

Teaching as Apprentices and Learning in Communities:  
Novice Social Studies Teachers' Development of Critical Literacy Practices

by

Karen Widger Caldwell

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements of the degree of  
Doctor of Education  
(Curriculum and Practice)  
at the University of Michigan-Dearborn  
2022

Doctoral Committee:

Associate Professor Danielle L. DeFauw, Chair  
Lecturer Truman Hudson, Jr.  
Professor Julie A. Taylor

## **Dedication**

To Michael, Elizabeth, and Emily, for believing. Without you, this simply would not have been possible.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to my advisor and Chair, Dr. Danielle DeFauw, for her unfailing encouragement and invaluable feedback. I could also not have undertaken this journey without my defense committee members Dr. Truman Hudson, Jr. and Dr. Julie Taylor, who generously shared their expertise and feedback. Additionally, Phase I of this research study was supported by a generous grant from the University of Michigan-Dearborn's Experience Plus initiative.

I am also grateful to the faculty of the College of Education, Health and Human Services and my fellow doctoral students for expertise, guidance, partnerships, and support. Special thanks to Dr. Christopher Burke for saying yes, and to Dr. Paul Fossum for helping me think through the ideas underlying early versions of my proposal.

For much of the past year, I have followed, observed, and interviewed novice teachers and some of the teacher educators who supported their journey. This dissertation study would not have been possible without their time and generosity and the permission of the affiliated university and field placement schools.

## Table of Contents

Dedication.....	i
Acknowledgements.....	ii
Table of Contents.....	iii
List of Tables.....	vi
List of Figures.....	vii
List of Appendices.....	ix
Abstract.....	1
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	2
Public Education.....	4
Role of Textbooks.....	7
Civics Education.....	8
Critical Literacy.....	9
Research Questions.....	11
Role of Researcher.....	11
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	13
Critical Pedagogy and Critical Literacy.....	13
Critical Literacy and Citizenship Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions.....	17
Training and Practices of Novice Teachers.....	20
Key Factors Supporting the Implementation of Critical Literacy.....	20
Key Challenges to the Implementation of Critical Literacy.....	27

Conclusion.....	38
Chapter 3: Research Methods.....	39
Phase I.....	41
Case Selection.....	41
Data Collection.....	44
Phase II.....	46
Case Selection.....	46
Data Collection.....	47
Data Analysis.....	49
Validation Strategies.....	52
Reliability Strategies.....	53
Summary.....	54
Chapter 4: Findings.....	55
Theme 1: Teaching as an Apprentice.....	56
Novice Teachers' Dispositions.....	57
Building a Base.....	67
Deciding Where to Start.....	79
Being an Apprentice.....	82
Theme 2: Learning in a Community.....	91
Modeling.....	91
Containing Risk.....	95
Adapting.....	100
Conclusion .....	126

Chapter 5: Discussion and Implications.....	128
Discussion.....	129
Theme of Teaching as an Apprentice.....	130
Theme of Learning in a Community.....	140
Forming an Identity as a Critical Literacy Teacher.....	152
Implications for Practice.....	155
Limitations.....	157
Recommendations for Future Research.....	158
Conclusion.....	161
References.....	163
Appendices.....	181

### List of Tables

Table 1: Phase I Participants.....	43
Table 2: Phase II Participants.....	47
Table 3: Phase I Original Data Coding.....	50
Table 4: Phase II Original Data Coding.....	51
Table 5: Examples of Prepared Simulation and Primary Source Materials Selected by Novice Teachers from the Internet.....	88

### List of Figures

Figure 1: Frequency of Novice Teachers Feeling Marginalized in Our Society.....	58
Figure 2: Frequency of Social Justice Activism in the Lives of Novice Teachers.....	60
Figure 3: Novice Teachers' Prior Experience Engaging With or Practicing Critical Literacy.....	61
Figure 4: Number of Novice Teachers Indicating the Social Studies Textbook Will Be Their Primary Teaching Material.....	62
Figure 5: Number of Novice Teachers Indicating They Feel Comfortable Teaching Controversial Topics.....	65
Figure 6: Percent of Novice Teachers Indicating that Social Studies Teachers Should Teach Reading.....	103
Figure 7: Percent of Novice Teachers Indicating the Social Studies Textbook Will Be Their Primary Teaching Material.....	104
Figure 8: Percent of Novice Teachers Indicating They Were Comfortable with Using Teaching Materials that Might Contradict Traditional Historical, Political, Economic, or Social Narratives.....	105
Figure 9: Percent of Novice Teachers Indicating They Were Comfortable with Using Teaching Materials that Might Contradict Traditional Historical, Political, Economic, or Social Structures.....	106
Figure 10: Percent of Novice Teachers Indicating They Feel Comfortable Teaching Controversial Topics.....	107



Figure 11: Percent of Novice Teachers Who Agreed that Multiculturalism is a Fundamental  
Component of Social Studies.....108

## **List of Appendices**

Appendix A. Novice Teacher Recruitment Email.....	181
Appendix B. Consent Form – Novice Teacher.....	182
Appendix C. Consent Form – Instructor.....	186
Appendix D. Novice Teacher Critical Literacy Survey I.....	189
Appendix E. Novice Teacher Critical Literacy Survey II.....	192
Appendix F. Novice Teacher Critical Literacy Interview Protocol.....	194
Appendix G. Instructor Critical Literacy Interview Protocol.....	196
Appendix H. Novice Teacher Recruitment Email.....	199
Appendix I. Consent Form – Novice Teacher.....	200
Appendix J. Contact Email – Cooperating Teacher.....	204
Appendix K. Contact Email – School Administrator.....	205
Appendix L. Consent Form – Cooperating Teacher.....	207
Appendix M. Cooperating Teacher Critical Literacy Interview Protocol.....	210
Appendix N. Novice Teacher Critical Literacy Interview Protocol.....	212

### **Abstract**

Informed civic participation is vital to the maintenance of our democracy. Critical literacy, as part of citizenship education, gives students the tools to question the status quo, consider multiple perspectives, and think for themselves to create a more just and equitable society. Novice teachers need to be able to transfer critical literacy stances and practices to the secondary social studies classroom. For novice social studies teachers, the learning and practicing of critical literacy skills begins in teacher preparation programs and continues to varying degrees through student teaching and the first years of teaching.

This longitudinal multiple case study focuses on two research questions: How, why, and under what circumstances do novice teachers' critical literacy practices change over time? What conditions influence novice teachers' successes or struggles in implementing critical literacy practices? Analysis of data gathered from 16 participants over a nine-month period revealed that novice teachers' implementation of critical literacy stances and practices was influenced by their status as apprentices, their communities of practice, and their developing identities as teachers. Recommendations are provided for teacher preparation programs and K-12 schools to support novice teachers' critical literacy practices and stances as novice teachers work to develop students' knowledge, skills, and dispositions for engaged citizenship.

*Keywords:* novice teacher, critical literacy, social studies, teacher preparation, apprentice, learning community, identity

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

It may be an easy thing to make a Republic, but it is a vary laborious thing to make Republicans; and woe to the republic that rests upon no better foundations than ignorance, selfishness, and passion.

—Horace Mann. *Report No. 12 of the Massachusetts School Board*

Our democratic republic requires that citizens be knowledgeable about the structure and function of our government, consider perspectives other than their own, participate in the process of sharing and debating ideas, vote consistently and responsibly, hold elected officials accountable, and work for the collective good. Without this knowledge, dispositions, skills, and actions, our democracy, created “of the people by the people for the people,” will wither (Lincoln, 1863). Foa and Mounk’s (2016) analysis of World Values Surveys found that only around 30% of millennials, born since 1980, in the United States placed a high value on living in a democracy (3,398 valid responses); in 2011, 24% of U.S. millennials considered democracy to be a “bad” or “very bad” way to run a country (3,616 valid responses) (p. 8). More troubling was Foa and Mounk’s (2016) finding that one in six Americans believe it “would be a ‘good’ or ‘very good’ thing for the ‘army to rule’” (5,831 valid responses) (p. 12). Their research also showed an increased number of Americans who favored a “strong leader who doesn’t have to bother with parliament and elections” (Foa and Mounk, 2016, p. 12).

Americans lack basic knowledge about the structure and function of our democratic republic. The Annenberg Public Policy Center (2021) found a mere 56% of Americans can

correctly name all three branches of government. Only 51% of Americans can name the Supreme Court as having the responsibility for determining if a presidential action was constitutional. Likewise, only 50% of Americans can name freedom of the press and only 56% can name freedom of religion as first amendment rights. Lack of basic civic knowledge is not confined to adults; the most recent National Assessment of Educational Progress, which measures civic “knowledge, intellectual and participatory skills, and civic dispositions,” showed that only 24% of tested 8<sup>th</sup> grade students were proficient in civics, virtually unchanged from 23% in 2013 (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2018, p. 3).

Roughly half of Americans exercise their right and responsibility to vote. In the 2016 presidential election, 56% of the U.S. voting age population voted, a number lower than many other countries with national elections; in comparison, in 2016, 79% of the Australian voting age population cast ballots, and in 2017, 78% of the South Korean voting age population cast ballots in their national election (Desilver, 2018).

In addition to lacking basic knowledge about the structure and function of our government and low participation in voting, Americans have become increasingly divided and unwilling to consider perspectives other than their own. Stunningly, a Pew Research Center (2020) survey on views of U.S. democracy showed that only 66% of the American public felt that it was important that people agree on basic facts even if they disagree politically. If we cannot agree on what is a fact, how are we to make informed decisions based on facts? Most partisans see the other side as close-minded; roughly half see the other side as immoral (55% of Republicans and 47% of Democrats) and lacking any good ideas (53% of Republicans and 45% of Democrats) (Pew Research Center, 2019). Our polarized, hyper-focused media, ongoing

political scandals and squabbles, and growing mistrust of government are fueling partisan gridlock, division, and low civic participation.

So, how are we to make citizens who lead with knowledge, consider perspectives other than their own, participate in the process of sharing and debating ideas, vote, hold elected officials accountable, and work for the collective good? The answer is civics education and critical literacy in K-12 social studies classrooms.

### **Public Education**

Public education for citizenship was the driving force behind the creation and expansion of public schooling in the United States (Lazerson et al., 1984; Warren, 1988; Wraga, 1991). It was widely understood that “a citizenship based on limited knowledge was second class citizenship” (Lazerson et al., 1984, p. 51). Dewey (1916) and others argued that education was necessary for citizens to understand social, economic, and political changes that affected them; without the skills and knowledge to process social, economic, and political changes, citizens would withdraw from participating in the democratic process and democracy would be lost.

Education for democratic citizenship was the primary goal of American public education until the Cold War, when the purpose of education shifted to international military and economic competition (Winthrop, 2020; Wraga, 1991). This shift began with the launch of Sputnik (1957) and the resulting focus on STEM fields and continued with the publication of *A Nation at Risk* (1983). Most recently, this shift has manifested itself in the passage of No Child Left Behind (2001) and subsequent reauthorizations of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (Winthrop, 2020). Despite the forces of globalization, capitalism, and market reform, school must remain a place of democratic values and common good (National Council for the Social Studies, 2013b; Rebell, 2018). Kober (2007) noted the following:

Our nation's founders believed strongly that the success of America depended on the competency of its citizens. A chief reason for public education cited by Jefferson and other early leaders was the need to produce citizens who would understand political and social issues, participate in public life, vote wisely, protect their rights and freedoms, and keep the nation secure from inside and outside threats. (p. 10)

Thus, the purpose of public education is not to dominate the world economy, but rather to ensure the continuation of our democratic republic through developing the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for engaged citizenship. The National Council for the Social Studies, in the C3 Framework (2013a), emphasizes college, career *and* civic life. Failing to ensure that schools remain places of democratic values and common good threatens the future of our democracy.

No Child Left Behind (2001) emphasized student achievement in English language arts and mathematics and penalized schools for failing to meet adequate yearly progress. Schools, in an effort to meet the accountability standards, allocated more time to English language arts and mathematics and less time to other subjects such as social studies (McMurrer, 2007). The Center for Education Policy found that 44% of surveyed districts had cut time from other subjects and activities to increase time for English language arts and mathematics (McMurrer, 2007), while Fitchett et al. (2014) noted that “in the competition among the core subject areas for elementary instructional time, research has indicated that Social Studies receives the lowest priority” (p. 7). A nationwide study from the Center on Education Policy showed that the average decrease in social studies instructional time in elementary schools since 2001 was 76 minutes per week, a 32% decrease in total instructional time (McMurrer, 2008). Many schools sacrifice limited social studies instructional time (and thereby protect “high value” reading and math instructional time)

to complete tasks such as rehearsal for school programs, preparation for standardized testing, guest speakers, assemblies, and field trips.

This loss of instructional time for social studies is not limited to elementary schools. I have worked with many schools that ask middle school and high school social studies teachers to use one or two class periods a week for supplemental English language arts instruction, small group instruction for English language arts skill building, or test preparation. English language arts skill building is not always focused on social studies content; if social studies content is used to teach English language arts skills it is by chance and not by design. This reduction in instructional time is a loss of opportunity to learn what it means to be a citizen. Students lose the time necessary to deeply understand the “why” of important historical events and the implications those events have on our present and future. Students also lose opportunities for learning activities that directly build citizenship skills, such as planning inquiries, evaluating sources, using evidence, constructing sound arguments, communicating conclusions, using democratic procedures to make decisions, and taking informed action for the common good (NCSS, 2013b).

As well as allocating more time to English language arts and mathematics, schools have shifted the focus of instruction to the content and skills covered in the required standardized tests (McMurrer, 2007). This narrowing of the curriculum to discrete English language arts and mathematics skills that can be assessed by a standardized test has severely reduced the interdisciplinary knowledge, collaboration, and communication skills necessary for knowledgeable, engaged citizens. It is one thing to identify the types of rhetoric in English language arts; it is quite another to know how to apply the most effective type of rhetoric in making written and oral arguments about a pressing public policy issue. Likewise, it is one thing



to know how to analyze statistical data; it is quite another to know how to use the analysis of statistical data to collaborate, deliberate, and argue for a more equitable distribution of important resources such as healthcare, education, or government funding.

### **Role of Textbooks**

In addition to the decrease in time to teach social studies and a reduced emphasis on its importance, teachers have continued to rely on traditional textbooks as the primary mode of instruction. Despite the extraordinary growth of education technology and the move towards digital classrooms, textbooks are still common. Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, schools were using textbooks – they were just digitized. Textbooks can be used for as much as 80% of classroom instructional time (Blumberg, 2008). While teachers view textbooks as comprehensive, authoritative, and useful in organizing class activities (Shug et al., 1997), students can find them “boring and biased” (Davenport, 2019, para. 7). In a report on history textbooks written for the American Textbook Council, Sewall (2000) noted that textbooks are often “the sole source of information about the subject for teachers and students alike” (p. 3).

Textbook-dominated instruction is not consistent with democratic classroom characteristics (Kubow, 1996). Democratic classrooms are the incubator for democratic dispositions, skills, and practices as adult citizens. Accordingly, Kubow and Fossum (2007) identified the eight characteristics of democratic classrooms as active participation, avoidance of textbook-dominated instruction, reflective thinking, discussion, student decision making and problem solving, individual responsibility, recognition of human dignity, and relevance to students' interests and questions. Textbooks, as a part of curriculum, predispose students “to think and act in certain ways, and not to consider other possibilities, questions or actions”

(Sleeter & Grant, 1991, p. 80). Textbooks, when unquestioned, become instruments of social indoctrination and control (Sleeter & Grant, 1991).

Textbooks can be seen as political documents first in the textbook publication and district adoption process. Decisions about (a) what to include or omit and (b) the amount and depth of “coverage” a person, topic or event is given reflect societal values. Book publishers market textbooks “as tools for helping students ‘discover’ our ‘common beliefs’ and ‘appreciate our heritage’” (Loewen, 2007, p. 325). As such, topics of study, representations of people, events and places, and omissions in textbooks all send clear explicit and implicit messages to students about societal values and power structures. These messages are determined by state and local textbook adoption guidelines, textbook authors, textbook publishers, and state and local textbook adoption committees (Loewen, 2007; Marshall, 1991). Parents, community members, and organizations also determine what messages students receive through textbooks when they participate in the textbook adoption process through public review, public hearings and meetings, letter writing, social media campaigns, or protests. Additionally, textbook publishers try to avoid content that could be viewed as controversial, as controversy limits book sales (Loewen, 2007). Textbooks can further become political instruments if they are uncritically employed by the classroom teacher.

### **Civics Education**

While social studies teachers cannot shift national and state education priorities back to a more balanced focus on all four content areas or control the amount of time allotted for social studies in the school schedule, they can continue their historic mission to create citizens that maintain our democratic republic through pedagogical choices and practices in the classroom. In addition to knowledge about the structure and functions of our government, a quality civics

education should provide students with opportunities to analyze primary sources, consider multiple perspectives (Gould et al., 2011; Winthrop, 2020), practice inquiry (NCSS, 2013a), build critical thinking (Gould et al., 2011; NCSS, 2013a, 2013b; Winthrop, 2020), foster problem-solving (Gould et al., 2011; NCSS, 2013a, 2013b), engage in experiential learning (Gould et al., 2011; Winthrop, 2020) and prepare for democratic decision making (Gould et al., 2011; NCSS, 2013a, 2013b). Students should have many opportunities to research, read, analyze, write, and discuss with a focus on real-world issues (Gould et al., 2011).

A quality civics education has many benefits. *The Guardians of Democracy: The Civic Mission of Schools* report found that civics education promoted the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to “understand public issues, view political engagement as a means of addressing community challenges, and participate in civic activities” such as voting, volunteering, discussing politics, working on community issues, and communicating with elected representatives (Gould et al., 2011, p. 6). Importantly, a quality civics education is concerned with the rights and welfare of others and fundamental fairness and equity (Gould et al., 2011, p. 17). Kober (2007) noted that public education historically has been expected to fulfill certain missions beyond purely academic matters; other public missions include guaranteeing equal opportunities for all children, unifying a diverse population, and improving social conditions. Public education must serve the common good of all citizens.

### **Critical Literacy**

Gould et al. (2011) argue that “classrooms characterized by content rich curriculum as well as respectful and interactive discussions of social issues” have significant benefits for civics outcomes (p. 20). One powerful pedagogy that supports the use of rich curriculum and thoughtful discussions is critical literacy. Critical literacy, a subset of critical pedagogy, asks students to

take a critical stance while reading (Scherff, 2012) and to focus “on the relationships between language, social practice, power, and access” (Reidel & Draper, 2011, p. 125). Examining multiple content sources and asking questions beyond traditional text sourcing (i.e., identity of author, author’s perspective and purpose, time and place written, reliability) allows students to see beyond the written word of the text. For example, critical literacy asks students to consider the (a) intended audience (Lewison et al., 2015); (b) positioning of the reader (Janks, 2019; Lewison et al., 2015; Stevens & Bean, 2007; Vasquez et al., 2019); (c) author’s use of power, bias/balance, omissions/inclusions (Janks, 2019; Jones, 2006; Lewison et al., 2015; Stevens & Bean, 2007); (d) use of language (Lewison et al., 2015); (e) understanding of who benefits/who is harmed by the text (Jones, 2006; Stevens & Bean, 2007); and (f) understanding of who and what is valued in the text (Jones, 2016; Lewison et al., 2015). Reading social studies texts with a critical literacy stance allows students to “thoughtfully consider multiple perspectives before discussion” (Gould et al., 2011, p. 29).

Considering the power that critical literacy has to support civic education, teachers need to learn and implement critical literacy strategies in the social studies classroom, particularly since traditional literacy teaching is not critical literacy (Reidel & Draper, 2011; Wolfe, 2010) and traditional classroom discussion is not the dialogue necessary for exploring and challenging existing power structures. For novice teachers (pre-service teachers, student teachers, and first year teachers), the learning and practicing of critical literacy skills begin in teacher preparation programs and continues to varying degrees through student teaching and their first teaching positions. Given the power of critical literacy strategies to support taking multiple perspectives and engaging in thoughtful dialogue about issues vital to our democracy, it is essential novice

teachers transfer the critical literacy dispositions and skills learned in teacher preparation programs to the classroom.

### **Research Questions**

This longitudinal multiple case study research project will investigate two research questions related to novice teachers' critical literacy stances and practices in secondary social studies classrooms:

1. How, why, and under what circumstances do novice teachers' critical literacy practices change over time?
2. What conditions influence their successes or struggles in implementing critical literacy practices?

Exploring these questions and describing the complex process of becoming a critical literacy teacher will provide crucial information to novice teachers, teacher preparation programs, and K-12 schools as they work to support novice teachers in developing students' knowledge, skills, and dispositions for engaged citizenship.

### **Role of the Researcher**

As an experienced social studies teacher, social studies and English Language Arts instructional coach, and teacher educator of preservice teachers, I am deeply interested in these questions regarding critical literacy stances and practices. However, as Ellsworth (1989) noted, it is difficult to challenge subjugated knowledges when you are not free of your own learnings. My learnings and experiences as a K-12 student and undergraduate student were steeped in the traditional, unexamined and unquestioned historic, civic, economic, and social narrative of our country.

Becoming an experienced social studies teacher solidified my pedagogical content knowledge in social studies, and fostered a growing understanding of the pieces that were missing from our traditional narrative. I saw the importance of teaching students to critically examine our world and make informed choices based on a full understanding of the past and present. This would be the beginning of my interest in critical literacy.

As an instructional coach, I learned how to plan and provide professional development, how to coach and mentor other teachers, and how to navigate school politics. I realized that schools operate in historical, political, economic, and social structures that can act as supports and/or barriers to change. From these positions and experiences, I seek to understand how teachers can effect real change, change that gives all our students the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to consider multiple perspectives, question what they read, see, and hear, engage in civic discourse, and take informed action to improve our world. In planning and conducting this research study, I acknowledge that not all social studies teachers have a similar interest in enacting critical literacy practices in their classrooms.

## Chapter 2

### Literature Review

This literature review will examine scholarship on critical literacy, its relationship to the development of citizenship skills, knowledge, and dispositions in social studies classrooms, and the training and practice of novice teachers. The foci of this literature review are the opportunities and challenges for novice social studies teachers becoming critical literacy teachers who use critical pedagogy fully. The literature review will support the research study proposed here which aims to answer the following questions:

1. How, why, and under what circumstances do novice teachers' critical literacy practices change over time?
2. What conditions influence their successes or struggles in implementing critical literacy practices?

### Critical Pedagogy and Critical Literacy

Critical pedagogy does not have a single definition. The term, popularized by Henry Giroux, one of the founding theorists of critical pedagogy in the United States, identifies an area of study where schools are seen as both places where the dominant, oppressive culture is reinscribed and can be resisted and challenged (Villaneuva & O'Sullivan, 2019). Critical pedagogy owes much to Friere (1970), who advocated for democratic teaching methods, dialogue, and conscious-raising so students could reflect and act in ways that transformed their world into a more socially just place. Over the past half-century, critical pedagogy has expanded

to include many perspectives and schools of thought, some of which contrast with each other (Villanueva & O'Sullivan, 2019).

In a literature review to examine “the points of convergence and divergence among current authors interested in Critical Pedagogy,” Villanueva and O'Sullivan (2019) analyzed 100 articles from scholarly journals published between 2007 and 2014 (p. 3). The researchers found three points of convergence: a focus on using education to slowly transform social inequities, making education a political act; the creation of democratic classrooms through more egalitarian teacher student relationships and dialogue that empowers students to critically question the status quo; and the promotion of conscientization without indoctrinating students. Fully 90% of the reviewed articles addressed the political nature of critical pedagogy, conceptualizing political as “the contributions that particular educational encounters can offer in challenging oppressive dynamics of power in society” (Villanueva & O'Sullivan, 2019, “4.1 A Transformative Aim” section). These points of convergence remain centered on Friere's (1970) central ideas regarding critical pedagogy: that a consciousness-raising education allows us to reclaim our humanity and work to end social injustice, economic exploitation, and political disenfranchisement.

Villaneuva and O'Sullivan (2019) also found one point of divergence in the literature review on the perspectives on critical pedagogy. Among the articles reviewed, some scholars understood the praxis of critical pedagogy as residing inside the classroom, taking the form of dialogue (Ott & Burghardt, 2013), critical writing (Huang, 2012), or theater (Harlap, 2014), while others saw it as residing outside of the classroom in direct action and activism (Bamber & Hankin, 2011; Fobes & Kaufman, 2008; McInerney et al., 2011). This represents a division and disconnect that Freire (1970) did not intend; he envisioned the praxis of a liberatory education to reside first in the classroom and then outwards to change the world.



Additionally, Villaneuva and O'Sullivan's (2019) research found that critical pedagogy could be categorized into two schools of thought: critiques and applications. The critique school contains critical race theory, feminist critical education, and post-critical pedagogy, while the application school of thought includes critical pedagogy of place, decolonization pedagogy, critical peace education, and critical literacy. The research study proposed here will focus on the application of critical pedagogy through critical literacy in the secondary social studies classroom.

Like critical pedagogy, the term *critical literacy* does not have a single definition. Vasquez et al. (2019) note that many theories (e.g., post-structuralist, feminist, post-colonial, critical race, new literacy, place-conscious pedagogy) have combined to position critical literacy alternatively as a concept, framework, perspective, way of being, or stance. Fundamentally, critical literacy is about language and power and represents a call to action (Vasquez et al., 2013). Scherff (2012) defines critical literacy as having a "critical stance," while Reidel and Draper (2011) describe critical literacy as focusing "on the relationships between language, social practice, power, and access" (p. 125). Reidel and Draper (2011) support their description by identifying six classroom practices used by critical literacy teachers: reading multiple texts, reading from a resistant perspective, creating counter-texts, engaging in dialogue, facilitating student choice, and taking social action.

Hendrix-Soto and Wetzel (2019) conducted a literature review of 26 peer reviewed studies on critical literacy education in teacher preparation programs. They noted that although there is not "one definition or location of critical literacies" five overlapping tenets are especially important: literacies are political, critical literacies are "tools for deconstructing and reconstructing the world," critical literacies question and contest the status quo, literacy is

reconceived beyond print and writing, and literacy is situated and varied across time and place (pp. 201–202). In defining critical literacies as political, Hendrix-Soto and Wetzal (2019) note that critical literacies are tools for interrogating reality, challenging oppression, and creating empowerment. Bishop (2017) described the practice of critical literacy as grounded “in the ethical imperative to examine the contradictions in society between the meaning of freedom, the demands of social justice, the obligations of citizenship, and the structured silence that permeates incidences of suffering in daily life” (p. 371). Thus, critical literacy has the power to change the political contexts in which we live.

Fang (2012) argues that a critical literacy approach “engages students in analyzing texts and interrogating the values, prejudices, and ideologies underpinning those texts, helping them better understand the politics of representation and the constructedness of knowledge” (p. 107).

Giroux (2020) offers a more expansive concept of critical literacy:

At its most ambitious, the overarching narrative in this discourse is to educate students to lead a meaningful life, learn how to hold power and authority accountable, and develop the skills, knowledge, and courage to challenge common-sense assumptions while being willing to struggle for a more socially just world. (p. 5)

As tools, critical literacies allow students to decode, deconstruct, and interrogate texts in order to make positive changes in communities based on social justice. In questioning and contesting the status quo, critical literacies empower marginalized students to investigate and take action. Janks (2014) argues that critical literacy facilitates the development of a social conscience and the redesign of the world into a more just and sustainable place, while Stevens and Bean (2007) argue that critical literacy is necessary to reduce risks posed by unquestioned scientific and technological developments. Envisioning literacies more broadly than just print and writing,

critical literacies include all forms of communication and expression. Finally, because the world is constantly changing, reading the word and the world is an ongoing process, ever dependent on time and place (Friere & Macedo, 1987; Luke, 2012).

### **Critical Literacy and Citizenship Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions**

Critical literacy in social studies is about recognizing “that our world – geographically, environmentally, politically and socially” has been “formed by history and shaped by humanity” (Janks, 2013, p. 227). More than just interrogating why things are the way they are, critical literacy in social studies is about taking that analysis and using it to nourish our democracy and our democratic values of equality, justice, diversity, common good, rule of law, and popular sovereignty.

For the purposes of this review and research study, critical literacy is defined as a “philosophical belief embedded in literacy education” that teaches students to interrogate the creation and maintenance of historical, social, political, and economic structures in our society (Lee, 2011, p. 100). Critical literacy instruction in social studies can build the citizenship knowledge, dispositions, skills, and actions students need to be civically engaged adults (Giroux, 2020). Wolk (2003) stated:

At its foundation, social studies are about questioning and power, living for the common good, understanding and appreciating the past to create a better future, celebrating and encouraging diversity in perspective and culture, making daily moral judgements about how to act and what to believe, and being informed of events and issues locally and globally. (p. 102)

Critical literacy gives students the skills to question received authority and investigate the facts behind the facts. It moves students from passively consuming sets of facts to actively

participating, understanding, and transforming their world (Vasquez et al., 2013). Taking a Frierean perspective, O'Quinn (2005) argued, "Teachers, as the touchstone of democratic practices, must be evermore vigilant in teaching young people the critical literacy skills necessary to unwrap sociopolitical rhetoric and pull apart the political messages besieging them" (p. 261). While O'Quinn was referring to language arts teachers as the traditional teachers of literacy, her focus on a democratic education makes her argument highly relevant to social studies teachers. The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) (2019) states students must understand that both texts and the world are socially constructed, while O'Quinn (2005) has argued that students must recognize the sociopolitical nature of texts. Knowing how social and political capital are created and used gives students the knowledge to participate in positions of power and authority (O'Quinn, 2005). Without this "decoding" (O'Quinn, 2005) or "reading the word and the world" (Freire & Macedo, 1987), students will be unable to see text as directing them "for a particular way of interpreting the world and living in it" (O'Quinn, 2005, p. 265).

In addition to critically engaging texts for issues of perspective and messaging, critical literacy requires that students read and critically engage with texts they might find offensive to their beliefs or disengaging (NCTE, 2019; Vasquez et al., 2019). Such reading is necessary for considering and respecting others' perspectives, a fundamental skill of citizenship education (Gould et al., 2011; Nieto & Bode, 2018; Winthrop, 2020). Likewise, understanding others' points of view is necessary for compromise and policymaking, fundamental actions in a democracy. An enabling public education gives citizens the "opportunity to test their thinking against other perspectives and value the experience and insights of others" as well as the understanding that knowledge is not fixed or complete (Lazerson et al., 1984, p. 66). Vasquez et al. (2013) argue that alternate perspectives provide a self-correction tool, as we are reminded that

some perspectives and points of view represent advantaged and disadvantaged positions.

Ongoing struggle with issues raised by multiple perspectives reminds us that complex problems are rarely solved with simple solutions.

Understanding texts and the messages contained in them allows citizens to hold elected officials accountable for their words and actions (Gould et al., 2011). As representatives of the people, elected officials should act in ways that are ethical and consistent with the will of the people. Critical literacy skills support the education necessary to “enable every man to judge for himself what will secure or endanger his freedom” (Jefferson, 1810). Without critical literacy skills, citizens cannot determine “serious leaders of high character from con men” (Kahlenberg & Janey, 2016, p. 3).

Critical literacy also allows students to make sense of the sociopolitical systems we live in, including issues of power, equity, and social justice (Beck, 2005; Gould et al., 2011; NCTE, 2019; Pohl & Beaudry, 2015; Vasquez et al., 2019). Critical literacy gives students the tools to ask questions such as: Whose story is being told and from what perspective and for what purpose? Whose story has been marginalized or omitted? Why? Who benefits from the omission? Who is harmed? Who is included? Who is left out? Why is this so? What can we do to make our society more equitable or just? In seeking answers to such questions, critical literacy helps ensure that our core democratic values of popular sovereignty, justice, equality, and common good remain the basis for civic engagement and decision-making.

In teaching students to read and write “against the grain” (O’Quinn, 2005, p. 268) and “with an edge” (Lewison et al., 2015), social studies teachers help students develop the knowledge, dispositions, and skills necessary for citizenship. Despite the benefits that critically analyzing and evaluating the meaning of texts and messages brings to citizenship education,

there are significant challenges to teaching critical literacy in the social studies classroom, including the narrowing of curriculum (McMurrer, 2007); time (Fitchett et al., 2014; Kenna et al., 2018; McMurrer, 2007); standardized testing (Fang, 2012; Kenna et al., 2018; McMurrer, 2007; Saunders, 2012); the historical reliance on textbooks (Blumberg, 2008; O'Brien & Stewart, 1990; Reidel & Draper, 2011; Sewall, 2000; Sleeter & Grant, 1991); and prescribed curriculum, materials, and pacing guides that limit teacher autonomy (Norris et al., 2012; Saunders, 2012; Wolfe, 2010).

### **Training and Practices of Novice Teachers**

For novice social studies teachers who are beginning their careers and practicing new knowledge and skills in the process of becoming professional teachers, there are additional factors that support and/or challenge the implementation of critical literacy. In creating a binary framework for analyzing factors that support and/or challenge the implementation of critical literacy, it is understood that this analysis does not imply a purely “either/or” dichotomy, but rather an acknowledgement that some factors can be viewed as more supportive and others as more challenging to novice teachers' implementation of critical literacy practices.

### ***Key Factors Supporting the Implementation of Critical Literacy***

The review of the literature identified several factors that support novice teachers' implementation of critical literacy. These factors include (a) personal disposition (Rogers et al., 2016); (b) lived experience (Han et al., 2005); (c) opportunities to see critical literacy practices modeled (Van Sluys et al., 2005); (d) opportunities to experience and practice critical literacy for oneself (Reidel and Draper, 2011); (e) support and encouragement for practicing critical literacy during preservice field experiences and student teaching (Mosley, 2010); (f) ongoing professional development (Lewison et al., 2002); and (g) opportunities to engage in reflective

practice (Vasquez et al., 2013). Supports for critical literacy stances and practices are present in the university, the K-12 schools, and the novice teacher.

### **Novice Teachers.**

***Personal Disposition.*** Personal dispositions are an important factor in determining novice teachers' use of critical literacy. This includes experience, attitudes, and goals. In a four-year longitudinal study of two novice teachers, Jones and Enriquez (2009) observed that the novice teachers differed due to their previous experiences in school. One novice teacher who struggled with school skillfully used critical literacy and social justice in her classroom. The second novice teacher who was more skilled at school and had a preexisting "critical edge" did not incorporate critical literacy in her classroom, as her professional goal was to become an expert in balanced literacy (p. 154). Jones and Enriquez (2009) recommended that colleges of education "actively recruit students who have experienced struggles within schooling" as it is difficult to for students who are highly successful at doing school to challenge and discontinue the status quo (p. 165). Saunders (2012) built upon this finding in her case study of a student teacher who attempted to use critical literacy in her field and student teaching placements. Saunders notes that the student teacher was successful as a critical literacy teacher in part due to her feeling of being marginalized and connecting that to her students' marginalization. Likewise, Rogers, Wetzel, and O'Daniels' (2016) qualitative case study of a preservice teacher learning to become a critical literacy teacher explored how the preservice teacher used his disposition as an activist, his experiences as a marginalized member of society, and his goal for social justice to successfully become a critical literacy teacher and social activist. Pandaya (2019) noted that Allan Luke's (an influential critical literacy theorist and educator) work stems from his sense of "cultural outsidersness" (p. 194). Thus, it appears that past experience with marginalization may make

novice teachers more willing to practice critical literacy to critique existing social, cultural, political, and economic structures.

The dominant culture of the United States is based on white, European, and Christian values, beliefs, and norms. National Center for Education Statistics (2020) data on the characteristics of public-school teachers shows that 79% of teachers are white. The composition of the remaining 21% of public-school teachers is 9% Hispanic, 7% Black, 2% Asian, 2% two or more races, and 1% American Indian/Alaska Native. Members of the dominant culture may not perceive themselves as having a culture (Vasquez et al., 2013). Teachers need to be aware of “differences – and the privileges or marginalization that goes along with these differences” to effectively use multiple perspectives to support critical literacy instruction (Vasquez et al., 2013, p. 72).

***Lived Experience.*** Another factor that plays a role in novice teachers' implementation of critical literacy is their living experiences. Han, Madhuri, and Scull's (2015) comparative case study of two preservice teacher literacy courses found that preservice teachers from urban areas (n = 10) were more likely to embrace “social justice strategies and resources” than preservice teachers from rural areas (n = 14). Han et al. (2015) concluded that rural preservice teachers lacked “exposure to diverse students and families” (p. 637) and that the cultural hegemony of the rural university and surrounding schools led teachers to focus on the technical knowledge of teaching literacy instead of on issues related to diversity or racism, which were seen by the rural preservice teachers as not relevant or in the past. However, this conclusion should be taken with caution, as a 2018 Pew Research Center study found that 21% of rural America is non-white, indicating that rural communities are more diverse than implied, and issues related to diversity and racism more present and relevant than the authors conclude (Parker et al., 2018). In addition



to personal disposition and lived experience, teacher preparation programs can support novice teachers' implementation of critical literacy.

### **University Teacher Preparation Programs.**

***Opportunities to See Critical Literacy Practices Modeled.*** A factor supporting the implementation of critical literacy is the opportunity to see critical literacy practices modeled. In a case study of three preservice teachers' reading beliefs and practices in an Introduction to Reading course, Van Sluys et al. (2005) found less than four percent of the preservice teachers' "responses to be critical in nature" (p. 19). Participants were engaged in "doing school" as they had previously learned as students, and "there was more to undoing and disrupting to be done in order to push students to think about reading as a critical practice" (Van Sluys et al., 2005, p. 18). The researchers noted that mere exposure to social issues texts, literature circles, and professional readings was not enough; skills for the deep questioning and critical approach to texts and messages had to be explicitly modeled. Similarly, Reidel and Draper (2011) designed a critical literacy framework for integrating critical literacy in a secondary social studies methods course. Reidel and Draper (2011) described the importance of modeling the practices of questioning text, suggesting alternatives, and determining action. Additional support for seeing critical literacy practices modeled is supported by Hall's (2005) review of research on teachers' attitudes and beliefs regarding content area reading.

***Opportunities to See and Practice Critical Literacy for Oneself.*** In addition to seeing critical literacy practices modeled, novice teachers need to experience and practice critical literacy for themselves. Hsieh (2017) argues that in order for novice teachers to embrace critical literacy, "they must engage in both intellectual and moral shifts that allow them to teach children who are different from themselves, reading the world in ways that are different from their own

contexts” (p. 291-292). During a two-semester study focusing on teaching critical literacy for social justice, Skerrett (2010) found that preservice English and social studies teachers enrolled in an adolescent literacy course during semester one were able to create critical literacy lessons and identify the benefits of critical literacy instruction; however, they expressed resistance to incorporating critical analysis and evaluation of the implications of texts and messages into future classroom instruction. During semester two, the preservice teachers completed a critical literacy project based on an issue they chose. Experiencing critical literacy and social action as a student instead of a future teacher increased positive feelings and greater willingness to implement critical literacy. Similarly, novice teachers in a post-baccalaureate content area literacy course who experienced critical literacy themselves developed an understanding about critically questioning and analyzing texts and messages and saw the need for advocacy in teaching (Lesley, 2004). Lewison et al. (2002) also found that teachers who practiced critical literacy in teacher study group meetings increased critical literacy practices in their classrooms.

In their work on creating opportunities for pre-service and in-service teachers to live critical literacies, Vasquez et al. (2013) created opportunities for teachers to build curriculum using student interests, to challenge the common place, and to interrogate multiple perspectives. Pre-service and in-service teachers were asked to examine their culture, beliefs, and teaching philosophy before engaging as students in critically reading, writing, and discussing print, visual, and audio messages. Teachers were also asked to create text sets, multi-modal media sets, and counternarratives as part of their critical literacy projects. Vasquez et al. (2013) note that “critical literacy asks pre-service and in-service teachers to teach literacy in a way that they have not in all likelihood experienced themselves” (p. 64).

The National Standards for the Preparation of Social Studies Teachers (2018) argue that new teachers should be provided with a repertoire of instructional practices that promote student learning for informed civic life. The standards view pre-student and student teaching as more intentional sites for growth. Providing experience with critical literacy as a student supports novice teachers as they implement critical literacy in their K-12 classrooms.

### **K-12 Schools.**

*Support and Encouragement for Practicing Critical Literacy.* Supportive preservice field experiences and student teaching contexts provide additional opportunities for novice teachers to practice critical literacy. K-12 schools that allow teacher autonomy over materials, pacing, and lesson planning support novice teachers experimenting with critical literacy. Similarly, supervising in-service teachers who encourage critical literacy practices support novice teachers' pedagogical development in critical literacy. Shulman and Shulman (2004) note that communities of practice necessarily influence participating individuals, and educators in school settings must "create environments that support, sustain, and 'tune' the visions, understandings, performances, motivations, and reflections all its members" (p. 267). As Saunders (2012) succinctly noted, "People hone their identities in relation to their work with others" (p. 21). For example, a study of preservice teachers and critical literacy concluded that experiencing critical literacy in the classroom supported creating the identity of a critical literacy teacher (Mosley, 2010). This opportunity to "sediment their identities as literacy teachers" occurred as the preservice teachers repeatedly chose texts, built texts with students, and reflected on the constructed texts (Mosley, 2010, p. 420). Novice teachers who are supported and encouraged as they practice critical literacy dispositions and skills are more likely to repeat critical literacy in the classroom.

***Ongoing Professional Development.*** Another factor is ongoing professional development. Professional development during the first year of teaching allows novice teachers to revisit their university learning and refocus teaching away from the myriad administrative demands of teaching. In a study of novices and newcomers to critical literacy, Lewison et al. (2002) found that peer workshops and study group sessions were helpful in troubleshooting and implementing critical literacy. Ongoing professional development provides a space for experiencing critical literacy and for refining the practices of being a critical literacy teacher. Schmidt, Armstrong, and Everett (2007) note that “continuing to work with teachers is important because changes in knowledge and understanding take time” (p. 54).

***Opportunities to Engage in Reflective Practice.*** The final factor supporting the implementation of critical literacy practices was the opportunity to reflect. Reflection is a necessary prerequisite to awareness and willingness to change. “As preservice teachers come to see the inequities stemming from imbalanced power relations that limit the academic potential of some students, they may transform their belief, and potentially rework their teaching practices” (Souto-Manning & Price-Dennis, 2012, p. 307). Similarly, reflection allows teachers to see their role in maintaining the dominant culture and how that role mitigates efforts to teach students to critically examine the relationship between language and power (Vasquez et al., 2013). This reflectivity allows teachers to simultaneously work towards change while interrogating the ways they are part of the very problem they are trying to solve. Vasquez et al. (2013) argue that teachers cannot do crucial literacy alone; “having someone to think with and reflect with...makes all the difference in whether you continue to create more and more spaces for critical literacy in your setting or whether you throw in the towel” (p. 106). Similarly, Lewison et al. (2002) noted that implementing critical literacy is facilitated when teachers have support and

the opportunity to reflect with other critical literacy teachers. While many factors support novice teacher implementation of critical literacy, other factors challenge novice teachers' implementation of critical literacy.

### ***Key Challenges to the Implementation of Critical Literacy***

The literature review also identified significant challenges to novice teachers implementing critical literacy in the social studies classroom. These factors include (a) attitudes and beliefs about the purpose of reading (Reidel and Draper, 2011); (b) lack of experience with critical literacy as a student (Norris et al., 2012); (c) lack of cultural awareness (Han et al, 2015); (d) personal discomfort with teaching controversial issues (Schmidt et al., 2007); (e) concerns regarding classroom management (Beck, 2005); (f) lack of opportunity to see critical literacy practices modeled during teacher preparation (Berchini, 2014); (g) lack of opportunities to practice critical literacy during university coursework (Stevens and Bean, 2007; (h) conservative culture of K-12 schools (Smagorinsky et al., 2002); (i) disciplinary subculture and practices (O'Brien and Stewart, 1990; O'Brien et al., 1995); (j) status as a "novice" (Bean and Harper, 2004); (k) professional concerns regarding evaluation and employment (Hess, 2009); (l) uncertainty regarding what critical literacy looks like in the classroom (Lewison et al., 2002); and (m) pragmatic concerns regarding time and the demands of testing (Kenna et al., 2018). The challenges were inherent in the novice teacher, teacher preparation programs, and K-12 schools.

#### **Novice Teachers.**

***Attitudes and Beliefs About the Purpose of Reading.*** There are five primary factors that challenge novice teacher implementation of critical literary practices. First, the attitudes and beliefs novice teachers hold about the value and purpose of reading are a challenge to implementing critical literacy. Novice teachers in content areas other than English language arts

may feel that they are not reading teachers (Hall, 2005; Reidel & Draper, 2011) or that the purpose of reading is to acquire information (Reidel & Draper, 2011; Skerrett, 2010). Secondary teachers assume that students master literacy skills in elementary school; if a student has not, it is the job of the English teacher or the reading specialist to help the student master the literacy skills necessary to be successful in content area reading tasks (O'Brien & Stewart, 1990). Similarly, secondary content area teachers view themselves as disciplinary experts, not disciplinary literacy experts (Hall, 2005; O'Brien & Stewart, 1990). In a qualitative study on how secondary social studies teacher define literacy and implement literacy teaching strategies, Kenna et al. (2018) found that social studies teachers defined literacy in the social studies classroom as reading comprehension, writing fluidity, skills, and vocabulary. The research team also found that secondary teachers used disciplinary literacy strategies (which support critical literacy) half as often as content literacy strategies, which were focused on comprehension skills. This focus was driven by standardized assessments. In a qualitative study of content area reading, Alger (2009) found that first-year secondary content area teachers transferred strategy knowledge from their preservice to first-year teaching contexts as follows: selected reading strategies to organize information, held students accountable, or reduced the amount of reading required by students. In doing so, the teachers transmitted knowledge from textbooks without teaching students to interrogate the texts. This view of reading as a necessary chore or a means to an end does not support the repeated close reading and inquiry that is the foundation of critical literacy (LaDuke et al., 2016).

The Common Core State Standards (2010) focus on content reading—comprehension skills such as key ideas and details, vocabulary acquisition skills, and summarizing—that can be applied to informational texts across content areas (LaDuke et al., 2016). The CCSS further

emphasize close reading, a method that focuses on asking text-dependent questions and seeking those answers through multiple readings of complex text (Fang, 2016; Moore et al., 2014). Some researchers have argued that close reading does not promote critical literacy because it focuses on text-dependent questions and firmly discourages seeking connections between the text and lived experience of the reader and sociocultural contexts (Moore et al., 2014). Similarly, the CCSS' focus on mastering complex text through repeated readings and seeking answers to questions that are directly in the text teaches students to accept received knowledge. Others argue that close reading does not necessarily preclude critical literacy and has "the potential to foster critical literacy development" (Fang, 2016, p. 111). When used in conjunction with disciplinary literacy (reading and writing skills specific to a discipline), close reading can support critical literacy (LaDuke et al., 2016).

The C3 Framework (2013) outlines disciplinary practices in social studies. The C3 Framework explicitly incorporates and extends the CCSS and describes the CCSS as providing a foundation for inquiry in social studies. The C3 Framework builds on this foundation by focusing literacy in social studies on academic inquiry and civic action and including the preparation for civic life as a key purpose of literacy (Lee & Swan, 2013). LaDuke et al. (2016) argue that critical literacy is well-aligned to the C3 Framework, citing the introductory language of the framework:

Now, more than ever, students need the intellectual power to recognize societal problems; ask good questions and develop robust investigations into them; consider possible solutions and consequences; separate evidence-based claims from parochial opinions; and communicate and act upon what they learn. (NCSS, 2013a, p. 6)

Content reading and close reading give students the preliminary tools to understand texts through disciplinary and critical literacy lens. Disciplinary literacy gives students the tools to source and contextualize texts while critical literacy empowers students to interrogate power structures and take informed action for the common good. If a novice teacher were not to see the value and purpose in using content reading and close reading within disciplinary literacy, they would be unable to effectively implement critical literacy in the classroom.

***Lack of Experience with Critical Literacy as a Student.*** A second challenge to implementing critical literacy is that novice teachers may not have prior experience with critical literacy in their K-12 education (Norris et al., 2012). Traditional literacy teaching is not critical literacy (Reidel & Draper, 2011; Wolfe, 2010). Traditional classroom discussion is not the dialogue necessary for exploring and challenging existing power structures. In a literature review of 19 studies that examined novice teachers preparing to teach in grades 6-12, Hall (2005) concluded that “preservice teachers’ beliefs seem to be grounded in their prior experiences as students” (p. 411). Darling-Hammond (2006) noted that “it is impossible to teach people how to teach powerfully by asking them to imagine what they have never seen or to suggest that they ‘do the opposite’ of what they have observed in the classroom” (p. 308). A lack of experience with critical literacy as a student is a barrier to implementing critical literacy as a novice teacher.

***Lack of Cultural Awareness.*** In addition to a lack of experience with critical literacy, white, middle class novice teachers may not see their whiteness and related privilege, and this lack of awareness about their culture may create resistance to interrogating existing power structures (Han et al., 2015; Mathews & Dilworth, 2008). White, middle class novice teachers may also see issues related to diversity or multiculturalism as irrelevant, especially if they are teaching in predominantly white communities and have limited experience and exposure to



communities that are not predominantly white. Likewise, novice teachers may not have the historical, social, and political knowledge to guide students in critical literacy practices (Davila, 2011; Lewison et al., 2002). Because novice teachers may not have deep background knowledge, they may perceive important issues such as racism as occurring only in the past (Davila, 2011; Han et al., 2015). A teacher who has been educated in the traditional school systems may not be able to shift perspectives and stand outside the system to examine some of its integral and invisible principles, or to read the world in ways different from their own context (Hsieh, 2017).

*Personal Discomfort with Teaching Controversial Issues.* An additional factor challenging novice teachers implementing critical literacy is personal discomfort with teaching difficult, sensitive, or controversial issues (Hsieh, 2017; Mathews & Dilworth, 2008; Norris et al., 2012; Schmidt et al., 2007; Wolfe, 2010). This discomfort can arise from personal values or beliefs around topics such as abortion, homelessness, immigration, poverty, race, religion, sexuality, or violence which may conflict with student, family, or community beliefs and values. It can also arise from beliefs about parental rights—that some topics are firmly and exclusively the purview of parents—or fear of parental pushback (Kimmel & Hartsfield, 2019). No novice teacher welcomes a phone call or a visit from an angry parent challenging the validity of the teacher's instruction, or worse yet, a public challenge at a school board meeting. Research has also shown “a direct correlation between a pre-service or in-service teacher believing that their role is to protect the innocence of children and the inability to assume a critical perspective” (Vasquez et al., 2013). This discomfort and concern often leads teachers to preemptively censor the materials they use in the classroom (Boyd & Bailey, 2009; Kimmel & Hartsfield, 2019). This removes opportunities for students to examine multiple perspectives, understand social

injustices, examine privilege and marginalization, and engage in questioning and debate, making students unprepared for life (Boyd & Bailey, 2009).

***Concerns Regarding Classroom Management.*** Novice teachers may also feel distrustful of their ability to teach controversial issues and manage conflict and controversy in the classroom (Beck, 2005; Mathews & Dilworth, 2008; Saunders, 2012). Spirited discussion about current or controversial topics can degenerate into shouting matches or physical altercations. At a minimum, poorly managed dialogue regarding controversial issues can weaken a novice teacher's credibility and authority in the classroom and undermine the classroom learning community. As apprentice teachers, novice teachers select instructional strategies that allow them to manage student teaching with the fewest classroom management difficulties (Bean, 1997). Failure to properly manage the classroom can also result in negative performance reviews.

#### **University Teacher Education Programs.**

***Lack of Opportunities to See Critical Literacy Practices Modeled.*** There are two primary factors challenging novice teacher implementation of critical literacy within teacher education programs. First, teacher education programs may undermine emergent critical literacy teacher identities by not modeling and mentoring critical literacy dispositions and skills. In a self-reflection on two years of teaching a secondary English teacher methods course, Berchini (2014) observed that teacher candidates have "deeply ingrained assumptions about what teaching, students, schools, and classrooms are and should be" (p. 250). Likewise, institutional structures and practices such as grade point averages and scholarships are an accepted and expected part of school. As part of teaching critical literacy practice, Berchini (2014) designed a final project tasking students to demonstrate their understanding of differentiated instruction,

backwards design, classroom discourse, authentic writing, and individualized effective assessment. Students pushed back at the open-ended nature of the task, the weight of the project in relation to other coursework, and the nature of the grading. Students questioned Berchini's commitment to the principles she espoused during the semester, and Berchini realized she did not practice what she taught; she had, in fact, engaged in "precisely the kind of tactic" that she asked her students to avoid (p. 255). Berchini concluded that if teacher educators did not walk the talk regarding critical literacy, novice teachers were likely to "resort to familiar, comfortable, dominant narratives, having not learned... how to problematize and negotiate such narratives" (p. 257). This conclusion is supported by Hsieh (2017), who reflected that due to time constraints, uncertainties about how to effectively teach critical literacy, and the potential implications on course evaluations for addressing controversial issues, she chose to focus her pre-service teacher literacy instruction on academic literacy strategies and English language learners. Realizing that her practice did not reflect her beliefs, Hsieh (2017) became more explicit about teaching and modeling critical literacy.

*Lack of Opportunities to Practice Critical Literacy.* A second factor challenging novice teacher implementation of critical literacy within teacher education programs is that novice teachers may lack opportunities to practice critical literacy dispositions and skills during their university coursework. In an article discussing what teachers needed to unlearn about critical literacy, Lee (2011) noted that teachers in a university program did not recall taking courses related to critical literacy. Stevens and Bean (2007) noted that opportunities to practice critical literacy skills with visual texts are relatively rare in teacher education programs. Practicing critical literacy lessons is often done for peers, not with students, creating an artificial environment or decontextualized setting for practicing critical literacy teacher identities (Bean,

1997; Stevens & Bean, 2007). In addition, teachers are not encouraged to interrogate curriculum programs and literacy initiatives, seeking answers to how the curriculum will serve future K-12 learners (Stevens & Bean, 2007).

### **K-12 Schools.**

*Conservative Culture of K-12 Schools.* The culture of many K-12 schools presents the final challenges to novice teachers' nascent critical literacy practices. A lack of support for practicing critical literacy from supervising in-service teachers can undermine novice teachers seeing themselves as critical literacy teachers (Boyd & Bailey, 2009; Lee, 2011; Wolfe, 2010). Supervising teachers have a powerful influence on preservice teachers' pedagogical decisions (Bean, 1997). In a qualitative study of preservice teachers' selection and use of content area literacy strategies, Bean (1997) found that the powerful influence of the supervising teacher was more significant than personal experience and disposition, theories about learning, or other preservice experiences. Similarly, Korthagen and Kessels (1999) noted that the novice teachers adjust to practices in their current school and not to university learning, indicating the dominant influence of the school environment on a novice teacher. In contrast, Grossman et al. (2000) found that pedagogical tools developed during teaching methods courses became more apparent during novice teachers' second year of teaching.

*Disciplinary Subcultures and Practices.* Disciplinary practices also affect novice teachers' critical literacy practices (Moje, 2008). In some content areas, lecturing is a demonstration of a teacher's content knowledge (Bean, 1997), a way to efficiently transmit information (Moje, 2008), and a work-around to reduce reading. This "pedagogy of telling" makes teachers resistant to teaching reading skills (Sizer, 1984). Content or subject area subculture defines and restricts novice teachers' pedagogical choices according to group norms

(O'Brien & Stewart, 1990; O'Brien et al., 1995). Thus, if a novice teacher's department does not value critical literacy as a way of teaching students to interrogate the creation and maintenance of historical, social, political, and economic structures in our society, a novice teacher will be less likely to implement critical literacy in their classroom.

Once novice teachers move from field and student teaching experiences into their first year of teaching, culture shock occurs:

New teachers are trained in schools of education that tend to espouse more liberal pedagogies. This chasm between university and school has often created a tension for education students who are immersed in a liberal culture during their university coursework and must practice in conservative school environments. (Smagorinsky et al., 2002, p. 188)

This more conservative culture affects novice teachers' beliefs and practices about what it means to be a teacher. If the K-12 school culture does not value or support the deep reading and critical analysis of the implications of text, a novice teacher will find implementing critical literacy difficult.

*Status as a Novice.* As preservice, student, and novice teachers enter schools for field placements, student teaching, and the first year teaching, respectively, they are perceived as both students and teachers no matter where they are at on their career trajectory. This "kind of limbo, caught between the world of student and teacher" may make it difficult to adopt a critical literacy stance (Stevens & Bean, 2007, p. 40). Novice teachers do not have the professional capital (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012) to challenge existing ways of knowing, doing, and being and must negotiate for power (Wolfe, 2010). Preservice teachers are highly attuned to the social, cultural, and political contexts of their K-12 school assignments (Bean, 1997; O'Brien & Stewart, 1990).

As apprentices, novice teachers have few rights in their field placement and student teaching settings (Bean, 1997). Novice teachers have not proven themselves as competent teachers, established a track record of effective judgement, or built the trusting relationships with colleagues and administrators that allow for latitude in teaching. Without the professional capital that allows for greater autonomy, novice teachers find themselves adhering to existing norms and practices.

***Professional Concerns.*** Novice teachers may not practice critical literacy teacher identities due to professional concerns. As noted in Carnegie Corporation's (2003) *Civic Mission of Schools* report, "Teachers need support in broaching controversial issues in the classrooms since they may risk criticism or sanction if they do" (p. 6). Teachers can be "required to eliminate or curtail plans to teach" controversial issues by school administrators (Hess, 2009, p. 25). For example, Hess (2009) noted that after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, teachers were disciplined and fired for addressing the attacks as a controversial issue. More recently, a teacher was fired in Spring Hill, Florida for using a questionnaire from the book *Exploring White Privilege* (Amico, 2016), an assignment the school determined did not "meet the standards of appropriate instructional material" (WTPS-TV, 2017). Notably, a law proposed in Arizona in 2018 would have helped school administrators fire teachers for discussing controversial issues in the classroom (Trimble, 2018). An analysis by *Education Week* showed that 41 states have introduced or passed legislation since January 1, 2022 limiting or prohibiting the teaching of "divisive concepts" such as racism, sexism, systemic inequality, power, oppression, and critical race theory (Schwartz, 2022). Potential punishments for teachers ranged from civil liability, not having the class they are teaching count towards students' graduation or being disciplined up to and including termination (Schwartz, 2022). Critical literacy, with its

focus on giving students the tools to interrogate the sociopolitical nature of texts, has the potential to run afoul of the current movement to limit the consideration and discussion of multiple perspectives on controversial issues.

***Uncertainty About What Critical Literacy Looks Like in the Classroom.*** When novice teachers move towards critical literacy, “their initial efforts toward implementing a critical literacy curriculum are often shadowed by hesitations and uncertainties of what critical literacy looks like in classrooms” (Lewison et al., 2002, p. 390). This lack of a clear teaching model undermines the implementation of critical literacy (Beck, 2005; Chlapoutaki & Dinas, 2016). Kenna et al. (2018) noted that a “lack of understanding of ways to practically apply disciplinary literacy concepts” was a problem in teachers implementing critical literacy practices (p. 228). Similarly, Behrman (2006) stated that critical literacy “appears to lack a consistently applied set of instructional strategies that would mark it as a coherent curricular approach” (p. 480). Thus, the very flexibility of critical literacy to address student interests, questions, and passions in the local K-12 classroom create a lack of structure for implementing critical literacy.

***Pragmatic Concerns.*** Finally, novice teachers may not practice critical literacy due to pragmatic considerations. This includes a perceived lack of time (Barry, 2002; Bean, 1997; Kenna et al., 2018; Norris et al, 2012), vast amount of content to be covered (Barry, 2002; Kenna et al. 2018), or the demands of standardized testing (Giroux, 2020; Kenna et al., 2018). Such pressures work against novice teachers locating and vetting primary and secondary sources, developing guiding questions for the analysis and interrogation of texts, and facilitating student discussions.

**Conclusion**

This literature review highlights the known key factors that enable and/or challenge novice teachers' implementation of critical literacy in the secondary social studies classroom. Given the importance of critical literacy in supporting the development of students' civic knowledge, dispositions, and skills to maintain our democracy, additional research is needed to determine what additional factors enable and/or challenge novice teachers' implementation of critical literacy. Identifying additional factors and exploring their underlying causes, the aim of this study, will allow novice teachers, universities, and schools to change practices around learning to teach in order to increase critical literacy implementation in social studies secondary classrooms.



### Chapter 3

#### Research Methods

For this qualitative research study, a longitudinal multiple case study design was used to explore the process of becoming a professional secondary social studies teacher, which is a complex practice embedded in the systems of culture, gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status, university philosophy and processes, and the local habitus of K-12 schools. A multiple case study research design was selected because case studies describe the complex aspects that occur in a bounded system (Johnson & Christensen, 2017). Case studies are also preferred when “how” or “why” questions, like the following research questions guiding this study, are asked about contemporary events over which the researcher has little to no control (Yin, 2018):

- How, why, and under what conditions do novice teachers' critical literacy stances and practices change over time?
- What conditions influence novice teachers' successes or struggles in implementing critical literacy practices?

To answer these questions, a longitudinal design was needed to explore evidence of how novice teachers' critical literacy stances and practices change over time and what factors support and/or challenge implementing critical literacy in the secondary social studies classroom. This is significant as Martell (2014) stated the following:

[There are] relatively few longitudinal studies on learning to teach that examine teachers as they transition from preservice to inservice. . . . [and] what is learned in preservice education

might not overtly come to fruition until teachers have overcome the turbulence of the first year. (p. 99)

Thus, a two-phase longitudinal study was needed to determine the transfer of learning from the university to the classroom. Data for this study were collected in two phases over nine months. Phase I examined (a) the critical literacy stances and experiences of novice teachers during their K-12 education and college education prior to taking the methods class *History for Secondary Grades*, and (b) the conditions affecting novice teachers' critical literacy stances and practices during the methods course *History for Secondary Grades*. Phase II examined the conditions affecting the critical literacy stances and practices of two novice teachers as they completed their field placements in secondary schools. This design allowed the researcher to examine novice teachers' implementation of critical literacy as they transitioned from preservice to in-service teaching.

While longitudinal studies are often thought of as occurring over several years, this nine-month study, occurring over the novice teachers' final university teaching course and their subsequent student teaching capstone experience, was designed to capture a point of significant personal and professional change as novice teachers transitioned from preservice teachers to student teachers. This transformation, like other significant life events (e.g., obtaining a driver's license, graduating from school, experiencing marriage or divorce, birthing a child, dealing with a parent's death, moving long distance, or living amidst a pandemic), occurs in a relatively short period of time but creates significant and long-lasting changes for a person's personal and professional life.

The longitudinal multiple case study research design created the opportunity to compare and contrast cases for similarities and differences over time and to provide greater opportunity

for generalization (Johnson & Christensen, 2017). The multiple case study research design also permitted cross-case comparisons, strengthened the ability to make generalizations, and preserved the in-depth description of traditional case studies (Herriot & Firestone, 1983). Using Stake's (2006) cross-case procedure, a cross-case analysis of the multiple cases was completed to generate assertions about the study's research questions regarding the conditions that influence novice teachers' implementation of critical literacy practices over time. A cross-case procedure provided a look at what was common and unique as each participant experienced becoming a professional social studies teacher who enacted critical literacy practices.

## **Phase I**

### ***Case Selection***

This research study used purposeful participant selection (Johnson & Christensen, 2017). Teacher education students from Eagle University (all names are pseudonyms), a regional university in an upper Midwest state, comprised the pool of research subjects for this study. Eagle University's College of Education had 260 male and 856 female students (undergraduate and graduate) for the 2019–2020 school year.<sup>1</sup> The undergraduate student population included 76.5% white, 10.0% African American/Black, 5.1% Hispanic/Latino, and 4.0% multi-ethnic students. Eagle University's diversity score is ranked above average in overall diversity, below average in ethnicity, average in gender, and above average in location and age.<sup>2</sup> For the 2019–2020 academic year, 98% of Eagle University's newly graduated teachers were rated effective or

---

<sup>1</sup> This data was obtained from Eagle University's College of Education & Human Services on October 13, 2021. The citation and reference have been omitted to maintain anonymity.

<sup>2</sup> This data was obtained from College Factual in 2021. The citation and reference have been omitted to maintain anonymity.

highly effective by school principals.<sup>3</sup> With a diverse teacher education population, it was hoped that the participants for this study would reflect diverse voices, experiences, and perspectives.

Participants were selected based on two criteria: enrollment in the secondary social studies methods course *History for Secondary Grades* during fall semester 2021 and plans to complete student teaching placements in Michigan. In this state, social studies teachers can earn an endorsement to teach elementary social studies at the middle school level, which requires a social studies methods class at the secondary level. For the purposes of this longitudinal multiple case study, participants included teacher education students and/or student teachers, both of which are referred to as novice teachers. Another participant, the instructor for the secondary social studies methods course, *History for Secondary Grades*, consented to participate in the study. The 25 novice teachers enrolled in the *History for Secondary Grades* course at Eagle University were invited to participate in the research study. Fourteen participants (12 female and two male novice teachers) consented to participate in Phase I of the study. A total of 15 participants are included in this phase of the study. To protect participants' anonymity, all participant names used in this study are pseudonyms.

Name, gender, and academic concentration of participants for Phase I are detailed in Table 1:

---

<sup>3</sup> This data was obtained from Eagle University's College of Education & Human Services on October 13, 2021. The citation and reference have been omitted to maintain anonymity.

**Table 1***Phase I Participants.*

Name	Role	Gender	Level	Major(s)
Michelle	Instructor	F	Secondary	History, Political Science and Psychology
Alexandra	Novice Teacher	F	Elementary	History
Becky	Novice Teacher	F	Secondary	English and History
Carter	Novice Teacher	M	Secondary	Unknown
Cathy	Novice Teacher	F	Secondary	Political Science
Emily	Novice Teacher	F	Secondary	Special Education and Political Science
Gracelyn	Novice Teacher	F	Secondary	Music
Izzy	Novice Teacher	F	Secondary	Geography
Jody	Novice Teacher	F	Secondary	Geography and History
Kori	Novice Teacher	F	Elementary	History
Kylee	Novice Teacher	F	Secondary	Mathematics
Lisa	Novice Teacher	F	Secondary	Political Science
Maci	Novice Teacher	F	Elementary	History
McKinley	Novice Teacher	F	Secondary	Political Science
James	Novice Teacher	M	Secondary	Special Education and History

The novice teacher recruitment email is located in Appendix A. The information sheet/informed consent for novice teachers is in Appendix B. The information sheet/informed consent for the social studies methods instructor is in Appendix C.

### ***Data Collection***

In Phase I, data collection was comprised of the following: pre- and post-surveys of novice teachers, 33 observations of the instructor, two semi-structured interviews of the instructor, individual semi-structured interviews of novice teachers, and collection of documents (e.g., program requirements, syllabus, course schedules, assigned monograph, recommended monograph, digital textbooks, journal articles, state teaching standards, lesson planning resources and templates, slide decks, assignments, handouts, lesson plans, resources related to applying for teaching positions, and novice teacher coursework). The following two sections will provide additional detail regarding the data collected for novice teachers and the instructor.

**Novice Teachers.** A novice teacher pre-survey was administered via Google Forms during the first 30 days of *History for Secondary Grades*. This survey, located in Appendix D, was anonymous. Ten out of 14 novice teachers completed the survey. A novice teacher post-survey, located in Appendix E, was administered via Google Forms after final grades were posted. This survey was also anonymous. Eight out of 14 novice teachers completed the survey during the 30-day survey window.

Documents gathered from novice teachers in the study included course activities and assignments, comprised of Dear Student letters, chapter assignment reactions, unit planning grids, lesson objectives, assessment alignment, microteaching lesson materials, self-reflections on microteaching lessons, discussion questions, professional learning committee notes, and

completed teaching units for United States and world history. Documents obtained from novice teachers were collected after the course was completed and final grades were posted.

Semi-structured interviews with five novice teachers took place via Zoom after completing *History for Secondary Grades* and the posting of final grades. The interviews lasted 30–45 minutes. Semi-structured interviews were used because they “enable researchers to maintain some consistency over the concepts that are covered in each interview” while providing flexibility to ask additional questions or dive deeper into a topic (Corbin & Strauss, 2015, p. 39). Interview questions focused on each novice teacher’s understanding of critical literacy as a theory and pedagogy, critical literacy dispositions and skills, factors that encourage teaching from a critical literacy perspective, and barriers and challenges to teaching from a critical literacy perspective. Novice teacher interview questions are located in Appendix F. Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. All interviews were member-checked by providing the participant a copy of the interview transcript via email and asking participants to confirm the accuracy of the interview.

**Instructor.** The researcher conducted two semi-structured interviews of 45–60 minutes with the instructor. The pre-study interview took place the week before the course began via Zoom. This virtual interview was audio-recorded and transcribed. The instructor reviewed the transcript and confirmed its accuracy. The post-study interview took place after the posting of final grades on December 17, 2021. This virtual interview was also audio-recorded and transcribed, and the instructor confirmed its accuracy. Instructor interview questions are located in Appendix G.

Non-participant observation of the instructor took place during *History for Secondary Grades* and lasted for approximately 75 minutes per course meeting (totaling 33 observations)

during the fall semester 2021. Non-participant observations allowed for the researcher to capture the subtleties of what went on during interactions between the instructor and novice teachers. This is important because participants are not “always aware of, or able to articulate” these subtleties (Corbin & Strauss, 2015, p. 41). Field notes were used to document non-participant observations.

Documents gathered from the instructor in this study included the university history major and minor required course list, course syllabus, course calendar, daily slide presentations, handouts, articles, resources posted on the digital learning management system, two digital United States history textbooks, one digital world history textbook, and assignments posted on the digital learning management system. In addition, the researcher purchased a copy of the required course text *Why Learn History (When It's Already on Your Phone)* (Wineburg, 2018) and the recommended texts *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts: Charting the Future of Teaching the Past* (Wineburg, 2001), *Everything You Need to Know About American History in One Big Fat Notebook* (Rothman, 2016), and *Everything You Need to Know About World History in One Big Fat Notebook* (Vengoechea, 2016). Documents obtained from the university social studies methods instructor were collected contemporaneously with non-participant observations of the course.

## **Phase II**

### ***Case Selection***

Phase II of this research study used convenient participant selection, a non-probability method that allows a researcher to easily recruit participants who meet the study criteria (Johnson & Christensen, 2017). Novice teachers from Eagle University were selected based on two dimensions: Phase I participation and plans to complete student teaching in Michigan. The



recruitment email for novice teachers is located in Appendix H. The information sheet/informed consent for novice teacher participants is located in Appendix I. In addition, the cooperating teachers for the novice teachers and the schools' principals needed to permit the researcher to conduct the study. Cooperating teacher recruitment emails (Appendix J), the principal agreement letter (Appendix K), and cooperating teachers' information sheet/informed consent sheets (Appendix L) were sent during the first four weeks of the novice teachers' student teaching experience. Two novice teachers agreed to participate in Phase II of the study; one cooperating teacher also consented to participate. Name, gender, and academic concentration of participants for Phase II are detailed in Table 2:

**Table 2**

*Phase II Participants.*

Name	Role	Gender	Level	Major(s)
Joseph	Cooperating Teacher	M	Secondary	Social Studies
Becky	Novice Teacher	F	Secondary	English and History
Emily	Novice Teacher	F	Secondary	Special Education and Political Science

***Data Collection***

For Phase II of data collection, non-participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and the collection of documents (e.g., lesson plans, student handouts, slide presentation decks) comprised the data collection methods. Documents gathered for this study included lesson plans created by the cooperating teacher and novice teacher. Lesson plans and other documents provided information on the cooperating teacher's and novice teachers' values, attitudes, beliefs,

and practices regarding critical literacy. Non-participant observations took place during novice teachers' student teaching experiences. Two non-participant observations, lasting 60 minutes, were completed for each novice teacher. Field notes were used to document non-participant observations.

Each semi-structured interview lasted approximately 30–60 minutes. Cooperating teacher interview questions are located in Appendix M. Novice teacher interview questions are located in Appendix N. These “prolonged case study interviews” occurring at two points in the novice teachers' transition from student to novice teacher allowed for further inquiry and exploration over time (Yin, 2018, p. 119). Semi-structured interviews were used because they “enabled [the] researcher to maintain some consistency over the concepts that are covered in each interview” while providing flexibility to ask additional questions or dive deeper into a topic (Corbin & Strauss, 2015, p. 39).

Following the second non-participant observation, semi-structured interviews of the cooperating teacher and the novice teachers were conducted outside of school hours via Zoom. Interview questions focused on the cooperating teacher's and novice teachers' understanding of critical literacy as a theory and pedagogy, critical literacy dispositions and skills, factors that encourage teaching from a critical literacy perspective, and barriers and challenges to teaching from a critical literacy perspective. In-person interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed via the live transcript feature on Zoom. All interviews were member-checked by providing the participant a copy of the interview transcript via email and asking each participant to confirm the accuracy of the interview transcript.

For all participant data collected during Phase I and Phase II, data collection devices included empty table shells or Word tables. Using an empty table shell or word table indicated

the data to be collected, ensured that parallel information was collected from all cases, and provided a basis for preliminary analysis (Yin, 2018). Also, the researcher kept a reflective journal to document/memo her feelings, assumptions, expectations, and biases regarding this research (Corbin & Strauss, 2015).

### **Data Analysis**

Data were saved to the researcher's biometric, password-protected computer in a case study database. The database contains an orderly collection of case study data, including transcripts of interviews, field notes from non-participant observations, documents, and analytic memoranda. All data were analyzed using Dedoose, a computer-assisted, qualitative data analysis software. Survey data was collected via Google Forms, and a copy was saved to the researcher's computer. Quantitative survey data were analyzed using Google Forms analytical tools. Throughout the data analyses, memos were written and saved electronically.

First-cycle coding methods included attribute coding and initial coding to create codes and initial categories (Saldaña, 2016). Attribute coding was used to note basic descriptive information such as participant demographics and university major and minor. Such descriptive information provided context and assisted in managing the data. Initial coding was used to break down the data, analyze the data, and compare and contrast the data for similarities and differences. Code mapping and landscaping were used to organize and assemble first cycle codes in preparation for second cycle coding. Code mapping assisted in transforming codes into categories, and code landscaping provided a visual and textual description of code frequencies (Saldaña, 2016). Theoretical coding, a second cycle coding method, was used to integrate and synthesize categories into themes (Saldaña, 2016). A codebook was maintained in a separate file.

From the data analysis, five prominent categories emerged from Phase I: *Building a Base*, *Modeling*, *Containing Risk*, *Deciding Where to Start*, and *Being an Apprentice*. Categories, definitions, and subcategories are detailed in Table 3:

**Table 3**

*Phase I Original Data Coding.*

Category	Category definition with prominent subcategories (No. of coded passages)
Building a Base	Novice teachers learned the building blocks of teaching social studies through examining the state content standards (286), lesson planning (253), microteaching (37), engaging in the disciplinary literacy practice of reading like a historian (245), examining primary sources (412), and examining multiple perspectives (449).
Modeling	Novice teachers used modeled strategies (108) for historical thinking (245), using primary sources (412) and examining multiple perspectives (449).
Containing Risk	Novice teachers learned strategies for managing controversy (124) and containing risk (41).
Deciding Where to Start	Novice teachers selected textbooks as their primary teaching and learning resource (270) over the state content standards (286).
Being an Apprentice	Novice teachers demonstrated the knowledge and skills of an apprentice through content knowledge (227), pedagogical content knowledge (22), reflection on confidence/comfort in teaching

(123), and struggles to manage the time necessary for lesson planning (113).

---

From the data analysis, one additional prominent category emerged from Phase II:

*Adapting*. The category, definition, and subcategories are detailed in Table 4:

**Table 4**

*Phase II Original Data Coding.*

Category	Category definition with prominent subcategories (No. of coded passages)
Adapting	Novice teachers learned to adapt university knowledge and skills to the needs of their students (19), adapt teaching to meet cooperating teacher expectations (9), and adapt lessons to contain the risk of conflict with colleagues and parents (3).

---

A cross-case analysis using Stake's (2006) cross-case procedure was completed to generate assertions regarding the study research questions. As part of the data collection and analysis process, the researcher identified and addressed craft rival explanations— threats to validity and investigator bias—to strengthen the study's findings (Yin, 2018).

This longitudinal multiple case study's findings and discussion are organized around the themes of *Teaching as an Apprentice* and *Learning in a Community*. These themes will be explored in greater detail in the following chapters.

### *Validation Strategies*

Using Creswell and Miller's (2000) framework for selecting validity procedures, credibility for this research included triangulation, member checking, researcher reflexivity, and thick rich description. This framework considers validity procedures from the lens of the researcher, the study participants, and the people external to the study such as reviewers and readers.

Triangulation, done from the lens of the researcher, is "a validity procedure where researchers search for convergence among multiple and different sources of information to form themes or categories in a study" (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 126). Triangulation, a measure of construct validity (Yin, 2018), is undertaken to ensure the correct information and interpretations have been obtained (Stake, 2006). This study looked for corroborating evidence within multiple case studies using survey responses, observations, semi-structured interviews, and artifacts in individual case studies. As advised by Stake (2006), the researcher endeavored to have at least three confirmations and assurances for each important finding.

Member checking, done from the lens of study participants, takes "data and interpretations back to the participants in the study so that they can confirm the credibility of the information and narrative account" (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 127). For this study, member checking was used to review transcripts of the semi-structured interviews. Members were given the opportunity to remove or add information to the interview transcript. One member chose to add information to their transcript, while another member chose to delete information. Both the use of multiple sources of evidence and member checking increased construct validity (Yin, 2018).

Researcher reflexivity, done from the lens of the researcher, provides an opportunity for the researcher to “self-disclose their assumptions, beliefs, and biases” (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 127). The researcher kept a reflective journal and created a “Role of the Researcher” section in the study to provide readers with an understanding of the researcher’s position. This reflection included the researcher’s acknowledgement of how her roles including social studies teacher, social studies and ELA instructional and content coach, professional development provider, school improvement facilitator, and teacher educator played in creating an intense interest in critical literacy as a tool for teaching secondary students the dispositions, knowledge, and skills for engaged citizenship. This reflection also acknowledged that not all secondary social studies teachers share the same interest in enacting critical literacy in their classrooms.

Lastly, thick, rich description, viewed through the lens of people external to the study, provides an opportunity for the reader to be “transported into a setting or situation” by describing the setting, participants, interaction, or event in as much detail as possible (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 129). Such detailed narratives provide the reader with a clear picture of study participants in the context of learning to become a professional social studies teacher who enacts critical literacy.

### ***Reliability Strategies***

To use Yin’s (2018) criteria for judging the quality of case study research designs, the following tests of reliability were included within the study design: using a case study protocol, developing a case study database, and maintaining a chain of evidence. A case study protocol made data collection procedures explicit and increased the transparency of documentation. The case study database located all data in one location in an orderly, searchable fashion. The case study protocol and case study database provided the necessary chain of evidence by ensuring that

all data were collected, all original data were located in one place, and the circumstances under which the data were collected were documented.

### Summary

For this qualitative research study, a longitudinal multiple case study design was used to explore the process of becoming a professional secondary social studies teacher. Phase I examined (a) the critical literacy stances and experiences of novice teachers during their K-12 education and college education prior to taking the methods class *History for Secondary Grades*, and (b) the conditions affecting novice teachers' critical literacy stances and practices during the methods course *History for Secondary Grades*. Phase II examined the conditions affecting the critical literacy stances and practices of two novice teachers as they completed their field placements in secondary schools. Data collection comprised pre- and post-surveys, non-participant observations, semi-structured interviews, and collection of documents over a nine-month period.

Data analysis revealed five categories from Phase I: *Building a Base*, *Modeling*, *Containing Risk*, *Deciding Where to Start*, and *Being an Apprentice*. Data analysis revealed one additional category from Phase II: *Adapting*. This longitudinal multiple case study's findings and discussion are organized around the themes of *Teaching as an Apprentice* and *Learning in a Community*. In the following chapter, the findings from this longitudinal multiple case study will be explored to understand (a) how, why, and under what circumstances novice teachers' critical literacy practices change over time; and (b) the conditions that influence novice teachers' successes or struggles in implementing critical literacy practices.



## Chapter 4

### Findings

This chapter explores the findings of a multiple case longitudinal study designed to understand (a) how, why, and under what conditions novice teachers' critical literacy stances and practices change over time; and (b) what conditions influence novice teachers' successes or struggles in implementing critical literacy practices. Overall, this chapter details the data analysis of the dispositions that the novice teachers brought to the university secondary social studies methods course where they were provided a range of opportunities to see and practice critical literacy. Due to the challenges in secondary schools that influence novice teachers' implementation of critical literacy practices, the novice teachers learned to make adaptations to their critical literacy practices.

This study's findings stem from 16 participants' data collected across two phases. Fourteen novice teachers and the university methods instructor participated in Phase I of this study. Data collected during the university social studies methods course *History for Secondary Grades* included pre- (n = 10) and post- (n = 8) surveys of novice teachers, 33 observations of the instructor, two semi-structured interviews of the instructor, separate semi-structured interviews of novice teachers (n = 5), and collection of course-related documents from the instructor and the 14 novice teachers (n = 935). Two novice teachers and one cooperating teacher participated in Phase II of the study. Data collection methods included two non-participant observations, collection of novice teacher lesson plans, and semi-structured interviews via Zoom

after school hours once observations were completed. Data analysis was completed using first, transition, and second cycle coding to create codes, categories, and themes (Saldaña, 2016).

From six primary categories, two themes emerged. First, the theme of *teaching as an apprentice* is derived from the categories of *building a base*, *deciding where to start*, and *being an apprentice*. It describes the content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and lesson planning skills demonstrated by the novice teachers. Second, the theme *learning in a community* is derived from the categories of *modeling*, *containing risk*, and *adapting*. This theme encapsulates the professional learning communities of the university and the local K-12 schools, including modeling of critical literacy, opportunities to practice critical literacy, and risk containment. The key assertion proposed from the two themes of *teaching as an apprentice* and *learning in a community* is as follows: *Novice secondary social studies teachers' identities as critical literacy teachers were shaped over time as they saw critical literacy practices modeled, had opportunities to practice critical literacy, learned risk containment strategies, and adapted to their teaching to their current learning communities.*

To protect participants' anonymity, all participant names used in this study are pseudonyms. Also, all responses from participants have been quoted as written or stated and are not corrected for grammar nor marked with [sic].

### **Theme 1: Teaching as an Apprentice**

The theme of *teaching as an apprentice* is derived from (a) a pre-survey (n = 10) of novice teachers' critical literacy dispositions and lived experiences prior to taking the course *History in the Secondary Grades* and (b) the three categories of *building a base*, *deciding where to start*, and *being an apprentice* that emerged from Phase I data analysis. Novice teachers came to the course with existing personal dispositions regarding multiculturalism, marginalization, and

social justice; different definitions of critical literacy; and different experiences with critical literacy stances and practices in their K-12 and university education contexts; all of these factors supported and challenged novice teachers' developing critical literacy stances and practices. In *History in the Secondary Grades*, novice teachers worked on *building a base* for future grades 6–12 social studies teaching through examining the state content standards, lesson planning, microteaching, engaging in disciplinary literacy practices, examining primary sources, and examining multiple perspectives. In *deciding where to start*, novice teachers selected the history textbooks as the primary driver of teaching decisions and the state content standards as the secondary driver. The last category, *being an apprentice*, was demonstrated through a lack of content knowledge, a lack of pedagogical content knowledge, a lack of confidence in teaching, and struggles with time management for lesson planning. The pre-survey and three categories comprising the theme of *teaching as an apprentice* will be described in greater detail in the sections below.

### ***Novice Teachers' Dispositions***

This category emerged during data analysis of the critical literacy pre-survey (n = 10) related to personal dispositions and lived experiences prior to taking the course, *History for Secondary Grades*. Data were collected through an anonymous pre-survey of novice teachers' beliefs regarding multiculturalism, teaching reading, and teaching content that might contradict traditional narratives; comfort in teaching controversial topics; and experiences with critical literacy, marginalization, and social justice activism. This survey was administered at the beginning of the methods course.

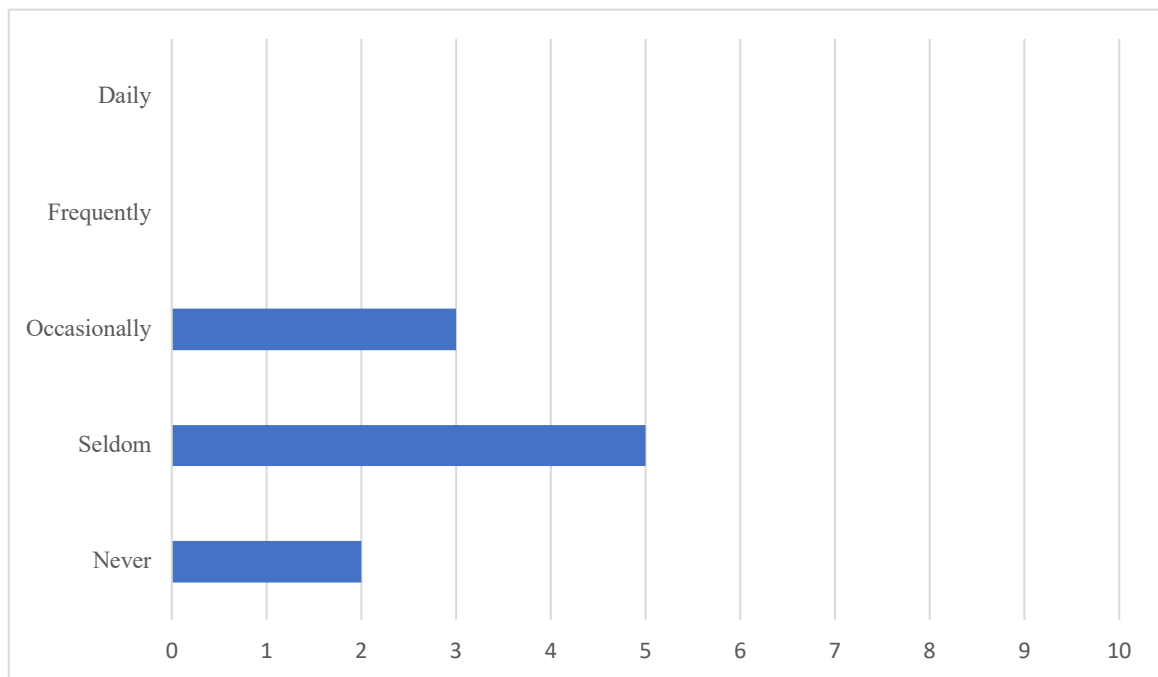
Past research has suggested that personal disposition (Rogers et al., 2016) and lived experience (Han et al., 2005; Jones and Enriquez, 2009; Saunders, 2002) are factors in

determining novice teacher implementation of critical literacy in their own classroom. Belief in the value and role of multiculturalism, personal experience with marginalization, and experience with social justice activism are elements of personal disposition and lived experience.

Novice teachers' pre-survey responses ( $n = 10$ ) showed a strong belief in the idea that multiculturalism is a fundamental component of social studies (90% percent strongly agree/agree). As shown in Figure 1, 30% of novice teachers reported occasionally feeling marginalized in our society. However, 70% reported seldom or never feeling marginalized.

### Figure 1

*Frequency of novice teachers feeling marginalized in our society.*



*Note:*  $n = 10$

Novice teachers' self-reported personal experiences with social justice activism varied widely. Data showed a lack of experience with social justice activism in their K–12 education,

with 80% of novice teachers reporting “none,” “not much,” or “little to no” experience. One novice teacher stated:

Any education and activism was completed on my own. My school was very strict in what students were and were not allowed to talk about or do. For example, my school was very outspoken that any students who want to protest for the march for our lives movement would be expelled.

For novice teachers who experienced social justice activism in their K–12 education, the experience was viewed as artificial or topical, with one novice teacher stating:

All my activism in k12 was very performative and on the behalf of my high school. There were "walk outs" and many students used these experiences to "protest" gun violence. Though many students just did it to not be in class and it was very performative and for the benefit of pictures and not on the behalf of minority populations or gun control.

A second novice teacher noted: “We were given the basic run down of the Civil Rights Movement every MLK Day each year, and I was briefly introduced to the women's suffrage movement in 8th and 10th grade.” Data show that for these novice teachers, social justice activism was neither common nor authentic in the K–12 setting.

For the majority of novice teachers, the university has provided greater opportunities for social justice activism, per novice teachers' responses. One novice teacher stated, “We've focused on many wider reaching issues that are relevant to what we do today and were encouraged to go out and advocate for issues that we are passionate about.” Another novice teacher stated:

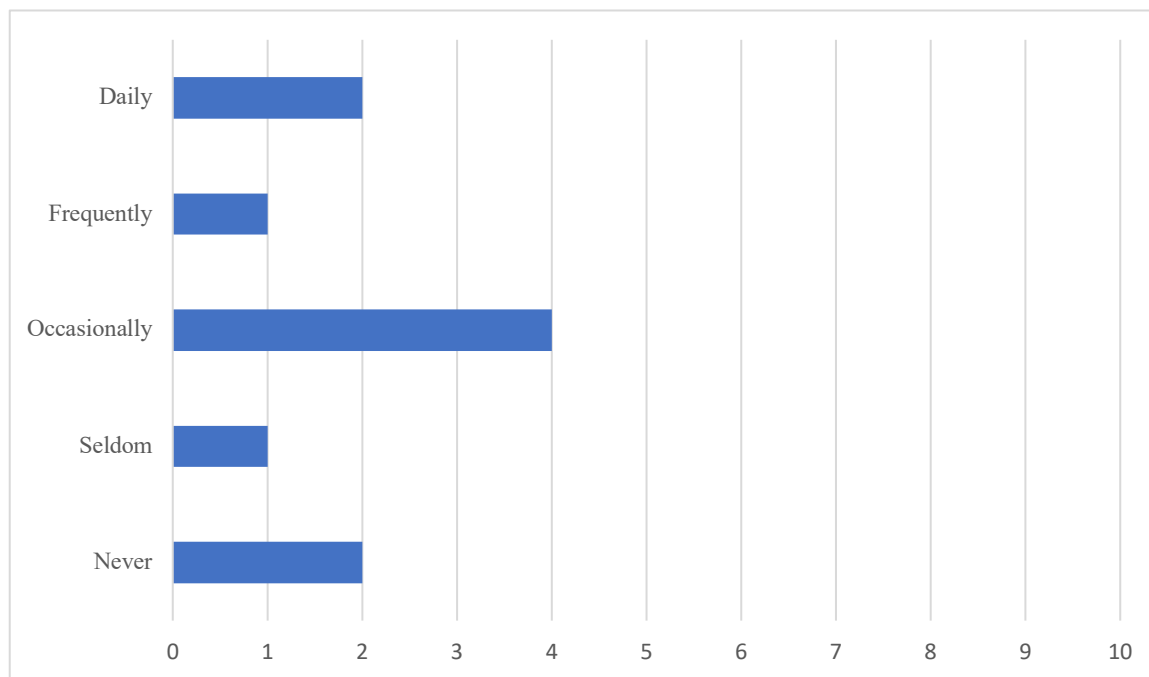
I have experienced more social justice activism during my college education. I have participated in marches that were done on my own time and not on the behalf of my

school or the expectations of my fellow students. They were done on the behalf of Black Lives Matter and LGBTQ+ rights.

As shown in Figure 2, 30% of novice teachers reported that social justice activism is a daily or frequent part of their lives, and 40% reported that social justice activism is an occasional part of their lives.

### Figure 2

*Frequency of social justice activism in the lives of novice teachers.*



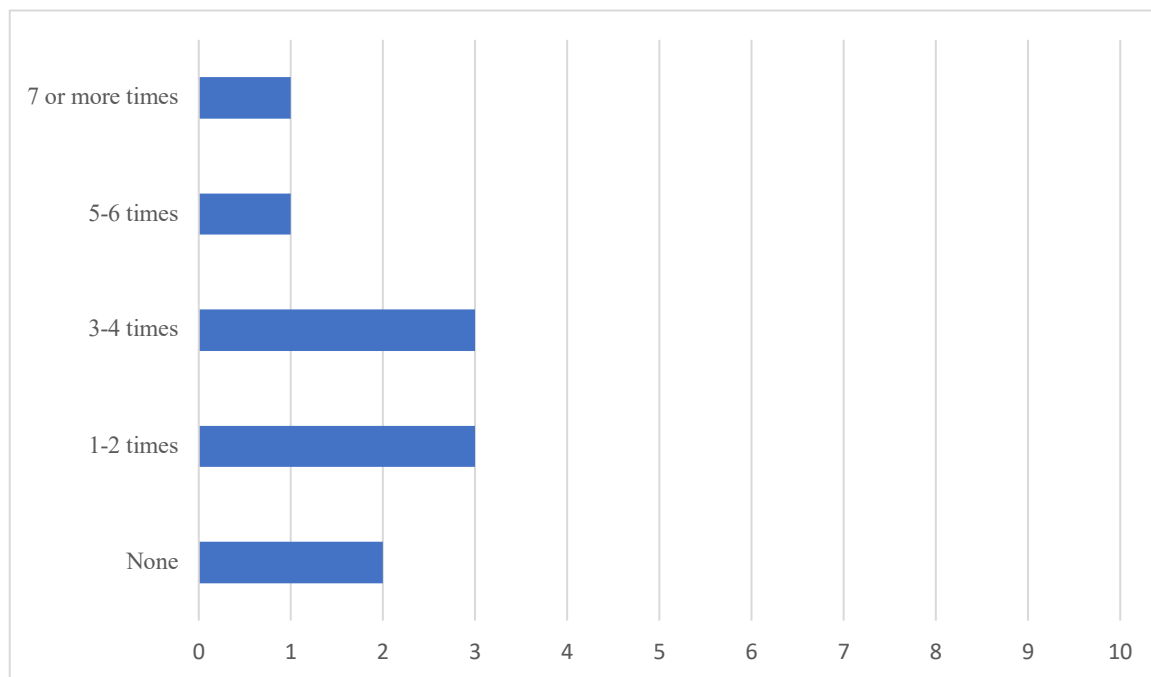
*Note:* n = 10

This data suggest that while social justice activism was not an integral part of novice teachers' K–12 education, the university provided novice teachers greater opportunities for social justice activism, and the majority of novice teachers participate in social justice activism at least occasionally.

Research has also shown that past personal experience with critical literacy is a factor in determining novice teachers' implementation of critical literacy. In the critical literacy pre-survey, novice teachers reported a wide variety of past experiences with critical literacy. As shown in Figure 3, most novice teachers had 1–4 prior experience(s) engaging in or practicing critical literacy.

### Figure 3

*Novice teachers' prior experiences engaging with or practicing critical literacy.*



*Note:* n = 10

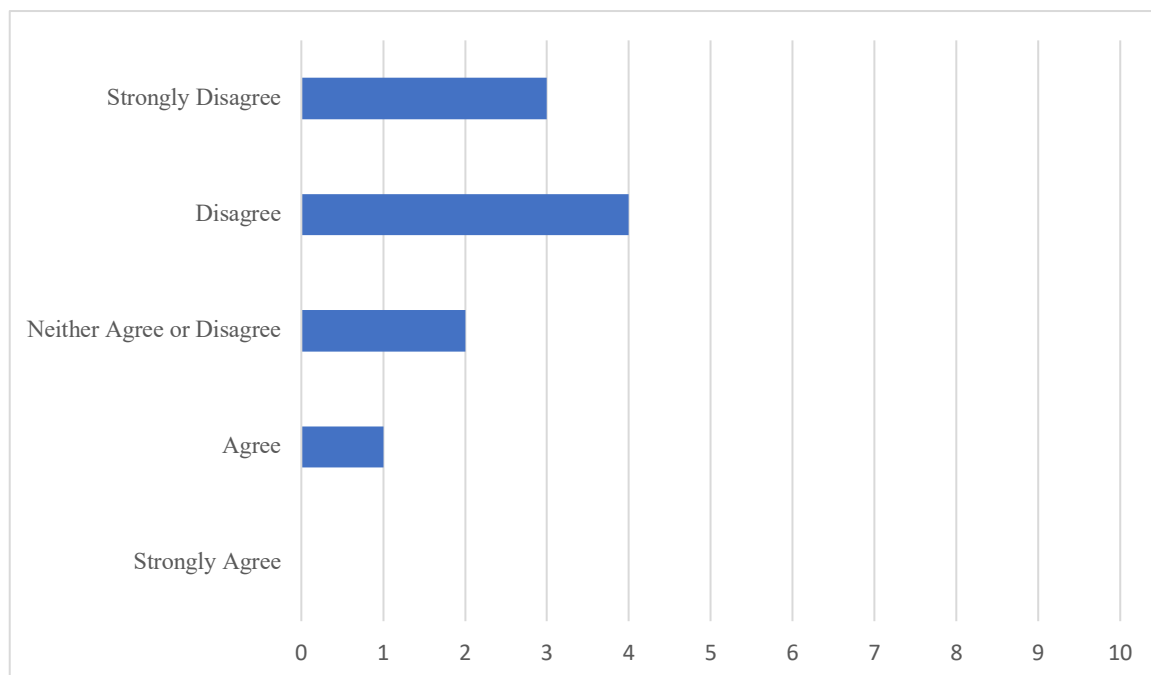
This finding needs to be interpreted with caution, as novice teachers' definitions of critical literacy revealed various understandings of critical literacy. This understanding ranged from “using thinking skills to best communicate and see the relationship of language and communication,” as one novice teacher noted, to “understanding the difference between the way

certain texts may be written and being able to read between the lines in order to achieve a deeper context,” as another novice teacher noted. Such a continuum is consistent with past scholarship exploring the multiple definitions of critical literacy (Henrix-Soto & Wetzel, 2019; Vasquez et al., 2019).

Novice teachers' pre-survey responses showed a strong belief (90% strongly agree/agree) that secondary social studies teachers should teach reading. As shown in Figure 4, the findings regarding what their future sixth- through twelfth-grade students would be assigned to read were less clear cut, with 10% of novice teachers agreeing that the textbook would be their primary teaching material and 50% disagreeing the textbook would be their primary teaching material. Many novice teachers, 40%, had not yet decided on the role of the textbook.

#### Figure 4

*Number of novice teachers indicating the social studies textbook will be their primary teaching material.*





*Note:* n = 10

Deeper examination of data regarding teaching materials revealed that novice teachers were comfortable using materials that might contradict traditional, historical, political, economic or social narratives, with 70% of novice teachers stating they planned to use such materials (e.g., primary sources). In addition, 70% of novice teachers planned to use materials that might challenge historical, political, economic, or social structures. These findings show that the majority of novice teachers plan to explore multiple perspectives, despite half of the novice teachers reporting that they did not experience exploring multiple perspectives themselves during their K–12 education. For these novice teachers, grades 6–12 social studies was “rather mundane and by the book” and only exposed them to “the white version of everything.” Of the five novice teachers who explored multiple perspectives in their K–12 education, only one novice teacher indicated regularly exploring multiple perspectives, stating that “my past teachers and professors have all focused on multiple perspectives in social studies courses.” The other four novice teachers reported some exploration of multiple perspectives through class projects or small-scale assignments, or by doing research for themselves outside of the K–12 classroom. Doing research oneself on multiple perspectives is shown in this novice teacher’s response:

I try to research other perspectives. Most of the time that is looking at the people who wrote the text book/the deemed ‘winners’ and those affected by the events. Through this I have learned how much history can ‘change’ by who is talking/teaching this part of history. This was on my own – not encouraged by my teachers.

Unlike K–12 education, the university provided all the novice teachers who participated in this study with an opportunity to explore multiple perspectives. This is exemplified by one novice teacher, who noted the following:

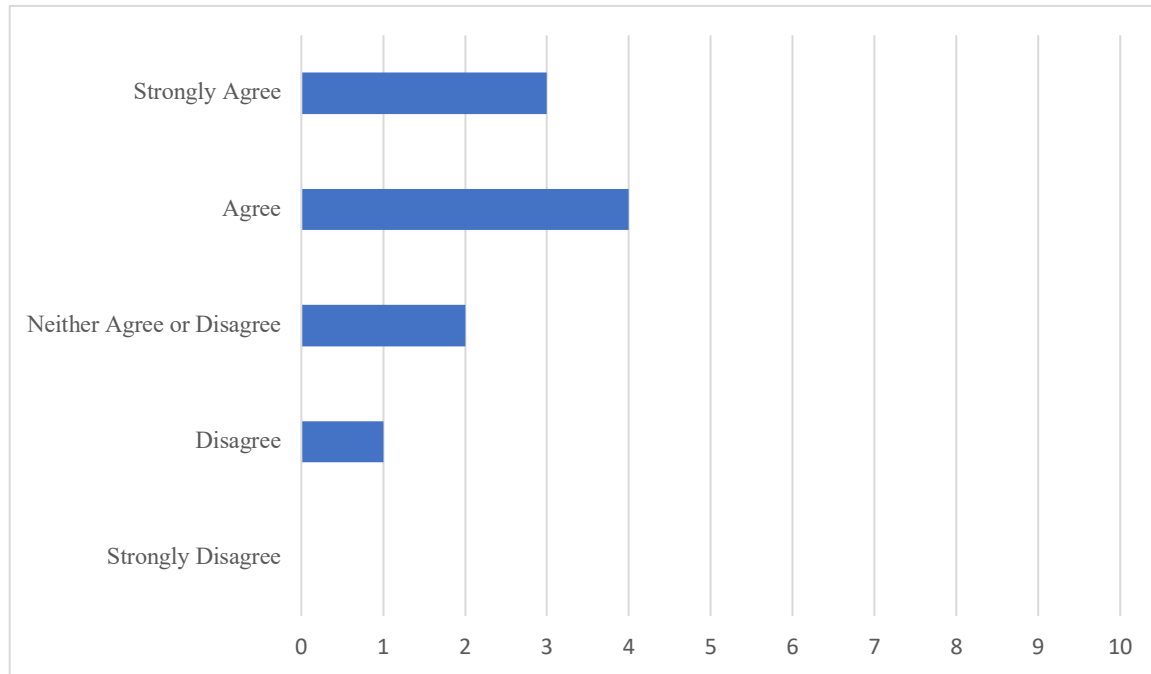
I have not experienced a white centralized/colonizer perspective of history since K12. At the university level, there is more of an emphasis on breaking this narrative of white centralized history. I have seen many different first-hand accounts from many events and economic downturns. Overall, my university experience mimics more of a well-rounded education that focuses on every part of history not just that of white cisgender men.

Other novice teachers noted the use of primary sources and “tough conversations” to learn about perspectives that were not explored in their K–12 education. One novice teacher described the shift in their thinking: “I was educated and learned from various people that did not necessarily look like me. It helped me to understand others better and I feel like I have a better understanding of the world around me.”

Exploring multiple perspectives can lead to controversy in the classroom, particularly if the traditional historical, political, economic, or social narratives and structures are challenged. Past research shows that novice teachers can feel (a) personal discomfort with teaching difficult, sensitive, or controversial issues; (b) distrust in their ability to teach controversial issues; and (c) concern over managing conflict and controversy in the classroom. As shown in Figure 5, 70% of novice teachers agreed or strongly agreed they felt comfortable teaching controversial topics.

**Figure 5**

*Number of novice teachers indicating they feel comfortable teaching controversial topics.*



*Note: n = 10*

When asked about past experiences with discussing controversial topics, the majority of novice teachers reported that controversial topics were not discussed or rarely discussed in their K–12 social studies classes. Only one novice teacher reported regular dialogue regarding controversial topics in social studies, noting that “it was one of my favorite parts of social studies.”

Interestingly, of the three novice teachers who reported regular dialogue regarding controversial issues, two noted that they participated in more dialogue about controversial topics in their English classes than in their social studies classes. At the university level, all novice teachers participating in this study reported engaging in some dialogue regarding controversial issues. All but one novice teacher reported that discussion about controversial topics was an expected and

regular part of their university education. One novice teacher described their experience as follows:

My university courses have been nothing but academic discourse, debate, dialogue and learning how to have a structured argument where there doesn't need to be an agreement but a point of understanding. I have learned skills of how to talk about topics like the death penalty, critical race theory, etc. by just having open discussions all while having time to prep and get acquainted with the material.

Another novice teacher noted the following: "My university courses have offered a lot more open room for the discussion of controversial topics. The main experiences of these come from classroom discussions, especially in my history classes which centers around a controversial historical event." However, one novice teacher reported that discussions about controversial issues were not robust, noting the following:

I have had very few discussion about controversial topics. Most of the time my profs bring it up vaguely (critical race theory, white supremacy, gay rights, feminism) and they seem to rush their thoughts on the topic as it makes them uncomfortable. This has lead students to not want to add to the conversation.

Based on the critical literacy pre-survey, novice teachers' personal dispositions and lived experiences created a strong belief in multiculturalism, a greater opportunity for social justice activism in the university setting than in the K-12 setting, and a strong willingness to challenge traditional narratives and structures and teach controversial issues. However, novice teachers had limited experiences with practicing critical literacy and were uncertain as to the role of the textbook in their future teaching. Their dispositions and lived experiences carried into the

university social studies methods course as novice teachers learned what it means to be a professional secondary social studies teacher.

### ***Building a Base***

Building a base, part of the theme of *teaching as an apprentice*, is a category that emerged during data analysis related to the course, *History for Secondary Grades*. In building a base, novice teachers learned to build a base for future grades 6–12 social studies teaching through course requirements: using the state content standards, planning lessons, implementing microteaching, engaging in disciplinary literacy practices, analyzing primary sources, and examining multiple perspectives. Building a base through these course requirements was evident throughout the course design as novice teachers used primary sources, engaged in historical thinking, and planned lessons and units.

**Course Design.** The framing and structure of the methods course, *History for Secondary Grades*, supported and challenged novice teachers' implementation of critical literacy in their future social studies classrooms. The course is framed as preparing novice teachers to become professional history teachers who build students to be critical thinkers and informed citizens who have the tools to think for themselves. These tools include the use of primary sources, consideration of multiple perspectives, awareness of potential biases, and use of credible evidence to support conclusions and positions. Novice teachers are expected to ground their lessons in the state standards, create effective lesson plans, and engage students in learning. They are also expected, as Michelle, the instructor, states, to “teach hard history without hurting people” and “have hard discussions” as a way to make incremental change. This framing, particularly in providing students with the tools to think for themselves and the need for change,

supports critical literacy stances and practices. Michelle's goals are encapsulated in her description of the course objectives:

I look at the course as laying the groundwork for what is good history/social studies instruction. So how do I put together a solid lesson plan management system, meeting the diverse needs of my social studies learners, and that meet the standards that the state and the nation have set forth? And I feel that, if I can get my students through a course doing a good job of putting together a solid unit and conducting several solid teaching lessons in front of me. There's always more I wish we could do with them, but in that amount of time if we can give them that and at the same time, show them areas of concern and pitfalls and areas to watch out for. That's what I try to do.

This goal of creating professional teachers who use good instruction is reflected in the course readings, syllabus, and schedule. Michelle selected *Why Learn History (When It's Already on our Phone)* by Sam Wineburg (2018) as the primary text for the course. This text argues that teachers need to teach historical thinking in order to develop the critical thinking skills of citizens and the “counteract haste and premature judgement” that comes with so much information on the Internet (p. 7). Wineburg (2018) also argues that textbooks are the bane of the history classroom, as they provide unchallenged certainties that teach students not to tolerate complexity and ambiguity or to consider multiple perspectives. “Ultimately it is a teacher's knowledge, capability, finesse, understanding, and sensitivity that constitute the most important qualities in a pedagogical repertoire” (Wineburg, 2018, p. 138). This text was supplemented by additional short articles that explored the purpose of studying history and discussion in the social studies classroom. Michelle also recommended to the novice teachers *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts: Charting the Future of Teaching the Past* (Wineburg, 2001), but she

stated that this was more of a graduate level book and recommended that novice teachers purchase and read the book later in their careers. While she would have preferred to require the book, Michelle was concerned that they were not professionally ready to dig into the research on historical thinking, and that the novice teachers would not have time to read the text. In place of Wineburg's (2001) *Historical Thinking and Unnatural Acts*, Michelle provided the novice teachers with Wineburg's (2010) two-page article titled *Historical Thinking* and stated that the article is a "good summary" of his 2001 book. Providing the article as a substitute saved the novice teachers money, reduced their reading load, and provided a "how to" for historical thinking skills; however, it also denied the preservice teachers the theoretical frameworks, research, and complexities of historical thinking.

The course schedule allotted 13 of the 29 course meetings to standards, textbooks, and lesson planning and 11 of the 29 course meetings to microteaching and peer-sharing the United States and world history units the novice teachers created throughout the course. The remaining five course meetings were allotted to introducing the course, the midterm review and midterm, and the professional job search. The two largest assignments by point value were the 10-day United States history unit and the 10-day world history unit, indicating the importance Michelle placed on novice teachers' abilities to write "solid lesson plans."

Of the 13 course meetings allotted to standards, textbooks, and lesson planning, four were reserved for primary and secondary sources and historical thinking. These course meetings and the related resources, activities, and assignments provided support for the novice teachers' growing critical literacy skills. Although Michelle did not use the term "critical literacy" specifically in her course, many of the concepts she taught were rooted in critical literacy, including reading multiple texts by using primary sources, using historical thinking skills to

interrogate texts, engaging in dialogue, and encouraging social action (Reidel & Draper, 2011).

Novice teachers were instructed by Michelle to use primary sources to “create a question, challenge a belief, encourage empathy, introduce a contradiction, or produce a new insight.”

Michelle stressed the importance of using primary sources to (a) engage students, (b) supplement secondary sources such as the textbook, (c) provide multiple perspectives and allow students to consider other viewpoints, and (d) consider whose story was marginalized or not being told.

Examining multiple perspectives, considering others' viewpoints, and considering whose story was being marginalized or omitted are key components of critical literacy (Hendrix-Soto & Wetzel, 2019; Reidel & Draper, 2011), all of which may be supported through the use of primary sources.

*Using Primary Sources.* Novice teachers were encouraged to use primary sources to introduce a topic by providing a written, visual, or auditory text to engage Grades 6–12 students. This approach was evidenced in the Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning activity the novice teachers engaged in on the first day of the course. Novice teachers were shown a medium size off-white hat box with a lid and instructed to write the question “What is the story of this box?” on their activity sheet. Michelle then distributed the written and visual primary sources contained in the box among the novice teachers and gave them time to explore and discuss in small groups. The novice teachers immediately engaged in the activity, contributing prior knowledge and making claims about the story of the box based on the primary sources. When the groups were called back to whole group discussion, they readily shared their thoughts. Using field notes to paraphrase, Group 1 stated, “The story has to do with a teacher and student addressing a tragedy or a time at a crossroad.” Group 2 stated, “A young man sees war when he is younger and goes to war as an adult and then becomes a teacher.” Group 3 stated, “The artifacts are from a U.S.



school in the early 2000s.” Michelle then shared the story of the box. Michelle connected this learning activity to critical thinking and teaching history by stating: “This activity gives students the ability to see that history is questioned. Students need to see that things can be questioned.” This idea – that history can be questioned – introduced Michelle’s semester-long focus on inquiry and critical thinking.

Novice teachers were taught that primary sources should be used to supplement the textbook during Grades 6–12 instruction. Michelle frequently noted that the textbook is not inerrant, and novice teachers should not rely on textbooks exclusively because they tell a single story in a single way. This is evidenced by her statement: “What are good sources? Where are the legitimate pieces out there? Textbooks are written by fallible people, too.” In response to a novice teacher’s question about the accuracy of textbooks, Michelle stated the following:

You are going to have to rely on the textbook, but you are leading them to understand that the [text]book is supported by primary source documents. You can say, ‘You can think about this in a different way’ and provide two to three credible sources that provide another perspective. Every story has two sides. Present both sides. Thinking about it is critical. Those critical pieces are an important part.

By framing the textbook as a useful but not exclusive or infallible resource, Michelle reminded the novice teachers of the importance of primary sources, multiple perspectives, and critical thinking.

Some novice teachers adopted this perspective. Gracelyn stated in her post-course interview:

So my history, like in high school, was very by the textbook. We relied heavily on the textbook, and I would like to stray from that. I'd like to use the textbook as a resource, but

not as the primary source of information and that I would like to rely more on primary sources than the textbook, just because I feel like I would have benefited more from that in high school, because I have benefited more from that in college having to analyze sources and developing deeper understanding about events through the primary sources rather than what the textbook says.

This statement shows planning for a more nuanced use of the textbook and a recognition that the unquestioned single narrative common in textbooks does not support critical literacy.

Michelle also advocated for novice teachers using myriad primary sources to provide multiple perspectives and viewpoints during Grades 6–12 social studies instruction. Michelle reminded novice teachers many times through lecture, during class discussions, and in slide presentations throughout the course to use multiple perspectives and viewpoints. An analysis of code application showed that the codes “multiple perspectives” and “primary sources” had the highest rates of code application as well as the highest rate of code co-occurrence. A list of categories and subcategories and related coded passages are located in Chapter 3, Table 3.

Lastly, Michelle used primary sources for “reading the silences,” or determining whose story has been marginalized or omitted. Omission of stories raises issues of power, privilege, equity, and justice – the very heart of critical literacy (Fang, 2012; Lee, 2011). Michelle defined reading the silences for the novice teachers as follows: “We have to look for what's missing. What's not there. Whose perspective is missing? What would the other side say? Why might something not be in there? That's what we would need to talk about.” Michelle provided the example of the great wealth of primary source material we have from Thomas Jefferson and how little we have from Sally Hemmings. In the exchange below with a novice teacher, Michelle

explicitly connected the novice teacher's sharing recent learning about the role of Jesus in African-American Christianity to power and privilege:

Novice teacher: The materials our professor gave us - he gave us this whole writing about how this one man was like analyzing how, like, why Jesus wasn't talked about to the slaves. Because Jesus would be considered the liberator and that's why that's why a lot of like, Jesus really isn't mentioned a lot in African-American Christianity, because it was left out during slavery. So the slaves didn't have, like, the idea of rebelling.

Michelle: You're going to look at world in your viewpoint, or your perspective and have that, but boy, you're going to take part of what you believe out of a discussion so that – God forbid - you don't lose your place. And that's a perspective that's missing.

In the ensuing discussion, novice teachers discussed other instances of missing perspectives in history and why those perspectives are missing from history textbooks.

***Historical Thinking.*** In addition to using primary sources to supplement the textbook, providing multiple perspectives, allowing students to consider other viewpoints, and considering whose story was marginalized or not being told, Michelle supported the novice teachers' growing critical literacy stances and practices through the four course meetings that focused on historical thinking or reading like a historian (Wineburg, 2001; 2013), a disciplinary literacy approach in social studies. Disciplinary literacy teaches students to move beyond general reading strategies to engage in the specialized ways of reading and thinking in an academic discipline (e.g., reading like a historian, reading like a geographer, reading like an economist, reading like a political scientist) (Wineburg et al., 2013). Historical thinking asks students to search for evidence among primary and, to a lesser extent, secondary sources, in order to create a narrative, claim, or argument backed by evidence. During the four course meetings devoted to historical

thinking, Michelle discussed why novice teachers needed to teach their Grades 6–12 students to read and think like historians.

Historical thinking asks students to use the strategies of sourcing, contextualizing, close reading, reading the silences, and corroborating to analyze historical texts (Wineburg, 2010).

Michelle provided clear definitions and used examples to model each historical thinking activity for the novice teachers to support their use of historical thinking in the Grades 6–12 classroom.

For example, Michelle defined sourcing as to “think about a document’s author and its creation” by asking the following questions:

- By whom, when, where and why was it created?
- Is there any obvious bias in this document?
- How trustworthy might this source be?”

The definition of sourcing was followed by a discussion of the differences between Fox News and MSNBC to connect to the novice teachers’ lived experience. After a spirited discussion on the two television news sources, Michelle moved to examining four pictures of New York tenement housing taken by Jacob Riis during the 1880s and four pictures taken by Dorothea Lange during the Great Depression. The novice teachers were asked to source each series of pictures by determining when, where, and why the pictures were taken. The novice teachers were also asked who took the pictures and what their motivations or biases might be in taking the pictures. This activity also reminded novice teachers that texts, traditionally thought of as the written word, included visuals such as art, photographs, advertisements, and film. Critical literacy asks readers to consider all the messages they interact with, regardless of the medium (Hendrix-Soto & Wetzel, 2019).

To demonstrate historical thinking skills of close reading and contextualizing, Michelle showed two written texts and two pictures related to Executive Order No. 9066, which was issued on February 19, 1942 to begin the process of moving Japanese-Americans into internment camps. Novice teachers were asked to source, closely read, and contextualize the texts. Because close reading is most closely related to traditional literacy instruction and the requirements of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts, the novice teachers were familiar with the strategy of close reading, which Michelle defined as to “carefully consider what the document says and the way(s) it says it.” She encouraged novice teachers to ask the following questions:

- “What language (words, phrases, images, symbols) does the author use to persuade the document’s audience?”
- How does the document’s language indicate the author’s perspective?
- Any content strike you as odd or unusual?”

Contextualization was defined as to “situate the document and events in time and place” by asking the following questions:

- “When and where was this document created?”
- What else do I know (or think I know) about this topic/time period?
- How might circumstances at the time effect its content?”

For this task, close reading required the novice teachers to examine the written and visual language contained in the documents and photographs to deepen their understanding of the anti-Asian sentiment that underlaid the creation of the internment camps. Contextualization required the novice teachers to draw on their prior knowledge of World War II, the attack on Pearl

Harbor, and the resurgence of anti-Asian sentiment during the war to situate the documents and photograph in the early 1940s.

To practice using historical thinking skills of reading the silences and corroborating, Michelle used a picture of a food fight in a high school cafeteria. Michelle defined reading the silences as “identifying what has been left out or is missing by questioning the account.” She encouraged novice teachers to ask the following questions:

- What perspective is missing?
- What would ‘the other side’ say?
- Why might something not be there?

To explore the strategy of corroboration, Michelle conducted a think-aloud from the perspective of the school administrator investigating the food fight. She defined corroboration as “asking questions about important details across multiple sources to determine points of agreement and disagreement.” She encourage novice teachers to ask the following questions:

- What do other documents say?
- Do the documents agree? If not, why?
- What documents are most reliable?
- What are other possible documents?

Through this picture analysis, novice teachers did not engage in the strategies of reading the silences or corroboration for themselves, important critical literacy strategies for determining whose perspectives are missing and the points of agreement and disagreement regarding an event. Michelle used direct instruction to teach the novice teachers that corroboration through multiple sources creates a more accurate history, and that the common threads from multiple sources and perspectives create our historical narrative. Recognizing that a more accurate history

is created from multiple perspectives is an important part of critical literacy, a requirement evident in novice teachers' lesson and unit plans.

***Lesson and Unit Planning.*** To support the novice teachers' use of primary sources and historical thinking skills with their Grades 6–12 students, Michelle provided the novice teachers with digital lists of resources for both United States history and world history primary sources. Novice teachers were also directed to the *Stanford History Education Group* (Stanford History Education Group, n.d.) and the *Read, Inquire, Write* (University of Michigan, 2022) webpages for lessons using primary sources and historical thinking skills.

To ensure the novice teachers understood historical thinking and were prepared to use the strategy in their future classrooms, Michelle required that they create a historical thinking activity that would become part of the 10-day world history unit. The 10-day world history unit is the culminating assignment for the course *History for Secondary Grades*, designed to have the novice teachers show that they can meet Michelle's goal of "putting together a solid unit" for Grades 6–12 social studies instruction. A title page, unit planning grid with state content standards, formative and summative assessment alignment sheet, 10 complete lesson plans (standards, objectives, teacher and student materials, lesson sequence), and unit assessment comprised the required elements of the 10-day unit plan. Novice teachers were also required to plan for one student discussion, one active learning strategy (i.e., role-playing, simulation, game, debate, drama/skit/play), and one historical thinking activity.

In creating the historical thinking activity for the 10-Day world history unit, novice teachers were required to use a minimum of two primary sources and to design a learning activity that involved a minimum of two of the five historical thinking skills (sourcing, contextualizing, close reading, reading the silences, and corroborating). Novice teachers were

also required to create three to four key questions that would ensure grades 6–12 students would be practicing the selected historical thinking skills. Of the 14 novice teachers who agreed to share their coursework during Phase I, two novice teachers chose premade historical thinking activities from the *Stanford History Education Group*, one novice teacher used primary sources located in the textbook, and 11 novice teachers searched for and gathered primary sources independently from the Internet. An examination of the historical thinking strategies selected by the novice teachers showed a strong preference for close reading (11 selections), contextualizing (11 selections), and sourcing (9 selections); a moderate preference for corroboration (6 selections); and a weak preference for reading the silences (2 selections). Strikingly, two novice teachers selected all the strategies except reading the silences for their historical thinking activity assignment.

The 14 novice teachers who completed Phase I of the study showed a wide variation in their application of using primary sources and engaging in historical thinking. At one end of the spectrum, primary sources were used as visual art on lecture slides or as unexamined supplemental reading material. For example, Alexandra created a gallery walk of paintings, but the gallery walk activity sheet used none of the five historical thinking skills. Students were merely asked to react to the paintings. In Kori's United States history lesson using political cartoons, students were asked questions regarding the issue shown in the cartoon, the intended audience, and the cartoonist's opinion before being asked their opinion and how the cartoon made them feel; no historical thinking skills were used in the activity. Cathy created a jigsaw activity on civil liberties during World War I, but the questions asked students to recite factual information from primary and secondary sources. The activity, ripe for the analysis and



interrogation of critical literacy practices, was used to minimize the reading and work done by individual students.

At the other end of the spectrum, novice teachers used primary sources to engage in historical thinking and critical literacy. For example, Kori used the essential question “What is the American identity?” to frame her United States history unit on immigration and urbanization. Supporting questions included: “Is there only one identity? Is it a group identity? Are there a series of identities that make up one American identity? Or is it a compilation of many identities into one? Is there an American identity?” During the course of the unit, students were asked to analyze political cartoons, read quotes from various perspectives, read primary sources from Indian boarding school survivors, and examine statistics and laws regarding immigration and discrimination against Native Americans and African-Americans. The unit culminated with an essay assignment asking students to answer the unit’s essential question on American identity. Kori’s extensive use of primary sources, historical thinking skills, and language such as *cultural genocide*, *lynching*, and *survivor* demonstrate a growing skill in critical literacy, a desire to connect the past to the present, and a social justice lens.

### ***Deciding Where to Start***

Another category, comprising part of the theme of *teaching as an apprentice*, is deciding where to start. Deciding where to start was evident in both the instructor and the novice teachers selecting the history textbooks as the primary driver of teaching decisions and the state content standards as the secondary driver. Foregrounding the textbook as the place to start lesson planning created a challenge to novice teachers’ implementation of critical literacy by moving the novice teachers away from the state content standards and undermining critical literacy

practices; critical literacy is specifically cited within the state standards as necessary for empowering students to evaluate the world and take informed action for the common good.

This foregrounding of the textbook is evidenced by having the novice teachers select their microteaching topics by choosing a chapter each from the digital United States textbook and the digital world history textbook instead of selecting a history content standard. Novice teachers were instructed to “make a chart and keep track” of the standards covered in each chapter as a way to link the textbook to the standards so novice teachers made sure to cover all the required standards by the end of the year. The 14 novice teachers who participated in Phase I struggled to fit their textbook chapter to the standards, as evidenced by Gracelyn’s observation that “there is not mention of the Renaissance” in the state content standards and Becky’s observation that “I am only finding three standards to cover in my unit, which is shocking considering how long the chapter of the book is and how much detail is included.” Izzy stated, “My initial thoughts are that there is a lot of content regarding daily life and the Farmer’s Alliance, the economy and the emergence of the Populist movement; all of these things are not implicitly mentioned [in the standards].” Similarly, Jody stated, “I feel like I needed more time on some things than the textbook had content.” These quotes show that relying on textbooks as the basis of instruction can provide more, less, and/or different content than required by the state standards.

In the “Skillbuilder” reference section at the back of the digital United States history textbook *The Americans* (Danzer, 2006), students are offered skill-building activities related to sourcing, contextualization, close reading, and corroboration of primary and secondary sources; however, no skill-building activity addresses reading the silences. In the digital world history textbook *World History: Patterns of Interaction* (Beck et al., 2009), students are again offered

skill-building activities related to sourcing, contextualization, close reading, and corroboration of primary and secondary sources, but activities related to reading the silences are missing.

Deciding to foreground textbooks, only loosely tied to the content standards and partially touching on critical literacy skills, as the place to start lesson planning undermines critical literacy practices.

Reliance on the textbook to decide what to teach instead of using the state standards was evident in the novice teachers' data. For example, Emily selected *Regents of the University of California vs. Bakke* (1978) and *Swann vs. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education* (1971) due to their presence in the chapter she chose in the digital United States history textbook *The Americans* (Danzer, 2006) as examples of cases that met the following content standard:

8.2.4 Domestic Conflicts and Tensions – analyze and evaluate the competing perspectives and controversies among Americans generated by U.S. Supreme Court decisions, the Vietnam War, the environmental movement, the movement for Civil Rights (See U.S. History Standards 8.3) and the constitutional crisis generated by the Watergate scandal (Michigan Department of Education, 2019, p. 115).

The standard suggests examining the following supreme court cases: *Roe v. Wade*, *Gideon vs. Wainwright*, *Miranda v. Arizona*, *Tinker vs. Des Moines*, and *Hazelwood vs. Kuhlmeier*. All of the listed cases except *Hazelwood* are contained in other sections of the textbook. Emily did not go beyond what was available in the textbook chapter, even when the standards provided sources for her to consider that were directly aligned and evident in the index. This still-developing knowledge of how to skillfully and selectively use the textbook as one of many sources to teach the content standards is an example of being an apprentice, the final category.

### ***Being an Apprentice***

The final category to emerge from data analysis of *History in the Secondary Grades* and comprising the theme *teaching as an apprentice* is being an apprentice. An apprentice is a person who is learning by practical experience an art, trade, or calling (Merriam-Webster, 2022); thus, novice teachers are apprentices who are learning to be skilled teachers by engaging in the process of teaching under the supervision of other experienced teachers. Novice teachers are apprentices to a complex profession requiring (a) deep content knowledge (Shulman, 1986); (b) thorough understanding of state teaching standards (Michigan Department of Education, 2019); (c) keen insight into child development (Wood, 2015); (d) skilled proficiency in selecting and using instructional strategies (Shulman, 1986); (e) solid awareness of local community history, culture and norms; and (f) capacity to combine that knowledge and those skills to meet the ever-changing needs of their students (Shulman, 1986). This masterful combination of subject matter knowledge and pedagogical knowledge is referred to as pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1986); it is the basis of being a skilled teacher. Being an apprentice was demonstrated through a lack of content knowledge and a lack of pedagogical content knowledge. Additionally, the time demands of lesson planning challenged novice teachers' implementation of critical literacy practices in their future Grades 6–12 social studies classrooms. Overall, a lack of confidence was apparent.

**Lack of Content Knowledge.** The 14 novice teachers who participated in the study consistently commented on their lack of in-depth knowledge regarding both United States history and world history. Per state requirements, K–12 students take three full years of United States history and geography, one full year of world geography, two full years of world history and geography, a half year of civics, and a half year of economics. Despite seven years of social

studies between grades 5 and 12, novice teachers could not remember United States history content in detail, as indicated by comments made in their written reactions to their assigned United States history microteaching topics. To illustrate, one novice teacher, Maci, stated, "One of my initial thoughts I had while looking over the chapter as well as the GLCEs [Grade Level Content Expectations] that correspond with the chapter was how little I remembered learning about the years leading up to the Civil War in school." Another novice teacher, Gracelyn, stated, "I vaguely remember learning about this content." A third novice teacher, Becky, noted the following:

I don't really remember going through the New Frontier and the Great Society a whole lot. I remember enough to recognize the terms and I have a rough idea of what was covered by the terms, but after reading the chapter, I am recognizing that this topic is much larger than I remember.

The novice teachers made similar comments in their reactions to their assigned world history microteaching topics, as illustrated by this quote from Maci: "Initially, I was a little nervous about the content in this chapter (as well as world history as a whole) because I do not remember much from my time in world history classes in high school and middle school." To illustrate further, another novice teacher, James, stated, "My world history knowledge is not as strong as my U.S. history. I do remember it in 10<sup>th</sup> grade though understanding there was imperialism going on in multiple countries." Overall, novice teachers did not remember the details of the history content learned in their K-12 education and relied on their university history courses to increase their content knowledge in preparation for teaching secondary social studies.

At the university level, novice teachers pursuing a history education major at Eagle University are required to take five core history classes, four history electives, and two history

teaching methods courses before student teaching. The *History for Secondary Grades* course is the final teaching methods course before student teaching. Novice teachers did not remember United States history content in detail from their required university United States survey courses and electives, as indicated by comments made in their written reactions to their assigned United States history microteaching topics. One novice teacher, Izzy, stated, "I do not believe it [the western frontier] was touched on in any college level courses." Another novice teacher, McKinley, stated, "I am very excited to be expanding my knowledge on a topic [the progressive era] I feel I haven't had a whole lot of experience with."

Novice teachers made comments in their written reactions to their assigned world history microteaching topics that reflected their lack of content knowledge. One novice teacher, McKinley, stated, "I also have had very little experience with North American society's in my college or K-12 career. I vaguely remember learning about some of them, but I don't think I ever had experience diving into the depth of them which is something I wish I would have had." Lisa, another novice teacher, noted the following:

I don't remember almost anything about this chapter (European Middle Ages). Partially I am excited because I am going to get to relearn all of it, and part of it is because I am unsure with the material. But that's ok because I think I would like to become more well versed in world history. I feel like I never truly got a well rounded education in world history so I am going to try and take this opportunity.

This still-developing content knowledge for United States and world history was evidenced by errors in the microteaching lessons the novice teachers were required to prepare and deliver in the methods course. For example, two of the three novice teachers who presented world history microteaching lessons during a course meeting, mispronounced words (i.e.,

papyrus, Muslim, Tanzania, Almoravids) in their presentations. Another novice teacher presenting a United States history lesson confidently asserted that women and men are now paid equally in the United States, while another confused the concepts of checks and balances between the three branches of government with federalism. A fourth student attributed the famous Robert Oppenheimer quote - based on Hindu scripture - "Now I am become Death, the destroyer of worlds" to the Bible.

Content knowledge was also a concern for the course instructor, who expressed unease regarding the novice teachers' understanding of history. While she acknowledged that novice teachers who took Advanced Placement history classes in high school "have more history under their belt," she stated that at the university level, "there's not enough content being pushed." She also related this to the ability to use critical literacy practices: "What I find is new teachers struggle with this, because they are just trying to keep their heads above water." However, this concern over the content knowledge possessed by the novice teachers was tempered by her acknowledgement of the realities of being a new teacher, as evidenced by her following statement: "I wrestle with a lot of this. I know that for myself you can't know it all, and I had a lot of learning that I did on the job because when you are forced to teach it, you've got to learn it." Recommending the books *Everything You Need to Know About American History in One Big Fat Notebook* (Rothman, 2016) and *Everything You Need to Know About World History in One Big Fat Notebook* (Vengoechea, 2016) to novice teachers as good resources for preparing for the state teacher certification test was another way Michelle acknowledged and addressed the novice teachers' lack of content knowledge.

In reading the novice teachers' lesson plans, the researcher noted that novice teachers relied on internet searches to research additional information about their assigned topics.

However, a lack of deep content knowledge was a barrier to finding additional materials beyond a basic Google search. Michelle addressed the novice teachers' lack of research skills with a presentation on internet research. However, novice teachers still needed to have an understanding of what might exist in order to search for primary sources, government documents, or scholarly articles. For example, one novice teacher consulted Michelle for assistance in finding material beyond the textbook. Michelle was able to direct him to a primary source website. In sharing this with the class, Michelle noted that the novice teacher had no idea those primary sources existed, or where he might look for them. A lack of deep content knowledge undermines novice teachers' abilities to engage in critical literacy, as deep content knowledge is necessary to know what perspectives are marginalized or missing from a text, or what discourses live behind or beyond the words in the text. The lack of content knowledge, in turn, contributed to the novice teachers' lack of pedagogical content knowledge. It is one level to have (or not have) deep content knowledge and another level to know how to skillfully teach the content to grades 6–12 students.

**Lack of Pedagogical Content Knowledge.** Pedagogical content knowledge requires that teachers have deep content knowledge and are skilled in using “the most useful forms of representation of those ideas, the most powerful analogies, illustrations, examples, explanations, and demonstrations” to make that content knowledge comprehensible to their students (Shulman, 1986, p. 9). If novice teachers do not yet have the knowledge and experience to effectively make the content comprehensible to students, then their students cannot analyze, interrogate, or evaluate the content for purpose, bias, perspective, omission, or marginalization – key skills in understanding the sociopolitical systems inherent in society and practicing informed, engaged citizenship.



In addition, novice teachers wobbled (Fecho, 2011) in selecting instructional strategies for use in their lessons to support their students' learning as their nascent understanding of teaching was challenged by having to demonstrate teaching in practice. Novice teachers demonstrated consistent use of graphic organizers, note-taking sheets, Kahoot quizzes, and gallery walk protocols. Many of these tools and strategies were sourced from the Internet, although they were not cited as sources in the novice teachers' final unit plans. In addition, novice teachers frequently relied on prepared materials from the Internet for more sophisticated instructional strategies such as simulations and primary source analysis. Examples of prepared simulations and primary source materials selected by novice teachers from the Internet are listed in Table 5.

**Table 5**

*Examples of prepared simulation and primary source materials selected by novice teachers from the Internet.*

Activity	Title	Source
Simulations	The Americas: Ancient Mayans and Aztecs	California State University
	The Indian Ocean Trade: A Classroom Simulation	Boston University Pardee School of Global Studies: African Studies Center
	Ancient Phoenician Trade Simulation	Teachers Pay Teachers
	Depression Game	Bringing History Home
Primary Source Analysis	Imperialists vs. Indigenous: Contrasting Points of View	StoryboardThat
	Inca Empire	Stanford History Education Group
	Mansa Musa	Stanford History Education Group
GeoInquiry	Native American Lands, 1819-2015	Esri GeoInquiries

A few novice teachers had difficulty calibrating the learning activity to the age and development of their students. For example, a novice teacher teaching the high school content standard on the causes of the Great Depression selected a stock market game designed for Grade 4, while another novice teacher selected early elementary readings on Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad for her high school students. These findings indicate still-developing

pedagogical content knowledge, which is required for effective teaching and the use of critical literacy practices, all of which take significant planning time.

**Time Needed for Lesson Planning.** As apprentices, novice teachers were overwhelmed by the time and effort required to create lesson plans and select student materials. One novice teacher, Gracelyn, shared, "I spent hours at the library." Maci shared, "This made me appreciate the teachers who put in the time and the work to make an engaging lesson." Time was identified as a barrier to creating critical literacy lessons, as evidenced by a novice teacher, Becky, who shared the following in response to a post-course, Phase I interview question regarding challenges to implementing critical literacy:

The amount of time that it takes to implement critical literacy. To go in and vet different literature that is good or is bad, is above the reading level or way below their reading level. I think that that is a huge challenge, which I think is part of the reason why my host teacher probably doesn't use a lot of other sources. It takes a lot of time to find them and to find them well done. So I think that that's probably a big challenge.

For novice teachers, working on growing their content knowledge and teaching skills and balancing the myriad demands on their time, the time required to plan critical literacy lessons was a potential deterrent to implementing critical literacy stances and practices.

As the course progressed, the novice teachers became aware of their status as apprentices; they knew little about teaching the content, doing research, planning lessons, selecting instructional strategies, and managing time. This growing awareness was evidenced in novice teachers' reflections about the learning they still need to do, which Lisa's comment illustrates:

I think it is important to have some structure and consistency in the classroom, but it has left me with a few things I am trying to work out. Am I too boring being too consistent?

Is the content engaging if this is a 55 min class period? Will actual students like this?

What strategies am I missing out on because I am simply not creative or knowledgeable enough? I want to try and work these things out during break and in student teaching.

Their growing frustration with what they did not yet know was captured with Gracelyn's statement: "Why are teachers not taught how to find credible sources and do valid research?"

Gracelyn's comment highlights one of the critical components of a knowledge and skills base that all teachers need to implement pedagogical content knowledge in social studies instruction.

**Confidence.** Pedagogical content knowledge affected the novice teachers' confidence and comfort in presenting their lessons. In one microteaching reflection, Lisa noted, "If I am not confident, I did not do enough research. How can I expect my students to know and learn things I barely know?" In assessing her world history topic, Kylee stated, "I am a bit worried about my lack of knowledge." In her reflection on her world history microlesson topic, Cathy stated, "The one thing I am most nervous about is not being educated enough on the topic to be able to effectively teach and create a good lesson." Cathy also noted, "I think the more I work with the content the more confident I will be with the material." These quotes show that novice teachers were increasingly aware of the connection between content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and their confidence and comfort in planning for and implementing teaching, all key components of Theme 1: *Teaching as an apprentice*. Engaged in the complex process of becoming a professional teacher while teaching as an apprentice, novice teachers also engaged in *learning in a community*, Theme 2. This theme describes the experiences of novice teachers in the professional learning communities of the university and the local K-12 schools, including modeling of critical literacy, opportunities to practice critical literacy, and risk containment.

**Theme 2: Learning in a Community**

Teachers learn, work, and practice in communities. At the university, novice teachers form communities based on the shared experiences of being in the teacher preparation program. In this community, novice teachers see instructional practices *modeled* by the instructor and are guided by the instructor in learning and practicing teaching with and for their peers. Novice teachers also learn and practice *risk containment* strategies and *adapt* their critical literacy stances and practices to the context of their learning communities.

***Modeling***

A fourth category that emerged during data analysis was modeling of instructional strategies. Michelle continuously modeled teaching strategies throughout the course. While any teaching methods course is primarily modeling instruction, for the purposes of this analysis, modeling refers to the following instructional emphases: gradual release of responsibility, historical thinking, primary sources, and multiple perspectives. The modeling of risk containment, an important factor affecting the enactment of critical literacy stances and practices, will be addressed in a later section.

**Gradual Release of Responsibility.** With gradual release of responsibility, a teacher transfers responsibility for completing a task to the students through a process of explicit instruction and modeling, guided practice, and then independent practice (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983). Michelle explained tasks, shared completed examples, worked through versions of the task with the novice teachers, and then asked the novice teachers to complete the task independently. Modeling the gradual release of responsibility for novice teachers as well as their modeling for their future Grades 6–12 students were evident across the data. Michelle modeled instructional strategies that supported and challenged novice teachers' implementation of critical

literacy practices in their future Grades 6–12 social studies classrooms. Michelle explicitly modeled most of the strategies she shared with the novice teachers through actual demonstration of a strategy, having novice teachers work through a strategy and debrief afterwards, showing a videoclip of someone doing the strategy and discussing it, or providing a worked example of a task or assignment. She also modeled other strategies around time management, student relationships, and lesson planning. This modeling both supported and challenged the novice teachers' developing critical literacy skills. Michelle required the novice teachers to specify in their daily lesson plans how they would model and release responsibility to their future Grades 6–12 social studies students.

**Engaging in Historical Thinking.** In the historical thinking activity described within the *Building the Base* category, Michelle modeled the historical thinking skills of sourcing, contextualizing, reading closely, reading the silences, and corroborating to analyze historical texts to support novice teachers' use of those strategies in their future Grades 6–12 classrooms. The strategies that were modeled the most – sourcing, contextualization, and close reading – were the strategies selected most frequently by the novice teachers for use in their 10-day world history units. The strategy that was modeled the least - reading the silences - was the strategy the 14 novice teachers who participated in the study subsequently selected the least frequently. Michelle's modeling of which historical thinking skills were most important transferred to the novice teachers' lessons.

Sourcing, contextualizing, and close reading are the easier historical skills to teach and learn. Reading the silences requires deep content knowledge to know whose voices or perspectives are missing or marginalized in the common historical, social, political, economic, or cultural narrative (Wineburg, 2010, 2015, 2018). For novice teachers who are still growing their

content knowledge base, determining the silences in a text can be challenging. Corroboration is also challenging, albeit for different reasons. In order to corroborate a finding, it is necessary to ask questions about key details across multiple sources to determine the areas of agreement and disagreement (Wineburg, 2010). This requires not only knowing more voices and perspectives, but synthesizing them into an interpretation of an event, a time consuming task leading to results that are open to interpretation. Michelle's more complete modeling of sourcing, contextualization, and close reading acknowledged the still-growing content knowledge of the novice teachers, the time demands of lesson planning, and their need to be confident in their teaching.

**Use of Primary Sources.** The use of primary sources to show multiple perspectives was modeled for the novice teachers using a series of five historical photographs of the *USS Monitor*, a Civil War-era submarine. Novice teachers were asked to look at a close-up picture that showed a portion of the turret and top of the submarine and use historical thinking skills to make an argument for what they saw. After a lengthy period of observation and whole group discussion, the novice teachers determined that they were viewing military men from the 1800s who were on a dock or other flat surface with two cannons and two heavy guns mounted in a watch tower. The novice teachers were then shown the remaining four pictures, which included two additional close-up pictures of different parts of the submarine and two pictures that showed the entire submarine. The additional four pictures provided a side view of the full submarine, views of the surrounding body of water and land mass, the presence of additional men in military uniforms, and an American flag flying from the vessel. Michelle introduced the additional pictures by stating the following:

Ready to move forward? Let's bring in multiple documents. If I go with just this first picture showing I will leave students with false impressions and you will see why in a moment. And it's important in this case that I bring in multiple sources. Bringing in multiple sources allows us to make more of a stronger hypothesis and guess and do investigation. And this allows us to use our historical thinking skills to move forward.

Using the additional photographs and some background information provided by Michelle, the novice teachers were able to add to their limited understanding of the first picture and correctly identify the object as an early United States submarine.

**Examining Multiple Perspectives.** In modeling using multiple sources to see other perspectives and viewpoints, Michelle chose to model the literal, physical perspectives of the photographer who took the images noted in the previous section. Each picture showed the submarine at a different angle and from a different distance. However, novice teachers could have gone deeper and engaged in critical literacy by examining the social, cultural, economic, political, or historical perspectives around early submarine warfare during the Civil War. While Michelle mentioned three other historical events (i.e., the Boston Massacre, the 1918 Spanish Flu Pandemic, and the Civil Rights Movement) as events that provided good opportunities for teaching multiple perspectives, exploring multiple perspectives and viewpoints regarding these events were not modeled.

Critical literacy asks readers to consider others' social, cultural, economic, political, or historical perspectives – how readers perceive the actors, events, motivations, and outcomes of events. By modeling multiple perspectives through the five photographs taken at different angles and distances of the *USS Monitor*, Michelle taught the novice teachers about literal, multiple perspectives – seeing a physical object from different vantage points - without risking



controversy in her classroom or teaching the novice teachers to manage controversy that might come with examining multiple social, cultural, economic, political, or historical perspectives in their future classrooms. The teaching or demonstration of containing risk while teaching controversial topics was not fully modeled.

### ***Containing Risk***

A fifth category that emerged during data analysis was the containment of risk as Michelle taught the course, *History for Secondary Grades*, through careful discussion, grounding teaching in the standards, and knowing the local community. In teaching how to contain risk through these three strategies, novice teachers were both supported and challenged in the use of critical literacy practices in their future Grades 6–12 social studies classrooms. Teaching and modeling ways to contain the risk created by teaching controversial issues supported novice teachers' use of critical literacy practices by providing a structure and rationale to defend teaching potentially controversial issues. Teaching and modeling ways to contain risk also challenged novice teachers' use of critical literacy practices by taking a cautionary approach, implying that novice teachers need to be careful in order to stay employed.

**Careful Discussion.** Over the course of *History for Secondary Grades*, both Michelle and the novice teachers broached the topic of controversy in the classroom through careful discussion. During the second meeting of the course, Michelle raised the discussion topic of Critical Race Theory, a current “hot” issue. As shown in this exchange, controversial topics are something to be addressed through careful discussion and investigation:

Michelle: Let me address the elephant in the room: Critical Race Theory. History, like our lives, is messy. Critical Race Theory is a theory. What is a theory?

(Novice teachers respond that it is a new idea about how something works.)

Michelle: It is a theory that has not reached into the standards for K–12. Should it be in higher ed? Absolutely. In higher ed, we dig deep to see what's out there and see what informs our processes. That theory has elements of an important truth about how a group sees its past and present. Our history is messy - there are things that are great and there are things we've messed up. We need to own both. It's not scary, but it needs discussion and more investigation.

Addressing Critical Race Theory in this way frames the theory as belonging in higher education, acknowledges that it represents a valid alternate perspective, and recognizes it as needing further investigation. However, in addressing Critical Race Theory in this manner, Michelle did not actually unpack Critical Race Theory and its implications for education, social justice, or civic action, and thereby avoided a potentially controversial classroom discussion. While Critical Race Theory is reserved for higher education, it has become a very contentious topic in K–12 education. Social studies teachers need to understand how to address controversial topics in ways that allow for respectful discussion around multiple perspectives, a key component of critical literacy.

Controversial issues are also to be viewed through historical thinking processes, such as contextualization, where a text is placed in a time and a historical, social, cultural, economic, and political environment. Placing a text in a time and place helps manage discussion when a historical text does not reflect current sociocultural norms. Michelle modeled this for the novice teacher by sharing how she contextualized an interview of a white man who repeatedly used racial slurs in a television interview during the Montgomery bus boycotts for her secondary social studies students. In contextualizing the interview, Michelle shared with the novice teachers that, in the “context of the time” the interview reflects how people were being talked about and

treated, and that the racial slur contained in the interview is “absolutely wrong.” Using historical thinking processes to examine a controversial issue brings a more scientific or scholarly mindset to the controversial issue, thereby reducing emotional responses during discussion.

**Grounding Teaching in the Standards.** Novice teachers were encouraged repeatedly to rely on the state content standards and teacher ethics guidelines when weighing decisions about teaching controversial topics or to address student/parent/administrator/community concerns regarding the teaching of controversial topics in their Grades 6–12 social studies classrooms. In describing her approach, Michelle shared, “I talked to them about what do your standards say. If you're teaching the standards and you are having fidelity to the standards, then you should be fine. Those are the agreed upon standards.” This approach can be seen in the following exchange between Michelle and Kori, one of the novice teachers, regarding the Civil War:

Kori: I went to school in Tennessee. We had one day to talk about the Civil War. We were taught that Black people fought for the Confederacy because they wanted to keep slavery. It was a miseducation.

Michelle: You should dig into history and what you are taught. I hope you don't just believe everything I teach you. You should dig in on it and fact check. Use your Michigan Teacher Ethics when tough topics come up.

When another novice teacher asked how to handle a parent who says they don't support what the teacher is teaching, Michelle advised, “So, are you teaching your standards that have been approved by the state and your school board? If you're teaching to your standards and you're presenting what the standards have asked you to present, you do your job.” Teaching to the state standards was the most common solution suggested for addressing community stakeholders' push pack on the teaching of controversial issues.

**Knowing the Local Community.** Michelle advised novice teachers to know their local community and use that knowledge when making decisions about controversial topics. During the second week of class, Kori shared with the class that another professor had recommended that if they were going to discuss a controversial topic in their history class, they should have a second teacher present. Kori solicited Michelle's thoughts on this advice, to which Michelle replied, "Watch the news, attend local school board meetings, and know your community." Thus, while Michelle did not directly answer Kori's question, she signaled that risk management entailed being aware of current events and the values and beliefs of the surrounding local community. As an additional piece of advice, Michelle also advised the novice teachers to make sure they aren't teaching the students what to think and to assess student work based on reasoned facts and evidence. This strategy was presented as a good overall strategy, regardless of which local community they might teach in. Michelle also reminded the novice teachers that "we need to have hard conversations in our classrooms."

While Michelle encouraged novice teachers to have hard conversations in their Grades 6–12 social studies classrooms and to ground controversial topics in the standards and historical thinking processes, she was clear that some activities were strictly off limits, including role-playing or simulations regarding slavery, race, or the civil rights movement or showing gory war scenes. During a conversation about active learning strategies such as debates, role-playing, dramas, simulations, and games, Michelle stated:

You need to be aware of your community and what's going on in our world. We need to be able to teach hard history without hurting people. Our times are changing - we need to take ourselves out of our positions and really think about other people's cultures. How do we go about teaching hard history? We have to have discussion in our classrooms but

avoid asking students to put themselves in other people's shoes. Ground your teaching in the standards. Role playing has to be really solid.

This advice reinforces the idea that teachers have both legal and ethical considerations when teaching controversial issues or handling historical events in a controversial or harmful manner (Michigan Code of Educational Ethics, 2019).

Novice teachers' questions and conversations indicated that while they were not personally uncomfortable teaching controversial topics, they were concerned about staying out of trouble with students, parents, and administrators. In reflecting on her teaching, Emily shared the following:

I also kind of like touching.... if I have the ability to, I like bringing up more controversial subjects that I feel that are important. So like a lot of teachers want to throw race... like they don't want to talk about race... just because it's very controversial, and I think that it's really important to at least discuss that and be empathetic towards others' experiences.

Another novice teacher shared, “[I]t’s a fear of mine, like about teaching on these subjects. Is that I'm going to teach something and I'm going to have a parent say ‘that's not true and I don't support that. You can't teach that.’” Emily also expressed concern about her future students, noting the following in her United States history lesson plans:

Some news outlets compared Trump to Nixon and Watergate. I think relating the material to modern day events could be very beneficial to learning. On the other hand, I am not confident that high schoolers would have the ability to calmly discuss and compare something so controversial considering the adults in my family barely can.

Maci expressed similar, if more general concerns regarding her lesson planning: “A concern I had immediately was how I was going to bring up some of the topics in class while being considerate of students' views and beliefs, as some can be touchy subjects.” Gracelyn acted on her concerns by choosing a simulation using Gummy Bears to teach about the Reformation, sharing that “the inspiration for this activity is it is modeling the Reformation without the hard topic of a real religion.” These novice teachers were reflecting on ways to engage in “hard history” while containing the risk that teaching controversial topics could bring to themselves or to their Grades 6–12 social studies classrooms.

### ***Adapting***

The final category comprising part of the theme of *learning in a community* is adapting. Adapting was evident in both the university methods course (Phase I) and in secondary school (Phase II) contexts, where novice teachers adapted their teaching practices to first meet the expectations of the university course instructor, and later, their cooperating teachers. As novice teachers adapted to their learning communities, they worked on creating their identities as professional teachers.

**Phase I: University Methods Course.** Adapting was another category that emerged during data analysis. As novice teachers studied course materials, listened to the instructor's presentations and advice, observed the instructor model, engaged in course learning activities, participated in class discussion, prepared lesson plans, and reflected on their teaching and learning, they adapted their critical stances and practices to meet their new learning requirements from the university methods course. Using data collected from a post-survey (n = 8) and semi-structured interviews (n = 5) that novice teachers completed after the posting of final grades in

*History for Secondary Grades*, the following section describes changes in their critical literacy stances and practices.

Changes in their stances and practices can be seen in novice teachers' post-critical literacy survey (n = 8), which was administered after the course ended and final grades were posted. Similar to the pre-survey, novice teachers did not have a consistent definition or understanding of critical literacy. Responses ranged from "critical literacy is the analysis of primary and secondary sources in order to develop a deeper understanding of the text and its role with the circumstances it exists/existed in" to "when students are given many, sometimes contradictory, materials in order to understand the differences that language can make on interpretations of events or concepts." Post-course interviews of novice teachers revealed a growing but incomplete understanding of critical literacy. In response to a request to define critical literacy, Becky stated the following:

I would define it as probably looking at a lot of conflicting sources and coming to conclusions about a topic based on those sources. I think that the big thing in critical literacy is looking at a lot of differing opinions. I feel like that's so important in a history classroom, because a lot of time history is presented as fact when we don't really necessarily all the time know that it is. So students will take it and be like, well, this is *for sure* why the Civil War happened when it's like, no there are different scholars who think that different things caused the Civil War. If we look at all of them, we see that some of them don't think it was based on race at all, and some of them think it was entirely based on like race and slavery. So I think that presenting all that information to students through critical literacy and through different sources, primary and secondary, is important.

Emily's response also noted that critical literacy was not directly addressed during the course:

So like I struggle with this because we didn't really talk about its meaning too much in class. But I'd say the ability to think in a certain discipline is really important. So like thinking in history is, you know, being able to kind of put yourself in someone's shoes and make connections to different events and stuff.

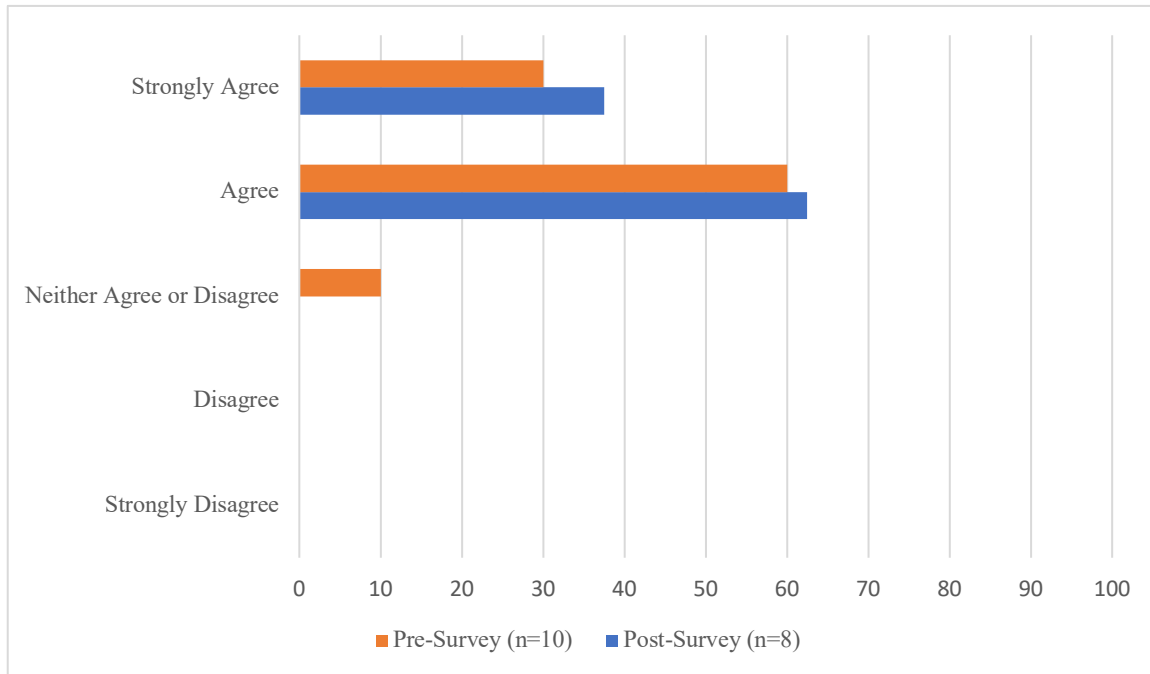
Given a bit more time to think about the question, Emily refined her definition to add, "Critical literacy includes making connections between events and concepts, identifying what is important, basically thinking like a historian." These definitions show a more sophisticated understanding of critical literacy, moving from analyzing language and using close reading skills to using multiple sources to show multiple perspectives, show that history is not fixed, and create empathy.

As shown in Figure 6, the percent of teachers who agreed or strongly agreed that social studies teachers should teach reading increased slightly after completing the university methods course.



**Figure 6**

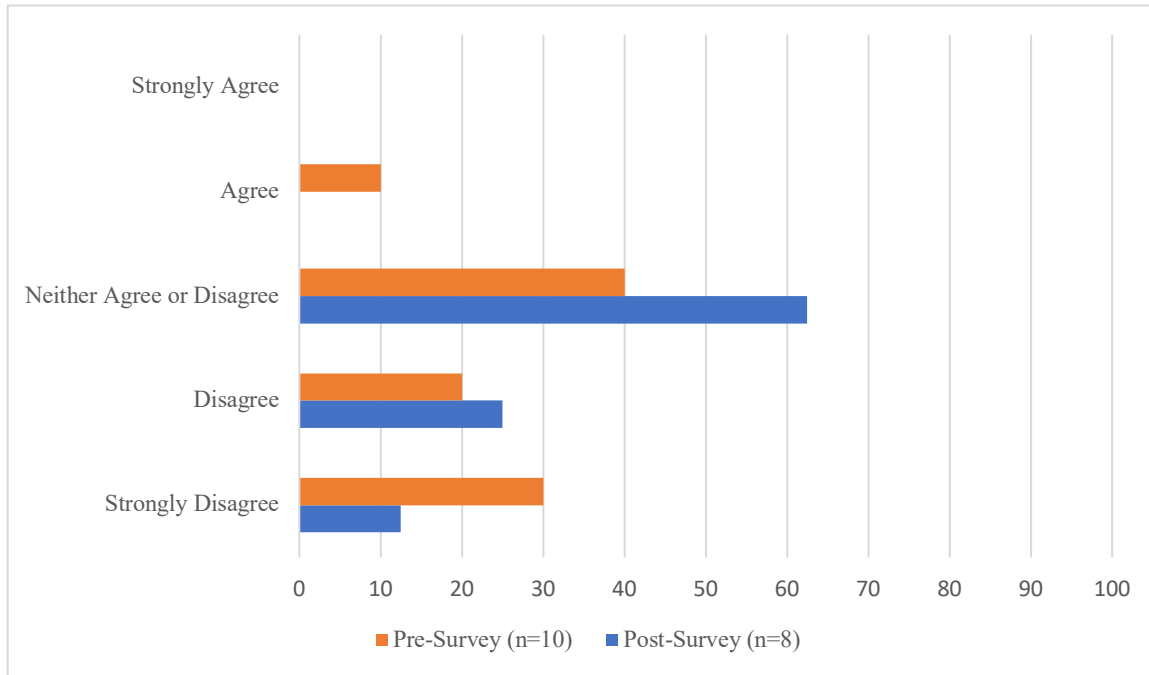
*Percent of novice teachers indicating that social studies teachers should teach reading*



However, as shown in Figure 7, novice teachers continued to be unsure of the role of the textbook in their lessons.

**Figure 7**

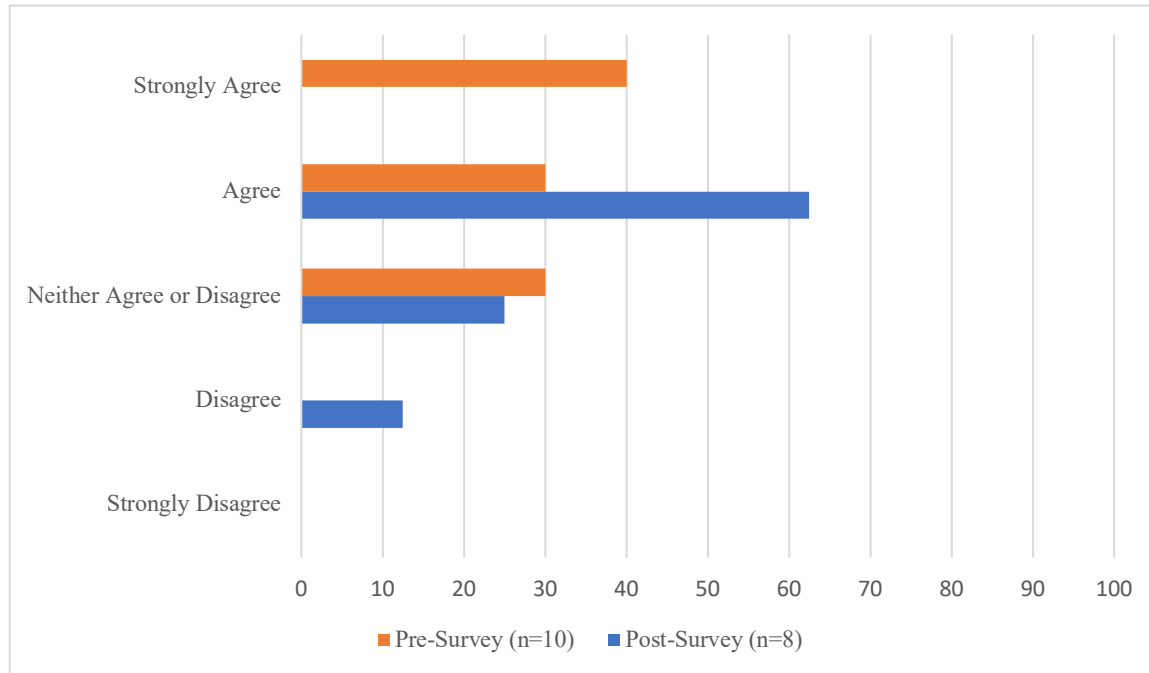
*Percent of novice teachers indicating the social studies textbook will be their primary teaching material.*



A deeper examination of data regarding teaching materials showed a slight decrease in the percent of novice teachers who agreed or strongly agreed that they were comfortable with using materials that might contradict traditional historical, political, economic or social narratives, as shown in Figure 8.

**Figure 8**

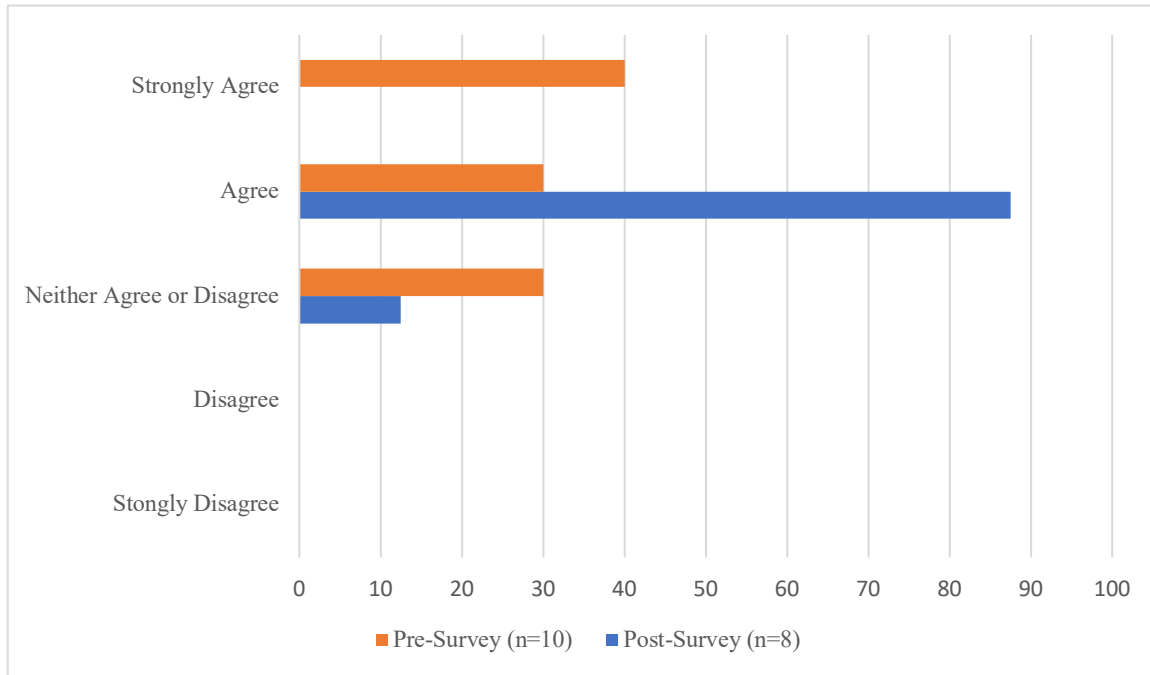
*Percent of novice teachers indicating they were comfortable with using teaching materials that might contradict traditional historical, political, economic, or social narratives.*



However, an examination of data regarding teaching materials revealed slight increase in the percent of novice teachers who agreed or strongly agreed that they were comfortable with using materials that might contradict traditional historical, political, economic or social *structures* as shown in Figure 9.

**Figure 9**

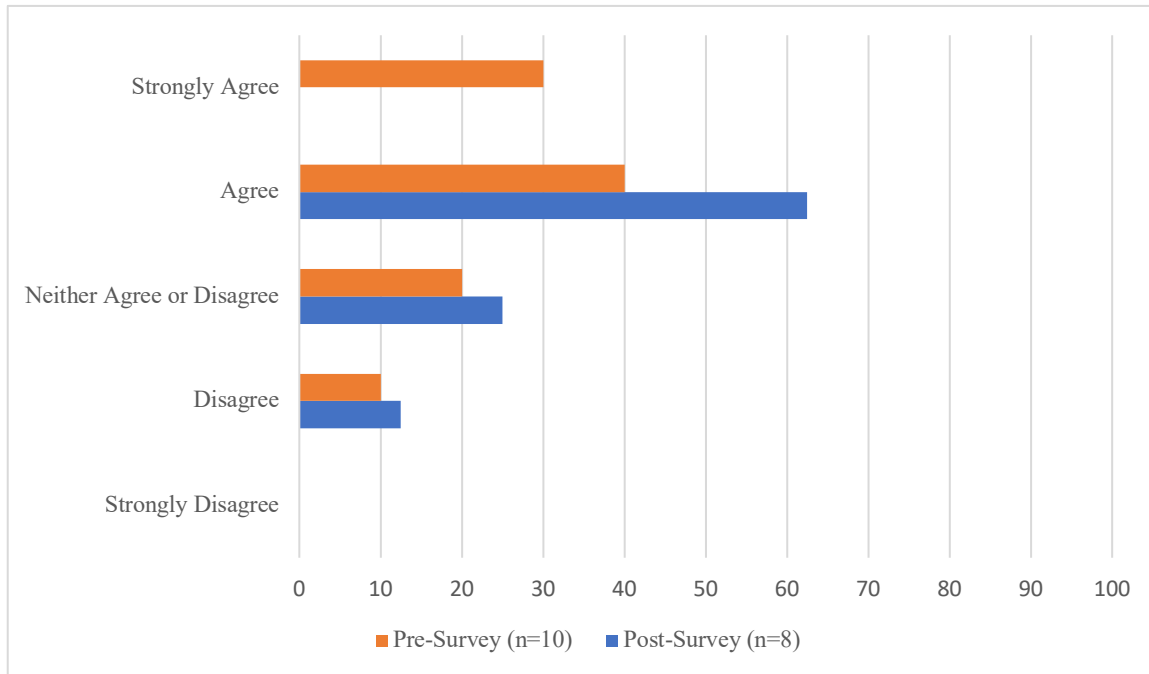
*Percent of novice teachers indicating they were comfortable with using teaching materials that might contradict traditional historical, political, economic, or social structures.*



The percent of novice teachers who indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed that they were comfortable teaching controversial topics declined slightly after completing the university methods course, as shown in Figure 10 below.

**Figure 10**

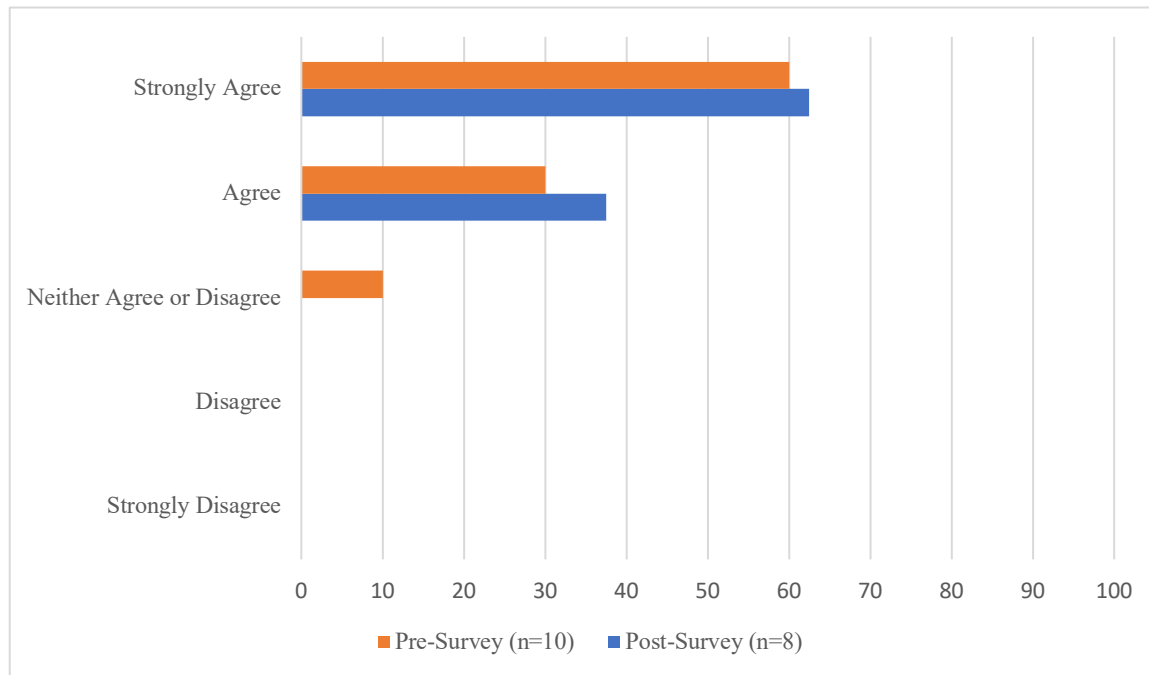
*Percent of novice teachers indicating they were comfortable with teaching controversial topics.*



The percent of novice teachers who agreed or strongly agreed that multiculturalism is a fundamental component of social studies increased slightly, as shown in Figure 11.

**Figure 11**

*Percent of novice teachers who agreed that multiculturalism in is a fundamental component of social studies.*



For this group of novice teachers taking this university history teaching methods course, the methods course increased their belief in the idea that social studies teachers should teach reading, their comfort in using teaching materials that challenge traditional structures, and their belief that multiculturalism is a fundamental component of social studies. The university methods course did not change novice teachers' future plans to use the textbook. The course decreased their comfort in using materials that challenged traditional narratives and their comfort in teaching controversial topics. As novice teachers moved into secondary schools to complete their student teaching, the secondary schools provided additional challenges and supports to novice teachers' critical literacy stances and practices. In this new learning community, per Phase II of the study, novice teachers continued to adapt their critical literacy stances and

practices as they were provided with opportunities to see critical literacy practices modeled, engage in critical literacy practices, and see and practice risk containment strategies.

**Phase II: Secondary Schools.** Two novice teachers and one cooperating teacher participated in Phase II of the study. In this phase, the researcher followed two novice teachers, Becky and Emily, into their student teaching placements to examine what conditions influenced their critical literacy stances and practices. Data collection methods included two non-participant observations, collection of novice teacher lesson plans, and semi-structured interviews via Zoom after school hours once observations were completed. Emily's cooperating teacher, Joseph, was also interviewed regarding his experience mentoring Emily. Because critical literacy is a term that varies in meaning, the discussions of each case will explain how the novice teachers and the cooperating teacher defined critical literacy and what parts of critical literacy they enacted. Both novice teachers adapted their critical literacy practices to meet the needs of their student teaching contexts. Variations between the novice teachers were related to their dispositions, pedagogical content knowledge, and contextual differences of their student teaching placements. The cases of Becky and Emily illustrate that cooperating teacher support and control exerted significant influence on novice teacher enactment of critical literacy stances and practices in the Grades 6–12 classroom.

***The Case of Becky.*** Becky is a 22-year-old white female who grew up in a small town along a lake. Becky became interested in teaching as an elementary school student, describing her early interest in teaching as follows:

I saw my teacher just get out of book and teach us from the book and so I was like teaching is so easy - I just have to read the book and tell it to the class. I was like I can do

that. From that point on, it was kind of what I saw myself doing, even after I learned that it was much, much more work than that.

When asked to describe herself as a novice social studies teacher, Becky stated her philosophy: “I go into things with is not wanting to do something that will bore me as a teacher. I'm a big fan of activities and getting students involved in thinking up fun things for them to learn something new.”

Becky had two student teaching placements to meet the requirements of her double-major in history and English language arts. For the first eight weeks of the semester, she completed a social studies student teaching placement in a 7<sup>th</sup> grade world history classroom. During her social studies teaching placement, Becky was teaching in a dimly-lit room set up as a computer lab with tables around the perimeter of the room and desktop computers and chairs facing the walls. Each student had a computer with internet access. No physical copies of textbooks, trade books, young adult literature, newspapers, magazines, maps or other text sources were visible. Becky's first cooperating teacher preferred to use a digital copy of the world history textbook and Google Classroom to teach.

Becky's philosophy of focusing on student engagement was evident during the first non-participant observation when she planned a trading simulation for her students. The simulation was based on *The Silk Road Game: Ancient China For Teachers* (<https://china.mrdonn.org/silkroadgame.html>). In selecting this simulation from the Internet, Becky continued to rely on prepared materials from the Internet for more sophisticated instructional strategies. Becky also shared with the seventh graders that they would be playing a StarPower game the next day to learn about trade in small societies. However, the traditional purpose of StarPower is to show human behavior in a stratified society. In selecting StarPower to



simulate trade in small societies, Becky demonstrated “still-developing” pedagogical content knowledge – she did not have enough knowledge about trade in small societies or the purpose of various simulations to correctly select a simulation that would facilitate her students’ learning about trade in small societies.

In reviewing Becky’s 12-day Empire Unit Plan, students completed quick writes, notes, two puzzles, a map activity and a vocabulary activity; watched three video clips; participated in a four corners activity and two simulations; and took a written test. Students were not asked to read multiple texts, engage in primary source analysis, examine texts using historical thinking skills, or consider social justice or social action. Becky’s cooperating teacher was absent from the building during her observation. Becky shared that he had not been in the classroom for two weeks. He was, however, available to her by text and email if needed, and she shared that he provided both instructional and professional advice when asked. This lack of direct supervision provided Becky with the freedom to lesson plan and teach as she saw fit, but it denied her the opportunity to collaborate with an experienced teacher and continue her growth from apprentice teacher to a beginning teacher.

Becky moved to the district’s high school to complete an eight-week English language arts student teaching placement at the half-way point of the semester. Becky was teaching 10<sup>th</sup> grade English language arts during the second non-participant observation. During this portion of her student teaching, Becky taught in a more traditional classroom setting. Individual student desks were arranged in six rows facing the front of the room, where two white boards, a projector screen, lectern, teacher desk, and supply table were located. Tall bookcases containing American literature anthologies and trade books were located on one side of the room. The back wall was decorated with inspirational posters reminding the students to do their best and be kind.

The room was well lit with the slightly cluttered look of an active classroom. Becky's cooperating teacher was present in the building, but absent from the classroom for a meeting during this observation. Becky asked students to free write in their writing journals, complete a poetry comparison activity, and complete a character analysis activity on *Of Mice and Men*. No critical literacy stances or practices were evident in this lesson, which was originally prepared by Becky's cooperating teacher.

Reflecting on lesson planning within both contexts, Becky noted that her first cooperating teacher preferred to use the world history textbook and Google classroom. Focusing instruction on the textbook was not Becky's preference, but she did not feel she had standing to challenge the primacy of the textbook:

That was probably one of the toughest things in [cooperating teacher's] class, because he primarily used the textbook, which I didn't necessarily agree with. But also at that point, I wasn't comfortable enough in my position as a student teacher to go around and change totally what he'd been doing with the students all year.

Becky's second cooperating teacher used American literature and poetry (e.g., *Of Mice and Men*, *A Raisin in the Sun*) to plan lessons, with most student work being completed with pencil and paper. Becky noted, "That has been good for me to see those two separate sides, so that I can kind of find my spot in between, where I fit in between in those things." In planning her own lessons, Becky adapted to each cooperating teacher's preferred mode and source of instruction.

During her final interview (conducted in the last month of student teaching), Becky described a three-part strategy when planning her own lessons. First, she read the textbook or novel being used in the curriculum. Second, she went online and searched for activities that others had created for that topic and made a GoogleDoc listing all the activities that she liked.

Third, she might edit the activities found online, per her quote: "Then I might go back and edit them to fit what I'm working on. I might try and edit them to fit a standard that I want to meet for a certain day." This three-part strategy for lesson planning reflects Becky's preference for not exclusively relying on the textbook or text, being efficient in lesson planning, and centering student engagement in her teaching practice. It also reflected a reliance on other teachers' pedagogical content knowledge. In selecting pre-made learning activities prepared by other teachers, Becky was transferring responsibility for assessing prior knowledge, determining the focus of the lesson, determining the most appropriate instruction strategy based on student needs, and choosing a formative assessment strategy to measure learning to another - theoretically more experienced - teacher.

In her final interview, Becky's definition of critical literacy had not fundamentally changed from her initial definition she provided in her post-methods course interview:

I would define it as probably looking at a lot of conflicting sources and coming to conclusions about a topic based on those sources. I think that the big thing in critical literacy is looking at a lot of differing opinions. I feel like that's so important in a history classroom, because a lot of time history is presented as fact when we don't really necessarily all the time know that it is.

Becky saw the purpose of critical literacy as presenting all information to students and having them come to their own conclusions. Following student teaching, she still felt that critical literacy entailed reading multiple perspectives, analyzing those perspectives, and forming one's own opinion based on evidence. She was passionate about students being capable of forming their own informed opinions independent of their teachers or parents.

Becky shared in her final interview that she enacted her critical literacy stances and practices just once during the first three months of her student teaching. The war in Ukraine had started and her students had many questions. Becky set aside the planned world history curriculum for two days to have the students read several sources on the war and the role of sanctions. Becky was proud of the lesson and her students' nascent critical literacy skills, but she was reluctant to have her students engage in critical literacy on a regular basis:

They have a lot of families where there isn't a lot of consistency and there's a lot of things that are going on in their lives outside of school, and so I didn't feel comfortable disrupting the consistency in the classroom that they had. I felt at the time that keeping that was more important than introducing them to critical literacy. Eventually I did with the activity with the Ukraine and Russia, because that lent itself to naturally being one where we could include it. But just based on the unit as a whole, I was like I just need to do what they've been doing all year so that they're comfortable so that they know what they're doing.

This quote shows Becky adapting her critical literacy practices to the more traditional culture of the school and her cooperating teacher's method of teaching.

Becky also expressed a strong desire to avoid having students debate and provide their opinions on some topics, as shown in the following quote:

There are some things that you just don't want to give them the option to argue against for their own say, you know. So, again it's a thin line, but then I think that there are things that they can debate and then things that they can't and those will just come naturally, I think.

When asked for examples of topics she would not let the students argue, Becky shared that any “big event that was tragic” such as the Holocaust or slavery was a topic she would not permit students to argue. In determining that some topics are not open for discussion, Becky is taking steps to contain the risk of conflict and controversy in her classroom.

As Becky completed her student teaching, she was still an apprentice to the teaching profession. She kept some things from her methods class and discarded others, adapted to the culture and practice of her student teaching placement, and gained confidence in her abilities to build relationships and manage the classroom. She used the provided textbook as her cooperating teacher modeled but added additional material from the Internet. However, she was not yet ready to create her own instructional activities, relying on materials prepared by other teachers. These pre-made materials did not include critical literacy stances and practices and were sometimes a poor match to the desired learning outcome, reflecting her still growing pedagogical knowledge. Becky held on to her definition of critical literacy, but only tried to enact critical literacy practices when an unplanned event – outside of the regular curriculum and ripe for critical literacy - was presented to her. Becky felt that keeping instruction consistent with her cooperating teacher’s instruction was in the best interests of her students and herself, so she adapted her teaching to align with her cooperating teacher’s expectations.

*The Case of Emily.* Emily is a 24-year-old white female who grew up in a well-off, heavily populated township near a large city. She became a teacher to work with students with disabilities. Because the special education program requires a double-major, Emily selected social studies to help her understand her students and how society works.

During her social studies student teaching placement at a middle school, Emily taught 8<sup>th</sup> grade U.S. History. The classroom she was teaching in was set up in a traditional manner, with

rows of desks oriented to the front of the room, where two whiteboards, a projector screen and the teacher's desk were located. The classroom had a laptop cart, a classroom set of U.S. history textbooks, dictionaries, maps, local college pennants, and various country flags.

Emily's philosophy of teaching is based on making connections between concepts, focusing on social issues, and creating empathy for others. During her first observation, Emily taught a portion of a lesson comparing two presidential campaigns during the early years of the United States of America. During Emily's portion of the lesson, students were asked to use the historical skills of close reading and corroboration by examining six primary sources (three paintings, a sketch, and two pieces of music) to compare and contrast the presidential campaigns of George Washington and Andrew Jackson. Students were not asked to use the historical thinking skills of sourcing, contextualization, or reading the silences. However, Emily addressed questions of power during her discussion of the relationship between granting non-property-owning white men the right to vote and the election of Andrew Jackson. She also focused on social issues by discussing changes in voting rights over time. Emily's goal of making connections was evident in a question asking the students to reflect on how their feelings about changing schools connected to President Jackson's changes to government.

Joseph, Emily's cooperating teacher, taught the opening activity, a ten-minute recap of the previous day's news. After this observation, Joseph shared with the researcher that he kept this portion of the lesson for himself because he felt that Emily did not have the knowledge necessary to answer students' questions about the context or background of events (e.g., the historical geo-political relationship between Russia and Ukraine). Emily shared that she thought Joseph kept the daily news recap because he enjoyed it, which Joseph confirmed when he shared that the daily news recap is something he really likes and a class component that the students rate

him highly on during his year-end evaluation. During his interview (conducted in the last month of Emily's student teaching), Joseph expanded on his reason for holding on to the daily news recap routine in his classroom:

I don't put [Emily] in that position for the specific reason I don't ever want her to feel liable for saying something that she feels that she would want to get across, right? And I think that that makes her nervous in those situations, because again like it's natural but I have a lot of practice with that, and that comes from trial and error.

In continuing to hold onto the daily news recap, Joseph is maintaining a connection to his students, expressing his concern about Emily's content knowledge, and containing the risk of controversy for both himself and Emily.

Joseph also taught the last ten minutes of the 55-minute class period, using the time to recap Emily's lesson and remind students of upcoming assignments and due dates. Emily shared that Joseph preferred to open and close the lesson, and that she had not yet had the opportunity to teach for a full class hour. This was a source of frustration for her, as she felt her peers were having a different student teaching experience where they were responsible for teaching the full class hour, while she taught two-thirds of the hour using lessons Joseph created.

During Emily's second observation, students were completing a document-based question ("DBQ") worksheet on manifest destiny. The four primary sources for this activity were located in the student's American history textbook. As an introductory activity, students were asked to look at a picture of John Gast's painting *American Progress* (1872). Students were asked to write three or four things they noticed about the painting in their notebooks. Emily did not source or contextualize the painting, and students were not asked questions related to reading the silences. Rather, students were asked to closely read the painting and note their observations.

Once students completed and shared their observations, Emily moved to the remaining three primary sources in the textbook: a paragraph-long excerpt from a white male newspaper editor promoting settlement of the West, a picture of a wheel from a covered wagon, and a paragraph from the diary of a white female settler describing the journey west. The constructed response question for each primary source required only close reading skills (e.g., How does Whitman describe the hardships of travel to the West?). While this DBQ activity used multiple primary sources, students were not asked to source or contextualize the primary sources. The sources were different, but they came from the same perspective – that of white people who felt they had the right to move West until they reached the Pacific Ocean. Students were not asked whose perspective was marginalized or missing. Emily shared that this lesson came from another teacher in the social studies department, and she modified two questions to put them in “kid-friendly language.” When asked about lesson planning, Emily stated that she had been teaching Joseph’s lessons or lessons from other teachers in the department until she passed the halfway point of her student teaching placement. At that point, Joseph transferred some responsibility to Emily to plan the content lesson that comprised the middle two-thirds of the class time.

As a novice teacher, Emily is concerned about her lack of content knowledge, and she is aware of her still growing pedagogical content knowledge. She expressed concern about her lack of content knowledge to Joseph; thus, her cooperating teacher advised her to tell the students she didn’t know the answer and to look it up together with them. Emily is keenly aware that her personal academic skills and university experiences are not directly transferable to her students. She understands different ways of teaching are required. She shared, “I also have struggled with, you know, after being in college for so many years you kind of pick up on how college professors teach, and that's very different from how you teach at the middle school level.” Emily



is a reflective practitioner. She lesson plans by reading the textbook or primary source materials to be used in the lesson, doing additional background research on the Internet, and selecting materials from teachers in her building that mostly align with the state standards, content knowledge, and critical thinking skills she is teaching. Lessons are refined over the course of the day, a process that Emily described as follows:

I'll present something first hour, and it does not go over well, and you kind of have to change it up. So my first hour lessons, they're not the best but my third hour or fourth hour I'm usually pretty good about getting things right.

Joseph did not rely on the textbook as the primary source of instruction, preferring to use primary sources and other materials. He described using the textbook as follows: "It's not popular with me – I don't use it often." Joseph uses the textbook to access the 12 DBQ activities and to "fill in some holes and some enhancement." Joseph sees using primary sources and creating one's own activities as related to pedagogical content knowledge, as evidenced in the following quote:

To be honest with you it's just not really pertinent, because there's so many other variety of places that we can find sources and better activities. And also sometimes you develop your own. If you have a source in front of you, you can develop an activity that you think you can answer some different questions, and you kind of get more comfortable with the source itself.

In Joseph's classroom, Emily is using primary source-based lessons developed by another teacher two to three times per week. These lessons focus on the historical thinking skills of sourcing, contextualization, and close reading. However, the lessons shared with the researcher

do not ask grades 6-12 students to engage in corroboration or reading the silences, the historical thinking skills most related to critical literacy stances and practices.

Emily, after several months of student teaching, defined critical literacy in her final interview as follows:

So like it's kind of the thinking skills necessary to be successful in social studies or any other curriculum. So the ability to look at a primary source and say, okay, this is important, because in just making connections there, even writing a thesis. And looking through the textbook and picking out what's important and what's not there. I don't know if that fully captures it.

This can be compared to her original definition (given during her post-methods course interview) below:

So like I struggle with this because we didn't really talk about its meaning too much in class. But I'd say the ability to think in a certain discipline is really important. So like thinking in history is, you know, being able to kind of put yourself in someone's shoes and make connections to different events and stuff. Critical literacy includes making connections between events and concepts, identifying what is important, basically thinking like a historian.

The revised definition kept the ideas of connections and identifying what is important but added the ideas of the thinking skills necessary for success, the use of primary sources, and reading the silences. Emily, in stating "I don't know if that fully captures it," highlights one of the issues with critical literacy – it has no single definition (Hendrix-Soto & Wetzels, 2019; Vasquez et al., 2019). Rather, critical literacy is a stance and a set of practices that teachers use to help students

interrogate the creation and maintenance of historical, social, political, and economic structures in our society (Henrix-Soto & Wetzel, 2019).

Emily did not abandon her pre-existing critical literacy stance and practices while administering other teachers' lesson plans. She shared that she often addresses marginalized voices and social justice issues during class discussions. For example, Emily raised prison labor while teaching a lesson on the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> Amendments to the Constitution, citing statistics that the majority of people in prison are people of color. Emily is careful to tailor these discussions to her audience and to limit deeper discussions regarding social justice to students who have initiated conversations around social justice issues with her. This is demonstrated in her statement, "Yeah, there are some students, I'm able to get away with having these conversations." Joseph is aware of Emily's social justice lens and monitors the lessons she creates to contain the risk of controversy. For example, in her final interview Emily shared the following:

I was putting together a worksheet and I tried to slide in a critical race theory question, which I don't think [Joseph] was into. I mean he was fine with it - he's pretty liberal, but it's more so like we needed to narrow down the questions and focus on other stuff. But I like kids to think about perspectives - like how we treat other populations and stuff.

When asked about the question Joseph wanted her to remove, Emily stated they were doing a lesson on immigration and the Know-Nothing Party and she wanted to ask, "Do we still have laws that discriminate against other people?" Because Emily wanted the question to focus on race, Joseph instructed her to remove it, citing the need for the lesson to focus on immigration.

Based on the data gathered and analyzed for this study, Joseph is modeling risk containment. This seems particularly true for written work – Emily can ask some potentially

controversial questions in class discussion, but she is not allowed to put them on assignments. Emily shared that Joseph will address potentially controversial topics in class, but practices risk containment by not letting the students take copies of the class materials home in order to avoid the possibility of angering some parents or other stakeholders. Emily has learned to adapt her critical literacy stances and practices to a level of risk Joseph considers reasonably safe.

While Joseph enacts critical literacy stances and practices in his teaching, like Becky and Emily, he struggled to provide a clear definition of critical literacy. In his interview, Joseph defined critical literacy as follows:

I mean for me, it's being able to look at a text and be able to decipher what the meaning is through the actual words, right? And being able to take the information and put it in your own words. That's where it's not just the reading aspect of the job, right? It's reading and being able to put it into your own words as to what you're talking about and breaking down individual things you don't understand or going through and really trying to investigate what you're reading.

When asked how students investigate what they are reading, Joseph stated the close reading strategies of highlighting and annotating as well as class discussion. He shared that he tries to be very careful in balancing class discussion, as described below:

Identifying those differences between the individual political discussions and really make sure that I hit what parents are saying at home while also providing the actual crux of the problem, if that makes sense. Trying to make sure that I explain the problem or whatever political problem it is, or whatever the world problem is, and making sure that I identify the differences to bring it back together to what the actual issue is.

For Joseph, critical literacy is about considering multiple perspectives to form your own opinion but being very careful to address both Republican and Democratic party positions and circle back to the issue at hand if the topic is related to current events.

Emily's relationship with Joseph changed over time. She became less frustrated with only teaching the middle two-thirds of the class when she was given some freedom to plan that part of the lesson. Also, Emily acknowledged she has a second student teaching placement in the fall for her special education major, and that it was unlikely she will teach social studies in the general education classroom. Thus, this student teaching placement was not her primary focus. Her description of student teaching was a "co-teaching model" that did, in the end, work for both her and Joseph.

*Cross-Case Analysis.* The cases of Becky and Emily show some commonalities within the student teaching experience. Both novice teachers were placed in schools in pre-dominantly white, significantly economically disadvantaged, politically conservative communities. They taught at similarly sized schools, neither of which had a set social studies curriculum. Both classrooms had history textbooks, albeit one digital and one physical, and both classrooms had individual computer and internet access in the classroom.

Both Becky and Emily were concerned about building relationships with students, managing the classroom, and finding the time to lesson plan. Becky found her split student teaching to be frustrating because she felt she was starting all over again when she moved to her second student teaching placement. She had to start the second placement earning her cooperating teacher's trust again and finishing teaching out the unit the cooperating teacher had started before making her own lesson plans. Emily's frustration stemmed from having to do two semesters of student teaching, and from Joseph not fully releasing control of the class.

Becky and Emily kept some things from the social studies methods course and discarded others. Both quickly abandoned detailed lesson planning, in part because of the early requirement to teach their cooperating teachers' lesson plans, and later, due to time. Both novice teachers avoided relying exclusively on the textbook as the basis for instruction, and both engaged in some critical literacy practices. Both novice teachers recognized that their university-level knowledge and experiences as university students had to be altered to meet the needs of their middle school students. For example, both Becky and Emily raised the need to chunk and scaffold longer or more complex readings. Both noted that students needed to develop their reading stamina, and both modified materials to address teaching vocabulary, two issues Michelle addressed in the methods class *History for Secondary Grades*. Both novice teachers adapted their teaching to the culture and practice of their cooperating teacher.

Becky and Emily showed degrees of change over time related to their critical literacy stances and practices. However, the degree of change for each novice teacher was related to an interplay of their personal dispositions, pedagogical content knowledge, and the context of their student teaching placements. Becky's goal, as a social studies teacher, is to keep students engaged in learning. Her secondary goal is to have students use multiple sources to arrive at their own evidence-based opinions. Her pedagogical content knowledge is still developing, as evidenced by her strategies for lesson planning and her selection of learning activities, primarily using the Internet. Emily's goal as a social studies teacher is to use multiple primary sources and current events to increase empathy and social justice. Her pedagogical content knowledge is more developed than Becky's, in part due to the high level of skilled support she receives from her cooperating teacher and her willingness to reflect and continuously improve her teaching practice.

Becky and Emily understood critical literacy to be using multiple sources to provide alternative perspectives. Becky's definition of critical literacy did not change, as the limited mentorship provided by her cooperating teacher did not add to her critical literacy stance or practices. Becky adapted her existing critical literacy practices to closely align with those of her cooperating teacher, who did not seem to practice critical literacy per this study's data. As such, Becky only used her critical literacy practices once during the time of this study when her cooperating teacher was absent from the classroom. Becky felt safe enough to practice critical literacy when presented with a set of ideal circumstances: an event with high student interest (a primary focus of Becky's teaching philosophy); a topic outside of the pre-modern world history curriculum; the limited presence of her cooperating teacher; and large amounts of easily accessible, credible sources providing multiple perspectives. In addition, the Russian invasion of Ukraine was not related to the culture war topics that deeply concern social studies teachers (e.g., abortion, Critical Race Theory, COVID-19 pandemic, gender identity, gun control, immigration, 2020 presidential election).

Becky was proud of the lesson on the Russian invasion of Ukraine and her students' thinking and discussion but shied away from repeating the experience due to concerns over disturbing the status quo. This may have been caused by the opportunity to obtain employment with the school district – Becky had been offered a long-term substitute teaching position and was hoping to teach in the district in the future. It may also have been a function of Becky's strong desire for student engagement, and her perception that this was a low-risk circumstance with readily available credible sources. In the end, the source of Becky's risk containment during student teaching seemed internal.

Emily's definition of critical literacy expanded during her student teaching to include the ideas of thinking skills necessary for success, the use of primary sources, and reading the silences. Emily's critical literacy skills were supported by Joseph's use of primary sources and critical literacy practices. Joseph's use of critical literacy practices was confined to class discussion to reduce risk of conflict with parents. Emily adapted her preferred critical literacy practices to meet the risk containment strategies and threshold set by Joseph. Modeling and direct coaching were used to teach Emily to avoid providing written evidence of addressing potentially controversial issues. However, Emily was insistent on continuing critical literacy practices and gently pushed the risk-containment boundaries set by Joseph by trying to include questions that some might have considered controversial in student assignments. The source of Emily's risk containment during student teaching seemed external.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter explored the findings that explained how, why, and under what circumstances novice teachers' critical literacy practices change over time through the themes of *teaching as an apprentice* and *learning in a community*. As a group, the novice teachers' (n = 10) pre-methods course dispositions and lived experiences created a strong belief in multiculturalism, a greater opportunity for social justice activism in the university setting than in the K–12 setting, and a strong willingness to teach controversial issues and challenge traditional narratives and structures. However, novice teachers had limited experiences with practicing critical literacy and were uncertain as to the role of the textbook in their future teaching.

In the course *History for Secondary Grades*, novice teachers learned the building blocks of teaching social studies; used modeled strategies for historical thinking; learned strategies for containing risk; selected the textbook as their primary teaching resource; and demonstrated the



pedagogical content knowledge, confidence, and time management skills of apprentices. After completing the *History for Secondary Grades* course, novice teachers (n = 8) increased their belief in the idea that social studies teachers should teach reading, their comfort in using teaching materials that challenge traditional structures, and their belief that multiculturalism is a fundamental component of social studies. The university methods course did not change novice teachers' future plans to use the textbook, and the course decreased their comfort in using materials that challenged traditional narratives and their comfort in teaching controversial topics.

Finally, through case studies of Becky and Emily, the supports and challenges in secondary schools that influence novice teachers' implementation of critical literacy practices were described. Both Becky and Emily adapted their university-level knowledge and skills to the needs of their middle school students, adapted their teaching to meet the culture and practice of their cooperating teachers, and adapted their lessons to contain the risk of controversy and conflict.

As evident within this study's two themes of *teaching as an apprentice* and *learning in a community*, (a) novice teachers are still apprentices to the complex profession of teaching, and (b) communities of practice influence the critical literacy practices of novice teachers. In the following chapter, these thematic findings are explored in greater detail in support of the key assertion that novice secondary social studies teachers' identities as critical literacy teachers were shaped over time as they saw critical literacy practices modeled, had opportunities to practice critical literacy, learned risk containment strategies, and adapted their teaching to their current learning communities. Implications for practice are discussed and recommendations offered for K–12 schools, university teacher preparation programs, and secondary schools.

## Chapter 5

### Discussion and Implications

This longitudinal multiple case study research project explored the process of becoming a professional secondary social studies teacher who enacts critical literacy practices in support of developing students' citizenship knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Becoming a professional teacher is a complex practice embedded in the systems of culture, gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status, university philosophy and processes, and the local habitus of K-12 schools. The following research questions guided this study on novice social studies teachers' implementation of critical literacy practices:

- How, why, and under what conditions do novice teachers' critical literacy stances and practices change over time?
- What conditions influence novice teachers' successes or struggles in implementing critical literacy practices?

Of the 14 novice teachers who participated in Phase I of this study and consented to the collection of course assignments after final grades were posted for *History in the Secondary Grades*, ten novice teachers completed the pre-survey, eight novice teachers completed the post survey, and five novice teachers participated in semi-structured interviews. The university methods instructor also participated in Phase I. For Phase II, two novice teachers and one cooperating teacher participated in the study which included the following data collection methods: semi-structured interviews, non-participant observation, and the collection of teaching

materials and lesson plans. Data were collected over a nine-month period in late 2021 and early 2022.

Data were analyzed using first, transition, and second cycle coding methods. Data analysis resulted in the identification of six key categories (building a base, modeling, containing risk, deciding where to start, being an apprentice, and adapting), which led to the subsequent identification of two themes related to supports and challenges to critical literacy stances and practices: *teaching as an apprentice* and *learning in a community*. These two themes are the basis for the key assertion that emerged from this study: *Novice secondary social studies teachers' identities as critical literacy teachers were shaped over time as they saw critical literacy practices modeled, had opportunities to practice critical literacy, learned risk containment strategies, and adapted their teaching to their current learning communities.*

## **Discussion**

During this study, it became clear that (a) novice teachers are still apprentices to the complex profession of teaching, and (b) communities of practice influence the critical literacy practices of novice teachers. The theme of *teaching as an apprentice* is derived from the categories of *building a base*, *deciding where to start*, and *being an apprentice*. This first theme describes the content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and lesson planning skills demonstrated by the novice teachers. The theme *learning in a community* is derived from the categories of *modeling*, *containing risk*, and *adapting*. This second theme encapsulates the professional learning communities of the university and the local K-12 schools, including modeling of critical literacy, opportunities to practice critical literacy, and risk containment. This study suggests that the formation of critical literacy teacher identities is an ongoing process

mediated by K-12 education, university teacher preparation programs, and the habitus of local K-12 schools.

### *Theme of Teaching as an Apprentice*

The theme of teaching as an apprentice describes the content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and lesson planning skills demonstrated by the novice teachers. Novice teachers built their teaching base by learning the state social studies content standards, researching additional content knowledge, learning and practicing instructional strategies, creating lesson plans and units of study, and reflecting on their teaching. Throughout this process, novice teachers began to learn the basic knowledge and skills of teaching social studies; however, a lack of content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and lesson planning skills presented a barrier to implementing critical literacy stances and practices and to creating the identity of a critical literacy teacher.

**Content Knowledge.** A teacher's content knowledge encompasses a broad liberal education, a depth of understanding in the discipline, and the teacher's attitudes towards the content (Shulman, 1987). Consistent with Shulman's (1987) work, Hausfather (2002) and Grossman et al. (2005) argue that teacher education programs must help preservice teachers construct a deep understanding of disciplinary content as foundation for skillful teaching. Wineburg (2001) takes a more comprehensive view of content knowledge, arguing that teachers with deep content knowledge are also thoroughly familiar with the theoretical and conceptual issues related to that content knowledge; they also have a more general body of knowledge that helps structure their understanding. In other words, master teachers are well-educated and well-informed.

Novice teachers in this study consistently indicated a lack of social studies subject matter knowledge in their reflections on their assigned microteaching chapters and their post microteaching reflections. Reactions to realizing their lack of subject matter knowledge ranged from dismay, disappointment, and frustration at the need for additional research to interest and excitement at the opportunity to learn more about an event, issue, or time period. Lack of subject matter knowledge was also evident in errors of fact, attribution, pronunciation, and cultural awareness. This lack of subject matter knowledge was a concern for the university instructor, who recognized both the challenge it posed for the novice teachers and the real limitations posed by university program requirements and time. Data consistently showed the lack of subject matter knowledge undermined novice teacher confidence and comfort in teaching their lessons.

Novice teachers who participated in this study reported limited memory of learning about social studies in their K-12 education. The most common reason given was that the material was not taught in an engaging way. This can be a function of how K-12 teachers view teaching and learning history. The question is whether or not history requires teaching by telling of dates, facts, and details or examining how historical knowledge is created, justified, argued, and modified. Teaching by telling (Sizer, 1984)—inherently less engaging than learning through inquiry, discussion, and experiential learning—is a traditional history disciplinary practice that may lead to learning and remembering less content. Teaching by telling also indicates a lack of the pedagogical skills and tools to teach the content, especially controversial issues, in meaningful and memorable ways.

In her study of preservice teacher instructors, Pace (2021a) found that preservice teacher instructors believed that “the first requirement for learning to teach sensitive and controversial issues was subject matter knowledge” (p. 83). Not understanding the content one is teaching is a

significant barrier to examining the construction of historical narratives or to skillfully teach controversial issues. Teachers must have sufficient content knowledge to anticipate student responses and address misinformation when teaching students to deliberate political issues (Hess & McAvoy, 2015). However, all is not lost. Willingham (2015) argues that we remember more from school than we think we do, and the residue of what we once learned is the basis for faster relearning. If novice teachers do not recall the many years of social studies they took in their K-12 education, the onus for learning social studies content well enough to learn how to teach it their future K-12 students shifts to the university and creates a potential challenge to enacting critical literacy, a philosophical belief that requires deep pedagogical content knowledge in order to decode, deconstruct, and interrogate social studies texts (Lee, 2011).

**Pedagogical Content Knowledge.** A review of literature on critical literacy; its relationship to the development of citizenship skills, knowledge, and dispositions in social studies classrooms; and the training and practice of novice teachers did not indicate pedagogical content knowledge as a factor supporting or challenging novice teachers' implementation of critical literacy. However, it became clear through a review of this study's data that a surprising finding was the role that pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1986) played in novice teachers' successes and struggles in implementing critical literacy practices.

Pedagogical content knowledge, first introduced by Shulman (1986), is the content knowledge "which goes beyond knowledge of subject matter per se to the dimension of subject matter knowledge for teaching" (p. 9). In subsequent work, Shulman (1987) further defined pedagogical content knowledge as "the blending of content and pedagogy into an understanding of how particular topics, problems, or issues are organized, represented, and adapted to the diverse interests and abilities of learners, and presented for instruction" (p. 8). Shulman (1986,

1987) argued that teachers must be able to fully comprehend an idea, probe it, examine it, and see it from multiple perspectives in order to determine how to teach it. As Shulman (1987) noted, "To teach is first to understand. We ask that the teacher comprehend critically a set of ideas to be taught. We expect teachers to understand what they teach and, when possible, to understand it in several ways" (p. 14). Wineburg (2001) refers to transforming knowledge for student learning as "an intellectual achievement of the highest order" (2001, p. 82).

Shulman (1987) argued that two kinds of knowledge and skill are needed to move past novice teaching to teaching difficult material well: a knowledge base and pedagogical reasoning and action. Knowledge base includes content knowledge; general pedagogical knowledge; curriculum knowledge; pedagogical content knowledge; knowledge of learners; knowledge of education contexts; and knowledge of the goals, philosophy, and history of education (Shulman, 1987). Of these kinds of knowledge, Shulman (1987) argues that pedagogical content knowledge is most important. Pedagogical reasoning and action include comprehension of ideas within and outside the discipline; the transformation of those ideas through the preparation and adaptation of ideas to meet the needs of the students, instruction, formative and summative evaluation; and reflection on teaching practice. Shulman (1987) noted that preparation includes "detecting and correcting errors of omission and commission in the text" (p. 16), which is a fundamental skill for teaching critical literacy that requires analyzing and interrogating the issues of power, bias, marginalization, and omission in texts.

Within this study, novice teachers demonstrated still growing pedagogical content knowledge in the selection of learning materials, instructional strategies, and assessment strategies. As they planned lessons in their methods course, novice teachers struggled to assess prior knowledge, determine common misconceptions, anticipate likely questions, and determine

which words would need explicit vocabulary instruction. Novice teachers also struggled to determine the amount and difficulty of reading to use in a lesson, and often selected less-effective reading strategies such as round robin or popcorn reading based on prior experience as a K-12 student (Opitz & Rasinski, 2008). Similarly, novice teachers wobbled (Fecho, 2011) in using modeled strategies, trying new strategies when required but reverting to more familiar ways of doing school when given the option to do so. Fecho (2011) describes the process of wobbling as a change created by a provocation of a response or a call to action that is often initially feared or resisted, but even when change is restored, learning has occurred. In trying out new strategies—even if the new strategies are abandoned in favor of familiar strategies—novice teachers increased their pedagogical content knowledge. Novice teachers also demonstrated still growing pedagogical content knowledge by relying on borrowed pedagogical content knowledge contained in pre-made lesson plans from the Internet.

Once novice teachers moved into student teaching, they continued to rely on borrowed pedagogical knowledge through the use of other teachers' lesson plans and lesson plans sourced from the Internet. However, they increased their pedagogical knowledge through the real-time feedback provided by cooperating teachers and secondary students, learning to adjust lessons to meet their students' needs. For example, in her final interview, Emily reflected:

So I have to know how my students think and what their abilities are because one thing I've been struggling with is I will give them the material thinking they'll be able to do it themselves and they struggle with it... So you have to teach them the skills which for me - it's quick. I don't even know how I think of things. I have to kind of figure it out and break it down for them. So that's something I had to learn and fortunately, [Joseph] is an amazing teacher, so he's been helping me with that.



This is consistent with research by Grossman et al. (2009) and McDonald et al. (2013) who argued that enacting practice in the authentic setting of a real K-12 classroom allows novice teachers to contextualize their practice and increases their pedagogical content knowledge.

In later work, Shulman and Shulman (2004) created a more comprehensive conception of an accomplished teacher. In their Teacher Learning Communities model, an “accomplished teacher is a member of a professional community who is ready, willing, and able to teach and learn from his or her teaching experiences” (p. 259). In this model, “able” is understanding or having pedagogical content knowledge. Thus, pedagogical content knowledge is a necessary prerequisite for moving from being a novice teacher to being an accomplished teacher.

Both content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge are necessary for the enactment of critical literacy practices. Critical literacy requires knowing that many perspectives on an event or issue exist. For example, one novice teacher, Kori, shared that her K-12 history education taught her that “Black people fought for the Confederacy because they wanted to keep slavery.” As a K-12 student, Kori was unaware of other perspectives from free African Americans or enslaved Africans on the role of African Americans in the Civil War. Thus, she was unable to examine, interrogate, and complicate the narrative she had been given. Critical literacy requires knowing where one would find primary and secondary sources that articulate multiple perspectives. In recognition of this need, Michelle shared how she helped a novice teacher find primary sources on religious orders in the Middle Ages and then shared lists of primary source resources for both United States history and world history. Michelle also devoted a course meeting to internet research to increase the novice teachers’ research skills.

Teachers also need to understand what challenges texts will present to K-12 students’ reading abilities and their prior knowledge and misconceptions in order to enact critical literacy.

Michelle advised the novice teachers to limit the number of primary sources and their length to avoid overwhelming K-12 students. Both Becky and Emily shared that their students' reading abilities and reading stamina were a barrier to using more challenging readings such as historical documents; thus, they had to explicitly chunk reading and teach vocabulary to support their K-12 students' learning.

Critical literacy also requires knowing what questions to ask K-12 students to guide reading, discussion, and writing as they examine texts. In recognition of this, Michelle shared Wineburg's (2010) *Teaching Historical Thinking Using Primary Sources*, which contains guiding questions for historical thinking. Michelle also used direct instruction supported by a PowerPoint slide show, which shared additional guiding questions for historical thinking. Lastly, Michelle used a course meeting to address K-12 student discussion. While the novice teachers had to demonstrate the ability to craft questions to guide reading, discussion, and writing in their 10-day world history unit lesson plans, this skill had not yet fully transferred to Becky and Emily's K-12 student teaching contexts. Critical literacy, with a focus on interrogating text for issues of perspective, marginalization, omission, and power, has the potential to create conflict between students and with parents and other stakeholders. This potential for conflict—and steps to manage the risk inherent in teaching controversial issues—can be seen in Joseph's acknowledgement that he felt he needed to protect Emily from the consequences of some things she might wish to say or discuss in the classroom because she did not yet have the pedagogical content knowledge to manage a spontaneous class discussion on current events. This caution limited Emily's ability to freely exercise her critical literacy stances and practices.

The still-developing pedagogical content knowledge of novice teachers presents a challenge to implement critical literacy practices fully, as critical literacy requires knowing that

many perspectives on an event or issue exist; where one would find primary and secondary sources that articulate those perspectives; what challenges the texts will present to students' reading skills, prior knowledge and misconceptions; how to skillfully craft questions to guide reading, discussion, and writing; how to skillfully manage conflict between students and with parents and administrators; and how to effectively support students' civic engagement and social justice actions.

**Lesson Planning Skills.** Novice teachers in this study also demonstrated still growing pedagogical content knowledge through the choice of where to start lesson planning: in the textbook or in the content standards. Novice teachers' lack of content knowledge led to their reliance on textbooks as the primary teaching material during the methods class *History in the Secondary Grades*. This finding is consistent with the literature, which showed that teachers rely on textbooks for the majority of classroom instruction time (Blumberg, 2008) because textbooks are viewed as comprehensive, authoritative, and useful (Shug et al., 1997). Sewell (2000) argued that textbooks are often the primary source of information for both teachers and students. This was evident in the comments that some novice teachers made regarding not knowing much about their assigned topic, but the textbook "covered it pretty well." Other novice teachers noted the inconsistency between the state content standards and the textbook and had difficulty reconciling the amount and focus of coverage given to a topic in the textbook with the requirements of the state standards. In all cases, the novice teachers worked from the textbook as their primary decision-making tool regarding content and attempted to select content standards to fit the textbook chapter. Heavy reliance on textbooks—written to appeal to the largest national audience, tell a singular unified story, and generate the least controversy—is not supportive of critical literacy stances and practices.

Similarly, novice teachers were still developing pedagogical knowledge that supported effective lesson planning. Skillful teaching requires knowledge of theories, methods, and practices of teaching and learning. It also requires knowledge of child development and the likely understandings and misconceptions students bring to the subject matter. In this study, novice teachers, still learning their craft, demonstrated a limited toolbox of instructional strategies and planned lessons that would exceed a standard hour-long class period. This finding is consistent with findings by Shulman and Shulman (2004), who noted that inexperienced teachers can lack the “practical skills of instructional planning and design” (p. 258) and Martell (2014), who noted that novice history teachers lacked the practical tools to enact their constructivist beliefs. Novice teachers’ lesson plans consistently demonstrated a reliance on slide presentations, lecture, guided note-taking, and quizzes. Some novice teachers demonstrated difficulty in selecting materials that were age-appropriate for secondary students. As the novice teachers moved through the course assignments and gained experience lesson planning and teaching, they used instructor feedback and self-reflections to improve their growing pedagogical content knowledge to include more sophisticated strategies such as class discussion, simulations, and historical thinking.

Once Becky and Emily moved to the K-12 classroom, their lesson planning was strongly shaped by the expectations and practices of their respective cooperating teachers. For example, based on the expectations of her cooperating teachers, Becky planned lessons using Google Classroom during her first student teaching placement and switched to planning pencil/paper lessons during her second student teaching placement. She shared that exclusively using either modality was not her preference as she preferred to use both in her own lesson planning. In addition, during her first student teaching placement, Becky shared that “one of the toughest

things” about student teaching was her cooperating teacher “primarily [using] the textbook, which I didn’t necessarily agree with.” Within her written lesson plan materials, Emily needed to omit topics, issues, or questions that were potentially controversial. For Emily, who has a strong social justice stance, this required accepting that social justice issues could only be addressed in class discussion and adapting her lesson plans accordingly.

Shulman (1987) noted that there is reason to believe that teacher knowledge and comprehension are related to the teaching methods used by the teacher. If novice teachers do not yet have the deep and wide content knowledge to know what is missing from the textbook or online teacher resource, they remain unaware of what perspectives are missing. If one does not know that other perspectives are missing or marginalized, there is no need to learn strategies that analyze multiple perspectives, create counter-narratives, or take social justice action. For example, Becky’s Empire Unit Plan, designed for her Grade 7 world history students, asked students to compare and contrast civilizations and empires, know the seven characteristics of an empire, understand how geography impacts the growth of an empire, and know how empires are typically governed. Students also engaged in two short simulations regarding the Silk Road and trade in societies. Becky’s knowledge of this content was limited, as evidence by her mis-selection of StarPower as a simulation for trade in small societies. With deeper content knowledge about empires and the Silk Road, Becky could have had her students examine the sociocultural and economic impact of silk for Western and Eastern societies or the impact of new religions, languages, and technology on the economies, cultures, and governments of Western and Eastern societies.

The theme of teaching as an apprentice describes the content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and lesson planning skills demonstrated by the novice teachers. This study

showed that a lack of content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and lesson planning skills presented a barrier to implementing critical literacy stances and practices. The second theme, learning in a community, describes how novice teachers learn in communities. The communities of the university teacher preparation program and K-12 schools provide experiences for novice teachers to continue building and adapting their teaching pedagogy as they practice becoming skilled social studies teachers. These opportunities will be described in greater detail below.

### *Theme of Learning in a Community*

Teachers learn, work, and practice in communities. At the university, teachers form communities based on the shared experiences of being in the teacher preparation program. Later, novice teachers switch their communities of practice from the university to the K-12 schools setting as they transition to professional teaching (Shulman & Shulman, 2004). The following two sections highlight novice teachers' opportunities to (a) see critical literacy modeled, (b) practice implementing critical literacy, and (c) witness and experience risk containment strategies for teaching controversial topics in both the university teacher preparation program and the K-12 schools learning communities.

**University Teacher Preparation Program.** The university teacher preparation program learning community is particularly evident in the methods course, usually the final university course taken before student teaching. In this community, novice teachers, guided by the instructor, learn and practice teaching with and for their peers. The university methods course is a safe place to practice one's identity as a teacher and to reflect and receive feedback. This context requires opportunities for novice teachers to (a) see critical literacy modeled, (b) practice implementing critical literacy, and (c) witness and experience risk containment strategies for

teaching controversial topics. This section focuses on the opportunities provided in the university teacher preparation program.

***Modeling of Critical Literacy.*** According to the University of Michigan's high-leverage practice *Explaining and Modeling Content*, effective modeling can "help make explicit content and practices that often remain tacit or invisible" (TeachingWorks, 2019). Teachers must see powerful instructional strategies modeled in order to use them (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Although skills for deep questioning of text and suggesting alternatives must be explicitly modeled (Reidel & Draper, 2011; Van Sluys et al., 2005), Berchini (2014) noted that a lack of modeling by teacher educators leads to novice teachers failing to question familiar, dominant narratives.

During the methods course, Michelle used complete modeling practices (planning, framing, active modeling, and closing) for the historical thinking skills of sourcing, contextualizing, and close reading. However, for reading the silences and corroborating, Michelle's selection of the food fight in the cafeteria was not an appropriate representation for modeling these skills. Similarly, when modeling multiple perspectives, Michelle's use of multiple photographs of the *USS Monitor* was an appropriate representation of physical perspective, but not of social, cultural, historical, or economic perspectives; thus, it was not an appropriate representation for modeling. To examine how narratives are constructed, Michelle needed to model examining how human events are framed and recounted. This incomplete modeling of critical literacy transferred to the novice teachers' selection of historical thinking skills for their history unit plans, with only two of the 14 novice teachers using the historical reading skill of reading the silences in their lesson plans. Without the effective modeling to support novice teachers' tentative exploration of all five skills (sourcing, contextualizing, close

reading, reading the silences, and corroborating), the majority of novice teachers did not practice reading the silences, the historical thinking skill most closely related to critical literacy's examination of representations and omissions in texts (Stevens & Bean, 2007). In order to engage in reading the silences, a teacher must know more than the common historical, social, political, economic, or cultural narrative (Wineburg, 2010, 2015, 2018). A singular narrative, by definition, tells one story with one perspective. Knowing the stories of who is marginalized or omitted from the dominant narrative allows teachers to guide students in questioning the power structures that have marginalized or omitted those stories (Hendrix-Soto & Wetzel, 2019), to construct counter-narratives (Reidel & Draper, 2011), and to take social action for a more just and equitable society (Reidel & Draper, 2011).

Considering multiple perspectives is a fundamental component of critical literacy (Reidel & Draper, 2011). During the university methods course, novice teachers were encouraged to use multiple primary sources to provide alternative perspectives on historical events. This was partially modeled during the course meetings devoted to historical thinking; however, the modeling was focused on visual perspectives, not historical, social, economic, or political perspectives. Without a complete modeling of this skill, novice teachers did not consistently use primary sources to provide multiple alternate perspectives. Only one novice teacher, McKinley, demonstrated the use of multiple primary sources to show alternate perspectives in her final 10-day world history unit. As Van Sluys et al. (2005) found in their case study on preservice teachers, mere exposure to critical reading practices was not enough; the skills for deep questioning and critical approaches to text had to be explicitly modeled. Modeling of critical literacy practices in the university teacher preparation program is necessary for novice teachers to engage in and practice teaching critical literacy effectively.



*Opportunities to Practice Critical Literacy.* The literature suggests that novice teachers need to experience and practice critical literacy for themselves (Hseih, 2017; Skerrett, 2010). Novice teachers reported few opportunities to practice critical literacy in their K-12 education. Opportunities to practice critical literacy for oneself is an important factor supporting critical literacy stances and practices. This is supported by the literature, which suggests that novice teachers may not have prior experience with critical literacy in their K-12 education (Norris et al., 2012; Vasquez et al., 2013). Other research has shown that novice teachers' beliefs and practices are grounded in their earlier experiences as K-12 students (Hall, 2005; Van Sluys et al., 2005); thus, it is difficult to ask novice teachers to do something that they have not seen before or is the opposite of what they have been taught (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Novice teachers who did not have opportunities to practice critical literacy were challenged in developing critical literacy stances and practices before entering the teacher preparation program. This is not to say that a lack of experience in the K-12 setting precluded developing a critical literacy stance—a few novice teachers reported learning about multiple perspectives, missing or marginalized histories, and social justice action outside of the K-12 setting. However, if a novice teacher did not have the curiosity, initiative, or resources to supplement the limited opportunities provided during their K-12 education, a barrier to critical literacy remained unchallenged.

The lack of exposure to critical literacy in university programs was noted by both Lee (2011) and Stevens and Bean (2007). Novice teachers in the methods class, *History for Secondary Grades*, had limited opportunities to experience and practice critical literacy for themselves during the course. These limited opportunities occurred during two microteaching lessons with peers in the university methods classroom, which created an artificial environment for teaching. This artificial, decontextualized environment undermined novice teachers

practicing critical literacy teacher identities (Bean, 1997; Stevens & Bean, 2007), creating an additional barrier to becoming a social studies teacher who enacts critical literacy practices. A final opportunity for supporting critical literacy practices in the university teacher preparation program learning community was the opportunity to witness and experience risk containment strategies for teaching controversial topics.

***Risk Containment.*** As novice teachers considered the professional advice given and the instruction modeled during their university methods class, their caution regarding teaching controversial issues increased. Novice teachers learned to contain risk by self-censoring materials they used in the K-12 classroom; grounding teaching in the state content standards; using disciplinary processes such as historical thinking, claims, evidence, and reasoning; planning carefully; and knowing the local community. Self-censorship is consistent with past findings regarding teaching controversial topics. In their commentary on censorship, teaching materials, and teachers, Boyd and Bailey (2009) noted that parental or community challenges to teaching materials can undermine the confidence and support of novice teachers. In avoiding the use of texts that address complex social, political, economic, or historical issues, novice teachers engage in self-censorship to protect their nascent professional capital and employment. This finding is supported by Kimmel and Hartsfield (2019), who found that novice teachers would rather engage in pre-emptive self-censorship than risk controversy in the classroom.

In their research into history teaching, Kitson and McCully (2005) examined the teaching of controversial issues in Northern Ireland and England. They characterized teachers' willingness to take risks regarding controversial issues along a continuum: *the avoider*, *the container*, and *the risk-taker*. The avoider simply "avoids teaching topics that are controversial" while the container teaches controversial issues, but the controversial issues are "contained through the historical

process” (Kitson & McCully, 2005, p. 35). The risk-taker “fully embraces the social utility of history teaching” and seeks opportunities to address controversial issues (Kitson & McCully, 2005, p. 35). Kitson and McCully (2005) noted that most teachers are “containers” who teach controversial issues but limit emotional engagement through historical inquiry methods such as using sources to present multiple perspectives or looking at similar events as case studies without directly examining the controversy at hand. This is shown in Michelle’s teaching risk containment to the novice teachers through using multiple sources, careful discussion, grounding teaching in the standards, and knowing the local community. It is also shown in Joseph’s teaching Emily risk containment by limiting controversial topics to class discussion, prohibiting students from taking some learning materials home, and reserving the daily news recap for himself. For Becky, learning risk containment during student teaching was less overt; she assessed her environment and concluded it was best not to do anything outside of her cooperating teachers’ current practices. In this way, Becky did not upset the status quo. Teacher identity, school context, and school curriculum were identified as factors influencing teachers’ willingness to engage in controversial issues in the classroom (Kitson & McCully, 2005).

Pace (2019, 2021a, 2021b) expanded on Kitson and McCully’s (2005) work by examining how instructors prepare preservice teachers to teach controversial issues. In this examination of learning to teach controversial issues, Pace (2021a) identified *contained*, *constrained*, and *supported risk-taking*. Pace (2019, 2021a, 2021b) found that teacher educators in Northern Ireland, England, and the United States taught and enacted contained risk-taking. Teacher educators engaged in strategies, discussions, and lesson planning related to controversial issues, but did not engage novice teachers in discussions about controversial issues that would provoke high emotion. In turn, novice teachers adopted the pedagogical tools modeled by their

university course professors and adjusted those tools (e.g., Structured Academic Controversy, walking debate, simulation, carousel conversation, silent conversation, speed debate, case studies, and Socratic Seminar) to fit their identities and the sociocultural and political contexts of their teaching placements (Pace, 2021a). Pace (2021a) argued that contained risk taking is helpful for teaching controversial issues and developmentally appropriate for novice teachers, as it allows them to balance bringing controversy and conflict into the classroom and maintaining control. In teaching novice teachers risk containment strategies, Michelle balanced her goal of having novice teachers “teach hard history” and “have hard discussions” with novice teachers’ need to maintain control of the classroom, build positive working relationships with parents and other stakeholders, and protect their teaching careers.

Within this study, methods for containing risk were modeled during the methods course through the Michelle’s acknowledgement of the more conservative community the university serves and her conscious effort not to use “trigger words” while teaching the novice teachers. Controversial topics such as Critical Race Theory and the 1619 Project were addressed through historical thinking skills. Novice teachers were repeatedly advised to ground their teaching about potentially controversial issues (e.g., abortion, the Black Lives Matter movement, and Confederate war memorials) within the state standards. Michelle advised novice teachers to keep administrators informed of such teaching while remaining cognizant of the history and norms of the school’s local community. Novice teachers were also encouraged to have “hard conversations” about “difficult history” in order to make incremental change and to teach students the tools to think for themselves. However, these dialogic skills were not directly taught. In discussing and encouraging, but not explicitly teaching, how to safely have hard conversations about difficult history or controversial issues, Michelle contained the risk to herself as a teacher;

these risks included potential novice teacher complaints, poor course evaluations, or disciplinary action from her department. Michelle's concerns are supported by Hsieh (2017), who reflected that uncertainties about how to effectively teach critical literacy and the potential implications on course evaluations for addressing controversial issues affected Hsieh's decisions about teaching critical literacy and controversial issues.

Through the university methods class *History in the Secondary Grades*, novice teachers learned to become "containers" instead of "avoiders" or "risk-takers" (Kitson & McCully, 2005). This containment of risk approach balanced novice teachers' desire to teach history differently than they had been taught with the realities of the political—and increasingly politicized—nature of teaching social studies. Consistent with findings by Pace (2021), the containment approach to teaching controversial issues is particularly helpful for novice teachers who must balance student engagement with classroom management within the K-12 context.

**K-12 Schools.** Shulman and Shulman (2004) noted that novice teachers switch their communities of practice from the university to the K-12 schools setting as they transition to professional teaching. In their new professional community, novice teachers contribute to the existing K-12 professional community while the existing K-12 professional community teaches and influences the novice teacher. This community of practice entails both power and negotiation (Wolfe, 2010) as well as collaboration, support, and expertise (Shulman & Shulman, 2004). This new professional learning community within the K-12 schools settings provides opportunities for novice teachers to (a) see critical literacy modeled, (b) practice implementing critical literacy, and (c) witness and experience risk containment strategies for teaching controversial topics.

***Modeling of Critical Literacy.*** As novice teachers move from the methods course to the K-12 classroom, they move from a controlled setting with instructor representation and the

opportunity to rehearse teaching to an authentic setting (McDonald et al., 2013). In the authentic setting of the K-12 classroom, novice teachers see representation (modeling) by their cooperating teacher, enact their own teaching practice, and reflect and analyze for continuous improvement (McDonald et al., 2013). In the case of novice teacher Becky, critical literacy stances and practices were not modeled by either of her cooperating teachers. In addition, the lesson plans given to Becky by her cooperating teachers to teach or from which to model her own lesson planning did not contain any critical literacy practices. When asked about working with other teachers in her grade or department, Becky noted that in the middle school, she met some of the other teachers during a school-wide professional development day and they were “nice.” When she completed her second half of her student teaching experience at the high school, the classrooms were arranged in pods and Becky would engage in small talk regarding weekend plans with the other English teachers. Within both of these teaching and learning communities, Becky was welcomed, but only her cooperating teachers provided direct support for instruction. This support did not include the modeling or representation of critical literacy practices.

In the case of novice teacher Emily, critical literacy stances and practices were frequently modeled or represented by her cooperating teacher, Joseph, who used the daily news recap as a vehicle for critical literacy stances and practices for his middle school students. This practice provided Emily with a daily model of critical literacy stances and practices. Joseph also placed a high value on using primary sources to show multiple perspectives and had Emily teach a primary source lesson two to three times per week. Interestingly, critical literacy stances and practices beyond using multiple sources and engaging in close reading strategies were not evident in either the written list of major news stories Joseph used for the daily news recap or in the lesson plans Joseph gave Emily to teach; rather, critical literacy practices and stances

regarding bias, power, marginalization, omission, or social justice were only evident during class discussion.

When asked about working with other teachers in her grade or department, Emily shared that she had attended a department meeting and regularly spoke with the other middle school social studies teachers, some of which had shared lesson plans and materials with her. These lesson plans were similar to the lesson plans Joseph shared—using primary sources and close reading skills—suggesting consistency in the community of practice.

*Opportunities to Practice Critical Literacy.* If a novice teacher's department or school does not value critical literacy as a way of teaching students to interrogate the creation and maintenance of historical, social, political, and economic structures in society, a novice teacher will be less likely to implement critical literacy in their K-12 classroom. Becky was not given explicit opportunities to practice, enact, or analyze critical literacy during her student teaching. Thus, she was faced with considering how she might implement critical literacy when her cooperating teacher did not. She made a conscious decision to not negotiate for opportunities to engage in critical literacy practices, citing her desire to not challenge how things were done in her cooperating teacher's classroom. This reluctance to challenge the status quo is consistent with prior research showing that novice teachers do not have the professional capital to challenge existing ways of doing (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). However, Becky's critical literacy stances and practices were not erased during student teaching; they were set aside for a more opportune time and place. This was evident when Becky, in the absence of her cooperating teacher and at the request of her students, deviated from the planned world history lesson to spend two days discussing Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the sanctions imposed on Russia. Becky was proud of the lesson and her students' critical literacy skills but quickly returned to "regular" instruction,

citing the need for consistency with past practice. Within this community of practice, critical literacy practices were not forbidden, but they were not perceived to be welcomed either. Becky's decision not to enact critical literacy practices on a regular basis showed she was attuned to the social, cultural, and political context of her school assignment (Bean, 1997; O'Brien & Stewart, 1990; Wolfe, 2010).

In contrast, Emily had many opportunities to enact, practice, and analyze critical literacy during class discussion. Written documents and assignments, slide presentations, and Google Classroom materials focused on using primary and secondary sources to teach reading comprehension and critical thinking skills. Emily shared that she regularly addressed issues of power and social justice during class discussions. Within this community of practice, Emily was supported in using critical literacy stances and practice through modeling and opportunities to enact, practice, and reflect. However, Emily was also taught through modeling and direct instruction to utilize risk containment strategies when engaging in critical literacy. Emily's and Becky's risk containment strategies will be discussed in greater detail below.

***Risk Containment.*** Emily engaged in risk containment based on her perception of what was permissible in her K-12 community of practice. Because her cooperating teacher modeled risk containment by limiting most critical literacy stances and practices to class discussion and occasionally not letting students take potentially controversial texts or assignments home, Emily understood that she could enact critical literacy under the same conditions. Tellingly, the interrogation of text and events for issues of power and social justice were reserved for class discussion. Due to her personal disposition and strong social justice lens, Emily made some attempts to move from risk "container" to "risk-taker" (Kitson & McCully, 2005). However, the community of practice at the middle school required more caution in balancing critical literacy



strategies with the beliefs of the mostly working class, conservative community in which the school is located, and Joseph exercised his power as her cooperating teacher to limit Emily's risk-taking when enacting critical literacy stances and practices. One example of this limitation was Joseph asking Emily to remove a question regarding discrimination from a worksheet Emily prepared on the Know-Nothing Party and immigration. A second example is Joseph reserving the daily news recap for himself, citing he doesn't put Emily "in that position [leading the daily news recap] for the specific reason I don't ever want her to feel liable for saying something that she feels that she would want to get across."

Becky also engaged in risk containment based on her perception of what would be permissible in her K-12 community of practice. Because her cooperating teachers did not model critical literacy stances and practices or provide Becky with explicit opportunities to engage in critical literacy stances and practices, Becky inferred that her new community of practice would not look favorably on her engaging in critical literacy. In the middle and high school contexts, Becky engaged in self-censorship and became primarily a risk "avoider" (Kitson & McCully, 2005). Becky exhibited one instance of being a risk "container" when she planned and engaged students in a lesson on the Russian invasion of Ukraine (Kitson & McCully, 2005). Her perception of risk was mitigated by the absence of her cooperating teacher, the high level of interest from her students, and the subject not being part of the current culture wars (e.g., abortion, Critical Race Theory, COVID-19 pandemic, gender identity, gun control, immigration, 2020 presidential election) that can quickly entangle a teacher in parent, administrator, and community pushback.

Overall, for Becky, containing risk was internally driven by worries over disturbing the status quo, the time demands of critical literacy lesson planning, and the desire to secure

employment with the district. For Emily, containing risk was driven externally by her K-12 community of practice, particularly her cooperating teacher and his perception of the community in which the school resided and his desire to protect Emily's developing status as a professional teacher. The opportunities to see critical literacy modeled, practice implementing critical literacy, and witness and experience risk containment strategies contributed to Becky and Emily's ideas of what it means to be a teacher. The formation of the identity *teacher* will be discussed in greater detail below as part of this study's key assertion that novice secondary social studies teachers' identities as critical literacy teachers were shaped over time as they saw critical literacy practices modeled, had opportunities to practice critical literacy, learned risk containment strategies, and adapted their teaching to their current learning communities.

### ***Forming an Identity as a Critical Literacy Teacher***

Research has identified several factors affecting how a teacher understands what it means to be a teacher: experience as a student, personal disposition, type and quality of teacher education programs, and early teaching experience (Deal & White, 2006). Of these factors, teacher education programs remain the official method of transmission for what, how, and why teachers teach.

Teacher education programs provide the opportunities for novice teachers to form the identity of being a teacher. As novice teachers take university courses, create lessons, work with students, reflect upon their teaching and learning, consult with mentor teachers, and move from theory to practice, they are forming their identities as teachers. This identity of *teacher* is lived in, practiced, and conceptualized through social engagement (Holland et al., 1998). Novice teachers' nascent identities are shaped and reshaped through performances as a teacher and mediated by experience in both the university and K-12 school settings. As Masuda (2012) noted

in her study of critical literacy and teacher identities, “teacher identity constructions can thus be multiple, complex, confusing, and an ongoing struggle” (p. 225). As novice teachers learn and practice teaching, they become teachers. The conversational question “What do you do?” is eventually answered with “I’m a teacher” (identity) instead of “I teach” (behavior).

In the university methods course, Michelle focused on helping the novice teachers develop identities as professional social studies teachers who created solid lesson plans based in the state content standards and met the needs of diverse learners. Practicing the identity of being a professional teacher meant learning the building blocks of lesson planning, engaging in historical thinking skills, using primary sources, examining multiple perspectives, and containing the risk of controversy in the K-12 classroom. Novice teachers practiced becoming professional social studies teachers who used critically literacy fully when they engaged in historical thinking skills and examining multiple perspectives. The opportunity to practice a critical literacy teacher identity was curbed by incomplete modeling (representation) and limited opportunities to practice (rehearsal) (MacDonald et al., 2013) within the university context.

In the local K-12 school setting, Becky and Emily had different opportunities to practice critical literacy teacher identities as novice teachers. As Wolfe (2010) described, novice teachers are “in a unique situation where they are negotiating power relationships with several different parties and institutions (university instructor, cooperating teacher, principal, students)” (p. 374). Becky felt constrained by her new community of practice and pre-emptively limited her critical literacy practices. Emily was contained by her new community of practice and expressed a desire to engage in additional practice of being a critical literacy teacher. However, partial or inconsistent enacting of critical literacy stances and practices is not a failure. It is, as Wolfe (2010) aptly noted, “part of the process of coming to understand how power relationships with

university instructors, cooperating teachers, and students must be negotiated” (p. 381).

Communities of practice must explicitly support novice teachers' development of critical literacy stances and practices; however, such support only occurs if the identity of a critical literacy teacher is seen as an appropriate and desirable part of being a professional social studies teacher. Only when being a critical literacy teacher is the norm will novice teachers feel empowered to engage in the repeated practice of critical literacy teacher identities.

In order to become a critical literacy teacher, it is necessary to be critically literate and to repeatedly practice performing as a critical literacy teacher. Mosley's (2010) study on preservice teachers and critical literacy concluded that experiencing critical literacy in the classroom supported creating the identity of a critical literacy teacher. This opportunity to “sediment their identities as literacy teachers” occurred as the preservice teachers repeatedly chose texts, built texts with students, and reflected on the constructed texts (Mosley, 2010, p. 420). As Holland et al. (1998) argued, this repeated practice of an identity takes personal and institutional time. Continual practice and self-forming of the identity of a critical literacy teacher leads to automaticity – one does not consciously think about the methods and strategies for practicing critical literacy; one simply *is* a critical literacy teacher who engages students in interrogating existing power structures and taking social action to humanize the world. Novice teachers need mentoring, time, and opportunities for reflection and feedback as they repeatedly practice becoming critical literacy teachers. This robust experience of critical literacy across time and context supports the adoption of a critical literacy teacher as an identity.

This longitudinal multiple case study found that novice teachers' critical literacy stances and practices were supported by (a) strong content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and lesson planning skills; (b) opportunities to experience critical literacy for themselves, see

critical literacy modeled, and undertake critical literacy stances and practices in their university and K-12 professional learning communities; and (c) professional learning communities that value and practice critical literacy teacher identities to support the development of students' citizenship knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Risk containment strategies, however, both supported and challenged novice teachers' critical literacy stances and practices. Overall, novice secondary social studies teachers' identities as critical literacy teachers were shaped over time as they saw critical literacy practices modeled, had opportunities to practice critical literacy, learned risk containment strategies, and adapted their teaching to their current learning communities.

### **Implications for Practice**

Based on gaps in the literature, the field is just beginning to grapple with how novice teachers of secondary social studies become critical literacy teachers; however, there is still much work to be done. Although this study is small, its findings raise important questions about programs and practices and suggest areas for reform.

First, the findings strongly suggest additional social studies content and pedagogy courses in secondary social studies teacher education programs. Without deep content knowledge, novice teachers simply do not know what perspectives are missing or marginalized or understand the meanings that live behind the text. Novice teachers also need additional support creating a robust toolkit of instructional strategies to draw on as they enact critical literacy, particularly strategies for guiding discussion and managing controversy and conflict without stifling dialogue. This additional support should be woven into teacher education courses to ensure novice teachers come to their final teaching methods class with a large repertoire of instructional strategies they have experienced and practiced to draw on as they teach students to decode, deconstruct, and interrogate texts in order to make positive changes in communities based on social justice.

Creating a stronger pedagogical content knowledge base in secondary social studies teacher education programs supports novice teachers in enacting critical literacy stances and practices in the K-12 classroom.

Second, novice teachers need to see critical literacy practices fully modeled using different real-life historical, social, economic, and political perspectives as a foundation for practicing critical literacy for themselves and with real audiences during field placements. This may mean building stronger relationships with cooperating teachers who enact critical literacy practices or building the capacity of experienced social studies teachers to enact critical literacy through innovative university-school-community partnerships. Teacher education programs must ensure that novice teachers are placed in K-12 classrooms and schools that support critical literacy. Local school habitus has the greatest impact on novice teacher literacy belief and practice (Deal & White, 2006); therefore school placements must support critical literacy dispositions and skills. Novice teachers who consistently experience critical literacy in the K-12 classroom are supported in the ongoing work of creating the identity of a critical literacy teacher. In recognition that not all novice teachers will be placed in K-12 classrooms that support critical literacy, teacher educators must teach novice teachers how to negotiate for the time and space to engage in critical literacy practices.

Third, novice teachers need to practice critical literacy for themselves on issues of their own choosing. These opportunities should be woven into teacher education and social studies content courses. Engaging in critical literacy from a learner's stance creates the deep learning necessary to successfully enact critical literacy as a teacher. If a novice teacher is supported and encouraged as they practice critical literacy dispositions and skills as a student and a novice teacher, they are more likely to repeat performing the identity of a critical literacy teacher.

Fourth, teacher education programs need to offer ongoing professional development and mentoring to sustain novice teachers in their first years of teaching. The administrative demands of teaching, classroom management, standardized testing, and other non-instructional responsibilities can overshadow the idea that instructional decisions should be driven by philosophical or theoretical goals. Ongoing professional development provides a space for experiencing critical literacy and for refining the practices of being a critical literacy teacher. Schmidt et al. (2007) noted that “continuing to work with teachers is important because changes in knowledge and understanding take time” (p. 54). Similarly, in a four-year qualitative case study of 15 novice English Language Arts teachers, Grossman et al. (2000) found that novice teachers revisited the conceptual and practical knowledge learned during teacher preparation after their first year of teaching. This research suggests that professional development and mentoring need to continue into beginning teachers second and third years of teaching. Professional development and mentoring give novice teachers an opportunity to reconnect with university learning and to “sharpen the saw” of critical literacy once they have passed the turmoil of the first year. This is important, as long-lasting changes to knowledge, skill, understanding, and practice take time.

### **Limitations**

While this multiple case longitudinal study collected data from 16 participants over nine months in two teaching and learning contexts, it was limited in three significant ways. First, Phase I of the study looked at 14 novice teachers and one university professor in one teacher education program for secondary social studies. The study would have been strengthened with the inclusion of other novice social studies teachers and teacher educators from additional teacher education programs from other states or regions.

Second, the study would have been strengthened with additional participants during Phase II. Phase II was designed for three to five novice teachers and cooperating teachers; however, only two novice teachers and one cooperating teacher participated. While the case studies of Becky and Emily provided rich description of their student teaching experiences in secondary social studies classrooms, additional cases would add to the knowledgebase regarding novice teacher successes and struggles in implementing critical literacy practices in secondary social studies classrooms.

Third, this case study would have been strengthened by adding a Phase III to continue to follow the novice teachers into their first and second year of classroom teaching. Given past research showing that what is learned in teacher education courses may not come to fruition until the second year of teaching (Grossman et al., 2000), this is an important area for future research.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

To conduct a research study, researchers focus their view on questions far less complex than the world presents itself. In focusing on novice teacher implementation of critical literacy in secondary social studies classrooms during the transition from university methods course to student teaching, other important questions regarding critical literacy and the process of becoming a professional social studies teacher remain: How do novice teachers' critical literacy stances and practices continue to change as they become experienced teachers? How does the culture of the K-12 schools and surrounding community interact with novice teachers' critical literacy stances and practices? What lenses do other disciplines such as English language arts bring to critical literacy stances and practices of novice teachers? How do experienced elementary and secondary social studies teachers enact critical literacy? How does the enactment



of critical literacy effect teachers' and students' civic efficacy? These questions will be expanded in further detail below.

Because novice teachers undergo a significant adjustment as they move from the university to the K-12 classroom (Ferber & Nillas, 2010) and research has shown that novice teachers may not return to their university learning until years two and three of teaching (Grossman et al., 2000), further research is needed to determine how, why, and under what circumstances novice teachers' critical literacy stances and practices continue to change as they become experienced teachers. How does the increase in pedagogical content knowledge that leads to being an effective teacher (Shulman, 1987) effect critical literacy stances and practices? As novice teachers build relationships with students and become comfortable managing the classroom (Beck, 2005; Mathews & Dilworth, 2008; Saunders, 2012) and the myriad demands on their time (Kenna, 2018), do they feel they have increased capacity to enact critical literacy practices?

Because teacher identities are created and maintained over time and are affected by local school habitus, the dynamics of novice teachers and local school culture is particularly ripe for future research. How does the culture of the K-12 schools and surrounding community interact with novice teachers' critical literacy stances and practices? Do novice teachers feel they have the professional capital (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012) to challenge existing ways of knowing, doing, and being? How do novice teachers learn to exercise their limited power (Wolfe, 2010) and negotiate for critical literacy stances and practices? Does the culture of the K-12 schools and surrounding community create an avoider, container or a risk-taker (Kitson & McCully, 2005) in the practice of critical literacy?

Much has been researched and written on English language arts teachers and critical literacy stances and practices (Beck, 2005; Hseih, 2017; Masuda, 2012; Schmidt et al.; 2007; Vasquez et al., 2019). In this study, Michelle noted that the novice teachers in the methods class *History for Secondary Grades* who were English majors had more exposure to critical literacy stances and practices than the novice teachers who were social studies majors, and they often did better with questioning texts. If an English language arts background supports critical literacy stances and practices for novice teachers, should an English minor be required for social studies majors? How does the addition of second content major or minor such as English language arts, sociology, art, music, or special education affect novice social studies teacher critical literacy stances and practices? Do these foci give teachers additional lenses through which social studies is taught and learned differently?

Research has shown that the narrowing of curriculum (McMurrer, 2007), time (Fitchett et al., 2014; Kenna et al., 2018; McMurrer, 2007), standardized testing (Fang, 2012; Kenna et al., 2018; McMurrer, 2007; Saunders, 2012), the historical reliance on textbooks (Blumberg, 2008; O'Brien & Stewart, 1990; Reidel & Draper, 2011, Sewall, 2000; Sleeter & Grant, 1991), and prescribed curriculum, materials, and pacing guides that limit teacher autonomy (Norris et al., 2012; Saunders, 2012; Wolfe, 2010) are significant challenges to enacting critical literacy stances and practices in social studies classrooms. Given these challenges, how do experienced elementary and secondary social studies teachers enact critical literacy? Are experienced social studies teachers more likely to be avoiders, containers or a risk-takers (Kitson & McCully, 2005) as they negotiate the daily realities of the classroom and the community? What conditions influence their successes and struggles over time? Are their critical literacy stances and practices robust enough to create communities of practice that would support novice teachers?

If the goal of critical literacy is to “educate students to lead a meaningful life, learn how to hold power and authority accountable, and develop the skills, knowledge, and courage to challenge common-sense assumptions while being willing to struggle for a more socially just world” (Giroux, 2005), how does the enactment of critical literacy in the classroom translate to praxis? How do teachers and K-12 students become activists who work to improve our democracy and society? How does the enactment of critical literacy effect teachers’ and students’ civic efficacy?

Exploring these questions will add to our growing knowledgebase regarding the implementation of critical literacy stances and practices in secondary social studies classrooms. Supporting the implementation of critical literacy stances and practices and the creation of critical literacy teacher identities is necessary for a civic education that educates citizens to lead with knowledge, consider perspectives other than their own, participate in the process of sharing and debating ideas, vote, hold elected officials accountable, and work for the collective good.

### **Conclusion**

While any one research study does not result in generalizable assertions about what all novice secondary social studies teachers perceive and experience, this multiple case longitudinal case study provides a nuanced description of the perspectives and experiences of this group of 14 novice teachers as they engaged in the complex process of becoming professional social studies teachers with a critical literacy stance. Critical literacy helps foster the dispositions, knowledge, and skills necessary for engaged citizenship. Informed, engaged citizenship requires that secondary students be able to analyze sources, consider multiple perspectives, practice inquiry, engage in critical thinking, use evidence to support conclusions, engage in civil discussion, practice complex problem-solving, and prepare for democratic decision-making. Through

effective critical literacy implementation, secondary students practice the skills needed to fulfill our core democratic values of truth, justice, equality, diversity, and the common good.

Given the power of critical literacy strategies to support taking multiple perspectives and engage in thoughtful dialogue about issues vital to our democracy, novice teachers must transfer critical literacy dispositions and skills to the K-12 classroom. Understanding the successes and challenges novice teachers face as they create critical literacy teacher identities is key to influencing pedagogical change in the K-12 classroom and to give secondary students the tools to examine, question, and *complicate* received information as they become engaged citizens in our democracy.

### References

- Alger, C. (2009). Content area reading strategy knowledge transfer from preservice to first-year teaching. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 53(1), 60–69.  
<https://doi.org/10.1598/JAAL.53.1.6>
- Annenberg Public Policy Center. (2021). *Annenberg Public Policy Center 2021 Constitution Day Survey*. University of Pennsylvania.  
[https://cdn.annenbergpublicpolicycenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Appendix\\_APPC\\_Civics\\_Sept\\_2021.pdf](https://cdn.annenbergpublicpolicycenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Appendix_APPC_Civics_Sept_2021.pdf)
- Bamber, P., & Hankin, L. (2011). Transformative learning through service-learning: No passport required. *Education + Training*, 53(2/3), 190–206.  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/00400911111115726>
- Barry, A. L. (2002). Reading strategies teachers say they use. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 46(2), 13–41.
- Bean, T. W. (1997). Preservice teachers' selection and use of content area literacy strategies. *The Journal of Education Research*, 90(3), 154–163.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00220671.1997.10543771>
- Bean, T. W., & Harper, H. J. (2004). Teacher education and adolescent identity. In T. Jetton & J. Dole (Eds.), *Adolescent literacy and practice* (pp. 392-411). Guilford.
- Beck, A. S. (2005). A place for critical literacy. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 48(5), 392–400. <https://doi.org/10.1598/JAAL.48.5.3>

- Beck, R. B., Black, L., Krieger, L. S., Naylor, P. C., & Shabaka, D. I. (2009). *World history: Patterns of interaction*. McDougal Littell.
- Behrman, E. H. (2006). Teaching about language, power, and text: A review of classroom practices that support critical literacy. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 49(6), 490–498. <https://doi.org/10.1598/JAAL.49.6.4>
- Berchini, C. (2014). Learning to teach and critical pedagogy: Struggling with a “Do as I say, not as I do” pedagogy. *English Education*, 46(3), 247–267.
- Bishop, E. (2017). Critical literacy: Bringing theory to praxis. In A. Darder, R. Torres, & M. Baltodano (Eds.), *The critical pedagogy reader* (3rd ed., pp. 370–381). Routledge.
- Blumberg, R. L. (2008). The invisible obstacle to educational equality: Gender bias in textbooks. *Prospects*, 38(3), 345–361. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11125-009-9086-1>
- Boyd, F. B., & Bailey, N. M. (2009). Censorship in three metaphors. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 52(8), 653–661. <https://doi.org/10.1598/JAAL.52.8.1>
- Carnegie Corporation of New York & The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement. (2003). *The civic mission of schools*. [https://media.carnegie.org/filer\\_public/9d/0a/9d0af9f4-06af-4cc6-ae7d-71a2ae2b93d7/ccny\\_report\\_2003\\_civicmission.pdf](https://media.carnegie.org/filer_public/9d/0a/9d0af9f4-06af-4cc6-ae7d-71a2ae2b93d7/ccny_report_2003_civicmission.pdf)
- Chlapoutaki, E., & Dinas, K. D. (2016). Obstacles to implementing critical pedagogy. *Multilingual Academic Journal of Education and Social Sciences*, 4(1), 104–114.
- Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2015). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Sage.
- Creswell, J. W., & Miller, D. L. (2000). Determining validity in qualitative inquiry. *Theory into Practice*, 39(3), 124–130. [https://doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip3903\\_2](https://doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip3903_2)

- Danzer, G. A. (2006). *The Americans*. McDougal Littel.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2006). Constructing 21<sup>st</sup>-century teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 57(3), 300–314. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487105285962>
- Davenport, D. (2019, April 3). *The civic education crisis*. Hoover Institution.  
<https://www.hoover.org/research/civic-education-crisis>
- Davila, D. (2011). “White people don’t work at McDonald’s” and other shadow stories from the field: Analyzing preservice teachers’ use of Obama’s race speech to teach for social justice. *English Education*, 44(1), 13–50.
- Deal, D., & White, S. (2006). Voices from the classroom: Literary practices of two novice elementary teachers. *Journal of Education*, 20(4), 313-329. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02568540609594570>
- Desilver, D. (2018). *U.S. trails most developed countries in voter turnout*. Pew Research Center.  
<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/05/21/u-s-voter-turnout-trails-most-developed-countries/>
- Dewey, J. (1916). *Democracy and education*. Macmillan.
- Ellsworth, E. (1989). Working through the repressive myths of critical pedagogy. In L. Stone (Ed.), *The education feminism reader*. (pp. 279-299). Routledge.
- Fang, Z. (2012). Approaches to developing content area literacies: A synthesis and a critique. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 56(2), 103–108.  
<https://doi.org/10.1002/JAAL.00110>
- Fang, Z. (2016). Teaching close reading with complex texts across the content areas. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 51(1), 106–116.

- Fecho, B. (2011). *Teaching for students: Habits of heart, mind, and practice in the engaged classroom*. Teachers College Press.
- Ferber, T., & Nillas, L. A. (2010). Through the eyes of student teachers: Successes and challenges in field teaching experiences. *National Teacher Education Journal*, 3(2), 61-86.
- Fitchett, P. G., Heafner, T. L., & VanFossen, P. (2014). An analysis of time prioritization for social studies in elementary school classrooms. *Journal of Curriculum and Instruction*, 8(2), 7–35. <https://doi.org/10.3776/joci.2014.v8n2p7-35>
- Foa, R. S., & Mounk, Y. (2016). The danger of deconsolidation: The democratic disconnect. *Journal of Democracy*, 27(3), 5–17. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2016.0049>
- Fobes, C., & Kaufman, P. (2008). Critical pedagogy in the sociology classroom: Challenges and concerns. *Teaching Sociology*, 36(1), 26–33.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0092055X0803600104>
- Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Herder and Herder.
- Freire, P., & Macedo, D. (1987). *Literacy: Reading the word and the world*. Praeger.
- Giroux, H. A. (2020). *On critical pedagogy* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Bloomsbury.
- Gould, J., Jamieson, K. H., Levine, P., McConnell, T., & Smith, D. (Eds.). (2011). *Guardian of democracy: The civic mission of schools*. Annenberg Public Policy Center.  
[https://media.carnegie.org/filer\\_public/ab/dd/abdda62e-6e84-47a4-a043-348d2f2085ae/ccny\\_grantee\\_2011\\_guardian.pdf](https://media.carnegie.org/filer_public/ab/dd/abdda62e-6e84-47a4-a043-348d2f2085ae/ccny_grantee_2011_guardian.pdf)
- Grossman, P., Valencia, S., Evans, K., Thompson, C., Martin, S., & Place, N. (2000). Transitions into teaching: Learning to teach writing in teacher education and beyond. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 32(4), 631-662.



- Grossman, P., Schonfield, A., & Lee, C. (2005). Teaching subject matter. In L. Darling-Hammond and J. Bransford (Eds.), *Preparing teachers for a changing world: What teachers should learn and be able to do*. (pp. 201-231). Jossey-Bass.
- Grossman, P., Hammerness, K., & McDonald, M. (2009). Redefining teaching, re-imagining teacher education. *Teacher and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 15(2), 273-289.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13540600902875340>
- Hall, L. (2005). Teachers and content area reading: Attitudes, beliefs and change. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 21(4), 403–414. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2005.01.009>
- Han, K., Madhuri, M., & Scull, W. (2015). Two sides of the same coin: Preservice teachers' dispositions towards critical pedagogy and social justice concerns in rural and urban teacher education contexts. *The Urban Review*, 47(4), 626–656.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11256-015-0327-8>
- Hargreaves, A., & Fullan, M. (2012). *Professional capital: Transforming teaching in every school*. Teachers College Press.
- Harlap, Y. (2014). Preparing university educators for hot moments: Theater for educational development about difference, power, and privilege. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 19(3), 217–228. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2013.860098>
- Hausfather, S. (2002). Content and process in constructivist education. In J.D. Rainer (Ed.), *Reframing teacher education: Dimensions of a constructivist approach*. (pp. 63-82). Association of Teacher Educators.
- Hendrix-Soto, A., & Wetzel, M. (2019). A review of critical literacies in preservice teacher education: Pedagogies, shifts, and barriers. *Teaching Education*, 30(2), 200–216.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10476210.2018.1465034>

- Herriott, R. E., & Firestone, W. A. (1983). Multisite qualitative policy research: Optimizing description and generalizability. *Educational Researcher*, 12(2), 14–19.  
<https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X012002014>
- Hess, D. (2009). *Controversy in the classroom: The democratic power of discussion*. Routledge.
- Hess, D., & McAvoy, P. (2015). *The political classroom: Evidence and ethics in democratic education*. Routledge.
- Holland, D., Lachicotte, W., Skinner, D., & Cain, C. (1998). *Identity and agency in cultural worlds*. Harvard University Press.
- Hsieh, B. (2017). Making room for discomfort: Exploring critical literacy and practice in a teacher education classroom. *English Teaching & Critique*, 16(3), 290–302.  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/ETPC-05-2017-0086>
- Huang, S. (2012). The integration of 'critical' and 'literacy' education in the EFL curriculum: Expanding the possibilities of critical writing practices. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 25(3), 283–298. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07908318.2012.723715>
- Janks, H. (2009). Critical literacy and the importance of reading with and against a text. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 62(5), 561–564. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jaal.941>
- Janks, H. (2013). Critical literacy in teaching and research. *Education Inquiry*, 4(2), 225–242.  
<https://doi.org/10.3402/edui.v4i2.22071>
- Janks, H. (2014). Critical literacy's ongoing importance for education. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 57(5), 349–356. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jaal.260>
- Jefferson, T. (1810, May 26). *Letter to John Tyler*. <https://www.let.rug.nl/usa/presidents/thomas-jefferson/letters-of-thomas-jefferson/jefl205.php>

- Johnson, R. B., & Christensen, L. (2017). *Educational research: Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed approaches* (6th ed.). Sage.
- Jones, S. (2006). *Girls, social class, & literacy: What teachers can do to make a difference*. Heinemann.
- Jones, S., & Enriquez, G. (2009). Engaging the intellectual and moral in critical literacy education: The four-year journeys of two teachers from teacher education to classroom practice. *Reading Research Quarterly, 44*(2), 145–168.  
<https://doi.org/10.1598/RRQ.44.2.3>
- Kahlenberg, R. D., & Janey, C. (2016). *Putting democracy back in public education*. The Century Foundation. <https://tcf.org/content/report/putting-democracy-back-public-education/?agreed=1>
- Kenna, J. L., Russell III, W. B., & Bittman, B. (2018). How secondary social studies teachers define literacy and implement literacy teaching strategies: A qualitative research study. *History Education Research Journal, 15*(2), 216–232.  
<https://doi.org/10.18546/HERJ.15.2.05>
- Kimmel, S. C., & Hartsfield, D. E. (2019). “It was...the word ‘scrotum’ on the first page”: Educators’ perspectives of controversial literature. *Journal of Teacher Education, 70*(4), 335–346. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487117751126>
- Kitson, A., & McCully, A. (2005). “You hear about it for real in school.”: Avoiding, containing and risk-taking in the history classroom. *Teaching History, 120*, 32-37.
- Kober, N. (2007). *Why we still need public schools: Public education for the common good*. Center on Education Policy. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED503799.pdf>
- Korthagen, F. A. J., & Kessels, J. P. A. M. (1999). Linking theory and practice: Changing the

pedagogy of teacher education. *Educational Researcher*, 28(4), 4–17.

<https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X028004004>

Kubow, P. K. (1996). *Reconceptualizing citizenship education for the twenty-first century: A study of postbaccalaureate social studies students from Canada, England and the United States*. [Doctoral dissertation]. University of Minnesota.

Kubow, P. K., & Fossum, P. R. (2007) *Comparative education: Exploring issues in international context*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Pearson.

LaDuke, A., Lindner, M., & Yanoff, E. (2016). Content, disciplinary, and critical literacies in the C3 and Common Core. *Social Studies Research and Practice*, 11(3), 96–111.

Lazerson, M., McLaughlin, J. B., & McPherson, B. (1984). Learning and citizenship: Aspirations for American education. *Daedalus*, 113(4), 59-74.

Lee, C. J. (2011). Myths about critical literacy: What teachers need to unlearn. *Journal of Language and Literacy Education*, 7(1), 95–102.

Lee, J., & Swan, K. (2013). Is the common core good for social studies? Yes, but.... *Social Education*, 77(6), 327–330.

Lesley, M. (2004). Looking for critical literacy with postbaccalaureate content area literacy students. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 48(4), 320–334.

<https://doi.org/10.1598/JAAL.48.4.5>

Lewison, M., Flint, A., Van Sluys, K., & Henkin, R. (2002). The journey of critical literacy: The journey of newcomers and novices. *Language Arts*, 79(5), 382–392.

Lewison, M., Leland, C., & Harste, J. C. (2015). *Creating critical classrooms: Reading and writing with an edge* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Routledge.

Lincoln, A. (1863, November 19). *The Gettysburg Address*.

<https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=36&page=transcript>

Loewen, J. W. (2007). *Lies my teacher told me: Everything your American history textbook got wrong*. Touchstone.

Luke, A. (2012). Critical literacy: Foundational notes. *Theory Into Practice*, 51(1), 4–11.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841.2012.636324>

Marshall, J. D. (1991). With a little help from some friends: Publishers, protesters and textbook decisions. In M. Apple & L. Christian-Smith (Eds.), *The politics of the textbook* (pp. 56–77). Routledge.

Martell, C. C. (2014). Building a constructivist practice: A longitudinal study of beginning history teachers. *The Teacher Educator*, (49)2, 97-115.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/08878730.2014888252>

Masuda, A. (2012). Critical literacy and teacher identities: A discursive site of struggle. *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies*, 9(3), 220-246.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/15427587.2012.627026>

Mathews, S., & Dilworth, P. (2008). Case studies of preservice teachers' ideas about the role of multicultural citizenship education in social studies. *Theory & Research in Social Education*, 36(4), 356–390. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00933104.2008.10473380>

<https://doi.org/10.1080/00933104.2008.10473380>

McDonald, M., Kazemi, E., & Kavanagh, S. S. (2013). Core practices and pedagogies of teacher education: A call for a common language and collective activity. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 64(5), 378-386. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487113493807>

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487113493807>

- McInerney, P., Smyth, J., & Down, B. (2011). 'Coming to a place near you?' The politics and possibilities of a critical pedagogy of place-based education. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 39(1), 3–16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1359866X.2010.540894>
- McMurrer, J. (2007). *Choices, changes, and challenges: Curriculum and instruction in the NCLB era*. Center for Education Policy. <https://www.cepdc.org/displayDocument.cfm?DocumentID=312>
- McMurrer, J. (2008). *NCLB year 5: Instructional time in elementary schools: A closer look at changes for specific subjects*. Center for Education Policy. <https://www.cepdc.org/displayDocument.cfm?DocumentID=309>
- Merriam-Webster. (2022). *Merriam-Webster.com dictionary*. Retrieved April 28, 2022 from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/apprentice>
- Michigan Department of Education. (2019). *Michigan code of educational ethics*. [https://www.michigan.gov/-/media/Project/Websites/mde/educator\\_services/prof\\_practices/code\\_of\\_ethics.pdf?rev=017460345b4e44a2959f0558a3638d82](https://www.michigan.gov/-/media/Project/Websites/mde/educator_services/prof_practices/code_of_ethics.pdf?rev=017460345b4e44a2959f0558a3638d82)
- Michigan Department of Education. (2019). *Michigan K-12 social studies standards*. [https://www.michigan.gov/-/media/Project/Websites/mde/Academic-Standards/Social\\_Studies\\_Standards.pdf?rev=4bab170dd4114e2dbce578723b37ca63](https://www.michigan.gov/-/media/Project/Websites/mde/Academic-Standards/Social_Studies_Standards.pdf?rev=4bab170dd4114e2dbce578723b37ca63)
- Moje, E. B. (2008). Foregrounding the disciplines in secondary literacy teaching and learning: A call for change. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 52(2), 96–107. <https://doi.org/10.1598/JAAL.52.2.1>

- Moore, M., Zancanella, D., & Avila, J. (2014). Text complexity: The battle for critical literacy in the Common Core State Standards. In J. A. Pandya, & J. A. Avila (Eds.), *Moving critical literacies forward: A new look at praxis across contexts*. (pp. 129–145). Routledge.
- Mosley, M. (2010). Becoming a literacy teacher: Approximations in critical literacy teaching. *Teaching Education*, 21(4), 403–426. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10476210.2010.514900>
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2018). *The nation's report card: Results from the 2018 civics, geography, and U.S. history assessments*. U.S. Department of Education. [https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/geography/supporting\\_files/2018\\_SS\\_infographic.pdf](https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/geography/supporting_files/2018_SS_infographic.pdf)
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2020). *Characteristics of public school teachers*. U.S. Department of Education. [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator\\_cge.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cge.asp)
- National Commission on Excellence in Education. (1983). *A nation at risk: The imperative for educational reform*. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED226006.pdf>
- National Council for the Social Studies. (2013a). *College, career, and civic life framework for social studies state standards: Guidance for enhancing the rigor of K-12 civics, economics, geography, and history* [White paper]. NCSS. <https://www.socialstudies.org/sites/default/files/c3/c3-framework-for-social-studies-rev0617.pdf>
- National Council for the Social Studies. (2013b). *Revitalizing civic learning in our schools*. [https://www.socialstudies.org/positions/revitalizing\\_civic\\_learning](https://www.socialstudies.org/positions/revitalizing_civic_learning)
- National Council for the Social Studies Task Force on Teacher Education Standards. (2018). *National Council for the Social Studies: National standards for the preparation of social studies teachers*. Retrieved from

[https://www.socialstudies.org/sites/default/files/media/2017/Nov/ness\\_teacher\\_standards\\_2017-rev9-6-17.pdf](https://www.socialstudies.org/sites/default/files/media/2017/Nov/ness_teacher_standards_2017-rev9-6-17.pdf)

National Council of Teachers of English. (2019). *Key aspects of critical literacy: An excerpt.*

<https://ncte.org/blog/2019/07/critical-literacy/>

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and Council of Chief State School

Officers. (2010). *Common core state standards for English language arts and literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects.*

<http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RH/introduction/>

Nieto, S., & Bode, P. (2018). *Affirming diversity: The sociopolitical context of multicultural education* (7<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Pearson.

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Pub. L. No. 107-110, 115 Stat. 1425 (2002).

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/PLAW-107publ110/pdf/PLAW-107publ110.pdf>

Norris, K., Lucas, L., & Prudhoe, C. (2012). Examining critical literacy: Preparing preservice teachers to use critical literacy in the early childhood classroom. *Multicultural Education, 19*(2), 59–62.

O'Brien, D. G., & Stewart, R. A. (1990). Preservice teachers' perspectives on why every teacher is not a teacher of reading: A qualitative analysis. *Journal of Reading Behavior, 22*(2),

101–129. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10862969009547699>

O'Brien, D. G., Stewart, R. A., & Moje, E. B. (1995). Why content literacy is difficult to infuse into secondary school: Complexities of curriculum, pedagogy, and school culture.

*Reading Research Quarterly, 30*(3), 442–463. <https://doi.org/10.2307/747625>

Opitz, M. F., & Rasinki, T. V. (2008). *Goodbye round robin: 25 effective oral reading strategies* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Heinemann.



- O'Quinn, E. J. (2005). Critical literacy in democratic education: Responding to sociopolitical tensions in U.S. schools. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 49(4), 260–267.  
<https://doi.org/10.1598/JAAL.49.4.1>
- Ott, B. L., & Burghardt, C. R. (2013). On critical-rhetorical pedagogy: Dialoging with *Schindler's List*. *Western Journal of Communication*, 77(1), 14–33.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10570314.2012.719659>
- Pace, J. L. (2019). Contained risk-taking: Preparing preservice teachers to teach controversial issues in three countries. *Theory & Research in Social Education*, 47(20), 228-260.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00933104.2019.1595240>
- Pace, J. (2021a). *Hard questions: learning to teach controversial issues*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Pace, J. (2021b). How can educators prepare for teaching controversial issues? Cross-national lessons. *Social Education*, 85(4), 228-233.
- Pandaya, J. Z. (2019). In the weeds: Critical literacy conversations with Allan Luke. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 49(2), 191–202. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03626784.2019.1584732>
- Parker, K., Horowitz, J. M., Brown, A., Fry, R., Cohn, D., & Igielnik, R. (2018). *Demographic and economic trends in suburban and rural communities*. Pew Research Center.  
<https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2018/05/22/demographic-and-economic-trends-in-urban-suburban-and-rural-communities/>
- Pearson, P. D., & Gallagher, M. (1983). The instruction of reading comprehension. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 8(3), 317-344. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0361-476X\(83\)90019-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/0361-476X(83)90019-X)

Pew Research Center. (2019). *Partisan antipathy: More intense, more personal*.

<https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2019/10/10/partisan-antipathy-more-intense-more-personal/>

Pew Research Center. (2020). *In views of U.S. democracy, widening partisan divides over freedom to peacefully protest*. [https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2020/09/02/in-](https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2020/09/02/in-views-of-u-s-democracy-widening-partisan-divides-over-freedom-to-peacefully-protest/)

[views-of-u-s-democracy-widening-partisan-divides-over-freedom-to-peacefully-protest/](https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2020/09/02/in-views-of-u-s-democracy-widening-partisan-divides-over-freedom-to-peacefully-protest/)

Pohl, B. E., & Beaudry, C. (2015). Critical literacy in the social studies classroom: A case for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. *Journal of Family Strengths, 15*(2), 1–14.

Rebell, M. (2018). Preparation for capable citizenship. *The Phi Delta Kappan, 100*(3), 18–23.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0031721718808259>

Reidel, M., & Draper, C. (2011). Reading for democracy: Preparing middle-grades social studies teachers to teach critical literacy. *The Social Studies, 102*(3), 124–131.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/00377996.2010.538758>

Rogers, R., Wetzel, M., & O'Daniels, K. (2016). Learning to teach, learning to act: Becoming a critical literacy teacher. *Pedagogies: An International Journal, 11*(4), 292–310.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/1554480X.2016.1229620>

Rothman, L. (2016). *Everything you need to ace American history in one big fat notebook: The complete middle school guide* (P. Bigler, Ed.). Workman.

Saldaña, J. (2016). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Sage.

Saunders, J. (2012). Intersecting realities: A novice's attempt to use critical literacy to access her students' figured worlds. *Multicultural Education, 19*(2), 18–23.

- Scherff, L. (2012). "This project has personally affected me": Developing a critical stance in preservice English teachers. *Journal of Literacy Research, 44*(2), 200–236.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1086296X12440430>
- Schmidt, R., Armstrong, L., & Everett, T. (2007). Teacher resistance to critical conversation: Exploring why teachers avoid difficult conversations in their classrooms. *The NERA Journal, 43*(2), 49–55.
- Schwartz, S. (2022, March 14). *Map: Where critical race theory is under attack*. Education Week. <https://www.edweek.org/policy-politics/map-where-critical-race-theory-is-under-attack/2021/06>
- Sewall, G. (2000). *History textbooks at the new century: A report of the American Textbook Council*. American Textbook Council.
- Shug, M. C., Western, R. D., & Enochs, L. G. (1997). Why do social studies teachers use textbooks? The answers may lie in economic theory. *Social Education, 61*(2), 97–101.
- Shulman, L. (1986). Those who understand: Knowledge growth in teaching. *Educational Researcher, 15*(2), 4-14.
- Shulman, L. (1987). Knowledge and teaching: Foundations of the new reform. *Harvard Educational Review, 57*(1), 1-22.
- Shulman, L., & Shulman, J. (2004). How and what teachers learn: a shifting perspective. *Journal of Curriculum Studies, 36*(2), 257-271. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0022027032000148298>
- Sizer, T. R. (1984) *Horace's compromise: The dilemma of the American high school*. Houghton Mifflin.
- Skerrett, A. (2010). Teaching critical literacy for social justice. *Action in Teacher Education, 31*(4), 54–65. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01626620.2010.10463535>

- Sleeter, C., & Grant, C. (1991). Race, class, gender, and disability in current textbooks. In M. Apple & L. Christian-Smith (Eds.), *The politics of the textbook* (pp. 1–21). Routledge.
- Smagorinsky, P., Lakly, A., & Johnson, T. (2002). Acquiescence, accommodation, and resistance in learning to teacher within a prescribed curriculum. *English Education*, 34(3), 187–213.
- Souto-Manning, M., & Price-Dennis, D. (2012). Critically redefining and repositioning media texts in early childhood teacher education: What if? and why? *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, 33(4), 304–321.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10901027.2012.732669>
- Stake, R. (2006). *Multiple case study analysis*. Guilford.
- Stevens, L. P., & Bean, T. W. (2007). *Critical literacy: Context, research, and practice in the K-12 classroom*. Sage.
- TeachingWorks (2019). *Explaining and modeling*. TeachingWorks Resource Library.  
<https://library.teachingworks.org/curriculum-resources/teaching-practices/explaining-and-modeling-content/>
- Trimble, M. (2018, December 31). *Arizona bill would punish teachers for talking politics*. U.S. News. <https://www.usnews.com/news/national-news/articles/2018-12-31/arizona-lawmakers-bill-would-punish-teachers-for-discussing-politics-controversial-issues>
- Van Sluys, K., Laman, T., Legan, N., & Lewison, M. (2005). Critical literacy and preservice teachers: Changing definitions of what it might mean to read. *Journal of Reading Education*, 31(1), 13–22.
- Vasquez, V. M., Janks, H., and Comber, B. (2019). Critical literacy as a way of being and doing. *Language Arts*, 96(5), 300–311.

- Vasquez, V. M., Tate, S. L., & Harste, J. C. (2013). *Negotiating critical literacies with teachers: Theoretical foundations and pedagogical resources for pre-service and in-service contexts*. Routledge.
- Vengoechea, X. (2016). *Everything you need to ace world history in one big fat notebook: The complete middle school guide* (M. Lindblad, Ed.). Workman.
- Villaneuva, C., & O'Sullivan, C. (2019). Analyzing the degree of consensus in current academic literature on critical pedagogy. *Scenario: A Journal for Performative Teaching, Learning, Research, 13*(2), 70–92. <https://doi.org/10.33178/scenario.13.2.6>
- Warren, D. (1988). Original intents: Public schools as civic education. *Theory into Practice, 27*(4), 243-249. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00405848809543360>
- Willingham, D. T. (2015). Ask the cognitive scientist: Do students remember what they learned in school? *American Educator, 39*(3), 33-38.
- Wineburg, S. (2001). *Historical thinking and other unnatural acts: Charting the future of teaching the past*. Temple University Press.
- Wineburg, S. (2010). Thinking like a historian. *Teaching Primary Sources Quarterly, 3*(1). [https://www.loc.gov/static/programs/teachers/about-this-program/teaching-with-primary-sources-partner-program/documents/historical\\_thinking.pdf](https://www.loc.gov/static/programs/teachers/about-this-program/teaching-with-primary-sources-partner-program/documents/historical_thinking.pdf)
- Wineburg, S. (2018). *Why learn history (when its's already on your phone)*. The University of Chicago Press.
- Wineburg, S., Martin, D., & Monte-Sano, C. (2013). *Reading like a historian: Teaching literacy in middle & high school history classrooms*. Teachers College Press.

- Winthrop, R. (2020). *The need for civic education in 21<sup>st</sup>-century schools*. The Brookings Institution. <https://www.brookings.edu/policy2020/bigideas/the-need-for-civic-education-in-21st-century-schools/>
- Wolfe, P. (2010). Preservice teachers planning for critical literacy learning. *English Education*, 42(4), 368–390.
- Wolk, S. (2003). Teaching for critical literacy in social studies. *The Social Studies*, 94(3), 101–106. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00377990309600190>
- Wood, C. (2015). *Yardsticks: Children in the classroom ages 4-14* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Center for Responsive Schools.
- Wraga, W. G. (1991). The return of citizenship education. *The Clearing House*, 64(6), 401-402.
- WTSP. (2017, April 6). *Teacher fired over controversial assignment*. WTSP-TV. <https://www.wtsp.com/article/news/local/teacher-fired-over-controversial-assignment/67-429165008>
- Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods* (6th ed.). Sage.

## Appendix A

Study ID: HUM00200225  
IRB: University of Michigan-Dearborn  
Date Approved: August 19, 2021

Dear HST 400 Students,

As part of my dissertation research, I am conducting a study on novice teacher critical literacy stance and practices in secondary social studies classrooms. This semester, I hope to collect research based on your experiences in the secondary history methods course HST 400. I plan to conduct an anonymous pre- and post-surveys and non-participant observations during class. After final grades are posted in December, I am hoping you will choose to participate in a short interview by telephone or video conference and that you might be willing to share some of your coursework with me.

If you are interested in participating in the research study, please complete the Student Consent Form and the short critical literacy pre-survey.

Participating in the research study is entirely voluntary.

Sincerely,  
Karen Caldwell

## Appendix B

### Consent Form – Novice Teacher

**The University of Michigan-Dearborn  
Exempt Study Consent  
Developing Novice Teachers' Critical Literacy Practices in Social Studies  
HUM#00200225**

**Principal Investigator:**

Karen W. Caldwell

Ed.D. Candidate

College of Education, Health, and Human Services, University of Michigan-Dearborn

734-276-7024

[caldwelk@umich.edu](mailto:caldwelk@umich.edu)

**Faculty Advisor:**

Dr. Danielle DeFauw

Associate Professor of Reading and Language Arts

College of Education, Health, and Human Services, University of Michigan-Dearborn

313-593-5426

[daniellp@umich.edu](mailto:daniellp@umich.edu)

**Purpose of the study:**

The purpose of the study is to explore the factors that support and/or undermine novice teachers' implementation of critical literacy in the secondary social studies classroom. Critical literacy is a philosophical belief that teaches students to interrogate the creation and maintenance of historical, social, political, and economic structures in our society. It is anticipated that Phase I of this study will last for one semester, and that Phase II of this study will be during student teaching.

Before you decide to be a part of this research study, you need to understand the risks and benefits. This consent form provides information about the research study

**Description of Subject Involvement:**

You are invited to participate in a research study about novice teachers and critical literacy practices in secondary social studies classrooms. You are invited to participate in this study because you are enrolled in HST 400 – History for Secondary Schools. Other than an anonymous survey during the first week of the course and non-participant observations of the class, this



study will be conducted after the completion of HST 400 – History for Secondary Schools and you have received your final grade.

If you agree to be part of the research study, during Phase I you will be asked to complete an anonymous survey at the beginning of HST 400 – History for Secondary Schools. After you have received your final grade for the course, you will be asked to complete an anonymous post-survey and participate in a video- and/or audio-recorded interview. The interview will probably last 30 to 45 minutes. Also, if you choose to share your work, both written and oral, related to the research project, your work will be used for research purposes. Phase II will have a separate consent document describing Phase II of the study. You may participate in Phase I without obligation to participate in future phases of this study.

**Benefits:**

Although you may not directly benefit from being in this study, others may benefit because the identification of supports and barriers to implementing critical literacy in the 6-12 social studies classroom will help teacher education programs and K-12 schools support novice teachers in implementing critical literacy practices.

**Risks and Discomforts:**

The researcher has taken steps to minimize the risks of this study. Even so, you may still experience some risks related to your participation, even when the researcher is careful to avoid them. These risks may include feeling nervous during the interview(s) for Phases I and II or observation(s) during Phase II.

**Compensation:**

You will receive no compensation for participating in this research.

**Confidentiality:**

I plan to publish or present the results of this study, but I will not include any information that would identify you. There are some reasons why people other than the researcher may need to see information you provided as part of the study. This includes organizations responsible for making sure the research is done safely and properly such as the University of Michigan-Dearborn IRB. To keep your information safe, I will maintain confidentiality by using pseudonyms instead of names. A key linking names and pseudonyms will be stored in a separate, secure location from all collected data. The key will be destroyed after data analysis is complete. All data will be stored on a password-protected laptop that only I have access to.

**Storage and future use of data**

The data you provide will be stored electronically in protected files that require a username and password. This includes video- and audio-recorded data. Data that include paper copies will be stored in a locked file in the researcher's home office.

The researcher will retain the data for 10 years.

The researcher will dispose of your data by permanently destroying any computer files or paper copies of research data securely.

The data will not be made available to other researchers for other studies following the completion of this research study.

**Voluntary nature of the study**

Participating in this study is completely voluntary. Even if you decide to participate now, you may change your mind and stop at any time. You may choose not to answer any interview question(s) and/or to end the interview at any point for any reason that you do not have to disclose. You may choose not to share any course materials that you do not wish to share. If you decide to withdraw early, data collected prior to your withdraw will not be used in the study.

**Consent to use academic work**

Your work related to the research project, both written and oral, will be used by the researcher for professional publication and presentation purposes. Such work includes assignments you completed for HST 400 – History for Secondary Schools. To keep your information safe, the researcher will use a pseudonym so you cannot be identified in research publications or presentations. A signed copy of this consent form will be shared with you.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature [Required]

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Contact Information:**

If you have questions about this research, you may contact Karen W. Caldwell, 734-276-7024, [caldwelk@umich.edu](mailto:caldwelk@umich.edu).

I confirm that I am 18 years old or older.

- Yes
- No
  
- I confirm I am seeking certification to teach secondary social studies.
- I agree to participate in the study.
- I will participate in the anonymous pre- and post-surveys.
- I agree to permit the researcher to observe me during class. The researcher will take field notes during observations.
- The researcher may use the materials that I produced in HST 400 – History for Secondary Schools for research purposes.

- The researcher may contact me for an interview once final grades have been posted. This interview will be recorded and transcribed. My contact details are listed below.
  - Printed Name:
  - Email:
  - Phone:
  
- During the Winter 2022 semester, I hope to have a clinical experience or student teach.
  
- If I am student teaching or completing a clinical experience during Winter 2022, the researcher may observe me and interview me, pending my cooperating teacher's, the university's, the district's, etc. agreement to participate in the study.

---

Signature [Required]

---

Date

## Appendix C

### Consent Form - Instructor

**The University of Michigan-Dearborn  
Exempt Study Consent  
Developing Novice Teacher Critical Literacy Practices in Social Studies  
HUM# 00200225**

**Principal Investigator:**

Karen W. Caldwell

Ed.D. Candidate

College of Education, Health, and Human Services, University of Michigan-Dearborn

734-276-7024

[caldwelk@umich.edu](mailto:caldwelk@umich.edu)

**Faculty Advisor:**

Dr. Danielle DeFauw

Associate Professor of Reading and Language Arts

College of Education, Health, and Human Services, University of Michigan-Dearborn

313-593-5426

[daniellp@umich.edu](mailto:daniellp@umich.edu)

**Purpose of the study:**

The purpose of the study is to explore the factors that support and/or undermine novice teachers' implementation of critical literacy in the secondary social studies classroom. It is anticipated that Phase I of this study will last for one semester, and that Phase II of this study will be during student teaching.

Before you decide to be a part of this research study, you need to understand the risks and benefits. This consent form provides information about the research study.

**Description of Subject Involvement:**

You are invited to participate in a research study about novice teachers and critical literacy practices in secondary social studies classrooms. You are invited to participate in this study because you teach HST 400 – History for Secondary Schools.

If you agree to be part of the research study, you will be asked to participate in two video- and/or audio-recorded interviews. It is anticipated that one interview will occur prior to the first course

meeting of HST 400 – History for Secondary Schools, and the second interview after the course has been completed and final grades have been posted. The interviews will probably last 30-60 minutes. Also, you will be invited to share course materials related to the research project. Course materials, both written and oral, will be used for research purposes. You may choose not to share some or all course materials.

**Benefits:**

Although you may not directly benefit from being in this study, others may benefit because the identification of supports and barriers to implementing critical literacy in the 6-12 social studies classroom will help teacher education programs and K-12 schools support novice teachers in implementing critical literacy practices.

**Risks and Discomforts:**

The researcher has taken steps to minimize the risks of this study. Even so, you may still experience some risks related to your participation, even when the researcher is careful to avoid them. These risks may include feeling nervous during observations or interviews. You may skip any question or stop the interview at any time.

**Compensation:**

You will receive no compensation for participating in this research.

**Confidentiality:**

I plan to publish or present the results of this study, but I will not include any information that would identify you. There are some reasons why people other than the researcher may need to see information you provided as part of the study. This includes organizations responsible for making sure the research is done safely and properly such as the University of Michigan-Dearborn IRB. To keep your information safe, I will maintain confidentiality by using a pseudonym instead of your name. A key linking your name and pseudonym will be stored in a separate, secure location from all collected data. The key will be destroyed after data analysis is complete. All data will be stored on a password-protected laptop that only I have access to.

**Storage and future use of data**

The data you provide will be stored electronically in protected files that require a username and password. This includes video- and audio-recorded data. Data that include paper copies will be stored in a locked file in the researcher's home office.

The researcher will retain the data for 10 years.

The researcher will dispose of your data by permanently destroying any computer files and/or paper copies of research data securely.

The data may be made available to other researchers for other studies following the completion of this research study, but all data will be de-identified so the data cannot be linked to any individual participant.

**Voluntary nature of the study**

Participating in this study is completely voluntary. Even if you decide to participate now, you may change your mind and stop at any time. You may choose not to answer any interview question(s) and/or to end the interview at any point for any reason that you do not have to disclose. You may choose not to share any course materials that you do not wish to share. If you decide to withdraw early, data collected prior to your withdraw will not be used in the study.

**Consent to use academic work**

Your work related to the research project, both written and oral, will be used by the researcher for professional publication and presentation purposes. Such work includes course materials for HST 400 – History for Secondary Schools. To keep your information safe, the researcher will use a pseudonym so you cannot be identified in research publications or presentations.

**Contact Information:**

If you have questions about this research, you may contact Karen W. Caldwell, 734-276-7024, [caldwelk@umich.edu](mailto:caldwelk@umich.edu).

I confirm that I am 18 years old or older.

- Yes
- No
  
- I agree to participate in the study.
- I will participate in the pre- and post-interviews.
- The researcher may use the materials I create for use in HST 400 – History for Secondary Schools.

---

Signature [Required]

---

Date

## Appendix D

### Novice Teacher Critical Literacy Survey I

1. In your own words, how do you define critical literacy?
2. Have you explored multiple perspectives regarding historical, political, economic, or social events in your K-12 education? If so, please describe your experiences.
3. Have you explored multiple perspectives regarding historical, political, economic, or social events in your university education? If so, please describe your experiences.
4. What experiences have you had in the K-12 classroom in engaging in dialogue (e.g., class discussion, debate, Socratic seminar, structured academic controversy) regarding controversial topics?
5. What experiences have you had in university courses in engaging in dialogue (e.g., class discussion, debate, Socratic seminar, structured academic controversy) regarding controversial topics?
6. What experiences have you had with social justice activism in your K-12 education?
7. What experiences have you had with social justice activism in your university education?
8. How often have you had a chance to engage in or practice critical literacy in the past?
  - none
  - 1-2 times
  - 3-4 times
  - 5-6 times
  - 7 times or more

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

9. Secondary social studies teachers should teach reading.
  - Strongly Agree
  - Agree
  - Neither Agree or Disagree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly Disagree

10. The social studies textbook will be my primary teaching material when I am a student teacher and/or beginning teacher.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree or Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

11. I will use current events articles as teaching material when I am a student teacher and/or beginning teacher.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree or Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

12. I will use materials that may contradict with traditional historical, political, economic, or social narratives when I am a student teacher and/or beginning teacher.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree or Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

13. I will use materials that may challenge traditional historical, political, economic, or social structures when I am a student teacher and/or beginning teacher.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree or Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

14. Multiculturalism is a fundamental component of social studies.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree or Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

15. I feel comfortable teaching controversial topics.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree or Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree



16. Social justice activism is a part of my life.

- Never
- Seldom
- Occasionally
- Frequently
- Daily

17. I feel that I am marginalized in our society.

- Never
- Seldom
- Occasionally
- Frequently
- Daily

Thank you for your time and energy spent on this survey. They are appreciated.

## Appendix E

### Novice Teacher Critical Literacy Survey II

1. In your own words, how do you define critical literacy?
2. What experiences have you had with critical literacy during this course?

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

3. Secondary social studies teachers should teach reading.
  - Strongly Agree
  - Agree
  - Neither Agree or Disagree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly Disagree
4. The social studies textbook will be my primary teaching material when I am a student teacher and/or beginning teacher.
  - Strongly Agree
  - Agree
  - Neither Agree or Disagree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly Disagree
5. I will use current events articles as teaching material when I am a student teacher and/or beginning teacher.
  - Strongly Agree
  - Agree
  - Neither Agree or Disagree
  - Disagree
6. I will use materials that may contradict with traditional historical, political, economic, or social narratives when I am a student teacher and/or beginning teacher.
  - Strongly Agree
  - Agree
  - Neither Agree or Disagree
  - Disagree
7. I will use materials that may challenge traditional historical, political, economic, or social structures when I am a student teacher and/or beginning teacher.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree or Disagree
- Disagree

8. Multiculturalism is a fundamental component of social studies.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree or Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

9. I feel comfortable teaching controversial topics.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree or Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

10. Social justice activism is a part of my life.

- Never
- Seldom
- Occasionally
- Frequently
- Daily

Thank you for your time and energy spent on this survey. They are appreciated.

## Appendix F

### Novice Teacher Critical Literacy Interview Protocol

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me to discuss your experiences in HST 400 – History for Secondary Schools. May I have permission to record and transcribe our conversation in order to have a more accurate record of your interview responses? Remember you may skip any question or stop the interview at any time.

Thank you.

1. Tell me about yourself and your educational journey thus far.
2. Describe yourself as a preservice social studies teacher.
3. As you consider HST 400 – History for Secondary Schools, what materials and activities supported your learning about teaching social studies?
4. As you consider HST 400, what materials/topics/activities were the most challenging? Please elaborate.
5. If you had to define critical literacy or describe how it looks and operates in a classroom, what would you say?
  - a. What would be essential to cover?
  - b. What materials and resources would you consider critical to have in your classroom?
6. As you consider HST 400, what materials/topics/activities supported your learning about critical literacy?
7. What are some of the challenges to implementing critical literacy in secondary social studies classrooms?
  - a. What are some of the things that would help a new teacher meet those challenges?
8. What is the role of social studies in preparing students in grades 6-12 for life outside of school?
9. As you think about your professional life as a social studies teacher, what sort of contributions do you see yourself making?
10. What are your plans for Winter 2022 as they related to a practicum or student teaching experience? You indicated on your consent form that if we can align the study details with your cooperating teacher and district, etc. that I may observe your teaching. Do you still feel comfortable with this option? Remember, you may change your mind at any point as well.

Thank you for your time. I will email you a transcript of this interview within 10 days. Although not required to, you may look over the transcript and reply to the email to confirm that it accurately reflects today's conversation. Should you feel there is any discrepancy in the

transcript, or you wish to remove or add to some of your answers, you will have the option to do so if you choose. I will also notify you when this study is published as my dissertation so you will have access to it.

Thank you again for helping me. I truly appreciate it.

## Appendix G

### Instructor Critical Literacy Interview Protocol

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me to discuss your experiences in HST 400 – History for Secondary Schools. May I have permission to record and transcribe our conversation in order to have a more accurate record of your answers? Remember you may skip any question or stop the interview at any time.

Thank you.

#### Pre-Study Interview Protocol

I'd like to begin by asking some background questions so I can get to know you a bit better.

1. Please tell me how you came to be an instructor of the HST 400 – History for Secondary Schools course at this university.
  - a. Prior teaching experience?
  - b. Educational background and experience?
2. What would you describe as the main objectives of the History for Secondary Schools course?
3. Keeping those objectives in mind, what activities or exercises have you found to be helpful in getting pre-service teachers to understand the objectives?
  - a. Describe particular processes you use to teach.
4. How do you facilitate any activities for your students that challenge them to think about their identity and culture?
  - a. What do those activities look like?
5. How do you facilitate activities for your students that challenge them to think about their role in teaching reading to secondary students?
  - a. Give me an example of something your students produced using the key concepts of critical literacy?
  - b. What do those activities look like?
6. How do you facilitate activities for your students that give them opportunities to see critical literacy practices modeled?
  - a. What do those activities look like?
7. How do you facilitate activities for your students that give them opportunities to practice critical literacy themselves?
  - a. What do those activities look like?
8. How can you tell when your students are learning the material?
  - a. What kinds of questions are being asked?
  - b. What kinds of content is being produced?

c. What kinds of tasks are being completed?

9 . What has been most helpful in teaching this course (theories, authors, materials, technologies)?

Thank you for describing your teaching practice. The next two questions are designed to describe what barriers or challenges, if any, you have encountered while teaching the course.

10. In your experience teaching the course, have you encountered barriers or obstacles such as controversial topics, lack of cultural awareness, emotionally charged conversations, or resistance to multiple perspectives in teaching the course?  
If so, please elaborate.

11. What topics/activities/materials have been difficult for your students?

12. Considering your experience in teaching this course, how would you define critical literacy?

13. What advice would you have for other teacher educators who might be thinking of introducing critical literacy into their courses?

Thank you for your time. I will email you a transcript of this interview within 10 days. Although not required to, you may look over the transcript and reply to the email to confirm that it accurately reflects today's conversation. Should you feel there is any discrepancy in the transcript, or you wish to remove or add to some of your answers, you will have the option to do so if you choose. I will also notify you when this study is published as my dissertation so you will have access to it.

Thank you again for helping me. I truly appreciate it.

Post-Study Interview Protocol:

1. In your experience teaching the course during the Fall 2021 semester, do you feel you encountered barriers or obstacles such as controversial topics, lack of cultural awareness, emotionally charged conversations, or resistance to multiple perspectives in teaching the course?

If so, please elaborate.

2. What topics/activities/materials have been difficult for your students this semester?

3. Considering your experience in teaching this course this semester, how would you define critical literacy?

4. What advice would you have for other teacher educators who might be thinking of introducing critical literacy into their courses based on your experience this semester?

5. Based on my observations during the Fall 2021 semester, I wonder . . .

Thank you for your time. I will email you a transcript of this interview within 10 days. Although not required to, you may look over the transcript and reply to the email to confirm that it accurately reflects today's conversation. Should you feel there is any discrepancy in the transcript, or you wish to remove or add to some of your answers, you will have the option to do so if you choose. I will also notify you when this study is published as my dissertation so you will have access to it.

Thank you again for helping me. I truly appreciate it.



## Appendix H

Study ID: HUM00200225

IRB: University of Michigan-Dearborn

Date Approved: August 19, 2021

Dear HST 400 Students,

As I shared with you, I hope to collect research based on your experiences in secondary social studies classrooms. If you still plan to be a(n) preservice or in-service teacher and you are willing to allow me to observe your teaching for research purposes within your practicum or student teaching context, please email me to let me know your interest. If you know your placement details and you're willing to share them with me, please do and I will follow up your principal and cooperating teacher, copying you on each email. These observations would occur twice during winter semester. I am also hoping you will choose to participate in a short interview by telephone or video conference after each observation. The interviews will last 15 to 45 minutes, and I will need to record the interview.

I hope to hear from you.

Participating in the research study is entirely voluntary.

Sincerely,  
Karen Caldwell  
caldwelk@umich.edu

## Appendix I

### Consent Form – Novice Teacher

**The University of Michigan-Dearborn  
Exempt Study Consent  
Developing Novice Teacher Critical Literacy Practices in Social Studies  
HUM#00200225**

**Principal Investigator:**

Karen W. Caldwell

Ed.D. Candidate

College of Education, Health, and Human Services, University of Michigan-Dearborn

734-276-7024

[caldwelk@umich.edu](mailto:caldwelk@umich.edu)

**Faculty Advisor:**

Dr. Danielle DeFauw

Associate Professor of Reading and Language Arts

College of Education, Health, and Human Services, University of Michigan-Dearborn

313-593-5426

[daniellp@umich.edu](mailto:daniellp@umich.edu)

**Purpose of the study:**

The purpose of the study is to explore the factors that support and/or undermine novice teachers' implementation of critical literacy in the secondary social studies classroom. It is anticipated that this phase of the study will last for 3-4 months.

Before you decide to be a part of this research study, you need to understand the risks and benefits. This consent form provides information about the research study.

**Description of Subject Involvement:**

You are invited to participate in a research study about novice teachers and critical literacy practices in secondary social studies classrooms. You are invited to participate in this study because you were enrolled in HST 400 – History for Secondary Schools and are currently completing your teaching field experience or student teaching placement.

If you agree to be part of the research study, the researcher will ask to observe your teaching twice during winter semester. Your lesson plans and teaching materials will be used for research

purposes. You will also be asked to participate in a video- and/or audio-recorded interview. The interview will probably last 15 to 30 minutes.

**Benefits:**

Although you may not directly benefit from being in this study, others may benefit because the identification of supports and barriers to implementing critical literacy in the 6-12 social studies classroom will help teacher education programs and K-12 schools support novice teachers in implementing critical literacy practices.

**Risks and Discomforts:**

The researcher has taken steps to minimize the risks of this study. Even so, you may still experience some risks related to your participation, even when the researcher is careful to avoid them. These risks may include feeling nervous during the observations or the interview.

**Compensation:**

You will receive no compensation for participating in this research.

**Confidentiality:**

I plan to publish or present the results of this study, but I will not include any information that would identify you. There are some reasons why people other than the researchers may need to see information you provided as part of the study. This includes organizations responsible for making sure the research is done safely and properly such as the University of Michigan-Dearborn IRB. To keep your information safe, the I will maintain confidentiality by using pseudonyms instead of names. A key linking names and pseudonyms will be stored in a separate, secure location from all collected data. The key will be destroyed after data analysis is complete. All data will be stored on a password protected laptop that only I have access to.

**Storage and future use of data**

The data you provide will be stored electronically in protected files that require a username and password. This includes video- and audio-recorded data. Data that include paper copies will be stored in a locked file in the researcher's home office.

The researcher will retain the data for 10 years.

The researcher will dispose of your data by permanently destroying any computer files or paper copies of research data securely.

The data will not be made available to other researchers for other studies following the completion of this research study.

**Voluntary nature of the study**

Participating in this study is completely voluntary. Even if you decide to participate now, you may change your mind and stop at any time. You may choose not to have the researcher observe your teaching. You may choose not to answer any interview question(s) and/or to end the interview at any point for any reason that you do not have to disclose. You may choose not to

share any lesson plans and teaching materials that you do not wish to share. If you decide to withdraw early, data collected prior to your withdraw will not be used in the study.

**Consent to use academic work**

Your work related to the research project, both written and oral, will be used by the researcher for professional publication and presentation purposes. Such work includes lesson plans and teaching materials. To keep your information safe, the researcher will use a pseudonym so you cannot be identified in research publications or presentations. A signed copy of this consent form will be shared with you.

---

Signature [Required]

---

Date

**Contact Information:**

If you have questions about this research, you may contact Karen W. Caldwell, 734-276-7024, [caldwelk@umich.edu](mailto:caldwelk@umich.edu).

I confirm that I am 18 years old or older.

- Yes
- No
  
- I confirm I am seeking certification to teach secondary social studies.
- I agree to participate in the study.
- If I am student teaching or completing a clinical experience during Winter 2022, the researcher may observe me and interview me, pending my cooperating teacher's, the university's, the district's, etc. agreement to participate in the study. The researcher will use field notes to document observations and interviews.
- The researcher may use the lesson plans and teaching materials that I create during my field experience or student teaching placement for research purposes.
- The researcher may contact me for an interview once final grades have been posted. My contact details are listed below.
  - Printed Name:
  - Email:
  - Phone:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature [Required]

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Appendix J**

Study ID: HUM00200225

IRB: University of Michigan-Dearborn

Date Approved: August 19, 2021

Dear \_(cooperating teacher)\_,

\_(novice teacher)\_ is a novice teacher completing their preservice or student teaching placement in your classroom. I am a doctoral student in the Doctor of Education program at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. For my dissertation, I am studying novice teachers' implementation of critical literacy practices. More specifically, my study focuses on how novice teachers' critical literacy stances and practices change over time.

I hope to collect research based on your experiences and \_(novice teacher)\_'s experiences in your secondary social studies classroom. I am hoping you will choose to participate in a short interview by telephone or video conference at the end of the semester. The interview will last 30 to 60 minutes, and I will need to record the interview.

I hope to hear from you.

Participating in the research study is entirely voluntary.

Sincerely,  
Karen Caldwell

### Appendix K

Study ID: HUM00200225

IRB: University of Michigan-Dearborn

Date Approved: August 19, 2021

[Date]

[Name]

Principal

[School address]

Dear [insert name],

I am writing to request permission to conduct a research study at your school. I am currently enrolled in the Ed.D. program at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, and I am in the process of completing my dissertation. My study is titled “Novice Teacher Implementation of Critical Literacy Practices in the Secondary Social Studies Classroom.”

I plan to study novice teachers who completed the secondary social studies methods course HST 400 – History for Secondary Schools during Fall semester 2021 during their preservice or student teaching placements. You have been contacted because [novice teacher] is completing their preservice or student teaching in [cooperating teacher]’s classroom this semester. I plan to observe [novice teacher] teach twice this semester and collect their lesson plans and teaching materials. If [cooperating teacher] is willing, I also plan to interview [cooperating teacher] regarding his/her experiences teaching social studies and his/her experiences with the novice teacher.

Your approval to conduct the study will be greatly appreciated. I will follow up with a telephone call next week and would be happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have. You may contact me at [caldwelk@umich.edu](mailto:caldwelk@umich.edu).

If you agree, kindly sign below. Alternatively, kindly send a signed letter of permission on your school’s letterhead granting your permission for me to conduct this study.

Sincerely,

Karen W. Caldwell

---

Signature [Required]

---

Date



## Appendix L

### Consent Form – Cooperating Teacher

**The University of Michigan-Dearborn  
Exempt Study Consent  
Developing Novice Teacher Critical Literacy Practices in Social Studies  
HUM#00200225**

**Principal Investigator:**

Karen W. Caldwell

Ed.D. Candidate

College of Education, Health, and Human Services, University of Michigan-Dearborn  
734-276-7024

[caldwelk@umich.edu](mailto:caldwelk@umich.edu)

**Faculty Advisor:**

Dr. Danielle DeFauw

Associate Professor of Reading and Language Arts

College of Education, Health, and Human Services, University of Michigan-Dearborn  
313-593-5426

[daniellp@umich.edu](mailto:daniellp@umich.edu)

**Purpose of the study:**

The purpose of the study is to explore the factors that support and/or undermine novice teachers' implementation of critical literacy in the secondary social studies classroom. It is anticipated that this phase of the study will last for 3-4 months.

Before you decide to be a part of this research study, you need to understand the risks and benefits. This consent form provides information about the research study.

**Description of Subject Involvement:**

You are invited to participate in a research study about novice teachers and critical literacy practices in secondary social studies classrooms. You are invited to participate in this study because you have been identified as a mentor teacher for a novice teacher who was enrolled in HST 400 – History for Secondary Schools Studies course at Central Michigan University during the Fall 2021 semester. This novice teacher is currently completing their teaching field experience or student teaching placement in your classroom.

If you agree to be part of the research study, you will be asked to participate in a video- and/or audio-recorded interview regarding your preservice/student teachers' experiences. The interview will probably last 30 to 60 minutes.

**Benefits:**

Although you may not directly benefit from being in this study, others may benefit because the identification of supports and barriers to implementing critical literacy in the 6-12 social studies classroom will help teacher education programs and K-12 schools support novice teachers in implementing critical literacy practices.

**Risks and Discomforts:**

The researcher has taken steps to minimize the risks of this study. Even so, you may still experience some risks related to your participation, even when the researcher is careful to avoid them. These risks may include feeling nervous during the observations or the interview.

**Compensation:**

You will receive no compensation for participating in this research.

**Confidentiality:**

I plan to publish or present the results of this study, I but will not include any information that would identify you. There are some reasons why people other than the researchers may need to see information you provided as part of the study. This includes organizations responsible for making sure the research is done safely and properly such as the University of Michigan-Dearborn IRB. To keep your information safe, the I will maintain confidentiality by using pseudonyms instead of names. A key linking names and pseudonyms will be stored in a separate, secure location from all collected data. The key will be destroyed after data analysis is complete. All data will be stored on a password protected laptop that only I have access to.

**Storage and future use of data**

The data you provide will be stored electronically in protected files that require a username and password. This includes video- and audio-recorded data. Data that include paper copies will be stored in a locked file in the researcher's home office.

The researcher will retain the data for 10 years.

The researcher will dispose of your data by permanently destroying any computer files or paper copies of research data securely.

The data may be made available to other researchers for other studies following the completion of this research study, but all data will be de-identified so the data cannot be linked to any individual participant.

**Voluntary nature of the study**

Participating in this study is completely voluntary. Even if you decide to participate now, you may change your mind and stop at any time. You may choose not to answer any interview question(s) and/or to end the interview at any point for any reason that you do not have to

disclose. If you decide to withdraw early, data collected prior to your withdraw will not be used in the study.

**Consent to use academic work**

Your work related to the research project, both written and oral, will be used by the researcher for professional publication and presentation purposes. To keep your information safe, the researcher will use a pseudonym so you cannot be identified in research publications or presentations.

**Contact Information:**

If you have questions about this research, you may contact Karen W. Caldwell, 734-276-7024, [caldwelk@umich.edu](mailto:caldwelk@umich.edu).

I confirm that I am 18 years old or older.

- Yes
- No

- I agree to participate in the study.
- I will participate in the interview.

---

Signature [Required]

---

Date

## Appendix M

### Cooperating Teacher Critical Literacy Interview Protocol

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me to discuss your experiences teaching social studies. May I have permission to record and transcribe our conversation in order to have a more accurate record of your answers?

Thank you.

The questions have two areas of focus: first, your experiences with your students, and second, your experiences with the novice teacher.

1. Please tell me how you came to be a secondary social studies teacher.
2. Describe yourself as a social studies teacher.
3. What is the role of social studies in preparing students for life outside of school?
4. How do you use the textbook in your classroom?
5. What is the purpose of reading in social studies?
6. In your own words, define critical literacy.
7. If you had to describe how critical literacy looks and operates in a classroom, how would you do it?
  - a. What would be essential to cover?
  - b. What materials and resources would you consider critical to have in your classroom?
8. Do you facilitate any activities for your students that give them opportunities to practice critical literacy?
  - a. What do those activities look like?
9. In your experience, have you encountered barriers or obstacles such as controversial topics, lack of cultural awareness, emotionally charged conversations, or resistance to multiple perspectives in teaching the class?  
If so, please elaborate.
10. What topics/activities/materials have been difficult for your students?
11. How did your teacher preparation program prepare you to teach critical literacy?
12. What advice would you have for other teachers who might be thinking of introducing critical literacy into their classes?

Thank you for describing your teaching practice. The next questions are designed to describe the novice teacher's implementation of critical literacy practices.

13. What opportunities have supported the novice teacher in implementing critical literacy?

- a. What opportunities have you had to model critical literacy practices for the novice teacher?
14. What opportunities have challenged the novice teacher in implementing critical literacy?
15. What are some of the things that would help a new teacher meet those challenges?
16. How well do you feel teacher preparation institutions are preparing teacher candidates to teach critical literacy?

Thank you for your time. I will email you a transcript of this interview within 10 days. I would like you to look over it and reply to the email to confirm that it accurately reflects today's conversation. Should you feel there is any discrepancy in the transcript, wish to remove or add to some of your answers, you will have the option to do so. I will also notify you when this study is published as my dissertation so you will have access to it.

Thank you again for helping me. I truly appreciate it.

## Appendix N

### Novice Teacher Critical Literacy Interview Protocol

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me to discuss your experiences during student teaching. May I have permission to record and transcribe our conversation in order to have a more accurate record of your answers?

Thank you.

1. Tell me about your teaching and learning journey during student teaching.
  - a. What went well?
  - b. What was challenging?
2. Tell me about your professional relationship with:
  - a. Your cooperating teacher
  - b. Other teachers in the department
3. Tell me a bit about lesson planning.
  - a. How did you decide what to teach?
  - b. How to teach it?
2. Describe yourself as a social studies teacher.
3. What is the role of social studies in preparing students for life outside of school?
4. If you had to define critical literacy or describe how it looks and operates in a classroom now that you've completed student teaching, how would you do it?
  - a. What would be essential to cover?
  - b. What materials and resources would you consider critical to have in your classroom?
5. Can you give me an example of something your students produced using the key concepts of critical literacy?
5. As you consider HST 400 – History for Secondary Schools, what materials and activities have supported your teaching students about critical literacy?
6. What has been most helpful in implementing critical literacy in your classroom?
7. What have been some of the challenges in implementing critical literacy in your classroom?
  - a. What are some of the things that would help a new teacher meet those challenges?
8. As you think about your professional life as a social studies teacher, what sort of contributions do you see yourself making?

Thank you for your time. I will email you a transcript of this interview within 5 days. Although not required to, you may look over the transcript and reply to the email to confirm that it accurately reflects today's conversation. Should you feel there is any discrepancy in the

transcript, or you wish to remove or add to some of your answers, you will have the option to do so if you choose. I will also notify you when this study is published as my dissertation so you will have access to it.