students understand the value of the concept “empire” as it endures through time and spans different civilizations. Jamie Lynn closed the class by asking, “What did we do today that affects our course question . . . How have societies, networks and transitions impacted globalization?” One student responded to the question. Then Jamie Lynn said, “It connected countries into networks, right? Those are good things for you guys to know. Again, tomorrow we will kick off the Mongols.” Here, Jamie Lynn drew the content of this lesson back into the larger course question.

In the interview, Jamie Lynn revealed her understanding of the value of the concept “empire” within the units she taught throughout student teaching. She answered,

[The concept Empire] fits into the narrative because we had just gotten out of the Islamic empire and got them exposed to what a really big empire was and moving into the Mongol one. I think it also fit crucially because the Islamic and the Mongol empire are based off of completely different ideals. . . . yet they’re both empires. Why? . . . the key characteristics, absolutely. And that’s one of the examples/non-examples. As you know, were the Mongol and the Islamic one.

This explanation shows that Jamie Lynn has some understanding of the meaning and importance of the concept “empire” to categorize phenomenon. In other words, she understood the value-within-content.

Attempts at Using Value-Beyond-School

My exploration for value-beyond-school suggests that these student teachers were either approaching an understanding or could articulate their understanding in the interview, but had trouble carrying it out in their teaching. In this section I show the challenges that student teachers had in knowing and using value-beyond-school, conceptual challenges in knowing this value and procedural challenges in making the value clear through their instruction. At the conclusion of this section, I show two cases where the student teachers needed only to be given minimal advice to come to their own understanding of the content’s value-beyond-school.

Approaching value-beyond-school. In three cases, the student teachers seemed to have a conceptual challenge in knowing the value-beyond-school, though they were approaching an understanding of the need for value-beyond-school in the content. They described students’ need to have value-beyond-school, but could not express it clearly in the class or interview. In Hans’ hooking lesson interview on the New Deal, he articulated both value-within-content and value-beyond-school when he said,

It is because of the impact the federal government has on, whether they know it or not, their lives today. The New Deal forever changed the role of the federal government in American’s lives, and it impacts still today. It is a question that comes up still today. . . . How big should government be? With this new legislation, the government became huge. . . . It shows at least the roots of why the federal

government is the way it is now. . . . prior to this we didn't have social security or anything like that. It is important for them to know that it came from somewhere. Hans expressed the value-within-content as the changes the New Deal catalyzed in the American government. He mentioned, but did not clarify, the value-beyond-school for students: "It is because of the impact the federal government has on, whether they know it or not, their lives today." This implies that Hans thought about the value-beyond-school, though he did not explain it fully.

Another example was Phillip's Hooking lesson on the unit spanning U.S. Imperialism and World War I. During this lesson, Phillip attempted to show both value-with-content and value-beyond-school. He chose the question, "Was the US foreign policy between 1890 and 1920 justified?" Phillip's class period was unorganized and confusing by his own admission, as well as my evaluation. Yet what he said in the interview provides insight to his understanding of the value of the content. He said in the interview:

It is kind of an interesting question of either justify why we went into all these places or why we shouldn't have been able to and how it kind of effects what we look at now today. In respects of our wealth as a country would not be where it is, if not for this initial push of imperialism.

Phillip explained the value-within-content of imperialism as the climb of America to power through this era and the enduring effects of this throughout the 20th century. He stated, "I think it is important to see this is the time period when we finally start kind of showing a more strength as a world power. I think they need to see that, for one." This second statement was a mere mention of value-beyond-school, only saying, "they need to see that," with no real explanation.

Phillip also linked the idea of America as a world power in a more current context, displaying some understanding of the value-beyond-school. He stated that this lesson is important to students because

it gives them insight into, why do we do things abroad? How is the U.S. a world power? How did this happen? Why? And kind of taking a deeper look into imperialism in general and it being justified or not I think is just an important question in general for themselves to ask.

He also stated that it was important for students to be “able to see 100 years later it is still going on.” Phillip related imperialism to what was happening with more current conflicts that involved the U.S., such as the “Iraq War.” Phillip also included in his explanation of the importance of the content for the students in terms of the value-beyond-school. He explained that knowing this content “allows them [the students] to question foreign policy in the future.” When I asked him to articulate this again later in the interview, he stated “It is important for them to realize relations with other countries can influence them in an indirect way, and a direct way sometimes too.” Again, Phillip said the content was important for them, though he never explained with clarity or specificity why they needed the content.

In both of these cases, the student teachers understood that the content was important to students and showed signs that they had considered this in their teaching and in the interview. Yet, they faced a conceptual challenge in carrying this through into their planning, as neither student teacher could explain in detail the importance for students.

Trouble translating value-beyond-school in class. In four cases, student teachers knew the value-beyond-school of the content and could articulate it to me in the interview,

but faced the procedural challenge of portraying it explicitly in the classroom. One example of this was Anthony's hooking lesson in a seventh grade social studies class on the Sahara and Sahel regions. The central question that Anthony chose for this unit was, "How do people adapt to living in the Sahara and the Sahel?" Anthony said one of the "major goals of the course" was to help students become more aware of other cultures in the world. This unit would help them understand people of the Sahara and Sahel regions. In the interview, Anthony again explained the value-beyond-school of this content:

the whole point of the week was to investigate how living there the adaptations are different than what they're [the students] used to living in, a westernized culture. . . . instead of comparing the two, comparing their culture to another culture and making a judgment, it shows, 'Ok, what you're doing in here is an adaptation to the environment you live in. What they're doing is an adaptation to the environment they live in.'

Anthony stated that cultural awareness was one of the main goals for the course and this unit would help the students understand more about people who lived in the Sahara and Sahel and why they lived the lifestyle they did based on their needs in that region. It is important to note, that not only did Anthony have a clear understanding of the value of the course and the unit, these two coincided closely with one another.

Anthony opened the class period with the question, "What adaptations do you have to make for living in Michigan?" Students responded with such answers as various changes people need for constantly changing weather and peculiar food tastes. In the interview, Anthony stated that he wanted students "to see adaptations that *they* make so that when we're looking at this other culture they see what they're doing as adaptations." From this

statement, Anthony had a clear purpose behind the activity that matched his unit problem seamlessly. Anthony then transitioned from the opening activity into the rest of the class.

He said,

Alright, so we looked at those adaptations this week. If you remember from last week, you did your African mapping lab, and you remember learning a little bit about the Sahara and the Sahel, right? So having learned about those, we are going to look at adaptations for living in these two areas. So that brings us to our question of the week, which is, 'How do people adapt to living in the Sahara and the Sahel?'

Anthony had a distinct understanding of the value of his content and for the activity students just engaged in, yet the connection he made between what they were doing in the opening activity and what he wanted them to learn was not clear. When I asked Anthony about this connection between the opening activity and the unit problem, he said,

I don't think I ever made that connection completely clear to them. The idea was there, but I wasn't explicit in saying, 'Ok, so some of the stuff you do here, it's not stupid. You do it, 'cause you live in Michigan. This week we're gonna look at some of the stuff that they do in the Sahara, and it might seem different, but it's not dumb. It's what they do to survive.'

Anthony recognized that he was thinking about his goal of helping students understand other cultures while he was teaching. He said, "I had the same goal in mind, but I never, you know. I think I was being way too subtle with presenting that to them when I should have told them, 'Hey, this is it.'" Anthony's comments show that he understood the need to make the problem explicit to students. He even could list some ways to make these connections

explicit while watching the video of his own teaching. However, in the planning and initial teaching of this lesson Anthony could not discern this problem.

Another case of this was Amanda's hooking lesson on the Progressive Era. The unit problem she used was one that her and her group created the semester before in their Social Studies Methods course. She explained the value of the content of the Progressive Era

I think it's important because the Progressive Era is a time when the people are really getting involved, and they can see how the general populous can create these movements and make a big impact on society. . . . I think that is important for them to see. A lot of them had been bringing up current issues, like when we talked about immigration and Occupy Wall Street.

Amanda seemed to have a basic understanding of the value-beyond-school of this content: that students need to learn about the possibilities people have in making a difference in this country.

During the lesson, however, the value-beyond-school Amanda explained in the interview never seemed clear. She began the lesson with an activity about the book *Fast Food Nation* (2003), by Eric Schlosser. The students read different parts of the book and highlighted the problems that the author was exposing in the Fast-food industry. The conversation at the end of this activity highlights my point.

Amanda: Right, and what Eric Schlosser, the guy who wrote this book, was trying to do was to raise awareness of this issue and trying to bring about legislation to make this change.

Student: Well, I know it did have a really big effect because it started conversations. I've heard a lot of people were reading it.

Amanda: Yeah, it brought about a lot of awareness, but I guess what I meant by that was it didn't bring a lot of legislation, not a lot of changes have actually occurred due to the book. That was the main goal that he was going for, but people are still going back to fast food restaurants. They're still making a ton of money on it, right? So what is this book reminiscent of? Have you guys heard of a book that is very, very similar to this from the Progressive Era that we're talking about? . . . *The Jungle*. Who's heard about *The Jungle* in here? Some people. Ok, this is a book passed in 1906, right during the Progressive Era that we're talking about, and it's about the meat-packing industry, which is exactly one hundred years before the *Fast Food Nation* movie came out, so they're talking about the same exact topics and the same exact issues but a hundred years different. . . .

Through this transition into the next activity, Amanda had the opportunity to help students understand the value-beyond-school that she explained in the interview. Instead, however, Amanda moved immediately into *The Jungle* activity, a "jigsaw" where students looked at different excerpts of book and explained them to their peers in the class as short presentations. This activity focused not on the social differences, but on the lack of changes the *Jungle* and the *Fast Food Nation* had. Most of the conversation students had after that point were on lasting issues between the *Jungle* and *Fast Food Nation* and highlighted some similarities between the two books. Though Amanda understood the value-beyond school, she had difficulty translating it into her class.

In these cases, student teachers clearly knew and could articulate the value-beyond-school of the content, but they faced a procedural challenge in making their understanding of the value of the content clear in their lesson. As with the last procedural challenge, these students seem to need more practice with transitions, introductions, and conclusions.

Helping student teachers utilize value-of-content in their planning. Though some student teachers did not utilize, or seem to consider, value-beyond-school of the content they were teaching, in two of these cases it took very little feedback from a field instructor (me) to help them think about this aspect of their content. An example of this happened during the feedback portion of the interview with Anthony about his Concept Formation lesson on “siege.” Near the end of the interview, I asked Anthony to think about the value of the content for students. It was obvious from his response that he had not thought about this before.

ATF: What is the importance of them knowing that term [siege]?

Anthony: Um, it is just the term they are using. They are building an attack on a castle is a siege, it was not a battle. There was some implied things that could have been more explicit like this is not just two armies. This was all the people of the town hiding in the castle. This was pointed out a little bit today during the [movie] clip that I wish I would have emphasized more. . . .

ATF: What do you think is the historical significance of sieges, of castle warfare for them?

Anthony: The theme of this class is, “What was life like in the middle ages?” Within that context, [the lesson theme] was, ‘hey, here is how wars took place. It is part of that larger narrative of how wars took place.’ But historically, it is like how has

warfare changed. It's like the beginning of nation-states, which that part in itself is really interesting. Just how warfare has changed over the course of time. Part of that was civilians hiding in a castle, and how it has progressed to the point where, instead of intentionally attacking civilians, it has become a profession. Where fighting is a profession. Not where fighting engulfs everybody.

ATF: Oh. How clear do you think that was?

Anthony: I don't think it was part of this by any means.

ATF: Do you think it should have been?

Anthony: Yes, it could have been, especially the chance to emphasize how this wasn't two armies. This was an army and town full of people. That should have been emphasized a lot more.

I am unclear how Anthony would have justified these statements in light of such events as Dresden in World War II, The Village of Mai Lai in Vietnam, or current day terrorism. Yet, the important point for my purposes is that Anthony came to the realization that he should have thought about and integrated the potential usefulness of this content for students. During the second interview, Anthony said the suggestion to think about the content from the student' perspective "was probably the most productive instruction I got over all three semesters in the School of Education." Though I gave very simple advice, just asking Anthony to consider the value of content for students, he considered it an important part of his teacher education.

Another example came during the interview for Jamie Lynn's Concept Formation lesson on "empires." During the feedback portion of our interview, I asked Jamie Lynn to think more about the value of her content for students. Jamie Lynn realized that her lesson

did not explicitly show the value of the concept to students much beyond telling them how important it was for them to know and that they would see empires throughout history. Jamie Lynn immediately started thinking about how to reword the question to reflect this enduring value of the content. She said, “I think the question I could ask them is how have empires shaped history. Which could be a course question . . . And I think opposing them or juxtaposing them to nations is what would make it critical.” Like the case of Anthony above, as soon as I asked Jamie Lynn a question about the value of content for students, her train of thought changed to start thinking about the value of the content.

In both of these cases, the student teachers faced a conceptual challenge in making the value of the content clear for students. Yet, these students easily overcame these conceptual challenges by simply thinking through a few questions from a mentor (in this case, me) about the value of the content. These questions redirected their thinking and helped them further articulate this important part of planning lessons. Without this priming, however, neither Anthony nor Jamie Lynn thought about it in their planning.

A Framework for Student Teachers to Think About the Value-Of-Content.

Through these interviews, it became clear how easily a field instructor could help student teachers overcome some of the conceptual challenges student teachers faced in thinking about the value of the content. It seemed that creating a framework as an intellectual tool for novice teachers would be one way to help them think about and utilize the value of content in their planning and teaching. Though I searched the observation data specifically for value-beyond-school, I was able to extrapolate other ways student teachers thought about the value of the content and construct a framework to help teachers think about content as they plan their lessons. This framework consists of value-for-school,

value-within-content, and value-beyond-school. These dimensions emerged out of analyzing the data I collected from interviews and observations. A brief explanation of the three dimensions of value-of-content I observed are

- *Value-for-school*. Expressing the content as valuable for students on future tests, assignments, activities, classes, college entrance exams, etc.
- *Value-within-content*. Expressing the value of the concept/central question or inquiry within the specific time period of the content or enduring through multiple historical eras (not including current day applications).
- *Value-beyond-school*. Expressing the value for students through a public problem or human dilemma of contemporary significance or by building on their past experiences or choices they face in their personal lives.

My purpose in constructing this framework is to help student teachers think about and clarify the value of content for students in their planning. I am not arguing here that these dimensions of the value of content should be looked at as separate from one another, but rather that historical content has value for students in school, in their understanding of history, and in their lives outside of school. Also, I am not arguing that value-beyond-school is what teachers should emphasize, as this can easily lead to an anti-intellectual approach to schooling and the disciplines. What I am arguing is that teachers need to think very carefully about the value of historical and social scientific content for their students, and that frameworks such as this one above provide tools to help them do so.

My next step in this area is to create an assessment framework to help student teachers overcome the procedural challenges they had in teaching with the value they determine. This work would be a checklist that helped novices think through specific places

to help students understand and explicitly see the value of the content. These places would include introductions that helped students understand what they were about to learn and why it is important, transitions so that students could see the conceptual connections between activities, and conclusions to reiterate and strengthen student understanding of the value of the content.

Conclusion

Data in this chapter suggest that student teachers faced conceptual challenges in creating and procedural challenges in enacting strategies of engagement in their lessons. Though it was encouraging that they had moved beyond the common novice mistake of using “neat ideas” or making decisions only for classroom control (Feiman-Nemser, 1987), these student teachers had difficulty planning and teaching engaging activities with the unit problem they chose. Some faced conceptual challenges in creating hooking lessons that engaged students into the unit problems. Others faced procedural challenges in integrating texts they thought would engage students and in making the strategies of engagement explicit and consistent throughout the lesson. As a result, their class period seemed more like a series of unrelated activities than a coherent well-planned lesson. Through this analysis, it became clear that student teachers need more instruction in thinking through and planning Hooking lessons based on the unit problems, and more practice in carrying out those lessons in the teacher education classroom and in the field.

Additionally, student teachers faced conceptual and procedural challenges in making the value of the content clear to students. Most student teachers did not plan their lessons with value beyond the classroom as part of their thinking. However, they did consider the value of the content in other ways. Some student teachers conceptualized the

value in terms of school activities and others in terms of value within the content. Those student teachers who appeared to consider the value beyond the classroom seemed to have procedural challenges making that value explicit in the lesson. My data suggest that student teachers needed a framework for thinking about content value. As a result, I created a thinking tool, which includes three dimensions: value-for-school, value-within-content, and value-beyond-school.

As I have shown, student teachers have difficulty both in creating coherence between their unit problem and engagement strategies and in utilizing the value-of-content in their planning and teaching. Teacher educators need to help student teachers understand the role of both of these dimensions of history instruction and to help them make these dimensions explicit in their teaching.

CHAPTER SEVEN: STUDENT TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE

People, such as cooperating teachers and field instructors, influence student teachers (Borko & Mayfield, 1995; Staton & Hunt, 1992). In this chapter, I explore the ways that student teachers describe the central people involved in their student teaching semester. The questions guiding this chapter are:

- 1) According to student teachers, how did these central people challenge or support their work in the classroom?
- 2) What did student teachers' responses about these supports and challenges seem to suggest about their use of the specific practices examined in this study?

Throughout the various data collection methods within this study, student teachers reported many of the same challenges and supports that other researchers found in previous studies. However, my study adds a dimension that brings a new frame of understanding to this area of research—the planning for and use of specific practices student teachers learned in their teacher education courses. I focus specifically on how student teachers' perceptions of the influence of central people positively or negatively affect the use of Concept Formation and Central Questions to drive instruction. I define a person as influential when student teachers stated directly that they saw some influence on

their teaching of the target practices or when an anecdote described by the student teachers indicated an influence.

In this chapter, I first describe the two people from the university that student teachers consider most influential: field instructors and cohort mates. Additionally, I describe how student teachers viewed my influence, as both a researcher and representative of the university, on their work. Then I describe two people from the field school that student teachers consider most influential: students and cooperating teachers. I devote most of the chapter to the influence of the cooperating teachers, as they seem to be the central influence on student teachers in both the literature and in my study. For each of the influential people, I consider how student teachers described the effect each had on the student teaching semester in general and then the effect each had on the use of Concept Formation and Central Questions.

University Influences

Cohort Mates

The student teachers commonly found their cohort mates at the University of Michigan to be a significant influence on their teaching. In every case, the student teachers' peers were a conceptual support to them, as they prepared for teaching throughout the semester, and contextual support, as they dealt with the stresses of student teaching. Five of the seven respondents explained how their peers gave them conceptual support in their work as student teachers. Three student teachers mentioned that they were able to share ideas with one another during their weekly seminar and through their frequent emails to one another. Hans said, "I feel like you can present something to them, and they'll tell you, 'Well, this could be problematic.' . . . I feel like everybody I work with is a highly competent

individual so just hearing their feedback was helpful, just productive.” Providing feedback to one another on lessons and activities seemed to be one way this group of student teachers supported each other in their work.

Additionally, three student teachers described cohort mates giving conceptual support by sharing resources. All three explained that before they started a unit, they would ask their peers for any resources they had. This was especially true in the case of Ned, who felt that his cooperating teacher provided him with almost no resources. He said, “When some of my cohort brought in their curriculum, I nabbed it all. One came in and said, ‘I have the entire curriculum from my school, anybody want it?’ I said, yeah sure, I have nothing to go off.” Hans explained he would not use materials that he borrowed from a cohort member verbatim, but he was “able to see how she went about it” and make it work in his lesson. Two of the student teachers talked about collaborative planning with their peers. Jeff reported he frequently met with two cohort members to co-plan: “We were talking about the Progressive Era and how to teach the progressive amendments, so we worked together on how to integrate the primary sources into a lesson and what kind of a graphic organizer to create.” Student teachers found immense value in their peers and the help and resources they brought to one another.

Finally, three student teachers explained the contextual support they received from their cohort mates in dealing with the stresses of their placement. All three of them felt that hearing each other’s experiences was helpful. Phillip said, “talking to the cohort was helpful. . . . We are in the same boat, so it is nice to see people who are experiencing the same types of things.” Through talking about the stresses of student teaching together, these student teachers supported one another in their experience.

Through peer relationships and their weekly seminar meetings, these student teachers described the conceptual and contextual support that helped sustain them through their student teaching experience.

Field Instructor

Another influential university person student teachers mentioned was their field instructor. Student teachers described the support from their field instructor in contextual, conceptual, and procedural terms. The primary contextual support, mentioned by six student teachers, was mediating the student teacher/cooperating teacher relationship. Anthony said, "I think he's there to be our advocate. . . . his role is to make sure that our placement and our interaction with the school we're placed at is giving us enough of the experience we need to become teachers." Likewise, Hans said, "He's like my agent. . . . I mean, granted, it's on me to kinda negotiate it, but, when times are tough . . . [he]'s been an advocate for me." Ned explained, "I almost see him as being an ambassador. . . . If anything comes up, he leaves his embassy and goes to the site and helps out. . . . it can be awkward or hard for a student teacher if there is a problem with our cooperating teacher." Some student teachers gave specific examples of how the field instructor fulfilled this role as mediator. When Jamie Lynn felt that her cooperating teacher was taking advantage of her by having her present to a group of teachers at a school meeting, her field instructor stepped in and told her she had "no responsibility to present to [them]. It is not your requirement at all. You are responsible for that classroom." When Hans had a conflict with his cooperating teacher (explained later in this chapter), his field instructor had a meeting with him and his cooperating teacher and helped him mediate the situation and complete student teaching. Through these experiences, student teachers felt supported in their

teaching context, more specifically in the relationships with their cooperating teacher as the field instructor intervened on their behalf.

One form of procedural support that five student teachers described was about classroom routines and management in their classrooms. Ned made a general statement about this: “A lot of what he [field instructor] had to say today was not about my lesson; it was about routines and procedures.” Two student teachers mentioned the advice he gave about classroom management, including moving students who were distracting others and limiting sarcastic responses. Two student teachers explained that he gave them practical advice on putting students into groups. Three student teachers mentioned specifically that he helped them question students and lead discussions. For example, Amanda said he told her to ask questions that required more than “one word or one simple sentence answers,” questions that make them “really go in-depth to explain themselves. . . . things like that to draw them out talking more, get more meaningful discussion happening.” Phillip said his field instructor told him to use “more ‘why’ questions. Why do they think this? Why is this helpful?” Phillip understood the reasoning behind his field instructor’s advice as

It makes them [students] have to reason through it. And it helps me to assess them of what they could be completely guessing. Like they could be, ‘it is a luxury good,’ and they could be completely right. But they could have just written that down completely guessing instead of having to think about it, reason through what type of product it was and why.

These five student teachers seemed to find value in the advice their field instructor gave about general classroom routines and management.

Through the weekly seminar, the field instructor provided conceptual support to

some and a contextual challenge to others. Four student teachers (Jamie Lynn, Phillip, Hans and Amanda) considered their field instructor a conceptual support, talking positively about the opportunities he gave them during the seminar to discuss their experiences with one another. Jamie Lynn said, “For the most part, I like the space to talk about some problems. Some actual teaching problems of the practice.” Phillip agreed: “Usually before and after class. We had time to collaborate and also talk about the case studies . . . work together or like, ‘hey I am teaching this in a couple weeks,’ or ‘I know I have to teach this lesson. Have you done this yet?’” Similarly, Hans explained that their field instructor facilitated discussions about common issues in their seminar.

Two student teachers (Jeff and Anthony) viewed the field instructor led seminar as a contextual challenge to student teaching because it added additional work. Jeff said, it’s another layer of, in my opinion, tedious work that we have to do. Like, writing up a reflection of our hundred competencies or fifty competencies, writing a page and finding evidence to support all of that. I don’t have time to do all that, to write all of these pages while I’m trying to plan all of my units and grade all my papers. Like, no, thank you. It’s not helping me whatsoever.

Anthony echoed these sentiments, indicating a concern about the time it took away from planning and preparing for school. He said he was bothered “just having to come here for two hours on a Monday after being at school.” As a whole, the seminar led by their field instructor seemed to be both a support, in offering opportunities for student teachers to discuss and work together, and a challenge, in creating more responsibilities for them.

Student teachers also talked about their field instructor in regards to one of the practices in my study, how to utilize and write Central Questions in their teaching. Two

student teachers explained how the field instructor was a procedural support as he helped them to utilize their Central Question during the class period. Jamie Lynn, for instance, said his advice helped her to frame and use Central Questions more effectively in her teaching. She said,

[Field instructor] was like, 'Where is the question for the day?' And I was like, 'good question.' It was like a light bulb went off in my head. I don't have a daily question. It is something like I knew, but I was like, I don't know how to implement that. . . . I thought the things we were doing answered the unit question, but those things were not explicit to the kids. In my head, they were. Those activities gave them evidence to answer the question, but there wasn't a question to frame that evidence.

Because of her field instructor's advice, Jamie Lynn realized that she needed to be explicit about her purposes for the activities she chose and how they link specifically with her unit question. Three student teachers talked about how their field instructor was a conceptual support to their use of Central Questions as he helped them reword the questions that they wrote for a unit, attempting to help the student teachers make their questions more "arguable" or "debatable." No student teacher mentioned help he gave them with Concept Formation. This is not surprising, as it was not one of the high-leverage practices for which he was responsible.

While the student teachers seemed to consider their field instructor's advice a conceptual support for creating and utilizing questions, one incident suggests the advice he gave may have been counterproductive to the use of Central Questions. Amanda was teaching a unit on the Progressive Era that her group constructed during the second semester of the program. The original question that they created for the unit during their

methods course was, “How did social movements of the Progressive Era impact government policy?” Their rationale for the unit question was

In America, the Progressive Era proved that the public’s social movements can make changes in the workings of the government and society. By examining how these populist movements influenced change within the government and society, the students will explore how the powers of the people and government can make changes in society.²⁷

According to Amanda, her field instructor “didn’t necessarily like the wording . . . and he suggested a couple ways I could word it.” She worked with him to revise the question. They settled on, “How did Social movements of the Progressive era have positive or negative effects on governmental policy?” Amanda thought this new question was better because it “was something they could argue.” Yet, this new question posed a potential problem for her unit that she may not have completely understood. According to their previous learning, Central Questions require specifically reasoned rationale and a unit focus. According to her group’s rationale, the original question, “How did social movements of the Progressive Era impact government policy?” was based on an exploration of the social movements and people making change in society. The new question, however, required a completely different rationale. It was an exploration about whether the changes reformers made during the Progressive Era were positive or negative.

When I asked Amanda to describe the rationale for the new unit question, she said, “I think it’s important. Because the Progressive Era is the time when the people are really getting involved, and they can see how the general populace can create these movements

²⁷ Taken from the Starter Unit Plan, Winter semester 2011.

and make a big impact on society and change. . . . I think that is important for them to see.”

The rationale she stated for this new question was the same as the one for the previous question, though the question changed the whole direction of the unit. Amanda stated that the field instructor helped her make a new “more arguable” question, yet she did not talk about receiving help to refocus the unit rationale and central focus to match the new question. In other words, she changed the question but kept the same rationale. From her interviews, it seems that the field instructor had intentions to help the classroom become more interactive, something she had admitted to struggling with, but his intervention had the potential to weaken her ability to understand and utilize Central Questions to make her unit more cohesive.

Through my study, it appears that student teachers considered their field instructor an integral part of their work during the student teaching semester, providing contextual, conceptual, and procedural support. The primary support student teachers mentioned was contextual, with his intervention in problematic situations with their placement or cooperating teacher. He also seemed to offer conceptual support in creating and using Central Questions that some of the student teachers found valuable. One case raises questions about this conceptual support of using Central Questions. If the advice undermined the use of Central Questions as I have argued, the student teacher did not have the expertise to think through the situation herself and fine-tune all the changes her unit required. This point shows the importance of sound and thorough intervention that student teachers receive during this vital stage in solidifying their understanding of unfamiliar practices. Student teachers look to the field instructor for help, and in many ways, he provided the help they needed. Yet, in the case of a specific and unfamiliar

practice, the student teacher needed more help than the field instructor may have been able to provide.

Researcher/Acting Field Instructor

Through the design of my study, I took on the role of both field instructor and researcher. In addition to observing student teachers implementing the practices from their methods class, I also interviewed them about their experiences, watched a video of their teaching with them, and asked them questions about the “teacher moves” they made during their teaching. At the end of the interview, I gave them feedback about their teaching, much like a field instructor. This portion of the interview had the potential to impact their use of these methods and their experience as a student teacher as a whole. In this section, I explain how student teachers described how participating in the study impacted them.

Six of the seven student teachers (Hans, Jeff, Ned, Jamie Lynn, Phillip and Anthony) viewed the time with me in their classrooms and in the interviews as a conceptual support. Most of them thought the feedback I gave was educative, though they said it was “direct” and even “harsh.” Jeff said he thought my feedback was “very direct,” stating, “I don’t know if it’s because we know each other or you are just more blunt. You say it like it is. You tell me what I did wrong, what I did well, which is good.” I asked if he had trouble with my feedback. He said, “Oh no, I don’t care, not at all.” Jamie Lynn agreed. She said the hours in the interviews were “worth it.” She said she enjoyed

 talking through things. I know I am probably going to be a better teacher for it. I
 enjoy your feedback. Yeah, it can be sometimes harsh, but it is real and I don’t mind.
 Cause I mentioned it to [cooperating teacher1], she said, ‘You know, you are going to

have thick skin after this, between everyone here and the people you work with at [The University of Michigan].'

When Anthony was talking about the feedback I gave him about his lesson, I asked if he thought I was too harsh or unfair in our meeting. He said, "not at all. That was probably the most productive instruction I got over all three semesters in the School of Education." In addition to the feedback, two student teachers (Anthony and Phillip) talked about the debriefing session with me as a time they could analyze their own practice and learn through talking about it. Phillip said, "If anything they [the interviews] kind of make you think about what you actually know and reflect on what you have learned." One student teacher (Ned) considered my presence and interview "very helpful," but was more curious than anything. He said, "I mean sometimes, out of my curiosity, I play a guessing game about what your study is about. You are a puzzle to me."

For the most part, student teachers considered my work a support to their student teaching and their use of target practices. However, one student teacher (Amanda) did not. Through one interview, it was clear that my role as both instructor and researcher caused her difficulty in her student teaching classroom. She admitted that my presence made her more uncomfortable than a regular field instructor.

Amanda: Yeah, and I know it's not supposed to affect our grade, but, it feels like a lot of pressure.

ATF: Does it? Oh, alright.

Amanda: I know you're not trying to. Don't take offense to it.

ATF: No, no, no. That's alright. I don't take offense. I hope I'm not making your life. . .

Amanda: You're not making it more difficult. It's just . . . I don't know. I just feel pressured, and it feels . . . you know you're not being graded on it, but you feel it reflects upon you. [crying]

ATF: Ok. I see.

Amanda: It's like you wanna do . . . I don't know. You always wanna do good when you're being observed, but you wanna try to do twice as good when you're [researcher] observing-

ATF: Me?

Amanda: Yeah, 'cause you know it's going into this research, and so we know you're gonna analyze it more so than [field instructor], who's just watching and gonna talk about it. I don't know. And there's nothing you can do about it. I mean, you can't help it.

To attempt to mediate this situation, I explained to Amanda how my study was not about her teaching, but about the program and any weaknesses in her teaching was about the instruction she had received. After this conversation, she said she was able to finish the interview and carry on with the study. I gave her the option to withdraw from the study, but she opted to finish. Up to this point, near the end of their student teaching semester and the end of my study, no other student teacher had this kind of reaction nor did they admit to feeling uncomfortable at all with me in the classroom.

School Influences

Students

Influential aspects of students. Student teachers discussed four aspects of students that they found influential in student teaching: classroom management, student

content knowledge, and class participation. Student teachers did not appear to consider these aspects of students, such as class participation, as caused by the practices they brought to their student teaching. Student teachers only identified one conceptual challenge they had with using the new methods with students: adapting the practices they learned to their students.

On the initial survey, no student teachers considered classroom management as one of their main concerns about student teaching. The interviews throughout the semester confirmed their suspicions about classroom management. There were no cases where student teachers talked about managing the classroom and students as an ongoing and central issue of their student teaching or their use of the practices. All student teachers talked about minor classroom issues, using descriptive words for students like “squirrellyness” and “talkative,” yet made few references to these issues disrupting their ability to teach. According to Amanda, classroom management had “been pretty good. It’s been fine. I don’t know why. I had thought that it might be harder.” The discussions about management did not seem to change throughout the semester. Ned said he sometimes had trouble getting them on task, but “once they are on task, they are sitting down and focused, they are magical. They are wonderful.” Jeff described his students as “very chatty,” though he tried “to turn that into a positive, like allowing them to do more group work.” He also said their “chattiness” works to his advantage because he did not “have problems with participation. . . . Because they’re chatty, they want to give their opinion.” Two student teachers, Phillip and Amanda, elaborated during the first interview on issues they had with one student in particular. By the second interview, both student teachers said these issues

subsided and did not occur again. Because of these responses, it seemed that classroom management was not of central concern to student teachers and their use of the practices.

Although student teachers talked about student content knowledge, it did not appear extremely influential in their use of practices in the classroom. All of them explained students' content knowledge as varying greatly. For instance, Anthony said his students' content knowledge "varies so much from student to student. It is very disjointed." Amanda agreed: "I think there's definitely some students who have a lot more content knowledge about it already, or prior knowledge about it, than others." These responses showed that although student teachers were aware of student content knowledge and the potential it had to be a challenge or support, it did not seem to be an influence on their use of new methods in the classroom. These responses do not imply that students' content knowledge was not an influence, but that the pre-service teachers did not view it as an influence.

Another aspect student teachers discussed was the level of student participation. For the most part, student teachers were satisfied with the level of engagement that students had in their classes. Hans said, "They all seem like they're into what I'm saying. Granted, I gotta change it up sometimes, but for the most part they seem engaged in what I'm talking about." Likewise, Ned said, "I actually think the kids are very helpful cause they have been responsive to everything I have tried." Each student teacher seemed encouraged by the amount of engagement that their students displayed, even with these unfamiliar practices.

In five of the observations and coupling interviews, student teachers showed concern that students were not as involved as they expected. Regardless, few student

teachers thought the practices to be the problem. For instance, Anthony found his students to be uncharacteristically uninvolved in class during his Concept Formation lesson, something he said was “weird” and “threw him off.” He did not blame the Concept Formation lesson as he thought their lack of involvement was circumstantial, namely thought he “placed the lesson at the wrong spot in the unit.” He reiterated this in the second interview after he had a more successful Concept Formation lesson later in the semester. He said this one was “placed better” within the unit and a concept “that they could see where it actually mattered.” Two student teachers (Jeff and Jamie Lynn) thought the problem could be their students, not the lessons. Jeff explained that his cooperating teachers had the same problem with student participation; therefore he did not think that it was him or the lessons that were the problem. Jamie Lynn thought that her students did not participate because they did not want to be wrong in front of their peers. Only one student teacher (Amanda) thought that the “repetitiveness” of a Concept Formation might be a problem and students were bored because of it.

Student teachers found students’ view toward the new practices as varying from generally positive to somewhat negative. Three student teachers found students accepting of the new methods. Anthony said that there has been a few times that he said, “Ok, we’re gonna try something you haven’t seen in this classroom yet this year, because this is something I learned at school. I wanna see how it works.” He said this makes them “very curious.” Jeff said students “were confused” by Central Questions during the first interview, but during the second interview said students liked it. He said that after he gave the class back to his cooperating teacher, a student came up to him and asked why they were not doing questions anymore. Jeff “had to explain to him that all teachers teach differently. Not

everyone uses unit questions and, unfortunately, you're not gonna be using unit questions anymore."

Some of the student teachers thought that their students did not notice a difference in the methods. Jamie Lynn explained that because she teaches in a department that uses similar methods of instruction that she learned to use, her students probably did not see much of a difference. Ned explained that his students got "really curious" about participating in the new methods occasionally, but he did not "know if they recognized" the difference in the lessons as they had not "had another history class yet so they don't have any comparison."

On the other hand, two of the student teachers described students as not receptive to the new practices they were enacting. Phillip said students were "apprehensive" about using Central Questions, particularly daily questions. He said that an assignment he used in economics based on a daily question "was one of the more challenging things they have ever done." He thought students had trouble grasping what he was trying to do with them as "[i]t was something that went over their head using claims and quotations to debate about it." Amanda explained that students "really like" essential questions during the first interview, yet their excitement had faded as the semester continued. During the second interview, she said

I think the excitement's kind of losing its effect on them now that they're doing it every day. Yeah, they're not as big as fans on them anymore. They don't like trying to answer them every day in class. They're like, 'Really? Do we have to do this every day, like a different question?' At first it was just something different, something new, so that's why they liked it.

While many of the student teachers thought their students seemed excited about the practices, these two did not.

As a whole, it did not appear from the interview data that student teachers considered their students an influential aspect of their experience in using new methods. Student teachers seemed to approach every aspect as a normal part of teaching, something every teacher experiences. It seems that student teachers need specific opportunities to think about their students on different dimensions, such as engagement, in relation to new practices they are attempting. For instance, student teachers had the responsibility to show evidence of a substantive conversation between students at least one time during the semester, yet they could show this at any time with any lesson. What if student teachers coupled substantive conversation with a specific practice and had to consider why it did or did not occur during the practice? In this way, student teachers would be more likely to consider student reactions to their teaching and try to problem solve the use of specific practices.

Challenge in implementing new practices to students. Student teachers reported one conceptual challenge in implanting new practices to students: adapting them to suit the level of the learners in the classes. Two student teachers (Anthony and Hans) referenced age as a difficulty with the methods. Anthony said the difficulty was “just being very unfamiliar with what are the intellectual capabilities of a seventh grader.” Hans said during the first interview,

it is always a challenge to come up with a question that is going to be answerable for a 9th or 10th grader’s brain to come up with. . . . I know how I would want to say things, but students are not always going to pick up on things that I am saying.

By the second interview, Hans said this was no longer a challenge for him as he knew his students better now: “I know what they’re capable of and I feel like I’ve done a good job of preparing them to answer questions like that, especially forming arguments.” Two student teachers explained how difficult this practice was with students who needed learning accommodations. Jamie Lynn specifically mentioned English language learners and students with special needs and Amanda said she found using the methods she learned “very hard for some of the students, especially some of them with IEPs [individualized education programs].”

Conclusion about students. As a whole, students did not seem central to student teachers’ discussions about student teaching and using these new practices. Student teachers did not acknowledge any specific aspect of students as highly influential in regards to their use of practices or even to student teaching in general. The cause of this may be that the student teachers’ field schools were a familiar demographic to them and were relatively safe and high performing. This could cause student teachers to consider students a constant among influential parts of student teaching. In other words, these student teachers seem to have thought that students will always be present, to one degree or another, and will bring challenges and supports. These responses reveal a need for teacher educators to draw student teachers’ attention more specifically to the students in their classes. Student teachers need specific opportunities to consider student learning in relationship to the practices they are using and to gauge students’ experiences with new teaching methods.

Cooperating Teachers

Cooperating teachers are a central influence on student teachers. No person spends more time, has more dialogue, or has more of an opportunity to watch the student teacher and provide feedback on their teaching and their planning. Previous findings cite the cooperating teachers' direct influence on student teachers' use of target skills (Copeland, 1978) and the amount and content of general feedback from cooperating teachers to student teachers (Borko and Mayfield, 1995; Feiman-Nemser, 1987). Consistent with the literature, which suggests cooperating teachers as the primary influence during student teaching, my respondents describe the pivotal relationship their teachers had on them and on the practices they learned in their coursework.

For the most part, student teachers described the relationship between them and their cooperating teachers as positive. In six of the seven cases in my study, student teachers felt that their cooperating teachers were supportive, accommodating, and knowledgeable about teaching and schools. They felt their cooperating teachers provided conceptual support, a wealth of resources and anything else they needed. They also felt that their cooperating teachers provided procedural support, with practical advice about running a classroom, planning lessons, and relating to children as a teacher. Because of all of these dimensions, almost every one of the participants in my study had a positive learning experience. However, my study considered student teaching from a different perspective. Instead of looking at their experience in general terms, like those listed above, I explored their experiences in light of the practices they learned in teacher education. This new perspective revealed a much different picture of the student teaching experience and the types of challenges and supports they faced.

Student teachers explained three areas of support from cooperating teachers: providing resources, giving feedback on plans and lessons, and being open to the practices that student teachers learned in their university courses. For the remainder of this chapter, I explain each of these areas in its own section. Within each section, I describe how student teachers perceived the support their teachers gave and then I examine the effect it had on the student teachers' use of the practices or on the criteria of high-quality history instruction (student engagement, conceptual coherence, metacognition for students, and using and producing texts). Finally, at the end of this chapter, I describe two exceptionally challenging sub-cases of student teachers' experience with their cooperating teacher and explore how the student teachers managed the situation differently and made it successfully to the end of the semester.

Providing resources. One of the main conceptual supports that student teachers perceived from their cooperating teachers was through providing teaching resources. Student teachers reported that, in most cases, their teachers were willing and able to provide what they needed to be successful. Student teachers often viewed these resources as a support to their planning and teaching. However, in some cases, student teachers felt that these resources created conceptual and procedural challenges to their planning and teaching.

In most cases, student teachers reported that their cooperating teachers provided them with numerous teaching resources. In only two of the ten cases (Phillip cooperating teacher² and Ned), did the cooperating teacher not provide resources consistently. These two cooperating teachers were either new to the content or the teaching materials of the class and did not have many resources. In the other eight cases, student teachers reported

their teachers provided as many resources as they needed, including books, activities, and work sheets. Anthony said during both interviews that the main support his teacher offered was the “sheer volume of resources” she had for him. When he needed a resource, his cooperating teacher walked over the closet and “pulled out a stack of 50 of them.” Anthony said, “It is as simple as just asking. I have to remember when I am looking for something that it is easier to shoot her an email than spend an hour looking for it.” Amanda said her cooperating teacher “has a whole bookshelf of content-knowledge books, and before my units she usually g[ives] me some that she really liked.” Phillip explained that his cooperating teacher¹ gave him a binder that “had everything she had ever taught. For U.S. History literally had every piece of paper the students had and it included three or four student works for that activity.” In addition, he explained that she provided him all the resources from a Teaching American History Grant workgroup from the previous year.

For the most part, student teachers appreciated the resources their teachers provided. However, in some cases, student teachers felt these resources created a contextual challenge for them. During the second interview, Amanda said she did not feel as much freedom as she would like and that she often felt “pressured” to do things that her cooperating teacher gave her. She said, “she’ll bring it up over and over and over without necessarily saying, ‘I want you to do this,’ but it’s evident that she wants me to do it. I don’t know. So I felt a little bit pressured.” Amanda thought that her teacher desired to keep the same activities she found successful and was “nervous because she was being evaluated on that content.” Hans also felt limited by the resources his cooperating teacher gave him, which I will explain in detail near the end of the chapter.

Some student teachers felt that the resources their cooperating teachers provided challenged their use of the practices from teacher education. For instance, three student teachers (Ned, Amanda, and Anthony) thought their cooperating teachers were too reliant on the course textbook and felt inhibited in using learned practices. Ned felt pressured by his cooperating teacher to use the textbook. He explained that during their pre-student teaching meeting she said to him, "You know you are going to put this book's test software on your computer, and I expect you to use it." Ned explained, "That right there was almost alarming to me. In the fact that not that you can use it, or you can take from it, you can modify it but that you HAVE to use." Ned felt that he was not able to use as many outside resources to shape his own lessons because of this. He said

The way she teaches her class, and she told me this that expects it, is that they have to read and take notes from the book every night. So they have to use the book, they have to know the material out of the book. If we give a pop quiz in class, the material comes right out of the textbook; if we give a test, the material comes right out of the textbook. Like, so I think that has very much influenced the way I teach. That is part of the frustration.

Anthony also felt that his teacher's class was "contrary" to what he learned in his teacher education where he was "very much encouraged to go find supplemental texts." He learned "textbooks aren't bad, but they should not be the sole focus." Anthony felt that in his field classroom "textbooks are at the heart of [the] curriculum right now at [his] school."

Anthony was able to take the general theme from his textbook to create Central Questions for his units; therefore he did not feel limited by them.

In only one case (Jamie Lynn) did a student teacher consider the support from her cooperating teacher a direct conceptual support to the practices she learned in teacher education. Jamie Lynn explained that her placement school contained a Professional Learning Community of history and social science teachers that use central questions in their instruction. As a department, the social studies teachers work together to write and clarify the central questions and share resources together to utilize this style of instruction. Because of this structure, Jamie Lynn had a central question for every unit she taught, and a wealth of resources that attacked this question as central importance to the unit. For example, the central question during our second interview was “Explain the emergence of the modern world system and transitions that brought it about.” While this was not a question, per se, it still had the potential to meet all the criteria of engaging students, bringing content cohesion, and cohesion of student thought if executed properly. Because of Jamie Lynn’s placement in a culture built around central questions, she thought the resources from her cooperating teacher helped her plan the practices from her teacher education.

Feedback on planning and teaching. Providing feedback for planning and teaching to the student teachers was a conceptual and procedural support provided by the cooperating teachers. For this section, I consider “feedback for planning” as helping student teachers before they teach by looking at and commenting on lesson plans or co-planning with the student teacher, and “feedback on teaching” as any feedback a student teacher receives from the cooperating teacher after teaching the lesson. I explored two classifications of feedback: frequency and content. In both of these categories, there was a great deal of variance when looking across the ten different cases, with some student

teachers reporting almost no feedback and support and others reporting support almost every day.

For this section, I will give a brief explanation of student teachers' perceptions of the frequency of feedback from their cooperating teacher. Then I will explain their perceptions of the content of much of the feedback that student teachers received. Finally, I will explain how some of this feedback, either implicitly or explicitly, had the potential to be a challenge to the planning of the practices in my study. One inference I make from student teachers' descriptions of the feedback they received is that frequent feedback did not guarantee quality feedback when looking through the frame of specific practices.

Frequency of Feedback. The frequency of feedback that student teachers perceived from their cooperating teachers fell into three basic classifications: almost no feedback in planning and teaching, a lot at the beginning but tapering off near the end, and consistent feedback throughout the semester. According to student teachers, three of the ten cooperating teachers almost never asked for lesson plans and rarely, if ever, co-planned with them. Jeff told a story about his frustrating experience of planning with one of his cooperating teachers during the first interview:

I sent it for my first day. I was really excited, so I sent it to him like a week in advance, and the day I teach I ask him, 'So any comments?' He's like, 'Oh. Let me pull it up real quick. I haven't got a chance to look at it.'

Jeff explained his feelings about this: "Come on, jerk. I spent this entire time trying to plan my lesson. I've never even taught a full lesson before in my life. Like, tell me something." Jeff said that this interaction set the tone for the relationship he had with this teacher all semester. He said, "I'm gonna teach my class, he's gonna teach his. We'll go on from there."

Jeff said he did not send another lesson plan to cooperating teacher¹ and had never sent a plan to cooperating teacher². Jeff also explained during both interviews that he rarely received feedback on lessons he taught:

it was just kind of like, 'Here you go. Do your thing.' Like zero feedback. It's still zero feedback. I can think of only one time, maybe twice, that I've actually heard a comment after one of my lessons. I'm assuming I'm doing everything fine, like obviously not perfectly, but good enough that it's not a disaster. I have no idea, though.

Jeff explained that he was glad they did not "nitpick," but it bothered him. He said, "It's frustrating. . . . I'm not perfect, like how can I do something better?" Jeff thought that his cooperating teachers probably thought, "It's student teaching, and I will work my way through it, that with time the issues will iron themselves out." Similarly, Phillip reported cooperating teacher² gave feedback for the first few lessons and then "he just kind of checked out." Phillip said this lack of feedback frustrated him as well: "I wanted some sort of validation almost. I don't know if I am doing it right. I need some type of constructive criticism." While my data does not reveal the amount of feedback student teachers actually received, it is clear that neither Jeff nor Phillip felt that they had adequate feedback to help them reach their potential during student teaching.

Three cooperating teachers gave frequent feedback at the beginning of student teaching, but less throughout the semester. Both of Jamie Lynn's cooperating teachers were in this category. She said they were consistent about seeing lesson plans and helping her plan for the first two months, but as the semester went on, their help in planning and teaching tapered off. By interview 2, Jamie Lynn explained that both teachers had stopped

opening the lesson plans she sent and did not spend much time with her in planning or in the classes she taught. Hans' cooperating teacher also fell into this category, as I explain later in the chapter.

The final four cooperating teachers helped with lesson planning consistently throughout the semester. Phillip reported that though cooperating teacher¹ did not often look at his lesson plans, she worked with him in the planning process almost every week throughout the semester. He explained,

We would work week by week, and I would tell her the five days I had planned of what I wanted to cover. Then, by the certain day, I would have the activities planned of what I wanted to do, then we would go from there.

Likewise, Amanda reported that her teacher was also consistently helpful in her planning throughout the semester. Amanda said they would meet once per week, "I can ask her, 'Hey, this is what my lesson looks like, do you think I should change something?' and she'll sit down and look through the whole thing and just kind of offer input." Amanda also explained that she received feedback after every lesson she taught. Her cooperating teacher "watched every lesson and wrote down notes" on what Amanda "did good" and "can improve for the next time." This feedback was consistent throughout the semester. Ned stated that his cooperating teacher was also consistent with planning and feedback. He explained that she would ask him what activities, assessments, and bellwork he had planned almost every day. Ned said she would ask him: "Can I see your lesson plan? Can you physically hand it to me? Do you have copies made?" Finally, Anthony spoke in both interviews about how supportive his teacher was when it came to feedback on his lessons.

She was present during almost every lesson he taught, and together they would “debrief everything,” every time he taught a lesson.

Content of feedback. As a teacher educator, it is easy to gauge a placement based on the amount of feedback from cooperating teachers: the more feedback a student teacher receives the better. However, frequency of feedback is not a sufficient measure when considering the placement in terms of its support of the use of specific teaching practices. Student teachers’ responses suggest that the content of teachers’ feedback was a much more important gauge of quality. Though student teachers felt the feedback they received was helpful, it appeared to offer little in terms of their growth in the understanding and use of the practices they had learned. In addition, some feedback seemed to pose conceptual and procedural challenges to student teachers’ use of the practices they were learning. In the following paragraphs, I will give examples of the feedback student teachers perceived and show how some of the feedback seemed to challenge student teachers’ use of practices learned in their teacher education coursework.

The first case is that of Anthony. Most of the feedback Anthony reported to have received from his cooperating teacher concerned procedural knowledge that, in his perception, was a support to his teaching. For instance, on some occasions Anthony explained he was inconsistent with students who did not follow directions. His teacher intervened to help him understand that it was his role to keep the class on task. He said that her feedback was “very helpful . . . So many times it is little things that I want to incorporate into my lessons, but I completely forget to do.” Anthony also explained that he frequently received help “adapting” the educational methods he learned to his seventh grade classroom by “having the classroom where they physical move about once every

fifteen/twenty minutes.” During the second interview, Anthony said his cooperating teachers’ advice was beginning to set into his planning: “instead of telling them to study for a second, it was, ‘Ok, turn to the people in your group and tell them your plans for Thanksgiving.’ . . . kind of gives them a brain break.” Anthony also received advice about pacing his class sessions.

Though Anthony’s teacher gave frequent procedural feedback of teaching, she did not seem to give conceptual support that helped him utilize the practices he learned in his teacher training. Anthony explained that he did not think his cooperating teacher had a thorough understanding of the practices he learned in teacher training. He blamed himself for not explaining the practices he was trying. He said he needed to be “more intentional about saying, ‘Here is the method they taught me. Here is what it is supposed to do.’” Anthony said, “She is seeing my lesson plan before she knows what it is trying to do. So she doesn’t know the right lens to view it through until after it has already been performed.” Anthony explained that his teacher would have been able to help him more effectively if he would have been more prepared.

At one point, Anthony explained a situation that had the potential to pose a conceptual challenge to him in his use of the new practices. The situation centered around a conflict in feedback he received from me (in my post-interview field instructor role) about his Concept Formation lesson and his cooperating teacher’s view of the lesson. The concept Anthony used was medieval “siege warfare.” The only feedback Anthony reported from his cooperating teacher was that the lesson was somewhat redundant because they had already covered “siege warfare” in a previous class session. In the interview, Anthony critiqued himself in two dimensions: he did not choose a concept that was central to the

content and he did not introduce the texts and non-examples well. I too had flagged these as areas that needed improvement and gave him feedback and guidance for future lessons. Anthony explained that my feedback bothered his cooperating teacher. He stated that she said to him, “I can’t believe they said that [talking about this feedback]. That was such a good lesson you planned. How could they criticize this thing [his Concept Formation lesson]?” Anthony explained that he did not agree with her assessment and thought the feedback I gave was very helpful. This situation posed a potential conceptual challenge because this student teacher faced a choice about who to listen to: his field instructor or his cooperating teacher. Instead of working together, these two influential people were at odds with one another.

A second case where a cooperating teacher emphasized procedural support of teaching was that of Amanda. In this case, the procedural support not only did not help her with what she saw as her most pressing needs as a fledgling teacher, it had the potential to hinder her use of the practices learned from teacher education. Amanda explained that she often received procedural feedback, such as improving transitions between activities and calling on different types of students. While Amanda found this feedback helpful, she never received feedback on the “most challenging part of her being a student teacher”: inducing substantive conversation amongst students. During the first interview, Amanda explained that a common problem in her class was that students did not engage with each other or her about the material. Amanda thought her problem was “not always posing the right questions that are debatable” and not focusing on “hot topics” and “controversial issues.” This diagnoses related to the advice she stated that her field instructor gave her about managing her classroom discussions. Amanda explained that she often focused on “easy

answers that they can find,” which she thought stifled class discussion. When she asked her mentor teacher for help with this, Amanda explained she “said to wait longer to make ‘em feel uncomfortable [so they] talk more, ‘Cause sometimes I’ll move on without waiting for another person to jump in.” When I asked Amanda if this advice was helpful, she said, “Yeah, a little bit. Some of the classes just sit there and stare at their desks.” Amanda felt that she needed help with questioning and focusing on content that would engage students, a very difficult procedural task, which was the advice her field instructor gave. The advice she explained to have received from her cooperating teacher focused not on crafting strong methods of questioning or making the content engaging and relevant to students; rather it was more “wait-time,” based on a more outdated and surface process-product model of teaching.

During the second observation, Amanda received procedural support in planning that seemed to undermine the central purpose of her hooking lesson: engaging students into the content. Amanda’s teacher wanted her to integrate a “content preview” of the entire unit for students, something the class did at the beginning of every unit. During their co-planning, Amanda and her cooperating teacher worked together to decide whether to put this review of the content at the beginning. They “worried that if [they] put it at the end that [they] would run out of time and not get to it, or at the end of the lesson. Amanda was “on the fence,” but followed her mentor’s advice to “give them a brief overview and then go more in-depth as opposed to going in-depth about this one situation, and then zooming back out.” The preview took almost seven minutes of class time. During that time, Amanda showed some photos from the era, reviewed the content they would talk about during that chapter, and called on students to answer questions about photos from the era.

Amanda explained that she thought she made the wrong decision by putting it at the beginning. She said, “I know in hooking lessons you’re supposed to hook them right off the bat, and this [the review] isn’t the hook part. . . . I thought about this when I was debating whether to put it at the beginning or at the end.” From Amanda’s perspective, her cooperating teacher’s advice was to maintain the culture of the class by using a preview at the beginning because of possible time constraints. This, by Amanda’s statement, may have undermined the purpose of a hooking lesson. Amanda’s cooperating teacher could have helped Amanda consider the larger unit and hooking lesson purpose and make her teaching decisions based on that. Instead, her cooperating teacher’s attention seemed to be on classroom culture and procedural details. The advice Amanda explained seemed consistent with doubts that she expressed about her cooperating teacher’s ability to help her teach the practices from teacher education. Amanda said, “I don’t think she necessarily knows much of anything about them honestly. . . . She has great activities and ideas, but she doesn’t know the methods that we talk about.” This case, as with the last, suggests that some student teachers thought their cooperating teachers could not help them use the practices they needed to, but also gave advice that ran counter to the using the practices.

Phillip’s perception of cooperating teachers¹ and 2s’ advice also suggests that they focused on procedural support; a focus that, in one case, caused Phillip to miss an opportunity to use his teacher training and in the other, seemed to impede his ability to use the new practices. Before Phillip’s Concept Formation lesson on “opportunity cost,” cooperating teacher² told him to add the journal question, “What goes into your decision-making when deciding whether to study or sleep at night?” Phillip said his cooperating teacher² “likes to have at least one [journal question] a week, and he knew he wasn’t going

to be doing one the next day. So we kind of quickly made one up to keep up with consistency in the classroom.” In his methods class, Phillip learned about using all parts of the lesson for a purpose, creating a more conceptually cohesive class, including using journal questions that can prime students’ thinking about the day’s inquiry. Preparing a journal question was an opportunity for Phillip and his cooperating teacher to think together about practices in the classroom and the larger purposes of his lesson. Instead, however, Phillip reported that his cooperating teacher² focused on the procedural “culture” of the class rather than on the larger structure of the unit and cohesion of the content.

Phillip explained a similar experience with cooperating teacher¹. This situation, however, seemed to undermine his teacher training on creating cohesive units. In the methods course, student teachers learned to plan whole units that cohered around a central unit problem. Phillip explained that cooperating teacher¹’s planning help made it difficult to use this training in three ways. First, they used a week-by-week method of planning instead of thinking about whole units. This made creating units more difficult because if a unit spanned more than five days, he could not plan with an “overall picture of the unit in mind.” Second, Phillip said his cooperating teacher¹ used what he called the “divide and conquer” method. He said, “we would divide it [the unit] up, do our work and then come back together . . . we would determine who would take a couple days and then make it cohesive. We would see the end of their day and the beginning of my day, and make it connect.” Phillip said this “divide and conquer” method made it difficult for him to plan a whole unit with an overall structure because he was only doing half the planning. Finally, when Phillip and his cooperating teacher¹ planned together they “would grab stuff from her past units and look at the standards” and also use “stuff [he] had gotten from other

teachers in the hallway” and put them all together in his lessons and units. Again, this patchwork type of planning did not provide him with conceptual support that could have helped him think through the overall direction and cohesion of the unit.

Phillip’s hooking lesson seemed to show some effects of this patchwork planning. He had found two activities related to imperialism and inserted them both in the lesson with what seemed to be little attempt to frame or purpose either one. As a result, his lesson seemed like two disjointed activities. As he watched the video, he too had a sense of problem about the lesson: “I think to me I was able to create the purpose in my head as to why they are doing it, but they never knew.” As he saw his lesson, he realized that students probably had no idea what he was doing. Phillip admitted that he found two different activities he liked and just “smooshed them together.” He said his cooperating teacher¹ gave him no help in planning this time and the only feedback he reported about the lesson from her was, “She liked it.” One potential result of this lack of planning help and feedback was his assumption that the lesson was cohesive. Phillip said he did not recognize a problem until he watched the lesson in the interview days later. If not for the video recording and the discussion we had to think more critically about the lesson, Phillip would never have realized how disjointed his lesson was.

There were additional cases when the student teachers reported feedback from cooperating teachers on planning and teaching that may not have undermined the practices, but did not seem to help student teachers’ use of the practices in any way. Ned said his teacher never gave him feedback on Central Questions. The only time she came close was when he used the question, “Did the Catholic Church do more harm than good?” in a Catholic high school, a question that had the potential to offend some students’ parents.

Jeff said the he only received feedback from cooperating teacher2 twice, both times for one hour on a Friday about the unit starting Monday. This frustrated Jeff, who explained his need for long term planning and organization. Jeff said giving only two days to plan “impairs [his] ability to properly present the material in a way that makes [him] feel confident with it and gives [his] students confidence that [he] knows what [he’s] talking about.” These student teachers did not perceive enough help from their cooperating teachers in planning these problem-based practices they learned in teacher education. At times, the help even seemed to undermine their use of these practices.

One example of supportive feedback. Only one student teacher (Jamie Lynn) perceived the instruction from her cooperating teacher1 as a direct conceptual support to constructing and using the practices she learned. Jamie Lynn said that cooperating teacher1, who attended the same teacher training as Jamie Lynn, understood the practices and expectations of her teacher education program and was able to help her grow in her understanding. She said that cooperating teacher1 uses central questions in “every lecture, everyday.” Jamie Lynn felt that her instruction was improving: “The fact that we teach around questions, and she challenges me in that, I feel like I’m doing students justice.” Jamie Lynn explained to some extent why cooperating teacher1’s teaching helped her use the practices she learned in her coursework:

How she organized lectures . . . her arguments, just watching her work. The amount of research she does still just to make things work is impressive. The questions she creates for her lessons and her arguments . . . ‘Every time I think of a lecture I think of them as arguments and the argument I want the students to see. Like, *How did the reformation change European thinking?* I will tell you how during my lecture.

Here are my three points on how it did.' Just seeing how she breaks those down . . . she's a really great teacher in a sense of her planning and her hard work. Like, she cares a lot about giving them the best product, and that's what I'm learning a lot from her.

Because of cooperating teacher1's knowledge of the practices that Jamie Lynn learned, she was able to give clear and constructive feedback to Jamie Lynn and help her clarify her lesson plans: "Sometimes she would say, 'Why don't you pull out your enduring understanding? Really what do you want your students to get by the end of this?'" From these reports, Jamie Lynn seems to have gained from cooperating teacher1 the ability to see the larger structure and purpose of a lesson and teach toward this.

Additionally, Jamie Lynn received feedback that helped her utilize a Concept Formation lesson. Jamie Lynn said cooperating teacher1 helped her clarify and use the texts that she chose more effectively:

'Hey, why don't you give a map to this one?' and 'Why don't you break down a couple of these more words for the students?' So she helped me with scaffolding the actual reading. . . . She said, 'Hey, I had to read this one through three times, so the students are going to, too.' So she was good at giving me some advice there."

Choosing and editing are some of the central parts of planning a Concept Formation lesson, and from Jamie Lynn's perspective, cooperating teacher1 helped her do this.

The feedback that Jamie Lynn perceived did not, according to her interview, come at the expense of procedural advice. Jamie Lynn said that cooperating teacher1 also helped her with aspects of teaching with procedural and management aspects of teaching. Jamie Lynn said, "She's like, 'walk around more. Rephrase more. . . . use more descriptive verbs.'

Those kinds of things or, ‘Don’t always call on the same people.’” Jamie Lynn did not feel she received advice that was helpful for planning and teaching the practices from teacher education at the expense of the practical knowledge that other student teachers received.

Openness to fulfilling program requirements. A final aspect that almost every student teacher described was their cooperating teacher’s openness to teach the practices they learned in their teacher education courses. From student teacher responses, cooperating teachers’ openness ranged from purposeful accommodation to apathy toward the student teacher’s plan. In some cases, the cooperating teacher even expressed some interest in using methods that student teachers brought into their classrooms. Though many of the cooperating teachers were open to the practices, some student teachers stated that they felt an underlying tension between the expectations from their teacher education coursework and their cooperating teacher. For the most part, student teachers spoke openly about the tension they experienced. In some cases, however, I draw conclusions from inferences based on student teachers’ responses.

In almost every case, student teachers felt supported by their cooperating teachers to use the practices they learned in their teacher education coursework. Anthony’s teacher asked him multiple times throughout the semester, “Are we giving you the opportunities to do the things you need to do for your requirements?” Anthony said that she even began using one of the strategies that Anthony learned in his program. Jeff also explained how open both of his cooperating teachers were to him using the practices. In the first interview, Jeff said he was not sure how cooperating teacher1 felt about what he was teaching, but the morning after the interview cooperating teacher1 “said he really liked the idea of having students walk in and answer the unit question” and talked about using them himself in his

lectures. Also, on one occasion, Jeff's other cooperating teacher walked into the classroom with another staff member to talk about Jeff's Central Question for the unit. Cooperating teacher2 told the other "teacher how great of a unit question he [Jeff] created and how it can be interpreted so many different ways. He asked the teacher, 'How would you answer that?'" Both of Phillip's cooperating teachers supported him using the practices he learned. Cooperating teacher1 said to him on more than one occasion when they talked about Central Questions, "I am sorry, I am probably a terrible example of teaching right now." Phillip's said cooperating teacher2, on the other hand, "could care less. As long as I am teaching the content, he is happy."

The openness cooperating teachers showed in regard to student teachers' university responsibilities seemed to be the case in almost every conversation between them. Regardless of this openness, however, some student teachers felt uncomfortable having professional dialogues with their mentor teacher about the use of these new practices. In some cases, this hesitance was due to the power differential between them. While planning her Concept Formation lesson, Amanda's cooperating teacher told her to use the concept *industrialization*. Amanda did not think this concept would work well for this lesson. She said, "I just felt we had kind of talked about industrialization the day before. We had done a factory simulation and so I already knew that they basically had the idea of what it was. . . . I knew that they might get frustrated with it." Even so, Amanda did not mention this to her cooperating teacher. She said

I don't really know why I didn't . . . I just don't wanna upset her too much or something, 'cause I know how important she is with my whole certification process.

I just don't wanna get on bad terms with her. . . . I don't want her to think that I'm

acting like I know more.

Whether Amanda was correct about the concept “industrialization” being a strong candidate for a Concept Formation lesson is not central to my argument here. What is critical here is the fact that she did not feel open to talking with her mentor about the situation. This dialogue could have been a time when her cooperating teacher explained to her what she could add to the students’ understanding about this concept. Instead, Amanda just did the lesson and expressed dissatisfaction with the way it turned out, hoping she would make it through student teaching.

In another case, Jeff felt that he could not express himself professionally about a movie cooperating teacher² wanted him to show. Jeff thought that movie was not interesting to students nor an effective way to present the content, yet he did as teacher² asked. Jeff said

It was a horrible video. He was telling jokes through the whole time and it wasn’t funny. He thought it was really funny. I can’t recreate those lame jokes the next hour, so I’m like, I’m thinking to myself, why the hell are we even watching this? Like, the students are sleeping. They’re not even doing anything, so I finally shut the dang thing off [during his own lesson] and just started talking.

When I asked Jeff why he did not challenge cooperating teacher²’s direction he said partly because he is a “people-pleaser,” but it also had to do with the fact that his cooperating teachers wrote his review for the School of Education: “I don’t want the opportunity to arise that he’s writing his weekly memo and be, you know, ‘He kind of gave me a little push-back on this,’ even though the end’s probably [not] gonna affect my grade, but I hold myself to too high of an academic standard to even put that in question.” This situation of a

student teacher unwilling to voice their opinion to their teacher also occurred in the case of Hans, which I will explain more at the end of this chapter.

In a related scenario, some student teachers were reluctant to talk with their cooperating teachers about the methods that they learned because they did not want to come off as arrogant to veteran teachers. Jeff explained that he had some difficulty in having conversations with his teachers about the practices he learned in teacher education. Jeff explained that cooperating teacher1's style is more traditional, lecture based, and "his tests are the multiple choice that are very, 'Here's the definition out of the book.'" Jeff said if he spoke about the practices he learned to teacher1, it would be like saying: "Here, I have this awesome strategy that really focuses the lesson and gives purpose to the lesson. You've never used it before, so you're obviously doing something wrong" Jeff decided to circumvent this problem by telling them that using these practices was a requirement of the program. Jeff said, "So I put on that I *have* to have a unit question on the board. . . . I put it as a requirement of the university, so it didn't look like a ploy to downgrade his teaching." Amanda also was hesitant to talk with her cooperating teacher about her teacher training because it would imply something. Amanda said, "you don't want to be talking about essential questions or something, and tell them that you prefer this way . . . if you are co-teaching their lesson that they created, you can't change their lesson necessarily." These student teachers did not feel the freedom to speak about the lessons they learned for fear of offending their cooperating teacher.

In both of these scenarios, due to the power differential and an unwillingness to critique their cooperating teacher, student teachers did not feel the freedom to have an open and professional dialogue with their mentor teachers. Though the cooperating

teachers expressed their openness to the methods student teachers learned, the student teachers still did not feel they were in a position to have professional dialogues. In this argument, I am not making the claim that the student teacher knew the correct way to construct a lesson or to utilize these methods more effectively than their cooperating teacher. Instead, I am trying to make a case about the need for open dialogue between student teachers and cooperating teachers. Without dialogues such as this, how can teacher education programs expect to have cooperating teachers that are knowledgeable about practices student teachers are learning? Also, how can they expect to prepare student teachers to join a profession that requires collaboration and dialogue? These situations in my study uncover this issue of the power differential and student teaching.

Another potential problem hidden beneath the cooperating teachers' openness to the methods is that some of the statements or actions they allegedly made had the potential to undermine the student teachers' views of the value of the practices they learned in their teacher education programs. The first case is that of Anthony. For the first few weeks of the semester, Anthony's teacher told him that she did not want him "changing things" by using the practices he learned in his teacher education courses. Instead, she wanted him to maintain the current learning structure until after the "students had established some solid routines" and after they finished the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) test, or the state of Michigan's standardized testing. Anthony stated during the first interview that she had "a very set curriculum" and that she wanted him to utilize her methods of instruction, "what she is used to teach for the last 10 years." He explained her current method of teaching as "very book based" [text-book], and "contrary to what we have been presented with here" [at The University of Michigan]. Anthony said,

for each section of the textbook, we sit up front and read the textbook to the students and explain to them the best way for you to improve your reading skills is to follow along with us. 'If you have questions, raise your hand.' I will stop every paragraph and maybe add something anecdotal or explain something a little more in depth. It is really sitting there reading and lecturing out of the textbook.

After the class finished the MEAP test, Anthony said that now she was open to him using "some experimental stuff," or the practices he learned in his courses. It seems that his cooperating teacher's view of using only her method of teaching until after the standardized test had the potential to influence Anthony's thinking about the effectiveness of the methods he learned for standardized testing schools.

Additionally, Anthony suspected that his teacher doubted the value of the practices he learned and needed to practice. While he thought his teacher understood the practices he learned in teacher education, he doubted "how much usefulness she sees in 'em at a given time." Anthony explained that at first his cooperating teacher saw his responsibilities to the university as "jumping through hoops," little more than "a bunch of lesson types you have to do." Anthony thought this was particularly evident with the use of Central Questions for instruction. He said, "I guess we focused a lot on crafting the question just right, and she doesn't see the need for the amount of detail put into it." This example shows some tension between what teacher educators want of student teachers, to spend time reflecting on their planning and teaching critically, and what teachers think is valuable for the classroom.

Two other student teachers also perceived that their teacher reacted negatively to the practices they were learning. Amanda claimed her cooperating teacher "flat-out told

[her] she doesn't like Concept Formation lessons. . . . she thought that they wasted time." Amanda thought this resulted in her teacher not taking the time to learn the practices. Amanda made the same claim in the interview about Concept Formation: "I do think it takes up a little bit too much time, and I think that if your students already kind of know the definition, and you can tell that they know it you can just move on." While I make no causal claims, Amanda agreed with her teacher about Concept Formations and gave the same argument against them. Amanda's cooperating teacher made a judgment about a practice she was neither trained in nor had complete knowledge of, as her understanding came only from watching it be enacted by a novice teacher.

In Phillip's case, his cooperating teacher² did not make direct comments about the practices he was learning, but commented negatively about the teacher education's philosophy of integrating a student teacher into the classroom gradually. Phillip said that one day teacher² said to him, "Today you are taking over the classroom. You have got two units and then you are done." Phillip said he explained to him that the University of Michigan usually does "a ramp up and ramp down" with student teachers to ease them into their teaching experience. His teacher² said to him, "nothing against you, but I am against UM's [The University of Michigan's] train of thought on the whole ramp up ramp down, I am just going to put you up there." He told Phillip stories about how his own cooperating teacher just "threw him" into student teaching. Like in the case of Amanda, Phillip expressed the same sentiment as his teacher². He said, "I think you learn best by getting thrown in the situation and seeing how you do." Again, I am not claiming causality of Phillip's attitude, but it seems that this same sentiment might be more than a coincidence. With so much emphasis in teacher education programs on the difficulty of teaching and

novice teachers' need for a learning community and detailed feedback about lessons to utilize new practices effectively, it is discouraging to hear that cooperating teachers encourage this experiential notion of teacher learning.

In each of these cases, the cooperating teacher stated that they were open to the student teacher using the practices they learned, but then made it seem to the student teacher that they did not think the practices were an effective way of teaching. It would be difficult for a novice to be able to navigate through such conflicting messages sent from their mentor and from the university while learning to effectively use new practices, not to mention learning to manage many of the procedural aspects of teaching. What if, instead of sending negative messages about the practices and the university, cooperating teachers joined in the dialogue with teacher educators? What if cooperating teachers did not come to a conclusion about a practice that failed because they watched a novice attempt it, but rather could watch the novice enact a practice and see not only what they were trying but how they could make it better?

Narratives Of Two Sub-Cases

The following two sub-cases show situations when a student teacher perceived large amounts of tension between their teacher education program and their cooperating teachers. These cases are important because they bring together many of the pieces of this chapter, such as tensions in regards to resources and undermining the learning student teachers experienced, into single situations. Both of these student teachers had to find a way to make their placement work throughout the semester. Both student teachers experienced a large amount of tension initially, and then found success in very different ways. The first case, Ned, as a whole was a success as he was able to find a mediating

principle that worked well to please both the university and his cooperating teacher. The second case, Hans, is perhaps less successful as he claims he had to resolve the tension he was under by simply giving in to his cooperating teacher's demands, even if that meant not teaching to his potential and not being able to utilize what he learned in teacher education.

Ned

During the first interview, Ned expressed the tension he felt in his position as a novice placed between the university and his cooperating teacher. He said

I don't think she likes the way UM [The University of Michigan] does things. I think from day one, when I have talked about some certain things I think there was some hostility about that. Not like, I couldn't do it, but that she herself wasn't somebody that taught like that or did things like that. And seeing the way her other classes run, it is kind of apparent she doesn't use a lot of what we have learned. . . . from day one, I have almost felt like there was going to be a conflict between UM [The University of Michigan] and my school. And it is not something that I feel threatened by. It is that I feel like I have to please her and I have to please UM [The University of Michigan], and that also adds to the frustration.

Ned was experiencing tension between his placement and the university, something that clearly upset him in the first interview. Ned also felt she was very critical of some of the practices he learned in teacher education. He explained that she said, "All these universities say they are presenting a new program, and they have the most cutting edge techniques or activities. But in the real world, we have been doing those all the time." Ned said, "Right from the start it was very clear she did not think highly of the program."

Ned said he thought that central questions were a source of conflict between his cooperating teacher and the university. This, however, did not stop Ned from using central questions in instruction. He said, "I feel that they are a good way of instruction and I am very comfortable in using them and forming them . . . I almost don't think you can really organize what you are doing without having some theme to tie it all together." Though his cooperating teacher did not approve of the way he learned to structure lessons, Ned continued to plan this way.

By the second interview, much of the tension that Ned expressed in the early part of the semester seemed to subside. He said his cooperating teacher did not have the attitude he once thought she had: "I don't think she was as hostile toward the program as she made it out back then . . . I think she sees value in it, it is not just something she personally does." As an example, he said his cooperating teacher was not against central questions as he thought. He said, "I don't know how she feels about them personally, but she has told me she likes the way I have been able to use questions to help students come to that understanding." It is unclear whether his initial view of his cooperating teacher was simply a false perception, or whether it was how she felt about the practices that changed as she watched him teach and understood more clearly what he was doing. Regardless, the beginning of Ned's semester was difficult for him due to his perception of the conflict between the program and his teacher, but resolved in a favorable way.

The real turning point, Ned thought, was when he understood the mediating principle that both his teacher and university personnel wanted from him. During the second interview, he could better articulate the tension he felt early in the semester. He explained that his cooperating teacher "was so critical what I was doing was wrong on her

end. And then when I spoke to [field instructor], I was trying to make [cooperating teacher] happy and then I wasn't doing what was expected on this end [in his university program]." This tension, however, was almost gone by the second interview as Ned learned how to manage the relationship between his cooperating teacher and his education program. He claimed to see what "really makes both sides happy or what both sides expect." He said, "I think I have found a "peaceful middle ground between those, but it was very difficult at first to find." Ned reached the peaceful middle ground by realizing that both sides—the university and his teacher—did not expect 'perfect lessons.'" He said he just needed to focus on what is going to help the students the most; "once [he] reached that point, it has made it that much easier." He said, "I have not felt like I did back then, where it was a tension between the two. . . . It is more like, 'What you are doing is helping the students learn, that is a good thing, we are both happy.'" Ned said now he feels that rather than tension between the two sides, "both sides have advice to give about my lessons and about my activities, but I feel that both sides are helpful. It is not a give and take; it is a both working together now."

Hans

Hans' situation contained more explicit tensions than Ned's. Rather than the student teacher only feeling internal conflict, there was reportedly a conflict between the cooperating teacher and Hans. This situation was one in which the student teacher perceived almost every issue I discussed throughout this chapter, including a focus on practical issues that detracted from the coherence of the lesson, conflict over the resources that the cooperating teacher provided, and tension over what Hans needed to do and what he thought his cooperating teacher wanted him to do. Instead of mediating both sides as

Ned was able to do, Hans did whatever he thought would placate his cooperating teacher because he thought this was his only path to finishing student teaching favorably.

The situation began with Hans planning and teaching his Concept Formation lesson on *imperialism*, one of the first lessons that he taught in the classroom. Hans' teacher had given him feedback on the lesson plan based on what he thought was procedurally and practically necessary for the class. This feedback, however, made Hans' lesson much less cohesive and clear. First, he told Hans to cut the lesson down in time by removing a speech that Hans planned as the beginning of the lesson, an imperialist speech by Alfred Beveridge to the US Senate after the Spanish-American War. The speech, however, was the part that tied his hook of the movie *Avatar* with the rest of the lesson. As a result, the movie scene seemed unconnected to the rest of the lesson, much like a teacher's ploy to appeal to students through a movie they had seen. Hans' original plan was for students to read portions of the speech and consider the same questions that guided them while watching the movie.

To cut additional time from the lesson, Hans' cooperating teacher wanted him to remove some of the examples and non-examples. This move further undermined the basic structure and purpose of the Concept Formation lesson. Hans' cooperating teacher told him to remove all of the examples of imperialism that were not directly found in American history. As they learned about Concept Formation in their methods course, I encouraged my student teachers to use examples of each concept from multiple eras and countries in order to have more information from which to establish an over-arching definition of the concept. Hans' said his teacher wanted him to use "something they would be familiar with." Hans did not agree with this advice. He said he "could have found better examples

otherwise.” At that point, however, Hans felt no latitude to say no to his teacher. By only using American examples with which the students were familiar, Hans’ students may have missed understanding the global scale of imperialism.

After the lesson, Hans’ teacher gave him two main pieces of feedback, improve transitions between activities and pace the class period more effectively. Hans’ said his teacher told him to make “sure there is clear connections between one activity to another,” advice Hans found helpful. The second piece of advice Hans received was about his class period running twenty minutes short. This was something that upset his teacher very much and caused a conflict between them. Hans explained that his cooperating teacher rebuked him for his “lack of preparation.” In return, he said to his teacher, “Well, I cut that [the speech and the other sources] under your recommendation.” Hans said his teacher offered no response to this and replied, “You just need to be more prepared.” Hans said in his interview, “My lesson was shorter because of what he suggested to me. I don’t think my lesson was shorter based on me not being able to draw things out. . . . I just ran with what he suggested.” Hans said he “was ridiculed for mistakes [he] thought [he] was allowed to make, but, that wasn’t the case.”

Hans did not think cooperating teacher understood Concept Formation at all. He said,

I don’t know if it is my job to describe what I am supposed to do. I thought I did an all right job describing it. I don’t know whose fault it is. . . . I guess if I am going to teach something like a concept formation, I should be able to explain myself to whoever is going to hear it.

During the first interview that Hans said he was experiencing a large amount of tension between his placement and the school of education. The source of much of this tension seemed to be Hans' perception—real or perceived—of the competing notions of teaching that his cooperating teacher held and with what his education program was trying to accomplish. During the second interview, Hans explained the first half of student teaching as follows:

The first six weeks were rough because we were trying to negotiate this whole thing. We are given this set of expectations, a set of competencies by the School of Ed [education]. . . . Which is fine. I feel confident that I can meet all those, but, it is the idea of having an attending [cooperating] teacher who is...not completely informed, I just don't think he had a full idea of what is entailed in the Rounds Project, and I don't think he has bought into it.

Hans said that his teacher's use of central questions was "non-existent." In one conversation, the cooperating teacher asked Hans if central questions were "even practical." Hans explained to him that he had seen successful instruction built solely from central questions used in two previous field placements. His teacher responded with "Oh, well, I am not completely turned off to it. I just have my way of doing things." Hans explained his teacher's current teaching style as

Very based in lecture, Powerpoint slides. Presenting information linearly, he compliments them with his own anecdotes, playing devil's advocate, asking certain questions, but that presentation is not necessarily there, and the students don't necessarily pick up on it. They might pick up on the controversy, but there is nothing there to bring it all together.

Hans explained he was trying to learn to teach with Central Questions because “they make the material coherent. . . . It goes back to the power of the questions. I feel like humans naturally want to answer questions.” Hans also said he sees the value of these questions as “they make history more cohesive, as opposed to one damn thing after another.” From these statements, Hans seemed to understand the value of using Central Questions in instruction and how they help teachers utilize the principles of high-quality history instruction.

Though Hans saw value in teaching with questions, he felt limited to do so in his field classroom. Immediately after his Concept Formation lesson, Hans’ teacher supplied him with all of his materials for teaching the class, including activities and Powerpoint slides. Hans reported his teacher said to him, “You just don’t have time to be making units from scratch,” and was “strong in his desire” for Hans to use the materials. Instead of trying to help Hans utilize the instructional practices he learned in his education courses, Hans felt his teacher wanted him to adopt his style. Hans said he “had to play the game” for his cooperating teacher”

I mean teach how he wants me to teach. It seemed that my attending [cooperating] teacher just had a set way, set philosophy of how he thought a student teacher experience should be. . . . He wanted me to kinda abide by what he’s done. I mean, I’m like his sixth student teacher, something like that. So he wanted me to follow the route that he had laid out already, you know, put forth in front of me, which now that I think about it, I probably should have just done it from the get-go and made my life a lot easier.

Hans told his cooperating teacher that he felt he was “between a rock and a hard place . . . trying to meet his expectations but then trying to meet the expectations here [UM].” His cooperating teacher responded with, “I don’t know why you feel that way. . . . I have given you all this stuff, this is thirteen years of experience right here. You need to take what I have given you and make it your own.” Hans said he felt limited in what he could say to his teacher about the work he was doing and expressed issues with the power differential between them. He said,

I feel like I was walking around on eggshells. Like I need to be very selective in my word choice or something bad will happen. I don’t know. I don’t know what type of power he yields as far as me being a teacher. That is not exactly clear to me. The way [field instructor] has described it; he has a lot of pull as far as that is concerned. I don’t know how true that is, but that is how I feel about it.

Hans expressed a sense of problem with his entire student teaching experience. He said student teaching “requires more effort than it should. Maybe that is wrong too. Just, this is incredibly difficult. I feel like I have to meet these two sets of expectations that don’t necessarily agree with each other. Like is this possible?” In addition to learning to manage content, students, and his new profession, Hans felt caught in what he perceived as a tension between the expectations between his teacher education program and his cooperating teacher.

Hans, like Ned in the previous scenario, found a way to mediate the situation with his cooperating teacher and be successful in his placement:

What I have done is taken all the resources he has given me, his power points, his material and made it my own. With a little bit of editing, of course, but keeping the

same basic structure, I have been able to create it so it meets my needs, as far as the expectations here [teacher education program], teaching with intellectual problems. Unlike Ned who found that helping students was a mediating principle, Hans decided to use what his teacher gave him and meet the expectations he had from both his teacher and from his teacher education program. Hans said once he did this he “turned a corner” in his placement. He said that his teacher gained confidence in his work and their relationship improved dramatically.

During the second interview, Hans explained that, for much of the semester, he was dealing with these same issues. Hans said that, until the final 2-3 weeks of his placement, he was still getting a lot of “criticism about his teaching” from his cooperating teacher that he had difficulty with:

I thrive under criticism. You tell me I’m doing something wrong, I’m gonna fix it. I’ve always been that way. . . . but it was to the point where it wasn’t constructive anymore. I felt like I was getting the hell beat out of me for no real particular reason. It’s like, this is a learning experience for me, too. You know, just help me learn here, and quit pointing out all these negatives. I mean, it wasn’t even like, ‘Oh, you did this ok.’ I mean, it was just straight-up concentration on the negatives.

According to Hans, the first six out of ten weeks were filled with tension about how he would teach in his classroom. Hans said about the first part of the semester, “I really wasn’t sure if I was gonna make it. . . . it took me a while to negotiate the whole situation.” By the sixth week of the semester, Hans felt more a little more leeway to make decisions about his own teaching. He reiterated that using his teachers’ materials were the key to finding success in his classroom and explained the drastic change in the nature of the feedback

once he started using his teacher's lessons. The feedback ceased to be "major overhauls of lessons" and became small logistical items and minor practical changes. Hans also explained that once he decided to use his teacher's lessons, the feedback moved to other areas of his teaching and helped him at levels beyond just planning. An example of this was when his cooperating teacher helped him realize that he was "flat" in his teaching. His cooperating teacher helped him mediate his "flatness" by providing anecdotes for him to use in his teaching. Hans said, "he provides good examples to try to make this content come alive." Once Hans started using the materials, his cooperating teacher moved on to other procedural aspects of teaching such as teaching presence.

When I asked Hans why he chose to mediate his placement this way, by using everything his teacher gave him, he stated three reasons. First, he had confidence that the materials had worked in the class before and would be successful. Second, he admitted he did it to appease his teacher and be successful in student teaching. He said, "also just kinda appease him to a degree. . . I don't want to sound like a jerk, but to kind of make it easier on me, as far as getting through student teaching, I've kind of just taken whatever he's given me and kind of ran with it." Third, because Hans knew he could save himself a lot of work that he said he did not have time for: "creating lessons from scratch is a lot of work. Granted, I think I'm pretty good at it, but it takes a lot of time and effort, and I just don't feel like I'm allotted that time and effort right now." While Hans saw some benefits of the materials his teacher provided, he also saw them as a challenge to him using the practices he learned in teacher education. Hans said he felt "restricted to what he [his cooperating teacher] has. I can't really think outside of the box."

In one sense, Hans' story is a success in that he finished student teaching and earned his degree. Yet, in another sense, Hans had a miserable and stressful experience as a student teacher. He did not have the opportunity to plan or enact lessons as he wanted, nor was he able to teach to his potential. Most of the semester, Hans spent doing whatever he could to just make it through. In that sense, Hans' story is not a success. Rather it is an illustration of almost everything that is wrong with the student teaching semester, concentrated in one semester and on one student teacher.

Conclusion

This chapter contains the stories of seven student teachers' experiences with key people of influence during their student teaching semester. These experiences closely resembled previous research findings. The student teachers worked with a field instructor over the semester, and, for the most part, appreciated his feedback. Each student teacher had at least one cooperating teacher. In many ways, these student teachers had positive experiences with cooperating teachers who they often reported as supportive and accommodating. When looking at the overall picture of student teaching, most of these student teachers' experiences seem quite positive.

However, when considering these student teachers' experiences in light of specific practices, a much different picture about the relationships between the student teacher and some of the central people in this study forms. Student teachers perceived almost no conceptual support in planning and enacting their Concept Formation lesson. In only one case did a student teacher feel she received conceptual support in planning a Concept Formation lesson (Jamie Lynn) and only about one aspect of the lesson, using texts, rather than on the practice as a whole. Also, most of the student teachers reported having received

very little feedback from their cooperating teacher after the Concept Formation lesson. Most of the student teachers did not feel their cooperating teachers understood the practice well enough to give useful feedback on the lesson. Some student teachers even reported their cooperating teacher to have explicitly spoken against a Concept Formation lesson, questioning its usefulness for the classroom. Additionally, student teachers reported having received no help in planning their Concept Formation lesson from their field instructor (myself, as acting field instructor). However, they did receive feedback from their field instructor after their Concept Formation lesson and seemed to find this feedback extremely helpful. Some of the student teachers reported understanding or being able to integrate the practice more effectively after reflecting with their field instructor and considering the feedback they received. Students did not seem to affect the way that student teachers viewed the lessons or the enactment of them.

Student teachers also perceived very little help from their cooperating teachers in teaching with Central Questions, either conceptually or procedurally, with hooking the students into the inquiry or creating the questions. Student teachers reported that while many of the cooperating teachers were open to Central Questions, they perceived little help in either planning or enacting the Central Questions. As with the Concept Formation lesson, only one student teacher felt her mentor teacher (again, Jamie Lynn) helped to write and integrate these inquiries. Only one student teacher reported having received help in planning with Central Questions from her field instructor. The student teachers seemed to find feedback from their field instructors helpful and could articulate how this help furthered their understanding of Central Questions. Student teachers also reported that students generally liked Central Questions in the lessons.

When describing their experiences with these lessons in their classrooms, most of student teachers acknowledged tensions they experienced with their cooperating teachers. Student teachers seemed to want to use the practices, but felt that they often did not meld seamlessly in their cooperating teachers' classroom. Many student teachers reported that their cooperating teachers were open to the practices, but they also described multiple situations that displayed a lack of openness from the cooperating teacher. Most of the student teachers did not feel free to have a professional dialogue with their cooperating teachers about either Concept Formation or Central Question. Student teachers either felt bound by their teacher's authority or worried they would offend their teacher by using a different kind of lesson. In addition, most of them felt that their cooperating teachers were unable to provide support for them because they did not understand the practices they were using. Student teachers were also unclear about whose responsibility it was to explain the practices they were using to the cooperating teachers. Four student teachers seemed to think their mentor teachers treated the practices they learned as little more than requirements rather than valuable practices for a history classroom. Additionally, even when cooperating teachers provided procedural support student teachers needed, such as in planning and feedback, it had the potential to undermine the practices student teachers learned in their program and were trying to use in the classroom.

How did the influential people seem to affect the ways that student teachers apply, disregard, or modify the practices they learned? As a whole, the perceptions of student teachers about the central people of student teaching seems to imply a chasm between the university and the field in regard to the practices they learned. This chasm had the potential to limit the use of these practices and cause student teachers to disregard them.

Based on student teachers' perceptions, the people in these two places were not working in concert with one another to help student teachers learn to teach in unfamiliar ways. As such, student teachers need a much more united and organized effort from cooperating teachers and field instructors to help them make these practices an active part of their repertoire.

CHAPTER EIGHT: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This semester began and ended much like most, with all student teachers completing teacher training and becoming licensed educators. During the semester, all participants had some issues in their experience. Some student teachers had minor behavioral issues with students, such as “squirrelyness,” but they received advice from their field instructor or their cooperating teachers and managed the problem. Others had varying degrees of issues with cooperating teachers, issues that they managed through various means. By the end, all major issues had subsided, and seven student teachers became licensed teachers. When considering the output of the semester—seven out of seven completed the program—as our only frame, this was a successful teacher education semester.

However, the output of the semester was not my frame. My study resembles the recent work of Rozelle and Wilson (2012) who sought to look inside the “black box” of field experiences in order to “document the mechanisms at play in field experience and how those mechanisms interact (or fail to interact) with concomitant experiences in teacher education courses” (p. 1197). Like Rozelle and Wilson, I wanted to look inside the “black box” of the field experiences using a cohort of seven student teachers as my participants. I explored the “mechanisms at play” in the two worlds in which they reside—the field and

the university. I also sought to explore how these mechanisms interact with some “concomitant experiences” of teacher education, or the history specific problem-based learning practices Concept Formation and Central Questions.

In particular, my desire to perform this study was two-fold. First, I wanted to examine student teachers’ field experiences for conceptual, procedural, and contextual challenges and supports they faced in implementing the practices they learned in teacher education. I defined conceptual factors as those that affect the student teacher in their thinking of the content and the planning of lessons and units, procedural factors such as those that affect the actual execution of the lessons, and contextual factors such as those that affect the student teachers’ experience in the classroom or school. I chose these categories for analytic purposes only and based them on what I perceived to be large categories of potential sources of challenge or support during the student teaching semester. As with any framework for analyzing and understanding complex tasks, the categories I have chosen are not clearly defined and phenomenon did not always fit neatly into one of these categories.

Second, I wanted to examine the experiences of Rounds student teachers in their final semester. Finally, I was interested in Rounds student teachers’ experiences as they entered a more traditional student teaching model. My study of the “black box” of student teaching has unearthed some specificity about pre-service teacher learning and use of history problem-based instructional practices, the key people of the student teaching semester, and some experiences of the Rounds student teachers. In the rest of this chapter, I begin with an overview of the conceptual, procedural, and contextual challenges that emerged in my data and some conclusions about these challenges. I then describe the

synthesis of these findings and some implications for teacher education, including potential changes in my work as a teacher educator because of this study.

Student teachers in my study experienced both conceptual challenges and supports with the practices they learned in their teacher education courses. Some of these conceptual challenges were particular to a certain practice type while others overarched both practices. Students reported having faced conceptual challenges particular to Concept Formation, such as difficulty finding appropriate concepts and fitting the lesson inside a cohesive unit, and to Central Questions, such as crafting or finding engaging questions for their students. Student teachers also described conceptual challenges that overarched both practices, such as adapting the methods to match appropriate grade levels of students. In addition, student teachers faced conceptual challenges they did not notice without intervention, including relating the hooking activity to the problem of the unit. The conceptual supports, on the other hand, were primarily data sources, such as textbooks, websites, or resources from their cooperating teachers or cohort members. Some named their field instructor as a conceptual support with writing Central Questions; however, in one instance he gave insufficient advice that potentially weakened the unit. Most student teachers received conceptual support with general unit and lesson planning, but received no conceptual support in planning with the practices from their teacher education courses. Only one student teacher received conceptual support from a cooperating teacher that met the conceptual challenges these student teachers faced, including feedback on planning and teaching that furthered the cohesion of the unit and the lessons. Student teachers also named me, their former methods instructor and acting field instructor, as a conceptual support. Because I understood these methods and the potential they hold for high-quality

history instruction, I was able to give the conceptual support the student teachers needed. Looking across these cases, it is clear that the conceptual challenges student teachers faced far outnumbered the conceptual supports they received in using these practices. Though the cooperating teachers provided numerous resources as conceptual supports, they did not provide help in using these resources to plan with the new practices more effectively. Student teachers need conceptual support that directly addresses the challenges that they face in thinking through and planning with complex and unfamiliar teaching practices.

Student teachers also experienced procedural challenges and supports as they used the practices in their field classrooms. The procedural challenges included integrating texts effectively, making the value of the content and the coherence between their unit problem and their lessons explicit in their teaching, and maintaining an emphasis on their unit problem in subsequent activities. Though student teachers had cohesive plans, carrying it out effectively in their teaching proved to be difficult. The student teachers received procedural supports primarily from their field instructors and from their cooperating teachers. Both field instructors gave general support with classroom routines and management, but also helped the student teachers clarify and make their central questions and value of the content explicit in their teaching. Cooperating teachers offered many general procedural supports to student teachers, including classroom routines, management, and feedback on lessons. However, cooperating teachers did not provide conceptual support that specifically addressed the practices student teachers were integrating from teacher education. As a whole, student teachers seemed to report more procedural than conceptual support during their student teaching semester. However,

most of the procedural support did not address issues student teachers had with bringing the new teaching practices into the field.

Finally, student teachers discussed contextual challenges and supports. The main contextual challenges that student teachers discussed were conflicts with their cooperating teachers and the tension they experienced between the expectations of the school of education and the field school. The contextual supports the student teachers mentioned were other cohort members, who listened to one other and discussed issues together, and their field instructor, who mediated any conflicts they had in their field experiences. For the most part, student teachers felt supported by their field instructor in dealing with these contextual challenges. Only one student teacher's contextual problems persisted regardless of the field instructor's intervention. From this data, it appears that the contextual supports student teachers had adequately met most of the contextual challenges.

Looking at the differences between the challenges that these student teachers faced and the supports they had to mediate these challenges as they tried to use practices from their teacher training, it appears that they, like many student teachers, were caught between two separate worlds of learning: the teacher education program and the field classroom. Regardless of the attempts of the Rounds to bring coherence between the teacher education program and the field in previous semesters, these student teachers perceived many of the same problems as those reported in the literature about the traditional model of student teaching. These two worlds had different, sometimes conflicting, expectations and experiences for the student teachers. These expectations and experiences led to conflict, stress, and suppressed professional dialogue; they even led one of the student teachers to question their ability to finish the program successfully.

One world, the university, gave these student teachers a conception of what “high-quality history instruction” looks like, practices that align with this conception, and opportunities to display these practices in their planning and teaching. However, when the student teachers came to other world, the field, they rarely experienced the kinds of support they needed to integrate these practices and understandings effectively. Though most of the student teachers reported to having received ample support in many areas of teaching from their mentor, only one student teacher described her cooperating teacher as understanding and already using the practices they learned. The other six student teachers stated that their mentors neither understood nor used the same practices. A few student teachers felt their cooperating teacher left them on their own to plan and gauge the effectiveness of their teaching. Other student teachers received frequent feedback from their cooperating teachers, but that feedback seemed to occasionally undermine what they learned in their coursework. Some student teachers’ responses showed that their cooperating teachers explicitly stated that they did not agree with their teacher education, with one cooperating teacher reportedly even used the term “jumping through hoops” about the requirements of the teacher education program. The examples student teachers discussed imply a lack of coherence between the two worlds in which student teachers must reside, at least from the perspective of these student teachers. As a result, many of the conceptual and procedural challenges student teachers faced in using new and complex teaching practices remained unmediated. Also, this seeming lack of coherence seemed to create new contextual challenges for these student teachers, such as tension, real or perceived, between their program and their cooperating teacher. Additionally, because the cooperating teachers were not explicitly trained to understand the program goals and

expectations with which the student teachers arrived, another symptom of the lack of coherence student teachers perceived, they missed opportunities to give feedback and help alleviate the confusion student teachers had in implementing learned practices. At times, some student teachers even felt they had to align with either the university or their cooperating teacher. This resulted in one student teacher simply choosing to do whatever his cooperating teacher wanted because of the power the mentor had over his successful completion of student teaching, even though he did not believe it was effectively helping him learn to teach.

It is unclear whether these different “worlds” of student teaching caused them to disregard the practices they learned in their teacher education program, though there is some evidence to explore. In using Central Questions for instruction, that does not appear to be the case as the student teachers continued to use them throughout the semester, regardless of whether their teachers did or not. Even though they received almost no help in crafting or integrating questions from their cooperating teacher, the student teachers still seemed to have a positive stance toward the practice and the likelihood of continuing to use the practice. In the case of Concept Formation, however, their field experiences seem to have negative consequences on student teachers’ view and continued use of this practice. Most student teachers did not think their cooperating teacher could help them plan or integrate these lessons and felt they had received negative reactions from their cooperating teacher about the lesson because of its redundancy or because it appeared to be a “waste” of class time. This feedback from a knowledgeable mentor seems to have the potential to influence student teachers to disregard the practice.

My study raises a number of questions and tensions, not only about student teachers in the Rounds Project, but also about teacher education writ large. First, an issue with the capacity of teacher education programs became quite salient through my study. In the case of these seven student teachers, there were limited opportunities for them to receive the conceptual support they needed to enact these complex teaching practices. The cooperating teachers mainly provided general conceptual and procedural supports. The field instructor was able to provide much of the needed practice-based procedural supports, yet did not seem to be able to give the conceptual support they needed. The only person who seemed to provide the conceptual supports student teachers needed was the teacher educator from their methods class (me). With all the different tasks of the complex work of teacher education, how much of this work can be done by the teacher educators themselves, rather than part-time faculty, graduate students, and the mentor teachers? Even well designed teacher education programs must delegate work to staff and graduate students who may or may not completely grasp the vision of the programmatic design.

Second, my study highlighted a tension between student teachers having an organic experience in the field classroom and requiring them to utilize the new practices they learned in their program. Requiring student teachers to use practices gives them opportunities to attempt a new practice and receive feedback. However, this also creates the potential for student teachers to use practices simply as a requirement. In my study, it appeared that the cooperating teachers often did not have enough knowledge of the practices and theory to give student teachers quality feedback. Therefore, it became vital for a field instructor who knew the practices to come to the field, watch them enact the practices, and then give them feedback. The use of a field instructor, however, required the

planning of a lesson within a finite period of time and according to the schedule of the different people involved. This creates the potential for an unnatural teaching experience as student teachers have a set of practices they must be observed enacting. How can teacher educators give student teachers opportunities to enact new practices while receiving valuable and knowledgeable feedback? This is another issue that training cooperating teachers more thoroughly would help to mediate as they would be able to present more often, allowing more flexibility in the teaching and planning of specific practices lessons.

Third, my study revealed a tension between giving student teachers codified and clear steps for practices and giving student teachers the impression the practice is non-malleable. For the Concept Formation practice, the student teachers received a set of clear, step-by-step instructions to follow in order to plan, something they considered one of the main conceptual supports in their work. They went through the lesson as a learner, then they planned and enacted for their peers in a micro-lesson two times, and finally they enacted a Concept Formation in a field class with an extended write-up. Many of the student teachers commented positively about the clear instructions for a Concept Formation and the multiple opportunities to utilize and learn this practice. While many of the student teachers spoke about the usefulness and value of a Concept Formation lesson, many of them explained that they would disregard this practice. They described the practice as not realistic for a classroom given the time and content constraints and identified their inability to find a concept to fit a particular lesson as problematic.

From these comments, student teachers clearly did not feel that they had the freedom to modify this lesson to fit their class situation or their content. To these student

teachers, a Concept Formation lesson takes one full class period and needs to be used with a particular kind of concept. A Concept Formation lesson was not the basis of a lesson that they could disassemble, reassemble, repurpose and utilize to fit their situation. Because of their inability to modify a Concept Formation lesson, it seems that many of them were likely to disregard the lesson. This inability stems from the instruction given in the methods course the semester before their student teaching. When I taught them a Concept Formation lesson, I taught them a concrete format of the lesson, with multiple opportunities to practice that format. I never gave the student teachers the idea that they had the freedom, as the designer of the lesson, to repurpose what they learned.

This lack of ability on the part of the student teachers reveals a tension between giving student teachers clear instructions to follow, and helping them to learn to think creatively about lesson structures. These student teachers appreciated and learned this unfamiliar practice through solid, step-by-step instructions and many opportunities to practice. It appears, however, that stopping their instruction at that point caused student teachers to view practices as having limited usefulness and utility. Student teachers seemed to think that if the circumstances were not ideal, the practice became unusable. These results suggest that student teachers need opportunities to learn new and complicated practices in a certain way with multiple opportunities to plan and enact. Then, student teachers need opportunities to use the practice differently. For instance, what if a teacher educator creates a scenario that the student teachers must problem solve around, that forces student teachers to disassemble a practice and repurpose certain steps? One example of this would be for a teacher educator to tell the student teachers they had ten minutes to teach a Concept Formation and make them think through how they would

change it and why. This would not only help the student teachers to attain a better understanding of the different steps, but also help them gain a clearer understanding of themselves as the architect of the lesson. Student teachers would begin to see practices as serving varied situations, rather than the single and narrowed view of the practice as the student teachers in my study seemed to have.

Fourth, my study suggests that student teachers had a limited view of Central Questions as inquiries for problem-based instruction, another consequence of my teaching during the methods class in the previous semester. Rather than viewing Central Questions as an entryway into an inquiry, the student teachers in my study often spoke of these questions as the inquiries themselves. They rarely talked about planning the rest of their lessons around these inquiries and how this might unfold throughout a unit. This seems to imply that student teachers had a limited understanding of what it means to utilize problem-based instruction in ways where students are actually inquiring. The root of this problem seems to be my own limited understanding of problem-based instruction during their methods class and even during the design and data collection stages of this study. During the methods class, I spent a great deal of time talking about, showing examples of, and having them design Central Questions. I spent very little time, however, on what it means to consider Central Questions within a whole unit and asking them to think about what a unit long inquiry look like. Even the design of this study proves my lack of understanding at that time. Most of the interviews that pertained to Central Questions centered on the question itself, what they chose or wrote and how they hooked the students into the questions, instead of what they did with the questions once they chose it. When considered this way, with both my previous instruction and study design in mind, it

is quite clear why the student teachers in my study seemed to lack a thorough understanding of problem-based instruction once they chose the question they would use.

Through these findings, it is clear that my instruction on using Central Questions should focus less on writing questions, and more on how the question represents an inquiry that students engage in. Student teachers need more opportunities to build an actual unit inquiry based on a Central Question and to then create a hooking lesson that helps them engage the students into that problem. They need help not only in utilizing the unit problem as they create a series of activities but also in building unit assessments around that problem. Though these learning experiences may take time in coursework, student teachers will attain more of a thorough understanding of what problem-based instruction looks like as a whole inquiry, rather than simply the question. Ideally, these student teachers would receive much of this training in their field classrooms, under the supervision of a cooperating teacher who understood and used Central Questions in their teaching. However, much like with Concept Formation, most of the cooperating teachers in my study neither utilized central questions for inquiry, nor did they help student teachers write or plan with Central Questions. As a result, if future semesters are similar to the one I studied, the instruction in the semesters before student teaching are critical in order for them to be able to plan cohesive and engaging units around Central Questions.

Overall, my study suggests that one crucial step for teacher education programs is to train cooperating teachers in both the theoretical foundations of the program and the specific practices that student teachers will use in their classrooms. Helping cooperating teachers understand and use these practices solves a number of issues that emerged through my study. This step would alleviate some of the capacity problems of teacher

education programs. If cooperating teachers understood these lessons and the theory behind them, they would be able to give the nuanced feedback necessary for the planning and teaching of these lessons and consequently help student teachers utilize them more effectively. In addition, student teachers would not feel intimidated to have dialogues about their teaching and about trying new methods of instruction. Student teachers would be able to watch a veteran teacher use practices they are trying to learn in specific contexts and discuss teaching choices the cooperating teachers made about these lessons. This would make the planning and teaching of these practices more natural, as the cooperating teacher would be available to watch the lessons every day. In its current form, the student teaching semester relies heavily on the cooperating teacher, a participant who, at least in my study, seemed to lack the understanding to help student teachers utilize new practices. In six out of the seven cases in my study, this central influence was, according to the responses that student teachers gave, at best a neutral influence, and at worst, undermined the education the Rounds project was attempting to instill in the student teacher.

One thing became clear through this study about the relationship between the field and the school of education during the student teaching semester: the same principles that undergird the Rounds Project, that sought to bring coherence to the under-connected parts of teacher education, need to be carried through into the student teaching semester. During a time of learning, student teachers should not receive mixed messages about teaching from the two different worlds in which they must reside simultaneously. They should not be on their own to gauge their teaching, particularly the implementation of unfamiliar practices. They should not feel they have to choose which side to give their allegiance. They should not feel the pressure of power structures as fledgling learners, which have the

potential to suppress professional dialogue and limit their teaching. Student teachers need to be in situations where all sides work in concert for their learning. Situations where both the mentor teacher and the field instructor understand the practices they are integrating and the nuances of planning and enacting these practices. They need field placements where cooperating teachers do not think that teachers can only learn by just “throwing them up there,” but by carefully planned and enacted experiences with knowledgeable feedback.

Overall, opening up the “black box” of field experiences in my study revealed different strengths and weaknesses in the Rounds project, the field experiences, and in my own work as a teacher educator. Future research stemming from this study include a follow-up of these student teachers to determine how they continued to apply, disregard or modify the practices through their induction years, a study exploring the implementation of some of the new modes of instruction I suggested for Concept Formation and Central Questions, and constructing a model for training cooperating teachers in the use of specific practices and determining the impact on student teacher training.

Appendix A. Student Teaching Syllabus

ED 304
The Teaching Internship:
Advanced Teaching Seminar in Secondary Social Studies

University of Michigan, School of Education
Fall 2011

Instructor

Meeting Time

Mondays 4-6 pm Room 1214 SOE

Course Descriptions

This seminar will function as a professional workshop, providing a venue for collaboration and reflection with a community of your peers as a continuation of your experience in the Rounds Project¹ over the last two semesters. We will use and reuse ideas, articles, examples and materials you worked with previously. Novelty is not the goal. Rather, we will revisit ideas to help you develop good habits of mind and practices that support you in your work as a teacher. Teaching is a *thinking* practice and, therefore, we will put thinking in the center of our work together – students' thinking in and about history and the social sciences and your thinking about teaching these disciplines to *all* of your students.

Course Goals:

Our goals in this seminar are:

- exploring connections between your previous coursework in the Rounds Project and your day- to-day experiences as a beginning educator
- engaging in critical discussions of problems of practice related to the secondary Social Studies classroom and school/community contexts
- examining the challenges and complexities of effective planning (including course, unit, and lesson planning), enactment of planning, and the analysis of student work as a window to learning more about your own teaching.

To reach these goals, both seminar discussions and your classroom teaching should reflect the following elements of high-quality social studies instruction that you have examined in previous courses:

1. **Problem Framing and Purpose Setting in Lessons and Units:** How do you as a teacher frame a lesson or unit

¹ The Rounds Project is an idea being piloted by the Secondary Social Studies Teacher Education program at the University of Michigan, School of Education.

around problems in your discipline? How do you decide on and convey to students the purpose of your lessons and units? How do you make these problems and purposes relevant to and engaging for your students?

2. **Concept Formation and Its Use:** What are the key concepts in your discipline? How do you convey these concepts to your students in relevant and engaging ways? What kinds of texts might be useful in this process?
3. **Teacher Selection and Use of Text:** How do you as a teacher decide which texts to use and how to use them?
4. **Student Production of Text:** What types of texts do you ask students to produce and for what purposes? (For example, essays, written tests, evaluations, written questions for the teacher, drawings, conceptual maps, etc.) What are your standards for evaluating texts? How do you engage students in substantive discussion with one another?
5. **Probing and Using Student Knowledge:** What is "knowledge" and who are your students? How do you find out what students know? How do you plan instruction that supports and extends students' prior knowledge and experiences?
6. **Assessing Student Understanding:** How do you align your assessments with your goals, problems, and concepts? What assessments are appropriate for different teaching goals? How can you development assessments that accurately reflect the learning of different students?

Seminar Participation:

Good teachers work as part of a team. Because this seminar is grounded in a theory of teamwork and collaboration, it is essential that you come prepared to work productively with your colleagues. Naturally, you must attend all of the seminar meetings, but we also expect you to assume the responsibilities of a professional in this setting. This includes: bringing all designated materials to be reviewed during each seminar, listening carefully to your peers and instructors, and offering feedback and ideas respectfully and thoughtfully. Your active, consistent participation is vital to the success of this seminar.

Professionalism:

You are a member of a professional preparation program. This seminar is both a professional and academic course. You are expected to demonstrate the professional standards of educators regarding timeliness, personal presentation, and general conduct. These standards may be different from the norms of general university student culture.

You will be assessed by your ability to demonstrate professionalism both in the field and in the academic setting. This includes: turning in work on time (both to your AT and FI²); being on time to seminar and your placement; actively participating in seminar and activities at your placement; communicating honestly with your FI and your AT regarding planning, absences, and the progress of you and your students; and maintaining

² AT=Attending Teacher, FI=Field Instructor

Appendix B. First Semester Literacy Course Assessment to Gauge Pre-Service Teachers' Disciplinary Understanding.

**Pre-Service Teacher Assessment
University of Michigan, Teacher Education Program
SOCIAL STUDIES
Administration # 1 & 2**

Name: _____

Term: _____

Date: _____

Section 1: Literacy Survey

In this section, we ask you to rate statements that indicate what you believe and know about reading, writing, and teaching and learning in social studies. You should think of each question in relation to your content area. Responses range on a scale of 1-7, with 7 indicating high agreement or frequencies and 1 indicating low agreement or frequencies.

(1 = STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Somewhat disagree; 4 = In-between; 5 = Somewhat agree; 6 = Agree; 7 = STRONGLY AGREE)

(If completing this survey on the computer, simply mark an "X" in place of the bubble for your choice.)

	SD	D	D	IN- BTW	SWA	A	SA
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A social studies teacher is obliged to help students improve their reading abilities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social studies teachers should teach content and leave reading instruction to reading teachers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knowing how to teach reading in social studies should be required for teaching certification in social studies.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social studies teachers should be familiar with the theoretical concepts of the reading process.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Only teachers of English should be responsible for teaching reading comprehension in middle schools.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Only teachers of English should be responsible for teaching reading comprehension in high schools.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Every social studies teacher should teach students how to read social studies materials.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(1 = STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Somewhat disagree; 4 = In-between; 5 = Somewhat agree; 6 = Agree; 7 = STRONGLY AGREE)

(If completing this survey on the computer, simply mark an "X" in place of the bubble for your choice.)

	SD	D	SW D	IN- BTW N	SWA	A	SA
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The primary responsibility of a social studies teacher should be to impart subject matter knowledge.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A social studies teacher should be responsible for helping students comprehend at an interpretive level as well as a literal level when they read.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social studies teachers should help students learn to set purposes for reading and how to monitor their own success.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social studies teachers should feel a greater responsibility to the content they teach than to any reading instruction they may be able to provide.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teachers who want to improve students' interest in reading should model their own use of reading to obtain information in social studies.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How clearly a social studies text is written matters most in how a reader comprehends a passage.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Text reading in social studies requires a special understanding of how language is used in disciplines such as history, economics, or government.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social studies teachers are responsible for teaching technical vocabulary terms in the social studies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social studies teachers are responsible for teaching students to learn words of many different types to help develop their understanding of the social studies.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When students read in social studies, the readers interact with the social studies text to invent new	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Section 2: Planning for Instruction

In the following section, you will be asked to provide a general overview of your thinking and answer a number of questions addressing instructional planning in history. There are a total of 4 questions in this section.

Question 1: It is the beginning of the year and you have just been hired to teach U.S. history to tenth-grade students. Your building principal welcomes you to the school and then informs you that she will expect your first unit plan and accompanying lesson plans one week before classes begin. **What kind of information would you need to know in order to begin your planning?**

PLEASE TYPE YOUR RESPONSE HERE:

Now we want you to address some specific kinds of information you might want as a teacher.

Question 2: What would you need to know about the context in which you'll be teaching?

PLEASE TYPE YOUR RESPONSE HERE:

Question 3: What would you need to know about the texts you'll have as resources for teaching and how would you go about using them?

PLEASE TYPE YOUR RESPONSE HERE:

Question 4: What would you need to know about the students you'll be teaching?

PLEASE TYPE YOUR RESPONSE HERE:

Section 3: Analyzing Texts

In the following section, you will be asked to explain how you approach the texts of your content area. You will be asked to read two different texts. After each text, you will be asked to answer two sets of related questions. Since both of the texts you will be reading are lengthy, you should be sure to monitor your time carefully.

Assume that you want your students to read a primary source text as part of a history unit. This is the "**Alien & Sedition Acts**" text.

Question 1: The Nature of the Text: "Alien & Sedition Acts"

How would you analyze the structure, tone, key ideas, and key terms of this text?

PLEASE TYPE YOUR RESPONSE HERE:

Question 2: The Text and the Reader: "Alien & Sedition Acts"

What challenges might the text pose for adolescent readers of this text? Why?

PLEASE TYPE YOUR RESPONSE HERE:

Now assume that you also want your students to read the following history textbook selection as a part of the same history unit. This is the "Second President" text.

Question 3: The Nature of the Text: "Second President"

How would you analyze the structure, tone, key ideas, and key terms of this text?

PLEASE TYPE YOUR RESPONSE HERE:

Question 4: The Text and the Reader: "Second President"

What challenges might the text pose for adolescent readers of this text? Why?

PLEASE TYPE YOUR RESPONSE HERE:

Section 4: Assessing Student Work

On the “Social Studies Student Work Samples” handout, you will find three students' responses to an assignment in which they were asked to address the question: *Who was the most effective leader of the new republic?* After reading the student responses, please respond to the questions listed below.

- 1. What feedback would you provide for each of these students' responses?**
- 2. What additional information would have helped you in your ability to give appropriate feedback?**
- 3. How would these responses inform your next steps instructionally?**

PLEASE TYPE YOUR RESPONSE HERE:

END OF ASSESSMENT

Once you have completed this assessment, please make sure to save your document and ask your instructor for directions on how/where to submit it.

Appendix C. Advancing Adolescent Literacies Project rubric

<p>STRAND 3: DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC CONVENTIONS, RATIONALE, & PRACTICES D-SUB Substantive stuff of field; D-PRAC Practices: conventions or norms around how things get done in the discipline (see attached for D SUB and PRAC codes and definitions)</p>	<p>0 Uninformed Novice Characterized by responses that:</p>	<p>1 Personal Novice Characterized by responses that:</p>
<p>REPRESENTATIONS OF DISCIPLINARY SUBSTANCE AND PRACTICE</p>	<p>Offer no discipline-specific substance (SUB); OR are such limited response that disciplinary substance is not clear (may only name the subject area). Note: Respondent makes statements as a reader rather than as a historian, scientist, mathematician. Are prompted by the text without indication of synthesis or application of key concepts OR Response is question restated OR response analyzes strengths and weaknesses in text and student work samples without acknowledging disciplinary substance or practices. (Critiques are generic to the extent that the disciplinary location is unrecognizable except insofar as concepts taken directly from the texts are included.) e.g., "She assumes that the reader is familiar with certain 'technologies' from that time period including steam power. Text responses might include responses that merely report on the text in question, restating or summarizing the text, listing vocabulary words.</p>	<p>Mentions (shows beginning/threshold understanding of distinctive nature of discipline) but does not provide a nuanced or interconnected representation of discipline-specific substance (SUB) and/or (PRAC)—at best, response allows reader to identify disciplinary area (does not include simply naming the subject area). e.g., <i>My first unit will be about Native Americans because I feel it is important for students to realize there were people living here before Europeans came. I would focus on the some of the myths and misconceptions about Native Americans. OR I would want to include primary source documents that provide different views of a time period, maybe a diary, a letter, a legislative document. Text responses might analyze strengths and weaknesses in text and student work samples with by only mentioning disciplinary concepts, events, or practices e.g., "I would want to know about my students' racial and ethnic backgrounds and SES before reading this text because the language in it is very "proper" so students who do not have a strong background in English or in reading history may have trouble with this text. It would be important for kids to understand how language was used and is used in the time period."</i> Demonstrate understanding of differences in students' understandings of disciplinary concepts, etc.</p>
<p>ACCURACY: "ACCURACY" REFERS TO GENERALLY ACCEPTED HISTORICAL, SCIENTIFIC, MATHEMATICAL, OR LITERARY CONCEPTS THAT CAN BE WARRANTED WITH EVIDENCE. THUS, CONFLICTING REPRESENTATIONS OR CONCEPTIONS SHOULD BE PRESENTED BUT THE CONFLICTS MUST BE ACKNOWLEDGED AND WARRANTED.</p>	<p>Consist wholly of inaccurate disciplinary knowledge or practices or makes reference to grossly inaccurate disciplinary knowledge or practices; e.g., "The Holocaust didn't happen."</p>	<p>Include some inaccurate disciplinary knowledge or practices. e.g., "For the Battle of Bull Run I might want students to present two sides of the American Revolution to show families and people were torn between loyalty to the British and the militia men."</p>

<p>TOPICS AND CONCEPTS</p>	<p>Provide no indication of knowledge of either topics or concepts relevant to the discipline</p>	<p>Mention topics or concepts without providing enough specificity of detail to indicate an understanding of the distinction between the two or the relationship of topics to concepts. E.g., "I would plan on about three lessons focusing on the early years, Jamestown, the lost colonies, disease, sustainability of colonies, and the beginning of discontent."</p>
<p>STANCE TOWARD DISCIPLINARY KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICES (ABSOLUTIST V. RELATIVISTIC V. SITUATED)</p>	<p>Are too general to indicate stance toward knowledge and practices of the discipline. E.g., "I will also expect students to develop their understanding of history as a field of study."</p>	<p>Include absolutist references to concepts, ideas, and practices of the discipline; e.g., "US history can be divided into two sections: Pre-1865 (founding to slavery) and post 1865 (abolition to present)."</p>
<p>N.B. It may be that respondents mention teaching practices that we might associate with the subject-area or discipline. However, if NO acknowledgement of disciplinary knowledge or practices without making them specific to the demands of disciplinary knowledge and practices, these should not be counted as "disciplinary," but rather as educational, even if we deem them appropriate to the discipline/subject-area.</p>		

Appendix D. Survey 1, given at the beginning of student teaching.

10/5/12

Qualtrics Survey Software

Default Question Block

Please print full name, major and minor (if applicable), and expected graduation date in space below

I understand how to teach a Concept Formation lesson.

Strongly Disagree Disagree In-between Agree Strongly Agree

Please explain a Concept Formation lesson.

I think Concept Formation lessons are a valuable tool for instruction.

Strongly Disagree Disagree In-between Agree Strongly Agree

Please explain the value (or the lack of value) of Concept Formation lesson below.

Is there anything about a Concept Formation Lesson you would change? Why or why not?

Integrating Concept Formation into my lessons will be challenging for me.

Strongly Disagree Disagree In-between Agree Strongly Agree

What specific challenges do you foresee in integrating Concept Formation into your units? Why do you think this?

4) I **DO NOT** understand how to plan and teach using Central Questions (intellectual problems).

Strongly Disagree Disagree In-between Agree Strongly Agree

Please explain using Central Questions in planning and teaching.

I think there is great value in using Central Questions (intellectual problems) in planning and teaching.

Strongly Disagree Disagree In-between Agree Strongly Agree

Please explain the value, if any, of Central Questions (intellectual problems) in planning and teaching. If you answered negatively, please explain to the best of your ability why many experts think there is value in using central questions, but why you question the value.

Using Central Questions (intellectual problems) in my lessons and units will be challenging for me.

Strongly Disagree Disagree In-between Agree Strongly Agree

What specific challenges do you foresee in integrating Central Questions into

your planning? Why do you think this?

I think my cooperating teacher will be open and supportive of me using the practices (such as Concept Formation and using Central Questions in planning) I learned in TE.

Strongly Disagree Disagree In-between Agree Strongly Agree

Please explain why you think your cooperating teacher will react to these lessons like this.

I think the students in my class WILL NOT be open to the practices (such as Concept Formation and using Central Questions) I learned in TE.

Strongly Disagree Disagree In-between Agree Strongly Agree

Please explain why you think your students will react like this to the practices you learned in TE.

I have the knowledge I need to plan and teach with the practices I learned in TE (such as Concept Formation and central questions).

Strongly Disagree Disagree In-between Agree Strongly Agree

Please explain why you think you do or do not have the knowledge you need to teach with the practices you learned in TE.

I think I **will use** the practices I learned in TE (such as Concept Formation and Central Questions) **more often than I am required to** as I move into my student teaching.

Strongly Disagree Disagree In-between Agree Strongly Agree

Please explain why you think you will or will not use the practices you learned in TE more often than you are required to in your student teaching semester.

Are there any **other challenges** that you think you will face in integrating the practices from TE into your classroom?

Are there any **other supports** you think you will have in integrating the practices from TE into your classroom?

Appendix E. Survey 2, given at the end of student teaching.

10/5/12

Qualtrics Survey Software

Default Question Block

Please print full name.

I understand how to teach a Concept Formation lesson.

Strongly Disagree Disagree In-between Agree Strongly Agree

Please explain a Concept Formation lesson.

I think Concept Formation lessons are a valuable tool for instruction.

Strongly Disagree Disagree In-between Agree Strongly Agree

Please explain the value (or the lack of value) of Concept Formation lesson below.

Integrating Concept Formation into my teaching was challenging for me this semester.

Strongly Disagree Disagree In-between Agree Strongly Agree

Explain some specific challenges you experienced in integrating Concept Formation into your units.

https://dc-viawest.qualtrics.com/ControlPanel/PopUp.php?PopType=SurveyPrintPreview&WID=_blank

1/5

What changes to the basic structure of a Concept Formation Lesson did you make as you integrated them this semester or what will you change next time you use them? Please explain your response.

Explain the most valuable thing you learned this semester about teaching with Concept Formation lessons. How did you learn this?

I **DO NOT** understand how to plan and teach using Central Questions (intellectual problems).

Strongly Disagree Disagree In-between Agree Strongly Agree

Please explain using Central Questions in planning and teaching.

I think there is great value in using Central Questions (intellectual problems) in planning and teaching.

Strongly Disagree Disagree In-between Agree Strongly Agree

Please explain the value, if any, of Central Questions (intellectual problems) in planning and teaching. If you answered negatively, please explain why you think they lack value in planning and teaching.

Using Central Questions (intellectual problems) in my lessons and units was challenging for me this semester.

Strongly Disagree Disagree In-between Agree Strongly Agree

Explain some specific challenges you experienced in integrating Central Questions into your planning and teaching.

Explain the most valuable thing you learned this semester about using Central Questions (intellectual problems) in your planning and teaching. How did you learn this?

My cooperating teacher was open to me using the practices (such as Concept Formation and using Central Questions) I learned in TE.

Strongly Disagree Disagree In-between Agree Strongly Agree

Can you explain why you answered the way you did about your teacher's attitude toward the practices you learned in TE, using an example or two to support your response?

The students in my class **WERE NOT** open to the practices (such as Concept Formation and using Central Questions) I learned in TE.

Strongly Disagree Disagree In-between Agree Strongly Agree

Can you explain why you answered the way you did about your students' attitude toward the practices you learned in TE, using an example or two to support your response?

I **had the knowledge I needed** to plan and teach effectively with the practices I learned in TE (such as Concept Formation and central questions).

Strongly Disagree Disagree In-between Agree Strongly Agree

Please explain how you know you did or did not have the knowledge you needed to plan and teach effectively with the practices you learned in TE, using an example or two to support your response. If you didn't, how did you compensate for your lack of knowledge?

I **used the practices I learned in TE (such as Concept Formation and Central Questions) more often than I was required to in my student teaching.**

Strongly Disagree Disagree In-between Agree Strongly Agree

Please explain how often you did or why you did not use the practices you learned in TE more than you were required to.

Are there any other **challenges** you faced in integrating the practices from TE into your classroom?

Is there anything else that supported you as you integrated the practices from TE into your classroom?

10/5/12

Qualtrics Survey Software

What was the most valuable thing you learned about teaching this semester? How did you learn this?

Appendix F. First interview protocol, given after the observation of Concept Formation lesson.

Ned's Post-Concept Formation lesson observation.

Say: Thank you very much for agreeing to meet with me today and for being part of this study. During this interview, I am going to ask you a number of questions about your experiences in student teaching thus far and then we are going to talk about the lesson I observed in your classroom the other day and the meeting with your cooperating teacher. Remember what you say in this interview will not affect your grade in any way and it is best if you can just be honest. Please know that I am not here to judge you, rather to look at how pre-service teachers are able to use the lessons we taught them. Do you have any questions?

Do: Wait for questions. Respond to any clarification questions or concerns.

Section 1

Say: Let's Begin. So how is student teaching going? (Probe: is it easier or more difficult than you thought?)

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: So I have been wondering a lot about the ways that you learned to do these practices in your methods course, such as micro-lessons. And I have a lot of questions about the value of what we do in your methods course – such as the mini-lessons, unit plans, rounds assignments. What is your opinion about the ways that your methods class, and all of your teacher education courses, prepared you for student teaching? (probe any general responses)

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: Tell me about your classes. (**Purpose is to gain an understanding of their view of the demographics of the classes. Probe any responses that could represent challenges or supports that students give**)

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: I know it is early in the semester, but what are you finding most challenging these days? (Probe: How is that affecting your planning and/or teaching? Is it affecting your use of the practices you learned in teacher education?)

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: What are you finding to be the most supportive aspects of student teaching, or aspects that make student teaching manageable? (Probe: How is that supporting your planning

and/or teaching? Is it making using your use of the practices you learned in teacher education more manageable? For instance, in the lesson you planned – what helped you the most?)

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: When did you start lead teaching? How is your role going to expand, do you know?

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: At this point, are you able to use the methods that you were taught in teacher education? (probe: which ones in particular)

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: Can you talk about some things that are enabling you to use them?

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: What about some things making using the practices more challenging?

Do: Wait for their response.

Say this series of prompts for last question one at a time:

1) What about your cooperating teacher – making student teaching more or less challenging?

2) What about the students in your classes – making student teaching more or less challenging?

Anything about the school structure (class period length, for instance) – enabling or hindering you from using the methods? Why?

What about the amount of knowledge you have, enabling or hindering you from using methods? Why? (Probe – Do you have enough content knowledge? How about your knowledge of teaching and students (i.e. the way they learn)? How about your knowledge of history as a discipline?)

What about planning time – do you have enough?

How about classroom management – enabling or hindering the use of the methods?

Say: So before we move on to watching some video and talking about your lesson,

let me ask you about using central questions in your planning. Have you been able to use them?

Do: Wait for their response.

If yes say: Have you talked to your cooperating teacher about using central questions in your teaching? Have you seen your cooperating teacher teach with central questions?

Does your cooperating teacher think Central questions are a good way to teach?
Does he/she use them in his/her lesson?

If no say: What challenges do you think might keep you from using central questions?

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: What is your opinion about the usefulness and value of Central questions as a basis for units and lessons? Have your thoughts changed from before student teaching to now? Why or why not?

Do: Wait for their response.

Section 2 – Using Concept Formation lessons

Say: So now we are in the second part of the interview. At this time, we will talk about your lesson from today and look at the video of your teaching and I will ask you questions about what was happening and what you were thinking. After the interview, we will debrief about the lesson, okay? Do you have any questions for me before we begin?

Say: So, before we start with the video, what was the concept you decided to use? How did you decide on the concept? How does this lesson fit in with the whole unit?

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: Can you explain the process of planning this lesson? Can you think of any challenges you had in planning? What helped you plan?

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: is this first time you have used CF? Why or why not? How did it go last time? What did you learn?

Say: Was it deductive or inductive Concept Formation? Why did you choose deductive? Which do you prefer?

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: so you were originally going to do this an inductive, you changed your mind? Why? Is time of class periods or other school structure a continual problem?

Say: How closely do you think you stuck to the prescribed method of Concept Formation? Why did you do that? (Probe - do you think any of the steps you changed or any should be added?)

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: After planning and teaching a Concept Formation lesson yourself, have you changed your view about the value of these lessons in teaching? Explain.

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: Do you think your opinion has changed about Concept Formation since you left the teacher education classroom and came to student teaching? Why or why not?

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: How about your cooperating teacher and Concept Formation? Have you seen her utilize this type of lesson?

Say: Did she give you any feedback on planning this lesson? What do you think about that? How well do you think she understood the lesson?

Say: When I asked her about it she said she did not give you feedback on the lesson you taught. Does that bother you? Is this a common problem with her?

Say: Also, she wasn't in the room for your lesson. Was she in the earlier period? How does that affect your planning?

Appendix G. Second interview protocol, given after the observation of hooking lesson based on central question.

Phillip's Post-Hooking lesson observation

Say: Thank you very much for agreeing to meet with me again and for being part of this study. This will be the last interview we do for this study. The order of this interview is a little different than the first. First, I am going to ask you a number of questions about your ongoing experiences in student teaching, then we are going to watch the video of your teaching, then talk about the rest of your unit. Remember what you say in this interview will not affect your grade in any way and it is best if you can just be honest and know that I am not here to judge you, rather to look at how pre-service teachers are able to use the lessons we taught them. Do you have any questions?

Do: Wait for questions. Respond to any clarification questions or concerns.

Section 1

Before we start, would you mind telling me quickly what courses you took last term as well as the courses that you are taking this term, specifically content courses? (If they don't know the exact course number, make sure to get instructor name and some sort of course title. Include education courses incase they happen to be taking a non-traditional education class)

Also, can you tell me the school/grade level(s)/subject(s) that you have had so far for your field placements both last term and this term? And what your technical major/minor is right now?

- 1) What made you decide to pursue a major in (major subject)?
- 2) Of the courses that you have taken since starting college (non-education courses), which of those— you're welcome to mention as many as you think relevant—do you feel have prepared you well for the types of knowledge, skills, and practices that are necessary for success in teaching your discipline?
- 3) What is it about these courses that make you feel that way?
- 4) How would you characterize your own content knowledge in your discipline right now? How is this helping or hindering you in your planning?
- 5) How would you characterize your knowledge of teaching? And of students?
- 6) As you think about your learning in teacher education, How do the practices you learned in teacher education relate to the way you learned in high school or earlier? What about in your college classes? (How does this affect your use of these teaching

practices?)

Say: So how is student teaching going? Is there anything eventful since the last interview? (Probe: As you are getting further into it, is it easier or more difficult than you thought?)

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: What are you finding most challenging these days? (Probe: How is that affecting your planning and/or teaching?)

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: Last time you spoke about the student in your sixth hour. You said, he “is a big pain...very attention seeking and very disruptive to the class.” How has that turned out?

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: What are you finding to be the most supportive aspects of student teaching, that make student teaching manageable? (Probe: How is that supporting your planning and/or teaching?)

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: Last time you said that your cohort was providing you the most support in their emails and in conversations. Are they still as helpful as they were?

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: Can you describe for me some of the methods you are more commonly using these days? Can you give some examples? Can you speak about what you would say are the main influences on your teaching?

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: How often, if at all, are you able to use the methods you learned in teacher education? (probe) Can you give some examples?

If not much –Can you talk about why you think you are not integrating them?

Do: Wait for their response.

Cooperating Teacher -

Say: How are your relationships with your cooperating teacher as the semester goes on?

(Probe any responses)

Say: What is the most challenging aspect of working with each cooperating teacher? How is this affecting (did this affect) your planning and teaching?

Last time you talked about Ms. _____ planning chunks of lessons, weeks at a time, which made it hard for you to plan units. How did this work out?

And with Mr.____, you said he was just thrown into teaching econ, which made it difficult for him. Did that end up happening? How did you and he deal with this?

Say: How have your cooperating teachers support you most? Take each one.

Say: How have they supported you in your content knowledge?

Say: How have they supported your planning?

Say: What is the most common advice or critique you get from her about your teaching? Can you give an example of this? How do you feel about this?

Say: Can you talk about some of the conversations you have had with your cooperating teacher lately about your teacher education experience?

I know one of your cooperating teachers was a graduate of the University of Michigan. How does this common experience help your student teaching? Do you find a difference working with her or your other cooperating teacher?

Say: Can you talk about some of the conversations you have had about the methods you learned in teacher education?

How well do you think she understands the methods you learned, such as Concept Formation and Unit problems? Can you give examples of these conversations? What is your thinking about your cooperating teacher's ability to help you with your planning and teaching of the lessons you learned in teacher education?

Say: How supportive would you say they are about you using methods you learned in teacher education? Why do you think that?

Say: What do you perceive as the cooperating teachers primary role in having a student teacher? In your opinion, how well is your cooperating teacher filling that role?

Students in Class

Say: How are the students in your class responding to your teaching?

Say: What are you finding most challenging when it comes to your students?

Say: What are you finding about students that supports your work or make your work enjoyable?

Say: In particular, to what kinds of lessons do they respond best? What is your evidence of that?

Say: How would you describe their reaction to the use of strategies you learned from teacher education? Can you give examples?

Say: How about classroom management – enabling or hindering the use of the methods? Is this getting better or worse?

School Structure

Say: What opportunities do you have to co-plan with other instructors?

If yes - Can you talk about your teaching team? How often do you meet? Can you describe the meetings? What is your role in these meetings? How do the teachers approach your learning in teacher education (for example – how do they ask you about current research on teaching, if at all?)

Say: Can you talk about your planning time? During and after school, do you have enough time to put together the types of lessons you want? How would your teaching be different if you had enough time?

Knowledge -

Say: What knowledge do you find that need most in your planning and teaching? How do you compensate for any lack of knowledge in that area?

Say: As the semester is continuing on, how would you characterize your content knowledge? What resources do you use to increase/sharpen your knowledge as you plan?

Say: How would you characterize your knowledge of the discipline of history? How do you use this knowledge in your planning and teaching, if at all?

Say: As the semester is continuing on, how would you characterize your knowledge of teaching? What resources do you use to increase/sharpen your knowledge of teaching (Who do you ask? What books do you turn to?)?

Say: As the semester is continuing on, how would you characterize your

knowledge of students? What resources do you use to increase/sharpen your knowledge of teaching (Who do you ask? What books do you turn to?)?

University Personnel

Say: How would you describe your relationship to university personnel (anyone tied to the university) during your student teaching experience?

Do you think that the university personnel creates more support or challenges for you as you go through student teaching? Can you give some examples?

Probe: with your field instructor? With me? How has [field instructor] or I made your student teaching more challenging? How have either of us supported you in your time as a student teacher?

What support have you received concerning your knowledge of content?

How helpful do you find the seminar that you attend? What is the most helpful aspect of seminar for you?

What other people from the university that have an influence on your experience? Can you explain their influence?

What is the primary role of your student teaching seminar? What do you usually do in that course? How valuable has it been for you?

What do you perceive as the field instructor's primary role in the work of a ST? In your opinion, how well is your field instructor filling that role?

Say: So before we move on to watching some video and talking about your lesson, I will ask you briefly about Concept Formation lessons. Remember, this is in no way a judgment about you or your teaching, just answer honestly.

Say: How many times would you say you have used them since I came to your class and saw you do the "opportunity cost" concept?

If yes say: how many times do you think? If no, what is making it difficult? How did it go? What concept did you choose? Why did you choose that? What makes a concept a strong candidate for this type of lesson?

What conversations did you have with your cooperating teacher about the lesson? Did he offer any advice about the lesson?

If no say: Why do you think you have not used this type of lesson? (Prompt – Have there been concepts you thought would work well with the lesson, and

you were reluctant to do so? Why?

If they say no good concepts – ask what would make a concept a strong candidate for this type of lesson?

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: What is your opinion about the usefulness and value of Concept Formation lessons? Has it changed from before student teaching to now? Why or why not?

Do: Wait for their response.

Part 2 – Using Central Questions and hooking lessons

Say: Can you explain to me the value of Central Questions in planning? Do you agree with this assessment?

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: How would you explain the value of a hooking lesson? Do you agree with this Assessment or is this what you learned?

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: Can you explain using central questions in actual teaching, as in – how do you think a teacher should utilize the unit question with their students? Do you agree with this? How do you utilize the question as you teach?

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: Thus far, how many units have you planned fully? And how many of these units have been based on central questions? Can you give me an example of the unit questions you have used recently?

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: How about daily lessons, how often would you say you base them on central questions? Why this many? Can you give an example of a daily question?

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: Does your cooperating teacher think Central questions are an effective way to teach? How do you know that? Does he/she use them in his/her lesson? How does this affect your unit

planning with central questions?

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: Can you describe the students' reaction to central questions?

Say: What is your personal opinion about the usefulness and value of Central questions as a basis for units and lessons? Have your thoughts changed from before student teaching to now? Why or why not?

Do: Wait for their response.

Section 2 – VIDEO and UNIT of Central Questions

Say: So now we are in the second part of the interview. At this time, we will look at some video clips of your teaching and I will ask you questions about what was happening and what you were thinking. After that, we will take a look at your unit plan and talk about how you used the question throughout. Do you have any questions for me before we begin?

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: What was the question/unit problem you chose for this unit? And can you tell me how you created this question?

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: How would you describe your content knowledge on American Foreign Policy? (probe – what did you do to strengthen your knowledge?)

Say: Can you explain the conversations you had with your cooperating teacher about this as a unit question?

Can you talk about some of the feedback you received from your cooperating teacher about this hooking lesson? Did they give you any help in your planning?

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: Can you explain the conversations you had with your field instructor about this UNIT question?

Can you talk about some of the feedback you received from your field instructor about this hooking lesson? Did they give you any help in your planning?

Say: Why is this question/unit problem important for students to be able to explore/answer? How clear do you think you made the importance of this unit to them as you taught your hooking lesson?

Do: Wait for their response.

Say: Can you tell me what was the most “hooking” part of this lesson? How do you think it hooked the students?

Say: Now we will begin the video of your hooking lesson.

Appendix H, Syllabus from second semester course Educational Psychology.

Winter 2011

EDUC 391 Syllabus

EDUC 391: Educational Psychology and Human Development

Section 002: Secondary Social Studies
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 2:30-4 pm @ 2346 SEB
(Syllabus subject to change)

Instructor: Gina Park
E-mail: ginapark@umich.edu
Office: 4039 SEB (inside hi-ce suite)
Mailbox: 1406 SEB (CPEP Office)
Office hours: By appointment

Course Overview & Goals

Welcome to *Educational Psychology*! You have begun your training as a teacher, and as you already know, teaching is not easy! It involves careful planning and forethought, but also quite a bit of thinking 'on the spot' in response to the academic, social, and individual needs of your students. Your role as a teacher also includes building relationships with individual students, establishing a classroom environment that motivates and supports students' learning, and connecting with others, such as your students' parents.

The purpose of the course is to better understand the role of the teacher in supporting students' development and learning through the lens of Educational Psychology. We will explore specific concepts, theories and issues related to development, learning, instruction, motivation, assessment, and classroom management for secondary teachers. Understanding human development will allow you to link these concepts to the practice of teaching and student learning. Discussions will focus primarily on how these psychological theories and principles can help you make sense of teaching and learning, and what makes particular teaching strategies and behaviors effective in different situations and for particular children (as individuals and as a group). While this class is NOT designed to focus on specific teaching methods or curriculum issues, it aims to provide you tools for understanding and making informed decisions around different aspects of classroom instruction and student learning.

By the end of this course, each of you will be able to:

1. Apply theories and research from educational psychology to understand the social and emotional development of students in the classroom.
2. Identify the psychological principles of education that lay behind commonly used models and strategies of *teaching* at the secondary school level.
3. *Critique lessons*, classroom materials (i.e. in textbooks, lesson plans, curriculum guides and Internet resources), and assessment tools for their implementation of educational psychology principles.
4. *Develop lessons and assessments* that implement the principles of educational psychology and that support all learners.
5. Use psychological principles as a means to *develop more equitable learning activities* for students from diverse backgrounds, including English language learners, and traditionally underrepresented groups.
6. Develop strategies to *promote student motivation and engagement* in their own learning.

In an effort to support your learning, we will participate in whole class and small group discussions, collaborative group work, independent activities, and lectures. My hope is that through our discussions, you will have a better understanding of how, when, and with which students you can

-DRAFT-

1

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