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Developing High School Students' Historical Empathy Skills Using Historical Dialogues: A Qualitative Study

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DEVELOPING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' HISTORICAL EMPATHY SKILLS USING HISTORICAL DIALOGUES: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

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EDUCATION STUDIES IN DIVERSE POPULATIONS

ABSTRACT

This qualitative case study explored how perspective writing, in the form of historical dialogues, had the potential to help high school students in an urban school develop historical empathy skills. The study took place in an 11th grade United States history class where three types of data, interviews with the teacher, observation field notes, and student work, were collected over one school semester. Findings indicate that when presented with counter-narratives that introduce the experiences of groups that have been historically marginalized through U.S. history, students are more easily able to make personal connections and empathize with people from the past. In addition, when writing historical dialogues, students faced challenges contextualizing the past due to finding it difficult to avoid presentism. This was especially true when writing about issues such as racism, gender roles, and injustice as well as writing dialogues between historical figures who were of the same race, culture, and/or gender. Another finding suggested that, through the analysis of primary sources, high school students were able to understand that people from the past were influence by factors such as race, politics, economics, and the historical era.

Keywords: contextualize, historical empathy, historical dialogue, marginalize, perspective recognition, urban

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Chapter 1

This qualitative bounded case study explored how perspective writing in the form of historical dialogues has the potential to help foster historical empathy. Historical dialogues provide the opportunity to apply historical empathy skills, such as text analysis, perspective recognition, and contextualization. The proposed study took place in an urban high school where the student population predominantly consists of students of color. The semester-long intervention focused on the stories of groups that have been historically marginalized and oppressed throughout the history of the United States. This may help minority students find meaning in the content and understand its relevance to their own lives. The study illustrated how perspective writing may be used to promote historical empathy. The skills that were developed during the intervention provided students with the opportunity to engage with historical figures and the social studies content.

Statement of the Problem

During the past 40 years, education research studies were conducted that explored how history is taught and how students make sense of the past and present. These studies have ranged from best practices in the elementary and secondary social studies classrooms to children's understanding about time, continuity, perspective, and evidence (Barton & Levstik, 2004). Social studies teachers want their students to connect on a personal level with historical figures, their feelings, and their lived experiences. Many leading researchers have explored the value of historical empathy as an instructional tool in the social studies classroom to accomplish this goal.

Historical empathy has been viewed as a vehicle through which students can value perspectives (Brooks, 2009, 2014; Cunningham, 2009; Endacott, 2010; Yilmaz, 2007). Most research on historical empathy has been dedicated to theoretical frameworks, best practices, and

how students benefit from activities that foster historical empathy. However, little attention has been given to how students benefit from discourse strategies as a way to promote and develop their historical empathy (Cunningham, 2009).

Discourse is the written or verbal exchange of ideas among multiple persons. Its value in the social studies classroom cannot be underestimated. Discourse, or dialogue, is a process of learning and knowing that is based on curiosity about the subject under study. The exchange of ideas and beliefs through conversation results in the unveiling of new knowledge. Through it, students develop a better understanding of the content under study (Freire, 1970). Omitting dialogue, verbal and written, from the social studies classroom deprives students of the opportunity to communicate with the past. Research and the analysis of sources provides them with the content to participate in dialogue. However, through discourse, students tell about a historical figures' social and cultural background. In addition, they connect affectively to historical figures by being able to articulate emotional and psychological factors that resulted in certain actions and decisions (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Colby, 2008; Endacott, 2010; Endacott & Brooks, 2013).

Most research studies regarding best practices in the development of historical empathy have been conducted in mostly suburban and rural schools, with a predominantly Caucasian student population. A need exists for studies conducted in urban schools with a predominant minority population. This enables students to connect and empathize with other people in history who have been marginalized. Historically and traditionally, social studies curricula have ignored the role that race and racism have played in shaping America's history (King, 2015; Woodson, 2015). Most textbooks downplay the contributions and experiences of people of color and women (King, 2014). It is important that the 21st century social studies classroom incorporates

discourse and activities that provide the historical realities and lived experiences of all races and genders (Chandler, 2009). Exposure to the stories of all groups helps bridge the divide among cultures. Students find more similarities in the affective and lived experiences among all races and cultures, proving there is a connectivity in history. The author contends that implementing a curriculum that includes perspective writing in the form of historical dialogues may help students in urban high schools to develop historical empathy skills.

Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this qualitative bounded case study is to explore the possible benefits of using discourse writing strategies to foster the development of students' historical empathy. The discourse strategy utilized in the research study is perspective writing in the form of historical dialogues.

Engaging in historical empathy enables students to be able to distinguish between life in the present and past, while still recognizing that historical figures' perspectives are valid (Endacott & Brooks, 2013). They apply cognitive and affective reasoning when analyzing evidence. Analysis skills are employed to examine why historical figures acted in a certain manner and made certain decisions. At the same time, students make affective connections with historical figures. They try to understand how emotions influenced people from the past and are reminded of similar experiences in their own lives. Students learn to do this without delving into presentism, which is the tendency to interpret the past and historical figures by contemporary values and judgements (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Brooks, 2011, 2014; Colby, 2009; Endacott, 2014; Lee & Ashby, 2001; Yeager & Foster, 2001). However, there is an argument presentism has a certain place in the historical empathy process (Armitage, in press; Collingwood, 1994; Ricoeur, 1980, 1988). Students may rely on the use of objective values, which is the idea that

some actions and beliefs are immoral because they are based on principles that are consistent across time and culture (Goldman, 2008; Langton, 2007). Such values and principles include kindness, justice, honesty, and human worth. Even though historical empathy requires students to contextualize the past, applying objective values enables them to connect to the experiences of historical figures. In an attempt to reconstruct the past through the analysis of primary and secondary sources, students avoid applying contemporary language, actions, or customs to other eras (Armitage, in press). However, there are certain judgments that may be appropriate for them to utilize, ones that can more than likely be supported by primary sources from the time period under study. This type of thinking and analysis facilitates student engagement with the content (Endacott, 2010; Endacott & Brooks, 2013; Yeager & Foster, 2001). This study explores how these cognitive and affective connections may be made through perspective writing.

Perspective writing provides students with the opportunity to research and contextualize the past (Brooks, 2008). Students reconstruct times from long ago from the perspective of those who lived it by using evidence. The purpose of this study is to examine how perspective writing, such as historical dialogues, promotes historical empathy. By writing dialogues, students create conversations between historical figures that allow them to engage with people from the past. This allows students to recognize how cultural and societal factors, such as race and politics, influenced people's actions and decisions as well constructed their world views (Brooks, 2013; Hawkman, 2017; Yeager & Foster, 2001). Students use evidence to make inferences about historical figures' thoughts, emotions, and motivations through dialogue. Creating historical dialogues promotes historical empathy because students connect with historical figures by gaining an understanding of how people from the past felt, why they made certain decisions, and how historical context affects these actions.

Significance of the Study

Recent literature and studies regarding historical empathy have focused on theoretical frameworks, best practices in the social studies classroom, and how students benefit from activities that promote historical empathy. Brooks (2008) states that less attention has been paid on the format that encourages the development of historical empathy and the way students communicate with the past. Perspective writing is one manner in which this can take place. It encourages the consideration of historical figures' feelings, thoughts, and culture in order to contextualize their actions. Students are empowered to make inferences about the past that are based on historical evidence (Brooks, 2008).

One form of perspective writing is historical dialogues. The major focus of past studies has been on historical monologues and how they can be used in the social studies classroom to engage students with content. This study extends the literature on historical empathy because it utilizes historical dialogues as an educational tool to engage students and foster historical empathy. Dialogues provide the opportunity to create conversations between and among historical figures. These exchanges allow students to show how people from the past had multiple perspectives about the same events, issues, and people. In addition, they have the opportunity to show their understanding of how people from the past were impacted by their lived experiences, biases, emotions, culture, and time period. Writing historical dialogues requires students to analyze primary sources, interpret text, and use historical evidence to write their conclusions about the past. These are skills that are aligned with the National Council for Social Studies' (NCSS) C3 Framework (2013a).

This study also focuses on the impact historical dialogues may have on students in urban schools. Little research about best practices and the benefits of historical empathy has been

conducted in urban schools. Urban schools tend to have a larger population of students of color than suburban and rural schools. These students may feel a disconnection with historical figures that are discussed and studied in the social studies classroom. Traditional history textbooks tend to minimize the contributions, experiences, and realities of oft-marginalized groups. Many groups in American history have been oppressed historically in one fashion or another. These include those who have been discriminated against because of race, religion, culture, gender, and sexual orientation. Students of color may relate to these groups more because of their own lived experiences or those of their ancestors. Therefore, this research extends the literature on historical empathy because the intervention in this study focused on counter-narratives. These are the stories of marginalized groups that often go against the accountings of history that have been long-held as truth, or those that are viewed as the only reality.

Research Questions

Existing literature and research studies support the idea that including historical empathy in the social studies classroom promotes the development of analysis and contextualization skills. Students also connect affectively with historical figures, allowing them to understand the complexities in human nature and behavior. Recent studies have focused on theoretical frameworks and the benefits of using historical empathy in the social studies classroom. However, there is a need for more research that explores the format in which students best learn to think with historical empathy and communicate with the past (Brooks, 2008). Therefore, the central question for this research study is as follows: To what extent, if any, do perspective-writing activities in the form of historical dialogues foster students' historical empathy? Sub-questions for this study are:

1. How do perspective-writing activities that focus on marginalized and oppressed groups help, if at all, high school students in urban schools foster historical empathy skills?

2. To what extent, if any, do historical dialogues help high school students to contextualize the past?

3. To what degree, if any, do historical dialogues help high school students to develop historical empathy skills?

These questions allow the researcher to measure how perspective writing promotes the development of historical empathy in the social studies classroom. In addition, the questions guide the study as the researcher explored how perspective writing fosters the development of analysis skills, perspective recognition, and contextualization.

Terms and Definitions

The researcher utilized several terms throughout the study. These terms are essential in order to understand how the researcher proposed to explore the impact of perspective writing activities on the development of historical empathy.

Contextualization: For the purposes of this study, contextualization is the ability to place an event or person in the historical, cultural, political, and social conditions in which it exists.

Historical empathy: A cognitive and affective process that allows students to understand and consider how the customs, values, and beliefs of a historical time period influence how historical figures felt, made decisions, and behaved in certain situations (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Endacott, 2010; Endacott & Brooks, 2013; Yeager & Foster, 2001).

Historical dialogues: For the purposes of this study, a historical dialogue is defined as a form of perspective writing that show active conversations between historical figures. Within the dialogue, people from the past exchange ideas, express feelings, argue, ask questions of one another, and may even find resolutions to conflict.

Marginalized: For the purposes of this study, this term refers to groups of people who have been historically treated as insignificant, or inferior, to the dominant groups in a society. These groups may be deemed inferior based on race, economics, gender, culture, religion, and politics.

Perspective: Perspective is the vantage point of a viewer. It is a way of considering issues and events based on a person's values, biases, and beliefs.

Perspective recognition: The ability to recognize that at any point in history, people may have varying perspectives about an event or person. Also, it is the realization that people's attitudes and intentions are historically and culturally situated (Barton & Levstik, 2004).

Perspective writing: For the purposes of this study, perspective writing is writing from the vantage point of another. The narratives are based on historical evidence, such as primary and secondary sources.

Students of color: For the purposes of this study, this term refers to students who are not of Caucasian or of European descent. This typically includes students who are African American, Latino, Asian, Native American, Asian-Pacific islanders, or of mixed heritage.

Urban: A territory inside an industrial area and one that is located inside a metropolitan city. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) classifies an urban area as large, midsize, or small depending on the population (NCES, 1996).

Urban school: Schools that are located inside or on the periphery of an urban area.

Limitations and Delimitations

Limitations in a research study are described as conditions or influences that the researcher cannot control. These conditions and/or influences often place restrictions on the methodology and conclusions of the study (Creswell, 2015). One limitation of this research study

is that the results cannot be generalized to a larger population. Urban schools have unique social, cultural, political, and economic factors that cannot be generalized across all urban schools. For instance, an urban school in Birmingham is different from one in New York City. These schools have different challenges due to geography, culture, and even their unique historical legacies. Therefore, it is not possible to state that all urban schools and classes are like the one included in this study.

Another limitation is time. The study was conducted over a school semester. Therefore, the ability to measure student growth in regard to historical empathy was constrained by the research taking place in a semester. The intervention in the study was constructed so that it provided rich data while at the same time, completed in one school semester.

The study also has delimitations. Delimitations are defined as the intentional choices made by the researcher that define the theoretical boundaries of the study (Creswell, 2015). The first delimitation in this study was the research questions. The use of perspective writing and its ability to foster historical empathy is being examined. The questions limit the scope of the study, what is being studied, as well as the participants under study. Most research into historical empathy focuses on theory and best practices. This study proposes that perspective writing in the form of historical dialogues may potentially help students to connect, cognitively and affectively, with historical figures.

The second delimitation is the decision to conduct the study in an urban school where the majority of the population consists of minority students. Most research studies done in historical empathy have been conducted in suburban and rural schools. There is a need to understand how historical empathy allows minority students to engage with history, especially with those groups that share the same or similar lived experiences.

The last delimitation is the researcher's choice to conduct the study in one school semester. Students had a limited amount of time to develop historical empathy skills through perspective writing. In the course of the intervention, there were eight opportunities for them to engage in perspective writing activities. Writing skills take time and practice to develop. A semester restricted students to a limited period of time in which to develop these skills.

Theoretical Framework

Vygotsky's (1986) social-cognitive theory of learning frames this study. His theory places great importance on culture, stating that it is what makes language possible. Social processes are what bring about the learning of language. He goes on to state that language makes thinking possible, and it impacts behavior. There are three types of language that one progresses through from infancy to adulthood: social, egocentric, and inner speech. Inner speech develops in older children and is responsible for all higher order thinking. The final part of his theory is the concept of a zone of proximal development.

The zone of proximal development is the distance between what a child can do independently and what a child has the potential to achieve. This is determined through guidance from an adult or peers that are operating at a higher thinking level (Doolittle, 1997; Vygotsky, 1986). According to Vygotsky, every child has a zone of current capabilities. Even if two children are the same age, if their mental capabilities are different so are their zones of proximal development (Lefrançois, 1991). Another aspect of this concept is factoring in the lived experiences of students and how it possibly influences how they learn. Students learn from the social and cultural environment around them by watching and copying the actions of those in the environment. This influences behavior and language development. For instance, a child who grew up in the inner-city has a different frame of reference than a child who grew up on a farm in

a rural area. They both have different ideas about education, and this may affect how they develop and learn (Vygotsky, 1986).

For the purposes of this study, Vygotsky's social-cognitive theory supports an argument for language-related activities that push students to operate at the limits of their zones of proximal growth. This means teachers should challenge students with rigorous strategies and methods. They should also recognize that students are multicultural. Pedagogy implemented in the classroom should consider the racial, cultural, socioeconomic, and linguistic differences that exist in the classroom. In addition, students learn best through social interaction, one in which they play an active role in their own learning (Vianna & Stetsenko, 2006).

In line with Vygotsky's theory is the concept of inquiry-based learning. This manner of learning is student-centered, and the teacher takes on the role of a facilitator. Inquiry focuses on the process of learning and not the accumulation of knowledge (Clabough et al., 2016; Turner & Clabough, 2015a). Students ask questions, follow the evidence, and then draw conclusions that are based on said evidence. Inquiry-based learning produces critical thinkers and problem solvers, not just retainers of information (Clabough et al., 2016). By asking questions, researching, weighing evidence, and drawing reasoned conclusions, students are taught to challenge ideas without attacking or belittling anyone's values, cultures, or beliefs. Requiring students to link conclusions to evidence makes learning more equitable (Barton & Levstik, 2004). This means all students are provided with the skills needed to link claims and evidence that may be denied through traditional instructional methods. Also, when writing a defending argument, students work from the same evidence which places everyone on a level playing field.

Freire's (1970) theory on education aligns with Vygotsky's and the concept of inquiry-based learning. He states that education has become a "banking system" where teachers deposit

information and facts into students, who are receptors. There is no communication involved between the teacher and students. The extent of student action and participation is receiving, filing, and storing the deposits, or content material. They are not critical thinkers. In "problem-posing" education, which is the optimal education system, there is dialogue. Freire (1970) states that dialogue is essential in the classroom, and it also extends to society where effective changes can happen through communication. In a problem-posing classroom, dialogue occurs between the teacher and the students, and between the students and the content material. The teachers and the students are learners; they learn from each other. There is an act of freedom in this type of education, as teachers and students ask questions and search for answers to transform the world around them. They seek to revolutionize the banking system, which supports the oppressive societal structures that relies on students' complacency and lack of critical consciousness. According to Freire (1970), education is the liberating force behind this revolution.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

The purpose of this literature review is to provide an overview of historical empathy as it pertains to best practices in the social studies classroom. The first part of this chapter gives a definition of historical empathy as well as the benefits of historical empathy in the high school social studies classroom. Next, the works of researchers in the field that reflect theory and best practices are presented. In addition, perspective writing in the form of historical dialogues is discussed as a tool to foster historical empathy. Finally, a summary of the need for the study is provided.

Historical Empathy

Historical empathy is a cognitive and affective process that facilitates engagement with historical figures. This process allows students to better understand how people from the past made decisions, felt, and acted within a specific historical context (Endacott, 2014; Endacott & Pelekanos, 2015). Historical empathy is the ability to understand the past as it was by the people who were there and not impose contemporary judgements (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Perrotta & Bohan, 2017; Yilmaz, 2007).

Yeager and Foster (2001) describe historical empathy as a largely cognitive function that includes inductive and inferential thinking. There are times when primary sources are fragmented, especially if they are very old. Students are often asked to bridge gaps among the evidence that is at hand and what is unknown (Brooks, 2009; Davis, 2001; Nokes, 2013; Yeager & Foster, 2001). The author of the primary source under investigation is unavailable. There is no way to ask the author's intent, motivation, or purpose in creating the source. This requires placing the author's account in historical context and drawing inferences. Students must read

between the lines of what is said and what is not being said. The outcome reflects students' ability to draw reasoned conclusions based on evidence using historical empathy (VanSledright, 2004).

In the past, the cognitive aspect of historical empathy has often been referred to as perspective-taking (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Endacott, 2010; Skolnick et al., 2004). The act of perspective-taking requires one to question and investigate why historical figures acted or felt the way they did. It also entails taking into consideration the social, political, and cultural landscape of the time period, as well as the person's biases, idiosyncrasies, and life experiences. Perspective-taking means seeking an explanation for past actions through the eyes of those who lived it (Skolnick et al., 2004).

Many researchers in the historical empathy field contend that it is a logical process, and one that is not based in sympathy (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Colby, 2008; Cunningham, 2009; Yeager & Foster, 2001; Yilmaz, 2007). Sympathy implies that all people's thoughts, feelings, and decisions are the same across time, no matter the historical era or cultural and life experiences. The fallacy in this type of thinking is there is a failure to understand the role that human experiences play in how historical figures thought and behaved. It makes their actions and decisions meaningless and incomprehensible (Barton & Levstik, 2004). Simply sympathizing with historical figures does not encourage students to ask probing questions and conduct the in-depth investigation that is necessary to understand the complexity of human nature (Colby, 2008).

Students are able to avoid the pitfalls of sympathizing by using historical empathy as an analytical tool. Historical empathy has its foundations based in the historical method (Yeager et al., 1998). Historical texts are used to reconstruct the views, beliefs, and situations of historical

figures (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Brooks, 2011). Therefore, the process of investigation, interpretation, and explanation is considered to be a cognitive one, based in knowledge acquisition. To engage in historical empathy, students progress through four interrelated phases (Yeager et al., 1998). The four phases are as follows:

1. The teacher must first present a historical event that requires the analysis of human action.

2. Students must acquire background knowledge so that they are able to consider the social, political, and cultural context of the historical era, as well as the chronology.

3. The examination and analysis of multiple sources of evidence are essential in order for students to consider multiple perspectives and interpretations of the event.

4. Through careful and methodical examination of the evidence, students draw historical conclusions and create explanations about the past.

Delving into the past, reconstructing past events, and recognizing past perspectives in not as easy task for students. They tend to view the past and its occupants through their own worldviews. This often leads to presentism (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Brooks, 2008; Colby, 2008; Kohlmeier, 2005; Lee & Ashby, 2001; Lee & Shemilt, 2011; Perrotta & Bohan, 2017; VanSledright, 2004). Presentism is when history is interpreted and examined by contemporary standards. The people of the past are not judged by the laws, mores, and values of their time period, but by current ones.

Avoiding presentism, which at its roots is a form of historical thinking, may seem unnatural and uncomfortable for students (Wineburg, 2001). It is not an innate skill. For students, it is probably much easier to apply their own logic and understanding to an event than to probe underlying meanings of people's intents and decisions. While analyzing primary sources, it is important for students to focus on what the author of the text was thinking and feeling. The person's values, beliefs, and even prejudices must be taken into consideration. This type of

thinking may be “unnatural” for students because they tend to want to view historical figures’ actions through their own experiences and feelings (Nokes, 2013; Wineburg, 2001).

Several researchers in the field believe presentism should not always be seen as an inhibitor to historical empathy. The feelings, thoughts, and experiences that students bring may potentially enable the process (Retz, 2015). The idea that students must disconnect themselves from historical events or people in order to interpret or analyze the past objectively is a dilemma. To connect with history, students need to bring their emotions and experiences for understanding of the past to be possible (Collingwood, 1994; Gallagher, 1992; Retz, 2015). Students have their own biases and preconceived notions when they encounter a primary source. It is through the interaction with the text and people from the past that students become aware of their own prejudices. They interpret the author’s meanings and perspectives, recognize the similarities and differences to their own, and consequently value the past’s connection to the present (Retz, 2015).

Current researchers such as Endacott and Brooks (2013) maintain that historical empathy should be more aptly described as a dual domain construct (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Colby, 2008; Endacott, 2010; Endacott & Brooks, 2013). Students examine historical figures’ perspectives, placing them in the social, cultural, and political context of a given time period. In addition, they seek to connect emotionally with people from the past, attempting to understand how feelings influence decisions and actions. Endacott and Brooks (2013) contend that the purpose of historical empathy is to equip students with the skills to distinguish between life in the past and present. They should master these skills while still being able to understand that perspectives from the past, while different, are still valid. It is through the cognitive-affective approach that this is possible.

If students were to consider the perspectives of historical figures from a strictly cognitive lens, they may tend to consider themselves far superior to people from past eras (Colby 2008; Endacott & Brooks, 2013; Lee & Shemilt, 2011). It would be easier for students to believe past people's decision and actions were irrational or foolish. For instance, before Copernicus and Galileo's pivotal discoveries, people of the 17th century believed the sun revolved around the Earth. Students may consider those from this time period as being absurd. Of course, they have the benefit of hundreds of years of hindsight, science, and technology (Nokes, 2013). Without the inclusion of the affective dimension, students only view the past through logic; they do not contemplate how people from the 17th century were influenced by feelings such as faith, conviction, fear, and doubt (Endacott & Brooks, 2013; Lee & Shemilt, 2011). The affective dimension does not enable students to see how the idea that the sun revolved around the Earth was a rational thought. It allows them to see how, due to historical context, the concept was understandable to people who lived during that time period. Students see historical figures as "humans" who engaged in similar struggles that they may experience in the present. Therefore, they better connect to people from the past and develop a sense of shared normalcy (Endacott & Sturtz, 2014).

The cognitive and affective domain allow for purposeful investigation where students will gain a true understanding of how lived experiences, culture, and beliefs have influence over people's decisions and actions (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Endacott & Brooks, 2013; Endacott & Sturtz, 2014; Lee & Ashby, 2001; Yeager & Foster, 2001). This investigative process requires the movement among three interconnected and interdependent tasks (Endacott & Brooks, 2013; Endacott & Pelekanos, 2015). The tasks are as follows:

1. **Historical contextualization:** Students must develop a deep understanding that people are a product of their time. The culture, politics, conflicts, and social norms of

that era should also be examined, as well as other incidents that happened prior and simultaneously to the event under study.

2. **Perspective taking:** Students recognize another person's beliefs, traditions, attitudes, and biases in order to grasp how the person may have felt about the event under study.

3. **Affective connection:** Students consider how a historical figure's decisions, actions, beliefs, or lived experiences may have been impacted by his or her emotional response to a situation. In addition, it is contemplated how the individual's feelings are similar to one's own in similar, yet different situations.

Endacott and Brooks (2013) contend that without the inclusion of all three of these tasks, students are engaging in either perspective taking or affective connection. It is only when they are involved in all three interrelated activities that students are truly engaging in historical empathy.

Benefits of Historical Empathy in the High School Social Studies Classroom

Historical empathy has several benefits in the high school social studies classroom. First, a curriculum that fosters historical empathy requires students to work with primary sources. Such authentic evidence not only imparts historical information but offers sentiments and feelings that were predominant during a certain time period (Endacott & Brooks, 2013). History is approached from a stance of critical understanding supported by evidence (Lazarakou, 2008).

Second, best practices include the use of diverse sources, enabling students to understand the complexity of historical events (Yeager & Doppen, 2001). Analyzing primary sources, especially those that represent multiple perspectives, exposes students to alternate realities and narratives. These alternative perspectives can be compared to those narratives that have been accepted as the prevailing truth (Nokes, 2013). Counter-narratives provide students with the voices of the people "from below." Many times, students are not allowed the opportunity to read about the experiences and perspectives of ordinary people, as history books tend to focus on

larger-than-life figures (Sánchez & Sáenz, 2017). Ordinary citizens in history may share similar experiences, thoughts, feelings, and cultures as students in the classroom. As many of the groups that have been silenced throughout history have been marginalized, students in urban schools may feel a specific connection.

Texts from the perspectives of non-majorities may appeal more to students of color (Brooks, 2014; Nokes, 2013). The examination of primary sources that show differing perspectives allows students to recognize that culture, socioeconomics, beliefs, biases, and even geography influence people's worldviews. Students have the opportunity to weigh and consider the evidence and draw informed conclusions about the reasons for events, historical agents' actions, and the consequences. They think critically and begin to better understand the past, and as a result, the present (Brooks, 2014).

Students are able to develop skills, such as perspective recognition. This allows them to understand that other people's perspectives are logical and rational. In a democratic society, it is crucial citizens know that other people view the world differently and should not be automatically dismissed as delusional, unethical, or ignorant (Barton & Levstik, 2004). Historical empathy provides students with the capability to understand that societies continually become more culturally and ethnically diverse through time. Therefore, the exploration of multiple perspectives is valuable because it fosters the understanding of different cultures, their views, and attitudes (Wansink et al., 2018).

However, Barton and Levstik (2004) assert that when teachers only focus on the skills that can be developed through historical empathy, and little attention is paid to the affective domain, there is rarely a change in students' attitudes about historical figures. Stereotypes about certain groups or historical eras will likely persist. However, when students are provided primary

sources and there is an eye toward developing perspective recognition, analytical skills, and affective connections, teachers increase the chances that their students will consider multiple perspectives in historical situations.

Best Practices and Research in Historical Empathy

Yeager and Foster (2001) assert that historical empathy is a logical and inferential process. It allows students to make sense of historical figures' actions, beliefs, values, and biases. When used with primary and secondary sources, students are able to infer about what is being said in the source and what is not being said. They must develop the ability to empathize with historical figures in order to draw conclusions about what precipitated them to act in certain manners or what factors motivated specific decisions. Taking into consideration the historical context of the era, students should be able to think through the evidence logically, allowing them to infer about the perspectives of people from the past. Yeager and Foster (2001) also state that when students learn to empathize, skills learned in the classroom are also transferrable outside the classroom. Empathy allows students to appreciate other perspectives, even if it is in direct conflict with their own. They also are able to comprehend how actions and decisions influence others. Therefore, historical empathy supplies students with skills to have a richer understanding of people from the past and present.

Endacott and Brooks (2013) proclaim that in the past 20 years there have been competing definitions about the nature, purpose, and role of historical empathy. This has led to continuing confusion about best practices regarding how to foster historical empathy in the social studies classroom. Endacott and Brooks (2013) present an updated model that states historical empathy should be taught as a cognitive-affective approach. They also provide an instruction model that utilizes this approach. If students only examined primary sources through a cognitive stance,

they would most likely find that people from the past often made foolish decisions. When paired with the affective lens, students understand choices can be made due to emotions. Their instruction model includes directions on how to generate questions that introduce students to historical empathy, analysis of documents, and encourage reflection. The model includes three components that must be present for students to develop historical empathy: historical contextualization, perspective taking, and affective connection. It is these components which allow students to consider the historical perspectives, feelings, and actions of historical figures. Such consideration allows for reasoned and deliberate conclusions on the part of students. Endacott and Brooks (2013) assure that basing best practices on updated research-based concepts ensure students have deeper understanding of history and those who lived it.

According to Barton and Levstik (2004) it is not possible to ask students to engage with the past or reflect on the common good if they do not care about the past or those who lived in it. The term "care" means that there is a relationship between the student and the person or event under study. Care can be said to be a connection to the past. Barton and Levstik (2004) state there are four types of caring. When students *care about* an issue, event, or historic person, they are motivated to learn more. They seek to make sense of the past by conducting more research in an effort to find out why certain events took place and what motivated people to act in the manner they did. Students *care that* certain unjust or triumphant events occurred in history and react emotionally as a result. Next, it is important to *care for* historical figures, especially those who were mistreated or oppressed, and last, students *care to* change their current attitudes and beliefs based on what they learn from their understanding of the past. Barton and Levstik (2004) contend that a "care-less" history is a soulless one, and students will quickly lose interest in the study of history, along with any understanding of its relevance to their lives.

Retz (2015) challenges the long-held supposition that to engage in historical empathy, students must avoid applying their own ways of thinking to historical figures. Presentism, which is using contemporary values and thinking to evaluate the past, inhibits students from grasping how social, cultural, and political factors of a specific historical era influenced decisions and actions made by people from said era. However, Retz argues that a certain amount of presentism has a place in the classroom when implementing activities that foster historical empathy. This idea extends the knowledge on historical empathy by introducing the "re-enactment doctrine" of R. G. Collingwood. Collingwood (1994) states that thought processes are not private and can be re-enacted. When viewed through a historical lens, Retz (2015) claims that people's thoughts, feelings, and beliefs are not exclusive and are not unique to people from different time periods. The universality of thoughts and emotions makes it possible for students from the present to understand and connect with historical figures. Even though the past and present may be separated by many years, students are able to identify with historical figures due to their own understanding and experiences with thoughts and emotions. This makes them capable of empathizing with figures from the past.

Endacott and Sturtz (2014) maintain that a number of studies have been conducted on the benefits of incorporating activities that develop students' historical empathy. For this reason, it is even more important that teachers not only implement these activities, but also know why they are including the strategies into their curriculum. There is a need for empirical research to bridge the gap between theory and practice. Examining pedagogical reasoning supplies the information needed to understand the choices teachers make to shape their curriculum in terms of how to develop students' historical empathy. For both novice and experienced teachers, it is beneficial to have a reflective and critical approach towards pedagogical reasoning when developing a

curriculum that incorporates historical empathy. A strong familiarity with content knowledge and deliberate selection of materials is only part of the process. Endacott and Sturtz (2014) find that pedagogical reasoning includes an awareness of a careful structuring of guiding questions, promoting student discussion, and developing students' historical investigation skills. According to Endacott and Sturtz (2014), students in the social studies classroom benefit when teachers anticipate challenges and plan for all phases of a curriculum that endeavors to foster historical empathy.

Colby (2008) introduces the "historical narrative inquiry model" in her article as an effective instructional tool that is grounded in historical empathy, disciplined inquiry, and historical narrative. The "historical narrative inquiry model" helps students to analyze and question a source. Through the incorporation of primary sources, students are able to develop historical empathy. This enables them to contextualize the past, understanding how historical figures' thoughts and actions were influenced by their culture, beliefs, and biases. Colby (2008) claims that the next natural step in the process is for students to express their empathy through narrative writing. Narrative writing embodies a distinct linguistic and literary style that almost emulates the primary source in its storytelling nature. When used effectively, writing historical narratives improves students' ability to think historically and to empathize. Colby's "historical narrative inquiry model" extends the knowledge on best practices that aim to foster historical empathy in the social studies classroom through writing activities.

Roberts (2016) contends that it may be easier for students to judge historical figures' decisions and actions with the advantage of hindsight. With the knowledge of outcomes, it is easier to identify what may be seen as mistakes or unwise decisions. Roberts (2016) describes an activity that uses predictions as a pedagogical tool to help students develop historical empathy.

In order to make predictions, students answer questions through problem solving, analyzing primary and secondary sources, and drawing logical conclusions based on evidence. The prediction-based inquiry lesson focuses on students developing their own solutions to the challenges the Founding Fathers faced regarding the Articles of Confederation. Students find out later if their solutions were similar to historic events. The first step in the lesson asks students "What would you have done if…?" This is followed by identifying and solving the problem through the analysis of primary and secondary sources. Then, the teacher reveals what really happened historically and requires students to compare and contrast their solutions to those of the Founding Fathers. Roberts (2016) states that students develop historical empathy when they understand how people from the past struggled to make difficult decisions. Also, by engaging in a prediction-based inquiry lesson, students become empowered about their own ability to make important decisions. They become problem solvers and no longer bystanders who consume historical information.

Clabough, Turner, and Carano (2017) maintain that drama is a learning tool that can be used to foster historical empathy. Teachers may use drama as a pedagogical tool to engage with historical figures in a new way. The authors provide four activities that apply interpretational and improvisational drama. These activities develop students' reading fluency, develop their problem-solving skills, and strengthens their ability to empathize with historical figures. At the same time, students utilize their dramatic skills to bring history "to life," which leads to the idea that people from the past are more than just one-dimensional figures from a book. The tasks also provide the opportunity for the exploration of multiple perspectives. Drama and monologues allow students to gain unique insight into the past and see it with new eyes. Students are able to

learn history through research, writing, and performance. This process results in reflection on culture, biases, emotions, and their impact on historical events (Clabough et al., 2017).

Yancie (2018) claims that using primary sources is important when evoking historical empathy in the social studies classroom. Primary sources provide students with the chance to contextualize the past. They allow a glimpse into people's lives from an historical era. Students understand that historical figures' choices and actions are often influenced by personal beliefs as well as pivotal events that happen during the time period. They also learn that historical figures' feelings, decisions, and actions are a product of their culture, personal biases, and beliefs. When selecting primary sources, best practices dictate that teachers select those that push students to ask questions and appreciate that people have differing perspectives. Therefore, for the three activities presented in the article, the author focused on primary sources that explore issues of social injustice. Each activity utilizes texts that highlights the marginalization of African Americans in different eras of American history. Students analyze primary sources to identify perspective, understand historical context, and examine different types of sources. A curriculum that embraces historical empathy and analysis of primary sources that evoke emotion will result in students being able to comprehend abstract ideas such as justice and inequity. Students are able to connect with those who have been denied basic rights in the past and understand how such events impact the present.

Brooks (2008) focuses on the format in which students express historical empathy. The study examined how the different nuances that are inherent in these writing formats can either promote or hinder historical empathy. According to Brooks (2008), less attention has been paid to the format in which students are required to express their ideas and understanding about the past. It is important to be able to communicate ideas about the past in the social studies

classroom. Brooks (2008) proposes that writing is one of the best ways for students to express historical empathy and communicate their ideas because it is a visual product of their reasoning, and it is also essential to the study of history. The article emphasizes two types of perspective writing. First-person perspective is written from the view of historical figures, and a third-person narrative is written about the perspectives of historical figures. Brooks (2008) found that students tended to identify more with historical agents when writing the first-person perspective narratives. They utilized adductive and inferential thinking, although there was also more of tendency to delve into presentism. In contrast, when writing in third-person, students appeared to concentrate more on the evidence, but the nature of third-person writing had the potential to hinder empathy.

Endacott (2010) claims there is a need for more research into students' demonstration of their engagement in historical empathy while instructional strategies are being implemented in the classroom. The study raises the question of whether teachers can expect students to have an appreciation and understanding for the past without including affective components in their instructional practices. Endacott (2010) utilizes a first-person perspective narrative as a way for students to demonstrate their engagement in historical empathy because it requires them to place themselves in situations where they are likely to have emotional responses. However, students must base their conclusions on historical evidence. From the results of the study, it was found that when restrained by evidence, that connecting to how historical figures think and feel provided an in-depth understanding to why people made certain choices when faced with difficult decisions. Based on students' narratives, it was seen that their responses were more insightful when they were able to relate to the problems faced by historical figures. When the

situations made students feel a similar response from their own experiences, historical figures became more human.

Yeager and Doppen (2001) examined whether students who used a standard social studies textbook were able to show the same empathic responses as students who analyzed a variety of primary and secondary sources. One group of students read the account in a textbook regarding the United States' decision to drop the atomic bomb during World War II. The second group were given excerpts from multiple sources on the same topic. Yeager and Doppen (2001) found that the students who used the textbook demonstrated little historical empathy. They were restricted to the amount of information they had to base their historical empathy and perspective taking, and therefore, they were not able to explore the content in depth. Those students who had access to multiple sources were able to show more of an understanding of how there were a variety of perspectives on Truman's decision to bomb Japan. The written responses demonstrated how students gained an understanding of how people in the past thought, felt, and acted differently according to the situations they faced during the historical era.

Kohlmeier (2006) acknowledges that research has been done on how students seem to struggle with activities that foster historical empathy due to lack of practice. Consistent use of primary sources combined with instructional strategies would have a greater impact on students and their development of historical empathy. A unit was created to explore this concept. The selected materials were primary sources written by women from different eras in world history. The goal of the study was for students to empathize with the unique challenges faced by women from different cultures and time periods. The activities in the unit were scaffolded, building on each skill that had been developed in the former activity. The first activity was a word web that introduced the students to the document, its author, and the language of the time period. The

Socratic Seminar, the focal point of the unit, allowed students to discuss their understanding of the document and share this knowledge with each other. The historical essay allowed students to create a written picture of the time and its people. Students used evidence to support their writing. Results suggested that the key to developing historical empathy lay in continued use of the strategies over the semester. This was evidenced by the growth Kohlmeier saw in her students' increasing ability to consider the historical figures' actions and decisions within context.

Brooks (2014) states that the way history is often taught in social studies classroom results in students being passive observers of a very simplified, black and white version of the past. It has little value and meaning to them. This is especially true for students who are the same gender or members of groups that have been marginalized or misrepresented in history. The experiences of oft-marginalized groups must be brought forth in the history curricula and not regulated to the background. Teachers need to ask questions that prompt discourse about important and meaningful issues, such as race and social injustices. The case study conducted involved two middle school teachers who were aware that in order for students to find meaning in the social studies curricula, they must highlight the connections between the past and the present. Brooks (2014) found that students benefited when the teachers made enduring social questions a focal point of their curricula. These questions encourage students to deliberate over the common good in the past and how it connects to and effects the past. Such questions also lead student to thoroughly investigate historical events and issues. In addition, Brooks (2014) asserts that in order for students to make these meaningful connections between the past and the present, they should be allowed some control over parts of the curriculum, such as with class or

group discussions. These opportunities provide students with the chance to express their thinking and hear multiple perspectives.

Perspective Writing as a Tool to Foster Historical Empathy

One way to foster historical empathy is through perspective-writing activities. The Latin root word for "perspective" is *perspectus*, which means "look through" or "perceive." This indicates that perspective may be defined as the vantage point of a certain viewer. In terms of historical empathy, there is a need to understand that multiple perspectives are a part of society. It is not something to be overcome or stifled so that everyone in the world shares the same opinions and beliefs (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Brooks, 2013). People's perspectives are influenced by social, cultural, geographic, political, economic, and religious factors. Best practices should include using perspective with writing in the social studies classroom.

Writing is essential in the study of history because it the most visible creation of what students produce demonstrating their historical understanding (Brooks, 2008). It has also become more important with the advent of the standards in the C3 Framework (Clabough et al., 2016; NCSS, 2013a; Yancie & Clabough, 2017). The C3 Framework implies that writing assessments such as essays, reports, and other types of narratives are the best ways for students to communicate and represent their ideas and understanding of historical issues and events (NCSS, 2013a). Historical thinking and working with evidence are inseparable from writing. Students are able to make connections more clearly between their interpretation and evidence through writing (Brooks, 2008; Monte-Sano & Harris, 2012; NCSS, 2010). Due to the nature of the "historians' work," social studies classes are the ideal places for instruction in thinking and writing. Historians focus on constructing written narratives and arguments based on evidence (Monte-Sano, 2008).

Therefore, perspective writing may be defined as writing from the vantage point of a certain viewer based on the analysis of primary and secondary sources. Writing in this manner serves as a product of students' reasoning as this allows them to express their ideas, interpretations, and understanding about the past based on evidence (Brooks, 2008; Wansink et al., 2018). Before students undertake the process of perspective writing, they should read evidence from the viewpoints of the people who created the text and place it in historical context. Monte-Sano (2008) calls this "interrogating artifacts" to gain access to the past.

The evidence that is uncovered provides the source material that students need to write. Perspective writing may call for a change to their ideas about an event or person due to the analysis of the evidence. It is important students know they cannot ignore counterevidence but must revise their ideas. Many times in history there is not a clear right or wrong answer, and this is often because historical figures have multiple perspectives. They have different ways of looking and reacting to an issue or event due to biases, beliefs, and feelings. Perspectives are constantly changing due to new life experiences. These varying views often occur at the same point in a historical era (Monte-Sano, 2008). Students express this understanding through perspective writing.

Writing in this manner consists of taking on the persona of another and seeing the past through his or her eyes. This allows students to establish a link between themselves and the historical agents under study (Colby, 2009; Ricoeur, 1980). Ricoeur (1980) describes narratives' role as the connection between "being in time" and "telling about it." This can be said to be especially true of first-person perspective writing. Telling about the past through the eyes of those who lived it allows students to use creativity and historical facts to view history with new

eyes. They are attempting to recreate the past through the use of evidence and tell about it through writing.

Monologues and dialogues are two forms of perspective writing. In the past, the major focus has been on historical monologues and how they can be utilized to lead students to engage with content. Monologues are dramatic written or spoken speeches where one person directly addresses an audience (Turner & Clabough, 2015b). There is a focus on one voice, and the monologist expresses his or her innermost thoughts and motivations. However, little research has been conducted on the benefits of historical dialogues. In contrast to monologues, dialogues are written or oral conversations between two or more people. They show the exchange of ideas, the way people interact, and even how people may be influenced and/or changed through interactions with one another.

Historical dialogues connect to best practices in the social studies classroom. Written dialogues are in the form of scripts. Students take on the persona of two characters and engage them in conversation with each other over a topic or issue. The conversations capture historical figures' values, biases, and beliefs. The dialogues may be used to show conflicting perspectives, emotions, exchanges of ideas, or even the change over time of historical figures' views. For example, students may write a dialogue between Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. DuBois. In the script, the two men converse and express their differing ideas about the Civil Rights Movement of the early 20th century.

In order to write a script, students are required to research and analyze text to build content knowledge (Turner & Clabough, 2015a). Writing from the perspective of historical figures requires knowing what social, cultural, and political factors of the time period may have had influence over people's actions, thoughts, feelings, and decisions. As students begin to delve

more deeply into historical figures' lives, they may become more invested and ultimately begin to empathize with them. History and its inhabitants are humanized and made more three-dimensional (Clabough et al., 2017). This is important when writing dialogues. It is not enough for students to simply know facts and dates. Students must know what the person they are personifying felt and what motivated him or her to act (Yancie & Clabough, 2016).

Need for My Study

Research studies have been conducted on best practices in historical empathy that would benefit students in the social studies classroom. However, less studies have been conducted on the format in which students best learn to think with historical empathy (Brooks, 2008). One manner in which this should best be done is through writing. Writing is an essential part of the historian's craft and is a tool that allows students to express their thoughts, ideas, and learning (Colby, 2008; Monte-Sano, 2010). First-person perspective writing allows students to use evidence to assume the role of people from the past, use historical context, and infer about historical figures' feelings and thoughts to step into the past.

Historical dialogues can be utilized in the social studies classroom as a form of first-person perspective writing. Students write scripts where they are the voices for historical figures. The dialogues reflect active conversations between people from the past as they argue, ask and answer questions, and find resolutions to problems. Students' writings should demonstrate their synthesis of their understanding of the historical context and primary source information. Little research has been conducted on how written historical dialogues may be used as a tool to foster historical empathy. There is a need for more activities that employ discourse as a tool to teach students to think with empathy. Dialogues encourage understanding through the exchange of different or similar ideas, feelings, and different lived experiences. Through the writing of

historical dialogues, students become metaphorical participants of the past, as they engage with those who lived it. Historical dialogues help students to understand why social, cultural, and political factors influence people's thoughts and decisions.

Writing historical dialogues connects to the writing standards implied in the C3 Framework. Students must use evidence to write their conversations. Primary sources allow students to contextualize the past, recognize multiple perspectives, and understand how people can view the same event and concepts differently (Levstik & Barton, 2015; Monte-Sano, 2008; Wineburg, 2001). Dimension three of the Inquiry Arc in the C3 Framework is called "Evaluating Sources and Using Evidence." To write historical dialogues, students apply the skills in this dimension as they deconstruct the perspectives of historical figures in primary sources and then rebuild them through creating historical dialogues (NCSS, 2013a).

The majority of research regarding historical empathy has been conducted in suburban and rural schools. The student population in the schools where the research has taken place has been predominantly Caucasian. There is a need for more studies conducted in urban schools where the student population consists of largely minority students. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) defines an urban area as a territory inside an industrial area and one which is also located inside a metropolitan city (NCES, n.d.). Urban schools are located inside or on the outskirts of an urban area. They tend to have a larger enrollment than their rural and suburban counterparts and are more likely to serve a student population that lives in low-income homes. The population also has a higher frequency of minority students. After the 1954 Supreme Court *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision, more Caucasian families left the cities to enroll their children in suburban schools. This contributed to the decline of urban schools, as tax-based money left inner-city districts with the fleeing families (Akin & Radford, 2018; Peck, 2017).

Other challenges that face urban schools are an increasing literacy achievement gap among African American, Latino, and Caucasian students. An achievement gap is a disparity in academic performance among different groups. In addition to the growing achievement gap, urban schools face lower achievement scores, absenteeism, classroom discipline, and less access to resources (NCES, 1996; Teale et al., 2007). All of these factors contribute to the reason many urban schools continue to struggle more than their suburban counterparts.

Many minority students who attend urban schools may feel a disengagement in the classroom because the historical figures in textbooks do not "look" like them (Clabough et al., 2017). Many history textbooks, and consequently history teachers, continue to reinforce master narratives in the social studies curricula. Master narratives are social and historical myths that emphasize the idea of an iconic figure or group's accomplishments over that of all other groups in society (Woodson, 2016). In terms of critical race theory, master narratives maintain the dominant story of White western culture. These stories often attempt to provide a reality that the superior position of White power and privilege is not only normative, but natural (Zamudio et al., 2011). Social studies classrooms must include counter-narratives, which are the stories of oft-marginalized groups that are often left out of history textbooks (Hawkman, 2017; Hawley et al., 2017). These accountings seek to disrupt the dominant stories by giving voice to others who were oppressed or victimized by societal systems, of which racism still remains at the heart of its culture (Woodson, 2016).

The social studies classroom should be a place where urban students are exposed to the experiences of all races, ethnicities, and cultures. Even those figures that do not resemble them in physical appearance, may have similar experiences as far as oppression, injustice, and disenfranchisement. For example, minority students should be able to empathize with Native

Americans because of how they were treated by early settlers and the American government. Such treatment includes discrimination due to race, religious practices, and culture. Introducing students of color to a curriculum that fosters historical empathy may increase engagement with history and allow them to find meaning in it and relevance to their daily lives (Brooks, 2014; King, 2014; Stewart, 1991). Through the course of the intervention, students may strengthen their writing skills as they contextualize the past and use textual evidence to support their historical dialogues. By teaching them how to use these skills, social studies teachers help to close the achievement gap, which is one of the many challenges faced by urban schools.

Based on the bulk of the literature, my study utilizes perspective writing in the format of historical dialogues to develop students' historical empathy skills. The research took place in an urban school where the students population consists of predominantly minority students. The intervention focused on issues of injustice, inequity, and race, which allows minority students to relate to the content on a personal level and connect empathically with historical figures being studied.

Chapter Three

Methodology

This research study explores how perspective writing, in the format of historical dialogues, may help to foster historical empathy for students in an urban high school. Through perspective writing, students use evidence from primary and secondary sources to reconstruct the past from a historical figure's point of view, allowing them to engage with people from the past. Writing historical dialogues provides students with the opportunity to give voice to those from the past. Students create conversations that reflect their understanding that people are influenced by their families, beliefs, feelings, and cultures.

Most research in the field of historical empathy has focused on theoretical frameworks, best practices, and how students benefit from a curriculum that incorporates historical empathy. However, little attention has been dedicated to how students benefit from discourse strategies as a way to develop historical empathy. Activities that provide students with the opportunity to express their understanding of the content through a written dialogue demonstrates critical and higher order thinking. Also, the majority of research studies regarding best practices and the benefits of historical empathy have primarily been conducted in rural and suburban schools. There is a need for more studies to be conducted in urban schools where the majority of the student body is a minority population. Students in urban schools may benefit from a curriculum that seeks to connect them with historical figures who have similar lived and cultural experiences. This allows the opportunity for students to connect with the past and find relevance and meaning in the content.

Site and Participants

This study took place in Main Street High School, a pseudonym for an urban high school in central Alabama. For reasons of confidentiality, the high school and teacher who participated in the study were given pseudonyms. An urban school is defined as one that is located inside an industrial area and/or metropolitan city (NCES, n.d.). Main Street High School is located approximately 21 miles from the center of a major metropolitan area. It is part of a larger district that includes rural, suburban, and other urban schools. This particular school has urban elements. There are approximately 1,200 schools in Alabama, and Main Street High School ranks within the bottom 50% of Alabama schools. This data is based on the state-mandated 2018-2019 math and reading proficiency testing scores.

Over the past four years, the student population has become steadily more diverse. The diversity score for Main Street High School is 51%, which is higher than the overall diversity score for Alabama schools', which is 30%. The student population is about 70% African American, a little over 20% Caucasian, a little under 10% Hispanic, less than 1% Asian, and less than 1% Other. The African American and Hispanic student population in Main Street High School have increased over the past seven years. In the 2011-2012 school year, the student body was about 40% African American, a little over 60% Caucasian, and under 5% Hispanic, Asian, and Other. In addition, Main Street High School has a 2% English Second Language (ESL) population.

The state scores for reading and math are considered average when compared to schools across Alabama. Reading proficiency is 29% and math is 33%. Sixty-six percent of the student body is eligible for free or reduced lunch. The number of students eligible for free or reduced lunch is also the state's measure of student poverty. The 66% eligible for free or reduced lunch is

an increase from the 37% that were qualified seven years ago. This reflects the rise in ethnic and socioeconomic characteristics and challenges that urban schools face. In addition, Main Street High School, the teacher, and students were purposefully selected for several reasons. The school is designated as an urban school and has an increasingly changing minority demographic. The teacher and the students are a part of this dynamic.

The classroom where the intervention was implemented is an 11th grade United States history class. The content covered in the class was the Second Industrial Revolution to present day. Most of the students enrolled in the history class were juniors. Mr. Cooper (pseudonym), the teacher, is a Caucasian man who is between 50-55 years old, holds a Master's Degree in history, and has 22 years of teaching experience. He has been teaching at Main Street High School for three years. There were 25 11th graders enrolled in the U.S. History class. The student demographics of the class reflected those of the school. In total, there were 14 females and 11 males. Twenty-two of the students were African American, two were Caucasian, and one was Hispanic.

Ethical Considerations

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval is obtained prior to the commencement of the study. IRB is responsible for reviewing and approving all research that involves human subjects. The names of the school, teacher, and students are confidential, and any identifying information is not stated to preserve the confidentiality of all participants. According to the American Psychological Association (APA), to guarantee confidentiality, it is acceptable to disguise some features of the case to ensure the participants are not identifiable (APA, 2010). To accomplish this goal, the school and all participants were provided with pseudonyms.

Another step taken to ensure participant protection was gaining informed consent. The teacher and students received a form to read and sign requesting their agreement to participate in the study. The informed assent and consent forms provided information about the nature and purpose of the study. All subjects were informed they had the right to cease participation in the research study at any time (Yin, 2009). Each form provided a description of what involvement in the study entailed. The teacher was expected to participate in three interviews and implement the intervention in the social studies classroom. Students provided work samples, but did not participate in interviews. The names on students' work were removed and given pseudonyms to protect their identities. At the beginning of the semester, the teacher gave all students an assent form that requested their participation in the research study. Twenty out of the 25 students returned their assent forms. The researcher only used the work products from those who consented to participate in the study.

A qualitative bounded case study research design was employed to examine how high school students in an urban school benefited, if at all, from writing historical dialogues as a way to foster historical empathy. A case study is an in-depth exploration of a specific problem, process, activity, event, or group (Creswell, 2015). It seeks to explore and understand a real-life phenomenon in-depth and within context (Yin, 2009). The researcher often collects a variety of data. This results in a deliberate and thorough analysis of an issue, that while confined to one case, may be applied in the real world (Creswell, 2015). A bounded case study means that the research involves a single participant, practice, school, or classroom. The researcher is attempting to understand the phenomenon that exists within the bounded system.

The intervention implemented as part of this bounded case study took place in an 11th grade U.S. history classroom. The intervention sought to develop students' historical empathy

skills through perspective writing. The perspective-writing activities used were in the form of historical dialogues. The curriculum highlighted groups that have been marginalized in American history from the Second Industrial Revolution to modern day.

Data Collection

The qualitative bounded case study employed several methods of data collection. The data consisted of teacher interviews before, during, and after the intervention. The purpose of the interviews was to gain insight into the teacher's perceptions and expectations of a curriculum that fosters historical empathy. The interview questions for the three meeting were the same and followed an interview protocol. They consisted of six open-ended questions that sought to explore if the teacher believed a curriculum that fosters historical empathy through perspective writing benefits students in an urban school. The researcher has provided the questions in the next section.

1. How do you think a curriculum that fosters historical empathy will help students to engage with the social studies content from the past?

2. How do perspective-writing activities help students to empathize with historical figures?

3. How do you think a social studies curriculum can be used to strengthen students' historical empathy skills?

4. How do you think perspective-writing activities that focus on marginalized groups help students in an urban school connect with historical figures?

5. How do you think writing historical dialogues help students to develop the understanding that historical figures are influenced by different factors in a time period?

6. How do you think this study will help students benefit from a curriculum that fosters historical empathy through perspective writing?

These questions allowed the researcher to measure the teacher's perceptions about how students in this urban high school may be able to better connect with historical figures through perspective writing.

The researcher also used observation data. There were eight activities included in the intervention. The original intervention consisted of 10 lessons and a final project. However, due to complications at the school site, the intervention was shortened to seven lessons and a project. In order to observe how students progress as they learn to recognize perspectives and to monitor their progress in writing historical dialogues, the researcher observed the class two times during the intervention process. These observations took place at the start and near the end of the study. Field notes from the classroom visits were kept in an observation journal. The researcher's role was as a complete observer. The goal of the visits was to view how the teacher implemented the curriculum and recorded students' responses to the intervention.

Last, the researcher collected students' work samples. The student work was collected at the conclusion of each lesson. Students wrote a metacognitive piece, where they explained their thinking and reasoning processes after completing each writing activity. These reflections were collected as well. Students' products were analyzed for progress in perspective recognition, using textual evidence, contextualization, and writing historical dialogues. Progress in these skills indicate that students were applying their knowledge to investigate the past and are truly engaging in historical empathy (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Endacott & Brooks, 2013; Endacott & Pelekanos, 2015; Endacott & Sturtz, 2014). The following is a description of the activities that were included in the intervention.

Standard 11.1 and 11.1a of the Alabama Course of Study (ACOS) states that students are to be able to explain how the United States moved from an agrarian society to an industrial

nation, leading to an era known as the Gilded Age (Alabama Learning Exchange, 2017). For this unit, students began building their perspective recognition and analysis skills. They learned how to deconstruct a text and recognize how people from the same era may have multiple perspectives about a topic or event. The unit included three activities that introduced students to deconstructing primary sources and using the textual evidence to write short first-person perspective pieces. The intervention began with these three short writing activities in order to teach students how to analyze a primary source and recognize perspective. In addition, students learned the nuances of writing in first-person perspective, such as how to use the language of the historical time era, tone, and characterization.

The first activity entailed students reading excerpts from Jim Crow era laws regarding the requirements for African Americans to vote. A document analysis worksheet helped students to analyze the text. The worksheet asked questions such as "What were the Southern states' perspectives regarding allowing African Americans to vote?" and "What textual evidence supports the Southern states' perspectives?" Students then completed a "historical tweet" where they were given a handout that resembled the format one would find on a Twitter account. They took the persona of an African American who was trying to vote in the South. Each student sent a tweet to someone in the class, describing in 50 words or less the obstacles faced in attempting to vote. The tweet also required students to state what "he or she" planned to do in the face of Southern disenfranchisement. Students were allowed to use the literary mechanism they would use on a Twitter account, such as acronyms. Following the activity, they wrote a brief metacognitive piece explaining how their tweet conveyed that the Jim Crow era laws were inequitable.

The second activity focused on the experiences of immigrants once they came to the United States. Students received primary sources that described why many immigrants came to America, as well as the living and working conditions that were common for most poor immigrants. Sources also included the perspectives of nativists who were threatened by the influx of immigrants entering the United States. A document analysis worksheet allowed students to analyze the sources. The questions were similar to the sheet from the first activity. The questions were readjusted for content. Sample questions were "What are the author's feelings about immigration to America?" "According to the author, what was life like for immigrants in America?" and "How does the text support the author's perspective?" The activity consisted of students taking the persona of an immigrant who had been in America for a short time. They wrote a postcard to a family member back in their native land, describing what life was like in America and if the correct decision was made to come to America. Just as there is limited space on an actual postcard, students' responses were limited to five sentences. They had to be concise, descriptive, and convey their feelings about settling in America. Students were expected to use the primary sources as textual evidence. After the lesson, each student completed a metacognitive piece that detailed how their postcard explained how culture and socioeconomics impacted the lives of many immigrants who decided to come to America.

The third activity focused on labor unions and the struggle the poor and working class faced to improve working and living conditions. Students read primary sources that detailed the demands of labor unions, ensuing strikes, and reasons factory owners refused to give in to certain demands. A document analysis worksheet allowed students to analyze the multiple perspectives presented in the primary sources. The questions were similar to the worksheets in the previous activity; they were readjusted for content. Example questions were "How did the author of the

text feel about labor unions?" and "What evidence from the text supports the author's perspective?" The activity consisted of students taking on the persona of a factory worker who was protesting for better working conditions. Students created a "flyer" to be passed out to potential labor union members. They flyer was to have at least four reasons why the poor and working class should join unions. It should also have stated how becoming part of the union would improve their lives. Students attempted to use the language of labor unionists from the primary sources. The activity was followed by a metacognitive piece where students explained how their writing conveyed the concept that socioeconomics, politics, and lived experiences influenced the labor unionists' actions.

Standard 11.1a of the ACOS states that students are to interpret the impact the change from workshops to factories had on workers' lives, as well as the Gilded Age and labor unions (ALEX, 2017). For this unit, students received a variety of primary sources regarding the experiences of immigrant men and women working in factories, factory owners, and labor union workers. Document analysis worksheets accompanied the resources. The document analysis worksheet required students to answer questions in order to deconstruct the text. Sample questions consisted of "What is the author's perspective about the working conditions in the factories?" "What evidence supports the author's perspective?" and "What was the author's purpose for writing the text?" The products for this activity were first-person perspective narratives that were one paragraph in length. Students wrote from the perspective of one of the women who worked in the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory in 1911. The paragraphs were to include reasons women chose to work in factories, working conditions, and feelings about the fire on March 25, 1911. Students built on the skills acquired in the first three activities, which included writing in first person. This was an important step before writing monologues and dialogues.

This narrative required them to take the first small step in the scaffolding process. As the intervention progressed, the assignments became increasingly more rigorous, building on the skills of previous lessons. Students completed a metacognitive piece that required them to explain how their narratives conveyed the idea that immigrant actions and decisions were influenced by socioeconomic, societal, and cultural factors.

ACOS standard 11.2d requires students to determine the influence of the Niagara Movement, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and leading figures in the early Civil Rights Movement, W. E. B. Du Bois, and Booker T. Washington (ALEX, 2017). Students received a variety of primary sources that showed the perspectives of African Americans who aligned with Washington and Du Bois. In addition, primary sources reflected the perspectives of those who were in support of and opposed the Niagara Movement and the NAACP. A document analysis worksheet helped students to deconstruct these multiple perspectives. The questions were similar to the ones from the previous sheet; they were readjusted for content. Sample questions were "What is the author's perspective about the ideas of Washington and Du Bois?" and "What evidence supports the author's perspective?" The product for this lesson was a first-person perspective narrative. Students were given a choice to write from the perspective of Washington or Du Bois. The narratives included information from the primary sources, addressing their ideas about racism, integration, and political activism. Students were also to include the social, cultural, and/or political constraints that both men were under due to societal attitudes about equality during the early 20th century. This activity allowed students to further develop the skill of writing in the first-person. They were encouraged to use characterization, voice, and take into consideration the events that were occurring during the historical era. After the lesson, students completed a metacognitive piece

that required them to explain how race, politics, and societal constraints influenced Washington and Du Bois' actions, beliefs, and decisions.

The next unit attended to standard ACOS standard 11. 4, which charges students with evaluating the impact of the United States' involvement in World War I, particularly as it relates women's changing role in society and politics (ALEX, 2017). Primary sources provided the perspectives of women who supported the war on the homefront and abroad, and from women who did not support the changing role of women. A document analysis sheet helped students to analyze the sources. The questions were similar to the analysis sheets from the previous two lessons. The product for the lesson was a short monologue written from the perspective of an American woman who was serving as a nurse with the military. The monologue included how the roles of women changed since the turn of the 19th century and where the future of women's rights might be heading. Students referred to the primary sources as evidence for their scripts. This activity was meant to build on the first activity. One of the goals of this task was for students to understand how women's roles in society changed over time. For this activity, script writing techniques were employed, such as inserting pauses or actions in parentheses. There was a building on the skills that were learned through writing the first-person perspective narratives. The subsequent activities required students to build on these newly acquired skills as the rigor increased with each lesson. At the conclusion of the lesson, students wrote a metacognitive piece where they explained how their monologues expressed how women's rights changed but were still limited due to the historical era.

The following unit addressed ACOS standard 11.5, which examines the impact of social changes in the United States from World War I through the 1920s, including the Great Migration and the Harlem Renaissance (ALEX, 2017). Primary sources provided the perspectives of

African Americans who participated in the Great Migration and experienced the social and artistic movement of the Harlem Renaissance. Document analysis sheets were used to deconstruct the primary sources and allowed students to explore the multiple perspectives of the texts' authors. The writing product was a monologue that reflected the perspective of an African American who migrated to Harlem in the 1920s. Students used primary sources to support their writing, describing social and economic factors that caused people to migrate to the North. The monologues also included the impact of the Harlem Renaissance on the African American consciousness. Script writing techniques were utilized, and students continuously built on the skills from previous activities. After the lesson, students completed a metacognitive piece describing how their monologues explained how attitudes, socioeconomic, and cultural factors led to many African Americans deciding to move to the North.

As a culminating writing project for the study, the teacher provided students with a choice of three writing prompts that were based on the content covered in the seven lessons included in the intervention. They wrote historical dialogues where they applied all of the skills and knowledge they learned over the course of the intervention. Each writing piece from the previous lessons potentially provided students with the skills needed to complete the culminating project for the study. They had the option to respond to one of the following three prompts:

1. Historical dialogues may be used to show how people from the same historical era may have differing perspective about an issue, event, or person. Through the writing, motivations, beliefs, biases, and emotions may be revealed. For example, in a dialogue between President Roosevelt and a Japanese American, both people have very different views on the establishment of internment camps. The reasonings and feelings about this issue are shared and explored in the dialogue. Use your knowledge about the content to write a historical dialogue. Make sure to use the voice and language of the time period, characterization, and apply script writing techniques. Choose from one of the following three prompts to illustrate your knowledge of the content and perspective writing.

    a. Write a dialogue between two people who represent the groups that were affected by the Nazis' use of concentration camps. The two people should have differing

perspectives about the use of the camps. The dialogue should express each person's perspective, how each person was impacted, and what each historical figure believes are going to be the future ramifications as a result of what took place in the camps. In addition, discuss whether each person believes an injustice was done to others because of their race, culture, or religion and if any moral issues have been violated.

b. Write a dialogue between W. E. B. DuBois and Booker T. Washington. The dialogue must express each man's perspective, how each person was impacted and constrained by social, racial, and political factors, and what each man believes lies in the future for African Americans in the United States. In addition, discuss whether each person believes if the United States has violated any moral issues by limiting the rights of African Americans.

c. Write a dialogue between a recent immigrant to the United States and a nativist from the late 1800s. The dialogue must express each person's views on immigration and how it affects the culture of the United States. Include the multiple perspectives regarding the economic opportunities and/or consequences that occur due to immigration. In addition, discuss whether each person believes if the United States is really the land of opportunity to all people.

As with other activities, students wrote a metacognitive piece explaining how their dialogues expressed how historical figures' views were influenced by emotions, culture, politics, and conflict.

Students potentially benefitted from completing one of the three writing prompts by being able to apply their acquired knowledge about perspective writing skills, perspective recognition, contextualization, and citing textual evidence to support their writing. Each piece showed how students have grasped the nuances inherent in perspective and script writing, such as the use of voice, language of the historical era, and characterization. The acquisition of these skills illustrate that students are able to historically empathize in the cognitive and affective domains (Brooks, 2008; Colby, 2009; Endacott & Brooks, 2013).

Data Analysis

Interviews

The researcher interviewed the classroom teacher before, during, and after the intervention. The teacher had previously provided informed consent. The researcher followed an interview protocol which included the same questions for all three interviews. There were two cycles of coding. The first was In Vivo Coding, which was used to analyze the transcripts of the teacher interviews. This type of coding was used to categorize data, especially the vocabulary of the participants. For studies that seek to honor the voice of the participants, In Vivo Coding is useful because it requires the researcher to extract terms and concepts from words of those being interviewed (Saldaña, 2016).

As transcripts were analyzed, the researcher focused on words and phrases that seemed significant to the participant. These words and phrases compelled the researcher to underline or highlight them, as well as write them in the margins of the transcript. As several concepts repeatedly emerged, they were converted into categories and the words and phrases were distributed among the categories.

The second cycle of coding was Pattern Coding. This type of coding condensed the large number of words and phrases that were pulled from the transcripts during the In Vivo Coding process. These codes were concentrated into meaningful themes and categories. The researcher reviewed the transcripts again for codes to be classified under the emergent categories. From these categories, the researcher derived a theoretical concept from the data (Saldaña, 2016). Several categories emerged that allowed the researcher to gain in-depth insight into the teacher's thoughts and feelings about the historical empathy curriculum and its benefits to students. Using the same interview protocol before, during, and after the intervention allowed the researcher to see the teacher's evolving beliefs about the intervention and its ability to develop students' historical empathy skills.

Observations

Two observations were conducted in the 11th grade U. S. history classroom under study. The researcher observed the classroom setting, the teacher's instructional methods, and students' responses to the intervention. The observations were done at the beginning and end of the intervention. The manner in which students worked with the primary sources, documented analysis sheets, and completes the historical dialogues were observed as well. The researcher wrote detailed field notes in an observation journal. These notes allowed the researcher to record the teacher and students' interactions, engagement, and progress throughout the intervention.

The field notes were coded in a manner similar to the interview transcripts. However, instead of using In Vivo Coding, Descriptive Coding was used to analyze the field notes. Descriptive Coding is suited for identification of topics, such as what is occurring at the moment. It answers the question, "What is going on?" in an abbreviated fashion. When documenting and/or analyzing materials, sources, and physical environments, Descriptive Coding is considered appropriate (Saldaña, 2016).

The researcher used Descriptive Coding to categorize the data accumulated in the observation field notes. Sections of data were given a topic. The researcher then repeated the process and all passages of data that had the same or similar topics were grouped together for further analysis. The grouped passages provided insight into concepts that had meaning or relevance to the study.

Student Work

Student work was analyzed in a manner very similar to the field notes. Descriptive Coding was considered appropriate for the analysis of work products, as well. As student work was collected after each unit, the researcher coded for emerging topics. Topics that were the

same or similar were grouped together and then analyzed to determine students' progress as the intervention continued.

The researcher looked for student growth in skills that are inherent in historical empathy, such as perspective recognition, the ability to contextualize, and the use of evidence to support perspective writing. These are skills that connect to best practices as addressed within the body of literature on historical empathy (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Brooks, 2008, 2013; Colby, 2008, 2009; Endacott, 2010; Endacott, 2014; Endacott & Brooks, 2013; Kohlmeier, 2006; Nokes, 2013; Yancie, 2018; Yeager & Foster, 2001). As students progressed from one unit to another, the researcher coded the students' work and metacognitive pieces to look for growth in these areas. For example, the first unit required students to write a first-person perspective narrative. This activity introduced students to writing from the vantage point of a historical figure and analyzing evidence in order to write a narrative that allowed them to step into the proverbial shoes of the past. By the third unit, when students wrote a short monologue, the researcher expected to see some growth in their ability to write with historical context, perspective recognition, and the use of evidence. Coding allow the researcher to see more evidence of these topics emerging, especially in comparison to the student work samples from the beginning of the intervention.

Credibility

Steps were taken to ensure the credibility of the research. One method was member checking. This entailed returning to the participants of the study and allowing them the opportunity to confirm the accuracy of the information they provided (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). In the study, the teacher, Mr. Cooper, was allowed to review the transcribed interviews to confirm that all answers were recorded truthfully and to fidelity. The researcher also provided

the teacher with a summary of the findings. It is important that the participant felt he was being represented honestly and that all findings were an accurate representation of his experience.

Another step the researcher took to determine the credibility of the research study was to establish dependability. This occurs when another researcher can review the steps of the study and follow them accurately; this is also called an audit trail (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). The second researcher can clearly state the purpose of the study, how and why participants were selected, how data was collected and analyzed, and how the findings and results were achieved.

The intervention reflected a curriculum that fostered historical empathy through perspective writing. Little research has been dedicated to the format in which students best learn to engage in historical empathy. Historical dialogues, as a form of perspective writing, allow students to connect with historical figures in an innovative manner. They must research and analyze primary sources in order to recognize multiple perspectives. The activities included in the intervention allow the opportunity for students to understand that many people in the same time period may view an event differently. Worldviews and perspectives are influenced by culture, politics, lived experiences, and emotions. Students who understand this enter the real world with a tolerance for differing opinions and perspectives, even ones that conflict with their own.

Chapter Four

Findings

The purpose of this case study is to explore the possible benefits of historical dialogues in developing students' historical empathy skills. The study attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. How do perspective-writing activities that focus on marginalized and oppressed groups help, if at all, high school students in urban schools foster historical empathy skills?
2. To what extent, if any, do historical dialogues help high school students to contextualize the past?
3. To what degree, if any, do historical dialogues help high school students to develop historical empathy skills?

The chapter includes a brief restating of the participants' demographics and how the selected sample is integral to the purpose of the study. In addition, chapter four includes a description of the steps used to analyze the transcripts, student work, and observation notes. There is a discussion of how analysis of the data collected ties back to the research questions.

The researcher's role and responsibilities in the study were varied. These include, but are not limited to, monitoring and reducing bias, collecting and analyzing data, and presenting the findings. What is also important to the validity of the study is reflection on the researcher's part. This involves asking questions that require contemplation about whether the researcher's experiences and beliefs may have impacted the study.

The researcher became interested in the topic of historical empathy because of a desire to see students connect with historical figures, have them find meaning in the past, and see its relevance to the present and future. In order to connect with the past and gain an understanding of why people acted and thought the way they did, students need to develop certain skills that are

inherent in historical empathy. They need to be able to draw reasonable conclusions about the past based on evidence, as there is always more than one perspective about an historical issue, figure, or event.

Sample

An eight-lesson intervention was conducted with one teacher and 25 students in an 11th grade U.S. history classroom. At the beginning of the study, the teacher gave students an assent form to read and sign requesting their agreement to participate in the student. Twenty of the 25 students returned the signed assent forms. The researcher only used student work data from the 20 students who returned the forms. The purpose of the study was to explore the potential benefits of historical dialogues in developing students' historical empathy skills. The teacher, who for the purposes of confidentiality is referred to as Mr. Cooper, is a Caucasian man who has been teaching at Main Street High School for three years. The demographics of the students in the class were as follows: 22 students were African American, two were Caucasian, and one was Hispanic. This is an approximate reflection of the overall demographics of Main Street High School.

The classroom setting can be described as traditional, in that the students sit in rows, and they face a white dry erase board at the front of the class. It is traditional, in that Mr. Cooper tends to lecture as his primary method of instruction. Yet, he intersperses his lectures with anecdotes and jokes that students respond to with indulgent laughter. It is apparent to the researcher that this serves to build a bond between Mr. Cooper and the students, which allows for a classroom environment where students feel comfortable.

Limitations

One factor may have influenced the findings in the study. The researcher allotted the fall school semester as enough time for, originally, ten activities to be implemented as part of the intervention. However, Mr. Cooper did not begin the activities at the beginning of the semester as was anticipated. They were implemented in mid-October and ended the third week in December. This resulted in three activities not being completed, two of which would have provided students with the opportunity to practice writing dialogues. As a result, students were provided with eight activities, including the final project. Beginning the activities in mid-October also resulted in the last activity and the final project occurring at the same time as final exams. This may have resulted in some students not dedicating as much time or thought to the activity, as they were focused on completing final exams.

Data Analysis

The researcher collected three types of qualitative data: interviews, student work, and observation notes. Mr. Cooper was interviewed three times during the course of the fall semester. The purpose of the interviews was to gain insight into his perceptions of how a curriculum that fostered historical empathy utilizing historical dialogues would possibly benefit his students. The researcher's goal in interviewing Mr. Cooper at the beginning, middle, and end of the intervention was to see if there was any growth in the students' work and performance from the first activity to the final project. In order to analyze the interviews, the researcher utilized In Vivo Coding. This is a form of data analysis that is frequently used to code interviews because it highlights the actual words, phrases, or voice of the participants. This is especially helpful when a study focuses on a particular culture or subculture (Saldaña, 2016). The researcher provided Mr. Cooper with a copy of each transcribed interview for his review and he agreed that the

interviews were transcribed accurately. In addition, a summary of the findings was presented to Mr. Cooper, and he acknowledged the findings were an honest representation of his experiences and ideas.

After each activity was completed, student work was collected and analyzed for growth in skills that are inherent in historical empathy. These skills include perspective recognition, contextualization, and being able to use evidence to support perspective writing. The researcher looked for growth in these skills when analyzing the work products as potential evidence that students were developing historical empathy skills. Descriptive Coding was used to analyze the student work because it uses words or short phrases to summarize the topic of a section of data. This type of analysis is ideal when examining work products because it assesses the substance of the content. Descriptive Coding also evaluates meaningful change or growth across a period of time. For this research study, student work was collected over two months. The activities were scaffolded in such a way that students were expected to show an increase in their historical empathy skills. This type of coding helps to determine if there is significant participant growth through the analysis of the work (Saldaña, 2016).

The observation field notes were also analyzed using Descriptive Coding. The field notes allowed the researcher to track the teacher and students' interactions, engagement, and progress throughout the intervention. Descriptive Coding is optimal when analyzing and documenting the environment, which for this study is the classroom. When observing the classroom, where the students are completing the activities, the researcher is able to use Descriptive Coding to accomplish two goals: to see what was occurring in the classroom and to hear what was said (Saldaña, 2016).

Findings for the First Research Question

The first research question asked, "How do perspective-writing activities that focus on marginalized and oppressed groups help high school students in urban schools foster historical empathy skills?" The researcher analyzed three transcribed interviews with Mr. Cooper. During the In Vivo Coding analysis, 10 codes consistently emerged that are relevant to the first research question. These were then categorized into one theme: empathy.

The analysis of the interviews revealed such codes as "perspective," "making it real," "clicking," and "put into that position." These words and phrases tend to relate to empathy because in order to understand the perspectives and feelings of those who lived in the past, students must be able to contextualize the past and put themselves in the proverbial shoes of historical figures, or be in their "positions." The development of empathy is essential in fostering students' historical empathy skills. Mr. Cooper stated that the writing activities served as a tool to help students understand how people from the past are influenced by culture, race, time periods, politics, and societal norms. He described this process as a "clicking." Mr. Cooper states this is when students make a connection between the past and the present:

> As we've gone through [activities] two and three, and four, what I'm starting to see is a kind of clicking a little bit more when they first get it…Again, it kind of helps them to put two and two together and get to the four, as opposed to I'm learning Fact A and Fact B, then I'm going to take a test. Then I forget those two facts. Whereas, these activities are linking them together. Maybe putting a dash in between A and B to help them a bit more.

Mr. Cooper indicated that the perspective-writing activities appeared to help students empathize with historical figures. When taking on the persona of a person from the past, students were led to talk and write about the feelings and beliefs of those who lived during pivotal eras in history. The activities helped students put themselves in the positions of oft-marginalized groups. They

asked themselves "What would I be thinking and doing?" Mr. Cooper believed students were "forced to put themselves in that position and any time you put yourself in the position of someone else, you understand it a little more and you can empathize with them." This idea aligns with the existing literature in historical empathy. Yeager and Foster (2001) state that appreciating other perspectives allow students to understand the actions and decisions of historical figures. This opens the door to empathy. When students are able to historically empathize, the result is opportunities for deeper and more meaningful connections to history and its inhabitants (Endacott & Brooks, 2013; Yeager & Foster, 2001).

During the course of the intervention, Mr. Cooper observed noticeable growth in students' ability to empathize with historical figures as they completed each activity. The first couple of activities required him to remind students to go back to the text and review for information to complete the assignments. He stated that students tended to be more dependent on him to show where the answers were located. However, as the activities progressed, they began to search out the answers for themselves in the primary sources. Mr. Cooper began to see where the students were making a greater effort to put themselves into the positions of the marginalized groups that were represented in the texts:

> The first couple [activities] I would have to be like, okay, you get the information from the – go back and read. That'll get them because they're just like where's the answer? I'm like no, you're trying to pretend that you're that person and then they're starting to get that more, so I think the more we do it as continue on with the activities, I think they get even better at it. Better is not the right word. I think they enjoy it even more, but I am starting to see a little bit of a shift in, again, most of them…Now I think they're starting to realize, okay, I know why I'm doing it now.

One skill inherent in historical empathy is perspective recognition. Mr. Cooper stated that the writing activities caused students to think about history and those who lived in other ways and from other perspectives:

> You're just forcing them to think and put themselves in a place where they're not normally would go. Again, it's a good tool to just have them to focus on a concept, and, oh, okay, well, this person would have thought that…It's just forcing them to do some thinking that they don't like to do…If you force them to look at it from a different perspective, that blows their minds, sometimes, so that's always good. I think sometimes you learn the most, is when you're forced to take the opposite side of what you actually believe on something, or to look at a historical situation from a different angle.

However, not only do students seem to utilize perspective recognition skills to consider how and why historical figures viewed the world differently, Mr. Cooper points how the same skill allows students to connect to the past and see the similarities.

> Just getting them to think, in general, is always good. Then, a lot of times, we go into a situation with a preconceived idea. But then we read about how others go through these awful situations, or even good ones, and you're like, I went through the same thing! A lot of times they don't think people in history went through anything like they do and when they find out, yeah they did, it really throws 'em. They see people aren't really that different.

This may be particularly true when attempting to understand how perspective-writing activities that focus on oft-marginalized groups help students in urban schools develop historical empathy skills. They may see similarities between their own lived experiences and those of people who have been historically oppressed. Perspective-writing activities aid in the development of the idea that some feelings and experiences are not singular to a certain historical era, but may actually span time and place. This idea connects to the existing literature regarding historical empathy and the benefits of perspective writing (Brooks, 2008; Colby, 2009; Wansink et al., 2018).

Mr. Cooper believes students also take their thinking a step further. Students appeared to be able to analyze and understand the perspectives of other historical figures and appreciate their situations in the past. He thinks it provides students with the opportunity to reflect on the idea that, yes, they face challenges in the present, but other people of color before them have

struggled through racism, political, and social obstacles that should make students appreciative of the benefits they now possess:

> I think it forces them to think about: Hey, maybe I'm not the only one in the situation I'm in. People before me have gone through things worse than I'm going through, so maybe my life is not as bad. I try and say that all the time when a student will say something negative about the United States. I'm like, "Oh, yeah, we've got problems, but we come a long way. It's better than other countries," but it helps them see: Hey, wow, I'd have lived in the 30s, I'd have been dealing with – whoa, I'm lucky to live now…so this kind of activity helps them, forces them, again I keep using the word force 'cause you've got to. It forces them to get their brain thinking and writing and reading about people that went through experiences that they can sympathize with; they can empathize with; they can understand those.

Mr. Cooper stressed that he believed the most impressive piece of the first perspective-writing activities was that students were led to empathize with historical figures by taking their perspectives. He consistently used the word "clicking" to describe a shift in thinking that took place from the beginning of the intervention to the end. This referred to the students' ability to understand how they were able to put themselves in the place of historical figures and understand how the historical era influenced their lives, beliefs, and feelings (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Endacott & Brooks, 2013; Endacott & Sturtz, 2014; Lee & Ashby, 2001).

This same line of thought appears to be reflected in the student work. Multiple codes emerged during the analysis of the student work that the researcher then categorized into themes. Then, the themes were separated according to their relevance to the research question. The four themes that were applicable to the first research question are listed below. Each description was derived from a combination of students' responses and codes that emerged during analysis of the data:

- **Economics**: The understanding that oft-marginalized groups were affected by poverty, unemployment, unfair wages, and the need for work. The lack of work or fair wages was often seen by students as the result of racism or nativism.

- **Feelings**: Emotions or an emotional state that is expressed in response to a situation or experience. These emotions include depression, happiness, hopelessness, frustration, hate, and regret.

- **Immigrant Experiences**: Immigrant experiences in the United States were varied and dependent on economics, nativism, and the environment.

- **Race/Racism**: An understanding of how race affected the people and events of certain eras. Unfair wages, segregation, and disenfranchisement were connected with race and racism.

The student work reflected that most students were able to empathize with the oft-marginalized groups that were represented in the primary sources. The concerns that were addressed in the primary sources were often restated by the students. Economics was a topic that was recurrent no matter which group was highlighted in the eight activities. However, when framed in terms of experiencing poverty or better pay to provide for their families, students tended to focus more on immigrants. Any disparity in pay or living conditions for African Americans tended to be viewed as a result of racism.

The second activity in the intervention required students to use a document analysis sheet to analyze primary sources written by immigrants who lived in the United States during the late 1800s and early 1900s. The texts focused on immigrants' experiences once they came to the United States, and their living and working conditions that were common during this time period. Students created postcards where they took on the persona of these immigrants and wrote to their families in native countries describing experiences in their new homes. The writing was meant to be concise. In this short piece, almost all students included information about "their" economic situations. One student, Katy, wrote:

> Dear Family, I think I have made the wrong decision with coming to America. I am living in poverty and living in small dirty spaces. I am frustrated because I thought this was going to be good for me, I guess not. Please take care of yourself and please get me so I can come home.

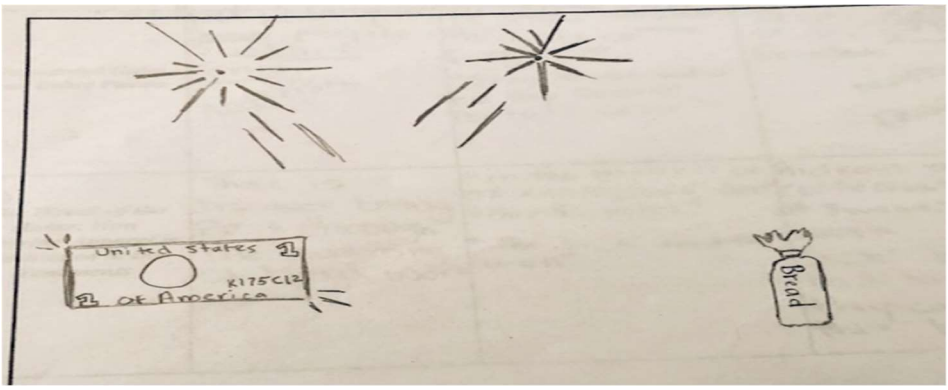
Jay, another 11th grader, wrote on his postcard:

> Dear Mother, my move to the United States has been very tough, things are very difficult. I think after many days of this work it will become unbearable. Everything on my body is in pain and I only get paid 50¢ an hour, not a good idea.

Katy and Jay wrote that coming to America was not the best idea, and they attributed their negative experiences to lack of money. This illustrates how economics was a central factor in the reasons why many immigrants found life in America very difficult. A lack of money often resulted in living in poverty, living in filthy and overcrowded tenements, and working long hours for little pay. However, other postcards showed, just as the primary sources did, that not all students associated immigrants' new lives in the United States with negative experiences. However, even in the postcards that held a positive tone, economics and how it affected immigrants' lives was the central topic:

> Dear Family, my life in America is amazing. My job is very easy to do. I earn $8.00 a week, and also the money is getting me enough food to last. At first, it was hard to get a job for me but I finally find one. (Kerry)

Kerry's postcard shows that there were immigrants who were happy with the decision to come to America. Just like in the other examples, money plays a central role in the reason to emigrate. Even though $8.00 a week may have been on the high end of wages earned during the early 1900s, having a job that pays well resulted in being able to eat and thrive in a new country.



The researcher found that there was one student who found it easier to draw her thoughts instead of writing the postcard. The following is Tammy's illustration of "her" experiences as an immigrant in America in the early 1900s:

Tammy's picture shows a dollar bill and a loaf of bread, implying that money is needed to eat in America. No conclusion can be drawn as to whether her person has the money or is in need of money. What is clear is that for her, economics is central to life as an immigrant in the United States.

The researcher may derive that as of the second activity, at least, students are able to use textual evidence to support their understanding of immigrants' experiences at the turn of the 20th century. Using textual evidence to express an understanding of the perspectives of others is a skill that is inherent in historical empathy and connects to current trends in social studies education (Brooks, 2014; Colby, 2008; Endacott & Brooks, 2013; NCSS, 2013a; Yeager & Doppen, 2001; Yeager & Foster, 2001).

Perspective recognition is evident in other students' products where they appear to make connections between economics and racism. The seventh activity required students to read letters from African Americans who left the South for the North during the Great Migration of the early 1900s. They read excerpts of letters from *Letters of Black Migrants in the Chicago Defender, 1916-1918* and *Sir I Will Thank You with All My Heart: Seven Letters from the Great Migration*. These primary sources were selected because they give voice to the African Americans who lived in the South and wanted to move North for a better way of life and to escape the pervasive racism of Southern culture. The letters also include descriptions of what life was like for many

African Americans in the North who expected to find an escape from the social, political, and economic obstacles they experienced in the South.

Document analysis sheets were used to analyze the texts and write monologues in the voice of African Americans who migrated North. The products suggested that poverty and unfair wages were a result of racism against Blacks by Whites. Ann wrote the following in a monologue:

> I left the South for the North because it wasn't a great and healthy lifestyle. It was harder and more challenging than I expected. I'm glad I left, now I can build my life back up and hold my head up and live a healthy wealthy lifestyle that I expected to live in the North.

Students appear to have made the connection by reading the text that racism was a reason why African Americans could not find work in the South, and therefore, wanted to leave to find better work and a better life in the North. The responses on the document analysis sheets showed students were able to recognize the authors' perspectives. In response to the question "What conclusions can you draw about the author's perspective on leaving the South for the North?" Jay responds, "He sees the bad rules that Jim Crow has set for them." He also writes that another author "was working hard in the South, and he could barely even feed his family." When reading the primary sources, Jay is able to recognize that the author of the first text sees the South as a hindrance to African Americans obtaining certain freedoms. This can be seen by Jay's references of the Jim Crow laws, which had its foundation firmly based in racism. In addition, it appears he realizes that the author of the second text makes a connection between being in the South and not being able to feed his family. In the South, Jim Crow laws set different rules for Black and White people. Therefore, no matter how hard a Black man worked, he would not make the same amount of money as a White worker based on the systemic discrimination African Americans faced in the South.

The researcher noted growth in another historical empathy skill in addition to perspective recognition. As the semester progressed, students showed more proficiency in using the text to support their first-person perspective writing in order to contextualize the past. The ability to place an event or person in the historical, cultural, political, and/or social conditions in which it exists is a skill that does not happen automatically. There is a tendency to think that all people act and feel the same way, no matter the time period. Students may even find it difficult to believe that people from the past did not have access to different types of technology that are in contemporary society. When writing first-person perspective pieces, students use the text, but may embellish, inserting details that are not accurate to the historical era.

The student work reflected a slow but steady progress in many students' ability to contextualize the past. For instance, in the second activity, Deborah took on the persona of an immigrant writing home about her new life in early 20th century America: "Mom, I know I've only lived here for a couple of months, but I found a job that pays really well! I'm able to provide for myself. I have an apartment and this close to having a car." There are a couple of items out of context in this postcard. The first successful automobile in the United States was designed in 1893; therefore, the likelihood of an immigrant who had been in American for only two months being able to afford one in the early 1900s is very unlikely. Also, even though many immigrants who arrived in America for a better life may have found a job they thought paid well, it is highly unlikely he or she would be able to afford an apartment all on his or her own.

However, when completing a historical dialogue, the same student showed improvement in contextualization. The following is an excerpt from Deborah's dialogue between an immigrant and a nativist:

> **Nativist**: You don't belong in this country.
> **Immigrant**: I came here to get a better job and provide for my wife and kids.

> **Nativist**: Well you shouldn't even be here, [you] came to take our jobs, how are we going to provide for our family if you immigrants come and take our jobs?

Contextualization appeared to be a skill that was harder for students to understand and apply than perspective recognition. It became clearer to the researcher that students were able to contextualize when analyzing the historical dialogues. They used linguistic terms that were common to the era. For example, several students used "negro" instead of Black to refer to African Americans. The researcher will go into more depth about this concept when discussing the second research question.

The information revealed by the interviews and student work reinforces the literature in the field of historical empathy as it pertains to theory and best practices. Mr. Cooper acknowledged that providing students with the opportunity to understand historical figures' acts, decisions, and beliefs is beneficial, especially when that belief contradicts their own. Students may be led to look at people and events from the past at another historical angle. This idea aligns with the literature of leading researchers in the field. Historical empathy is a means through which students are able to see that differing perspectives are valid (Brooks, 2014; Cunningham, 2009; Endacott & Brooks, 2013; Yeager & Foster, 2001). Through best practices, such as the analysis of primary sources and first-person perspective writing, the actions and decisions of historical figures do not appear irrational or ignorant (Barton & Levstik, 2004). Students see that people are influenced by their culture, society, politics, and time period.

The analysis of the student work revealed that students appeared able to empathize with the oft-marginalized groups they read about in the primary sources. The first-person perspective narratives illustrated their growth in being able to identify with the historical figures as they took on their personas in the writing activities. Students articulated their feelings and experiences about issues such as living in poverty, racism, earning low wages, and being treated unfairly. For

example, in the fourth activity, students wrote a first-person narrative as if they were women who worked in the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory. Danielle's paragraph addressed her reasons for working in the factory, as well as the working conditions:

> I work in the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory. I chose to work here because I needed the extra money. Working there was so hard and the conditions were so messed up for us ladies. We had a half an hour for lunch and nothing for supper and we weren't allowed to socialize or we will be admonished. After the fire, I'm traumatized from seeing all my friends passing away and I'm [the] only one alive. We all needed justice.

Danielle's narrative illustrates how she was able to recognize and tell about the experiences of oft-marginalized groups who were oppressed socially, politically, and economically. The narrative indicates that Danielle empathizes with how women in the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory were made to endure difficult working conditions, such as not being able to eat dinner. The paragraph suggests that she is not happy at being treated unfairly, such as not being able to socialize and being talked down to by her managers. Danielle's use of the word "traumatize" shows her empathy, as she understands how the women in the factory must have felt at witnessing the deaths of so many women during the infamous 1911 fire.

Brooks (2008) proposes that writing first-person perspective narratives are more effective to foster students' historical empathy skills. Although students are required to base their writing on textual evidence, first-person perspective writing encourages the use of inferential and adductive reasoning. These are both indicators of higher order thinking. The drawback is that there may be a tendency to delve into presentism, but this may be curbed with repetition (Brooks, 2008).

Thinking and writing with empathy has been called an unnatural act because it goes against students' instincts to incorporate their own beliefs, biases, and feelings (Wineburg, 2001). Mr. Cooper pointed out that writing the first-person perspective narratives made students

think about history in another way; a way they were not used to thinking or as he said, taking them places they "would not normally go." Nancy wrote a monologue in the persona of a woman who was a nurse in World War I. Her writing allowed her to weigh the mental and emotional price people had to pay in war, an aspect of World War I the traditional social studies curriculum many not examine:

> **Time**: March 18, 1915
> **Place**: A tent hospital
> **Rose**: (sighs while walking back to a patient) I never liked any of these wars, tearing apart each man that even thinks to come to war.
> **Rose**: (wheels patient to a room) I'm thinking about every man that comes and goes or just dies [and I] will forever be sad.
> **Rose**: (walks back and begins to take care of the next patient) I wonder what's going on at home and is everyone safe. When will this pain end?

Many times, when students learn about World War I, they do not have the opportunity to read about the human costs that are a part of war. Nancy was able to explore the life and experiences of a war nurse, allowing her to empathize with the exhausting and emotionally draining work that women faced on the battlefields of World War I. As students read more primary sources that challenged their ideas about history, the work reflected a marked increase in enjoyment and a shift in thinking the more they practiced writing and developing historical empathy skills. Kohlmeier (2006) contends that consistent use of primary sources combined with best practices impacts students and their development of historical empathy skills. Perspective taking, contextualization, and using textual evidence to support thinking are skills that need repetition over an extended time in order to become proficient in them (Kohlmeier, 2006).

The findings in the research study revealed new ideas that may add to the body of existing literature on historical empathy as it relates to the first research question. Mr. Cooper observed that first-person perspective-writing activities served to link the facts together for the students. Instead of learning the facts for the sake of a test and then quickly forgetting them,

these activities "puts a dash in between A and B to help them a bit more." Connections are made between one event and the next, one era and the next, and understanding how there is a continuity in history. Calvin's narrative in the persona of W.E.B. Du Bois demonstrates how he connects Du Bois' civil rights era to the 1960s Civil Rights Movement:

> Freedom, the right to vote, manhood, the honor of our wives, and the right to work. Those are all things we desire in this life…In a White person's eyes we're just a bunch of Black people who don't know nothing. But in our eyes, there's hope that we will get the freedom we deserve. My plan to overcome these obstacles is to protest on every of New York City until we get what want. They can soak us with fire hoses all they want but they can't soak our pride.

Calvin has used this narrative to capture Du Bois' voice. He also tries to imitate his speaking style, which is important when writing with historical empathy. Although out of context, Calvin attempts to connect Du Bois' era and civil rights struggles to those of the well-known civil rights era of the 1960s. There is a reference to fire hoses, bringing to mind the use of fire houses in Birmingham, Alabama during the 1963 Children's March. Calvin has shown that he is making a connection that there was a continuous fight for equality, from the early 1900s to the 1960s. There are overarching issues here: equality and social injustice.

Metro (2017) calls this teaching thematically. The traditional approach to teaching history is to introduce the content in chronological order. It is difficult to cover all the content in one semester, and many times students fail to see the relevance of historical events to their daily lives.

By teaching thematically, the teacher provides the opportunity for the class to see how an issue develops over time (Metro, 2017). They also understand the historical process and the reasons why eras are categorized into blocks of time. For instance, in a U.S. history class, students need to understand Manifest Destiny is a controversial belief endorsed by many in the U.S. for hundreds of years. They should connect that Manifest Destiny resulted in the historical

expansion of the continental United States, and its principles are still evident in today's foreign policy to push democratic values around the world. Teaching thematically encourages students to find the causality of events and consider how they are linked together (Metro, 2017).

The intervention in the research study allowed students to see how different historical eras, with different people, had the same issues such as racism, inequality, and poverty. These social, political, and economic obstacles were not limited to one particular race, gender, or culture. As students analyzed primary sources written by several oft-marginalized groups, from various points in history, they seemed to recognize that immigrants, women, and African Americans faced discrimination, denial of basic rights, poverty, and had to endure socioeconomic challenges. Comparisons were made with the people, the political, cultural, and societal factors, while understanding that political and social obstacles remained the same. Maybe more importantly, as students stepped into the shoes of historical people, they appeared to recognize that people's emotions and feelings were similar, if not the same. Thematic teaching facilitates the comparison of historical eras as well as the analysis of relationships among important events (Metro, 2017).

The other idea that emerged as a result of analysis of data was the idea that historical empathy helps students to make interdisciplinary connections among social studies content areas. As students completed the first-person perspective-writing activities, they wrote about topics such as poverty, immigrants' experiences, migration, and political obstacles. Each of these topics touch on other disciplines within social studies: economics, U.S. History, geography, and civics, respectively. These activities are an opportunity for teachers to draw information from other social studies topics to enrich the lesson that is being taught (Lintner, 2003; NCSS, 2013a). In the first activity, students wrote a historical tweet where they pretended to be an African

American who was living in Alabama during the early 1900s. In the tweet, students were required to explain the obstacles they faced while attempting to vote. Deborah wrote the following:

> Voting with all of these restrictions is complete bull. It is not right that in order to vote I have to reside in the state two years, one year in the county and three months in the election precinct. We also have to be able to read or write, if not we must own real and personal property assessed at three hundred dollars. Not everyone has an education and not everyone is rich.
> #PoorPeopleMatter

Carey wrote a tweet as well:

> Voting with all of these restrictions is unacceptable. It is not right that in order to vote I have to be able to pay my poll tax and I must register and hold a certificate of registration. I must also be able to read and write to register and if I can't do either, I must own $300 worth of property.
> #FixVoting

These two historical tweets are a part of an activity that focuses on how Jim Crow laws in the South were used to disenfranchise African Americans from the right to vote. It highlights how racism was a part of the Southern culture. However, another social studies discipline is incorporated in the lesson, which brings another aspect to the activity. The students read *What a Colored Man Should Do to Vote*, which is a set of laws that details the requirements African Americans in the Southern states needed to complete in order to vote at the turn of the 20th century. This text also connects to civics, where students learn about the rights and responsibilities of citizens. Civics includes the history of America's democratic principles, and how public issues, such as disenfranchisement of oft-marginalized groups, have been addressed in the past. The historical tweet connects to civic issues, adding another layer of depth to the history lesson to show students that history and civics are interconnected.

Although the teacher has a specific learning objective, weaving in other disciplines shows different aspects of the historical eras, events, or people (Clabough & Wooten, 2019; Lintner,

2013). The learning target has been firmly established, and the teacher purposefully selects and rejects cross-disciplinary information that may drive students to closely examine a central theme, issue, or event. The social studies disciplines are used in combination with each other to support the learning objective (Lintner, 2013). The other social studies content areas may provide a more in-depth glimpse into an historical era, allowing students access to more information to use when delving into inferential and adductive thinking as they are writing their narratives.

Findings for the Second Research Question

The second research question asked, "To what extent, if any, do historical dialogues help high school students to contextualize the past?" Mr. Cooper recognizes that having students write historical dialogues added to his curriculum. There was an observable difference in the students' engagement. He stated that it is another useful tool to have in the proverbial toolbox when attempting to teach students to think "outside the box" and place historical figures in context. It is easier to state facts in a lecture, and the information is clear to him because he has given the lecture many times. However, are the students really understanding the content? Are they comprehending that people during the same time period, seeing the same event, may have viewed an event differently? Mr. Cooper stated that these activities, including the historical dialogues, made him question this. Analyzing the text and speaking from the views of others provided an opportunity for students to make deeper connections to historical figures. This is especially true when these people from the past had to converse with each other, sharing their experiences and point of views. Mr. Cooper called this "thinking outside the box":

> As a teacher, I can say it in my lecture, because I've heard the lecture, so I been saying in my lecture all along and then I think, okay, they got it. Then do they really sometimes? It's just I see it as a useful tool to put in the toolbox with all of your other tools, because it forces them to think outside the box…I really like that because I don't know that otherwise doing the class like I normally do it, that that wouldn't have happened.

Mr. Cooper feels that the historical dialogues as well as the other writing activities helped students to contextualize the past. The researcher noted that although Mr. Cooper acknowledged some growth, the learning appeared limited to previous biases the students brought to the discussion. Upon analyzing the student work, it became clear that contextualization is still a skill they have yet to fully master.

The researcher analyzed students' work and multiple codes emerged that were then categorized into five themes. These themes revealed students' ability to connect with historical figures, their experiences, and feelings, yet, it was harder for students to contextualize the past when they had to write about certain historical events and social issues. The five themes with descriptions, as they relate to the study, are listed below:

- **Equality**: The idea that all groups of people should have equal rights, human and political, as well as justice through the law.
- **Political Obstacles**: The understanding that race and gender were factors in immigrants, women, and African Americans experiencing certain political obstacles, such as Jim Crow laws and laws that dictated requirements for voting.
- **Race/Racism**: An understanding of how race affected the people and events of certain eras. Unfair wages, segregation, and disenfranchisement were connected with race and racism.
- **Voting**: A basic right and one that was often denied African Americans. Voting was seen as giving people of color a voice and being denied the right to vote was tied to racism.
- **Women's Roles**: Idea that women are able to do the same jobs as men and that women had to prove themselves. Women had certain roles and were forced to prove they were able to step outside of accepted societal roles.

Perspective recognition appeared to be a skill that was easier for students to master than contextualization. It was harder for students to avoid presentism when writing from the perspective of one whose ideas conflicted with their own. Presentism is interpreting history and judging those who lived it by contemporary standards (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Brooks, 2008;

Kohlmeier, 2005; Lee & Ashby, 2001; Lee & Shemilt, 2011). When tasked with writing about race and equal rights, there is an indication from the student work that students found it difficult not to impose their own beliefs about justice and equal rights. Twenty-three out of the 25 students in Mr. Cooper's class are of color and over half of the class is comprised of female students. This may account for why there is a resistance to contextualizing certain historical figures and instead imposing their 21st century ideas about right and wrong, justice, and equality as it pertains to race, gender, and based on students' lived experiences. Students of color and females are members of oft-marginalized groups, meaning they may have personally experienced feelings of anger and frustration that are a result of being discriminated against because of race and/or gender. This may make it harder to accept and visualize that historical figures of the same race or gender may have held different views about issues, such as attaining equal rights. Students have been taught from a young age that equality was a right that women and people of color had to achieve through arduous protests and activism. Therefore, when faced with an alternative narrative that conflicts with their world view about the attainment of equality and justice, students may tend to rely on their own preestablished biases, thereby making historical figures' actions and decisions more understandable and reasonable.

For the fifth activity, students were required to write a first-person perspective narrative as if they were W.E.B. Du Bois or Booker T. Washington. Students were to pretend they were giving a speech and wanted to make people aware of their position on issues that were important to African Americans in the first part of the 20th century. The content of the narrative should have been different depending on who students chose to be. Students read excerpts from the *Atlanta Compromise Speech* by Washington and the *Niagara Movement Speech* by Du Bois. Using these texts as support, students should have seen that these men's positions on race

relations and activism were different. For instance, Washington believed African Americans should take a stance of appeasement. To demand equality at that particular time was a mistake, the best course was to work with Whites towards Southern progress. His famous line was that socially, Blacks and Whites were to be separate like fingers on hand but must pull together and be one like the hand in order to progress. Du Bois believed that African Americans should have all rights immediately. This meant the right to an equal education and definitely a right to vote, which meant having a voice in politics. He demanded an end to segregation, calling it undemocratic. Both men believed in the advancement of African Americans. They differed in the method it was to be gained.

Most students chose to write their narratives as Washington. Only two of the participating students wrote as Du Bois. The analyzed data reflected that when writing from Washington's perspective, most narratives include information about fighting for equal rights, ending segregation, and demanding the same opportunities, such as voting and education, as Whites. However, even with textual evidence at hand, all but one of the students who wrote from Washington's perspective, imposed their own thoughts and feelings about these topics into their narratives. Deborah wrote the following as Booker T. Washington:

> I believe African Americans should be treated the same as Whites. We shouldn't be any different considering we are all human no matter the skin tone. Blacks should have the right to vote just as Whites are allowed to. We shall all get along and unite as one instead of segregation. We shall let Blacks go to school just as Whites can I plan to start a movement to end segregation once and for all.

Another student, Jay, wrote as Washington as well:

> My fellow African Americans, we are here today to announce the opening of Tuskegee University. The first college based on the great men of the African American race. Our great triumph will be seen and noticed by the White oppressors. Things were hard but we are known, and we will be respected. Get your education and get your kids' education. Because we are their equal and we will not be underestimated like our ancestors and their ancestors.

While both students are writing from Washington's perspective, they have taken his words out of context. The views they have written actually align more with Du Bois' arguments. The words and phrasing of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. are reflected here as well. It makes sense that students would use Dr. King's terminology, as they may be more familiar with him and agree with his beliefs. It appears to be more difficult for students to separate their own feelings about race and equality when having to write about it from the perspective of someone whose views are in some conflict with their own. There is also the idea to consider that it may be difficult to connect that people of the same culture, race, and/or gender may have different perspectives about the same issue.

The two students who wrote as Du Bois did not seem to have the same difficulty, possibly because his views were more similar to their own.

> My ideas regarding racism are to just be equal. We should all have equal rights and justices. There should be integration of races, and all citizens and they should get every opportunity they earn. The political obstacles are the laws and rights the negroes don't have so it makes it hard for them to be seen as equal. We will overcome the obstacles by coming together and realizing that negroes are just the same as all Americans. (Katy)

Du Bois' arguments and beliefs seemed to be more in line with Katy's personal beliefs about racism, making it easier for her to contextualize his arguments. Katy even uses words that were common to the era, such as "negroes" to refer to Blacks. She imitated the linguistic terms, voice, and, tone of the Du Bois and the time period. This may have been easier for her to do because she was writing about African Americans being equal to everyone and demanding their rights. However, Jay used words that were not common to the time period. He referred to Blacks as African Americans, a term that was not in use until the late 1980s. In addition, he used the phrase "White oppressors." This is a term that was not in use in the early 1900s, it especially would not

be said by Washington. This is another indication that it may have been harder for Jay to contextualize Washington and his views.

Students appeared to have the same issues regarding contextualization when it came to gender roles as well. The sixth activity focused on the women's suffrage movement and the changing roles of women in society. The primary sources included a letter from the Women Voters' Anti-Suffrage Party, newspaper articles about women working in factories during World War I, and an excerpt from *Diary of a War Nurse*. The letter from the Women Voters' Anti-Suffrage Party was utilized because it allowed students to see that members of the same marginalized group did not always agree on an issue. It appeared hard for most students to grasp that some women would fight against the right to vote. It is natural for them to think that all people would want to have a voice in their government. The document analysis sheets reflected students' examination of the documents. In response to the question, "What conclusion can you draw about the author's perspective on women's roles in the workplace or in the home?" many responses reflected what are mostly likely the students' own thoughts. This question was asked about the Women Voter's Anti-Suffrage Party letter. Nancy responded that the author "really doesn't like what's being put on women." This is not entirely accurate. The author does not like that women are being encouraged to vote, but Nancy does not seem to understand this by her response. Another student, Jenny, wrote that, "Women's rules in the workplace or at home is very unreasonable sometimes." Carey responded, "Women's role is more important than a man's role." These were not the sentiments expressed by the author of the letter. She was very adamant that women had a specific role, at work, or at home supporting the war and the men who were fighting in it.

When answering the same question about the other texts, students' responses were more in line with what was stated in the text. These texts were about women working and stepping outside of traditional societal roles. The text *West Newton Grandmother New Chauffer at Arsenal* was a newspaper article that celebrated a woman for working what was seen as a man's job. The reporter detailed how she had previously been a hairdresser, which was a more traditional role for women. Now, this grandmother was taking the place of a man to support the war effort. This text garnered answers about the author's perspective that may be similar to students' own thoughts and ideas about women's roles and rights. In response to the same question about this text, Tony wrote, "[Women] did the work to help win the war." Carey stated, "It's not hard for a woman to do what a man can do." Nancy responded, "She can do anything, and men cannot truly stop [her] from what she wants." These are correct answers about the author's perspective, and these arguments may be easier for students to discern because these statements align with their personal belief systems about equal rights and democratic values.

The existing literature in the field of historical empathy supports the findings for the second research question. In urban schools, there should be a more deliberate effort to design a social studies curriculum where students have the opportunity to complete activities that require them to exercise historical empathy skills. The content presented should have value and meaning to them. Students in urban schools might also belong to the same groups that have been historically marginalized or misrepresented. The experiences of these groups must be included in the history curriculum and their stories should be told (Brooks, 2014; Hawkman, 2017). However, this should be done in such a way that allows for students to analyze counter-narratives and question the text (Hawkman, 2017; Hawley et al., 2017). Teachers must also create activities that require discourse about meaningful issues, such as race and social injustice

(Brooks, 2014; Hawkman, 2017; Hawley et al., 2017; King, 2015; Woodson, 2016). A curriculum that embraces inquiry and discourse could result in students being able to make affective and cognitive connections with people from the past (Endacott & Brooks, 2013). This is particularly true for students in urban schools. They may make connections with oft-marginalized groups who have been denied basic rights throughout history.

High school students in urban schools may find that they are able to connect to historical figures because of shared experiences. However, examining the past, reconstructing the events, and placing people and events in historical context are often hard tasks for students to accomplish. Student tend to view history through their own worldviews and experiences, which often leads to presentism (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Brooks, 2008; Colby, 2008; Lee & Ashby, 2001; VanSledright, 2004). Many times, it is more comfortable for students to analyze a topic and apply their own reasoning, especially when it pertains to issues of social injustice, such as racism or sexism. It may also be easier for students to rely on their own understanding of an issue rather than probe and ask what factors influenced people to make certain decisions (Nokes, 2013; Wineburg, 2001). If students are unable to avoid presentism, being able to master contextualization becomes a very difficult task. Endacott and Brooks (2013) argue that in order to accomplish this, there must be an understanding that historical figures are a product of their time periods. People do not live in a vacuum. Therefore, students must take into consideration the political, social, and cultural events of the time. Yeager and Foster (2001) assert that this is a logical process. The textual evidence should be analyzed, and students must learn to look past their own views, beliefs, and biases. It is only then that they are truly engaging in historical empathy and gaining a richer understanding of the past (Yeager & Foster, 2001).

Findings for the Third Research Question

The third research question asks, "To what degree, if any, do historical dialogues help high school students to develop historical empathy skills?" Mr. Cooper articulated that historical dialogues as perspective-writing activities provide the opportunity for students to recognize perspectives and have a more in-depth understanding of the content. Admittedly, in the normal course of his classroom routine, Mr. Cooper does not use many primary sources and activities that promote historical empathy. The intervention allowed him the opportunity to see how students became more engaged with the content. Each activity provided students with the opportunity to develop skills such as perspective recognition, first person-perspective writing, contextualization, and using evidence to support ideas. The activities were scaffolded so by the final project, students would have the skills necessary to write a conversation between two historical figures, reflecting the differing ideas and feelings of people from the past. Writing the historical dialogues "put together" the skills students had gained over the course of the intervention. Mr. Cooper stated that the dialogues allowed students to demonstrate that they have a better understanding of the content:

> I think overall, you put it all together, I think they have a better understanding of all the topics that were covered with the primary source and the readings…They're forced to put themselves in that position and any time you put yourself in the position of someone else, you understand it a little more and you can empathize with them, and so then you force [students] to do that.

Mr. Cooper mentioned several times that he saw moments when students "clicked" with the material, and they understood with more clarity that oft-marginalized groups in history experienced feelings and obstacles that are similar to theirs. It is not as if students had not previously heard about the racism, prejudice, sexism, and poverty that these groups endured. Reading the first-hand accounts are what established an affective and cognitive connection and

made the content relevant and meaningful. Mr. Cooper admitted this may not have happened if the class would have received instruction the way he normally delivers it:

> I think, overall, the class learned more, empathized more. You used the word empathize, and I think that's the key word because I think if I didn't do any of these activities, they would have still learned the content, but what we did, I think, really did help them to take a moment and be able to empathize with people that have gone before and other people. I really like that because I don't know that otherwise doing the class like I normally do it, that that wouldn't have happened…I try and tell 'em stories, so I think I get it in a little bit but I think forcing then to do some of that writing and reading and some of 'em kicking and screaming, but forcing them to do it did help. It did help.

Overall, Mr. Cooper was impressed with the historical dialogues his students wrote. When asked how he thought historical dialogues helped students to develop historical empathy skills, Mr. Cooper believed that when students put forth the effort, the learning is clear in the writing. The ability for students to recognize perspectives and contextualize the past are demonstrated by the conversations that took place between the historical figures in the dialogues. Mr. Cooper acknowledges that there were students who did not take the assignments seriously, but those who did benefited the most:

> Well, if they do a good job in their writing, it's fantastic. If they really take it seriously and think about what they've learned, what they've read that was provided for them and they really concentrate and turn that into a dialogue, I think it's fantastic. I think some of 'em just, "Okay, what do I got to do? I gotta write this back and forth," and they were just real surfacy, but then some of 'em really got it and they clicked, and I was really impressed and pleased.

While Mr. Cooper believed the intervention benefited his students, he did feel there was at least one challenge: time. Upon his initial review of the activities, Mr. Cooper thought that the activities would take one class period at the most, which is approximately 70 minutes. The activities actually lasted a class and a half and sometimes two periods. Mr. Cooper was not prepared for the activities to take this long. This left him with the dilemma of covering the content quickly or allowing the students to have more time so that the content was covered well.

In education, this predicament is called depth vs. breadth (Pearcy & Duplass, 2011; VanSledright, 1997). Mr. Cooper understood that if he chose to allot one class period, the students would not gain as much from the activities as they would if he took the extra time:

> I could make them go faster, but I don't think they would be gaining as much out of it, so then give them the time to do it. Then, if you give them the time to do it where they're really learning, then, it takes more time than I can give. It's the age old how much do I cover versus do I cover really well?

When implementing these activities in the future, Mr. Cooper acknowledges that he would need to plan better in order to allow more time: “I would have to strategically place and plan it out a little better, my planning ahead of time was not the greatest because I didn’t understand how long it was going to take.”

The researcher observed Mr. Cooper’s classroom two times during the semester. The first time students were engaged and focused. Each time the researcher observed the class, Mr. Cooper was starting a new activity. After receiving the instructions, students were engaged with the content. During the both sessions, they asked Mr. Cooper questions about the text, and then resumed their work. Most students worked individually, but there were four students who worked in pairs. However, the students were in rows and expected to work. There clearly was a routine in place that students were aware of, and they followed this routine. This is where the class may be described as structured.

It was clear that the students respect Mr. Cooper, which is why they were not completely off task when left to complete the work independently. When some students were talking more than working, they were quickly redirected and resumed working. The researcher noted that students read and annotated the primary sources and worked diligently on the document analysis sheets. They consistently asked Mr. Cooper questions, which showed they were engaged. Students asked Mr. Cooper and each other opinions about the work products.

The second observation took place at the end of the semester. It was very close to finals, and it was obvious that students were not as engaged as they had been the two previous visits. They seemed more concerned with final exams. There were more questions about when the final exams were taking place and less questions about the activity. Students were off task more, and as a result, Mr. Cooper spent more time on classroom management during the third session than he did previously. The intervention was meant to be implemented at the beginning of the semester. Mr. Cooper did not begin the activities at the start of the semester, which resulted in the intervention culminating at the same time as finals. This may have impacted the students' attentiveness to the activity, as they believed final exams held a higher priority.

The researcher analyzed the student work and found three themes that emerged as it pertains to the third research question. Following are three themes and the descriptions:

- **Empathy**: The process that allows for the understanding and consideration of how culture, society, politics, race, and gender influence how historical figures felt, behaved, and made decisions.

- **Feelings**: Emotions or an emotional state that is expressed in response to a situation or experience. These emotions include depression, happiness, hopelessness, frustration, hate, and regret.

- **Nativism**: A negative reaction to immigrants that had its foundation in racism and prejudice. It is the favoring of people who were born in a particular country. Immigrants were seen as a threat to the economics and culture of the native country.

The historical dialogues reflected that students were able to recognize perspectives. To recognize perspectives, it is required that students analyze primary sources that provide multiple perspectives on the same issue. The dialogues demonstrated students' ability to understand that people from the past had perspectives that were often conflicting, even if they were in the same time period and observing the same event.

For example, when analyzing Booker T. Washington's *Atlanta Compromise Speech* and W.E.B. Du Bois' *Niagara Speech*, it appeared that Amy was able to see that both men's views on racism and equal rights were different. Regarding Washington, she wrote, "the author's perspective on how African Americans should gain equal rights is that Whites and African Americans should let go [of] their issues and get to know each other." Amy stated that Du Bois felt African Americans should "continue protesting and voting." The responses indicate that there is an understanding that although Washington and Du Bois were spokespersons for the African American communities, their ideas about what it would take to achieve equality were very different. The men's goals were the same, but their methods were not. Another student, Jay, wrote that Washington's perspective on gaining equality was to "work for the acceptance of white people." Du Bois' believed that equal rights would be gained "by having a vote, which will change things." Jay appears to recognize that there is a conflict between how Washington and Du Bois believe African Americans should gain access to all of the rights promised to them in the U. S. Constitution.

The researcher found that on some issues, students were able to contextualize the past. For instance, when writing a dialogue between a nativist and an immigrant, Daryll's work reflected he was able to grasp divergent feelings. He used textual evidence to support his writing but was also able to demonstrate through his writing that each figure had strong feelings about his or her stances. Daryll developed historical empathy skills, perspective recognition, and contextualization, because he showed that each person was a product of societal, cultural, and racial factors as demonstrated with his historical dialogue below:

> **Immigrant**: I am here to make money. But everyone sees me as a bad person.
> **Nativist**: I understand, but this is my country for me to make money.
> **Immigrant**: I know but I want to work. I don't take from no one. I work for my own.
> **Nativist**: You take my jobs!

Immigrant: It is the land of opportunity for everyone.

This historical dialogue illustrates that Daryll grasps the concept that people from the same era can view issues differently. He writes a conversation between two people who have different objectives that conflict with each other. The dialogue reflects that nativism is at the root of this conflict, which shows that Daryll has the ability to contextualize and recognize perspectives. He used content to write about the economic factors that led to many nativists protesting the influx of immigrants into the United States in the early 1900s. It may have been easier for Daryll to connect with the immigrant because he/she is the object of discrimination. The same may be said for Nancy's historical dialogue between a Jewish concentration camp survivor and a German citizen, which is provided below with a portion of her dialogue:

> **Citizen**: I never knew about the concentration camps. I don't pay huge attention to the news.
> **Survivor**: Dear God! How could you not hear about it? There was so much happening?
> **Citizen**: Well, the news always lies about some things you know, there's always rumors.
> **Survivor**: If I told you I was a part of it would you believe me?
> **Citizen**: I 100% believe you.
> **Survivor**: (Is shook and doesn't know what to say) Well, thank you.

Nancy's dialogue rests on the historical argument that many German citizens did not know about the concentration camps in Nazi-occupied territories during World War II. This indicates Nancy has background knowledge to support her writings. In addition, there are two perspectives being represented, one of the Jewish survivors and the other of a German citizen that was not subjected to wartime crimes. Nancy has used her dialogue to communicate the disbelief of the citizen and the survivor, as well as the sympathy one feels for the other. Just as with Daryll, Nancy may have found it easier to empathize with the Jewish survivor because he or she is clearly the victim of oppression and injustice. In these cases, it appears easier for students to recognize perspective and contextualize the actions of historical figures who have been marginalized.

However, when students are faced with writing a dialogue that challenges their personal worldview, they appear to struggle with avoiding presentism. For instance, Jay wrote a dialogue between W.E.B. Du Bois and Booker T. Washington:

> **Washington**: Merry Christmas everyone, we all must embrace this upcoming new year as a change for us colored people.
> **Du Bois**: Yes, I believe so but what happened last new year, they sent everyone who protested straight to jail. If we just stay in school and study, they will have to accept our intelligence.
> **Washington**: Do you know how long that will take? If through all these thousands of years, they haven't noticed our intelligence I'm not sure they will notice it now.
> **Du Bois**: You fight this racism in whatever [way] you want to. In the end, we are all trying to move towards the same thing, equality.

Jay's dialogue reflects the beliefs of two men who were fighting for the same cause and were feeling the same frustrations because of the denial of equal rights. This connects to the existing literature on the writing of monologues and dialogues in the social studies classroom (Turner & Clabough, 2015a, 2015b; Yancie & Clabough, 2016). In order to write these exchanges between two historical figures, students are required to know the social and political climate of the time period and how these factors influenced the thoughts, decisions, and actions of people from the past. Jay's writing reflects that Washington and Du Bois were aware of racial and political issues that were hindering African Americans from obtaining certain rights. He also utilizes the linguistic terms of the time, such as "colored people," showing some skill at contextualization based on the language used in an historical era.

In the dialogue, Du Bois' sentiments are accurate. However, Washington's responses are not quite as historically correct. It may be that Jay has inserted his own feelings and thoughts about fighting for equal rights and racism and imposed them on Washington. This student data suggest that it is more difficult for students to connect that people of the same culture and race may have different perspectives about the same issue. In cases such as this, students tended to

delve into presentism and impose their own beliefs on the historical figures whose beliefs conflict with their own.

Research in the field of historical empathy supports the data as it relates to the third research question. In order to develop historical empathy skills, students must examine multiple sources that allow students to consider different perspectives and interpretations of an event. As a result, they will be able to draw conclusions that are based on evidence and not on their own personal beliefs and biases (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Endacott & Brooks, 2013; Lee & Ashby, 2001; Yeager et al., 1998). Writing historical dialogues requires students to examine and analyze multiple primary sources. They place historical figures' views, actions, and intentions in context. This helps students to understand that because people are influenced by different racial, political, and social factors, which may cause them to view the same event or issue differently (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Endacott, 2010; Endacott & Brooks, 2013; Endacott & Sturz, 2014; Yeager & Foster, 2001).

Writing is vital in the study of history because it is a way for students to demonstrate their understanding of the content (Brooks, 2008). With the advent of the C3 Framework, the standards in this seminal document by NCSS suggest that writing assignments are one of the most effective ways for ideas to be communicated in the classroom and then for students to take informed action (Clabough et al., 2016; NCSS, 2013a). Students construct arguments and narratives that reflect their interpretations of the historical evidence and empathy through writing. The narratives even emulate the linguistic style of the time period, imitating the speech, terms, and voice of the historical era. Therefore, writing is virtually inseparable from the historian's craft (Monte-Sano, 2008). To demonstrate their learning, students must first analyze sources, compose interpretations that are based on evidence, and think critically and historically.

This means they consider the source of documents, determine bias, draw conclusions, and put these conclusions down in a written format. Writing is one way for students to capture and convey their historical thinking (Brooks, 2008; Monte-Sano, 2008; NCSS, 2013a; Wansink et al., 2018).

Historical dialogues are a form of writing that connects to best practices in the social studies classroom and are ways for students to develop historical empathy skills. To write a dialogue, students must research and analyze the text to build content knowledge (Turner & Clabough, 2015a). This enables students to grasp the political and social factors that existed in a certain time period that affected historical figures. Once students are able to empathize and contextualize the past, they can write a dialogue that demonstrates their understanding of how multiple factors held sway over people's actions, decisions, and motivations (Colby, 2008; Endacott, 2010; Endacott & Brooks, 2013; Yancie, 2018; Yancie & Clabough, 2016).

A benefit of using historical dialogues to develop students' historical empathy skills is that it allows them to use drama to engage with historical figures (Clabough et al., 2017). Drama sets the proverbial stage for students to explore multiple perspectives. When people converse back and forth, they share ideas, potentially solve problems, or even argue and come to resolutions. As a result, historical figures are brought to life. Instead of being one-dimensional figures on a page in a textbook, they become human beings who have faced obstacles, achieved triumphs, and cried tears of grief and joy (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Colby, 2008; Collingwood, 1994). Perspective writing in the form of historical dialogues aids students in seeing the past through the eyes of those who were there, expressing their innermost thoughts and feelings about some of the most pivotal moments in history (Colby, 2009; Ricoeur, 1980). They delve past the dates and superficial facts, and explore people's intentions and behaviors that make history a

human story. Ivy's historical dialogue illustrates how students are able to grasp the human costs that are associated with major events in history.

> **Time**: 10:30 a.m. October 11, 1942.
> **Setting**: A bench at a concentration camp in Auschwitz, Poland.
> **Ella**: (stares in the horizon) You know what, Jan? This place is horrible. I hate it. We get treated like dogs.
> **Jan**: (sits there with a blank face and sips her water) Now Ella, you better hush before a guard hears you. But yes, I agree. I have grown weary, depressed, and just flat out tired. I cannot do this anymore. Sometimes I sit and think do I really want to live, even in this hell hole.
> **Ella**: I understand, but despite the circumstances, we still have our lives and that's all I want.
> **Jan**: It's a constant hard lifestyle, but what about the future?
> **Ella**: Jan, there's nothing we can do, either live or die, but I'd rather die than go through this for eternity.

Ivy's historical dialogue shows the despair and hopelessness that was felt by prisoners in a Nazi concentration camp during World War II. She uses words such as weary, depressed, and tired to convey the feelings and physical state of those that were in the camps. The existing literature states that historical empathy is a cognitive and affective process (Colby, 2008; Endacott, 2010; Endacott & Brooks, 2013). If students were to analyze the past and texts only through a cognitive lens, they would most likely find historical figures irrational and foolish. Combined with an affective lens, students realize that many decisions may be based on emotions, biases, and cultural norms (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Endacott & Brooks, 2013; Lee & Shemilt, 2011). Ivy's dialogue demonstrates how historical empathy is a combination of these dual domain constructs.

The cognitive aspect is that there is a clear recognition of perspectives. The dialogue is explaining past events through the eyes of people who supposedly lived it. Ivy has shown an affective connection to these historical figures by understanding how being in a concentration camp led to feelings of hopelessness and defeat. Many times, it is easier for students to ask, "Why couldn't they have just tried to escape?" Historical empathy leads them to understand that

historical figures' actions and decisions were not irrational or a result of ignorance (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Endacott & Brooks, 2013; Lee & Shemilt, 2011). They were a result of the time period and certain factors. Writing dialogues allows students to recognize this idea and take it a step further. They embody these people from the past and write as if they are "in time" instead of just telling about it (Ricoeur, 1980). In essence, for a moment, students must be in the historical era and recognize that they are subject to social, political, and cultural factors, such as war and racism. Writing the dialogues allows students to demonstrate their understanding of and connections to people of the past in meaningful ways.

Summary of Findings

In this chapter, the researcher presented the data that were collected from a study conducted in an 11th grade U.S. history classroom. The participants included one teacher and 25 students. Three types of data were collected: interviews, student work, and observation notes. The researcher used In Vivo, Pattern, and Descriptive Coding to analyze the three data sets. Multiple codes emerged as a result of the data analysis. Then, codes were categorized into themes that reflected the central ideas of the data.

The researcher's findings indicated that high school students in urban schools have the potential to benefit from a curriculum that utilizes perspective writing in the form of historical dialogues to foster historical empathy. The first research question asked, "How do perspective-writing activities that focus on marginalized groups help high school students in urban schools foster historical empathy skills?" When presented with counter-narratives that introduce the experiences of groups that have been historically marginalized throughout U.S. history, students seemed to easily make personal connections to the past. These groups have been oppressed due to race, gender, religion, and socioeconomics. Many of these factors are ones that urban students

can connect to based on their lived experiences. Urban schools tend to have a higher population of students of color. Therefore, urban students may potentially empathize more easily with the feelings generated by racism and prejudice. They also have a higher incidence of socio-economic challenges, such as households with low income, living in poverty, and communities that may be overdeveloped with less green spaces. Many students face challenges that are similar to those relayed in the counter-narratives that are told by historically oft-marginalized groups. Consequently, the past has more relevance and meaning to them.

Writing activities allow students the opportunity to develop perspective recognition and contextualization skills. Students read and analyzed primary sources in order to understand that people from the past were influenced by factors such as politics, culture, religion, and race. They made connections among historical issues. For instance, students' work suggests they realized that immigrants were often paid lower wages, and as a result lived in poverty. Also, African Americans were subjected to racism and, consequently, moved from one geographic region of the country of the other in search of a better way of life. Reading the first-hand accounts of historical figures provided the opportunity for students to empathize with these groups and recognize that the effects of the struggles they endured were not just immediate, but far-reaching. Teachers can build on the fact that students make these connections by introducing thematic teaching. Teaching chronologically may not allow time to cover the content that would show how historical issues develop over time. However, when using themes, students may see continuity and change over time because each thematic unit addresses an event from several historical eras (Metro, 2017).

The second research question asked, "To what extent, if any, do historical dialogues help high school students to contextualize the past?" Students encountered challenges during the

intervention. The data suggests that it was difficult for many of them to avoid presentism when contextualizing the past, especially when writing about issues that conflicted with their own personal beliefs. This became clearer in activities where students were required to write about topics such as racism, equal rights, and gender roles. Even though students were able to connect empathically with historical figures, it was difficult for them to understand that people of the same race, culture, and/or gender may have differing perspectives about the same issue or event.

The third research question asked, "To what degree, if any, do historical dialogues help high school students to develop historical empathy skills?" Despite struggles with presentism, the data indicates that there was growth in students' abilities to recognize perspective and contextualize issues and events from the past. Writing historical dialogues provided students with the opportunity to demonstrate their learning and understanding that historical figures are, to some degree, products of their time period. The dialogues reflected that students were able to engage with the past and those who lived it. It was still easier for students to empathize with some groups than others. For instance, when writing a dialogue between a nativist and an immigrant, there was a clear distinction of both parties' stances, their feelings, and opinions. Yet, students still seemed to struggle with being able to avoid presentism in dialogues between historical figures who were of the same race, culture, and/or gender. In a dialogue between Washington and Du Bois, the distinction between the two men's political positions are not clear. The student delved into presentism, imposing his own views about race and politics on Washington. The data from my study highlight potential next steps for future research with historical empathy.

Chapter Five

The purpose of the case study is to explore the possible benefits of historical dialogues in developing high school students' historical empathy skills. The study attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. How do perspective-writing activities that focus on marginalized and oppressed groups help, if at all, high school students in urban schools foster historical empathy skills?

2. To what extent, if any, do historical dialogues help high school students to contextualize the past?

3. To what degree, if any, do historical dialogues help high school students to develop historical empathy skills?

The researcher designed a social studies curriculum with the intent to strengthen high school students' historical empathy skills. The study was implemented in an 11th grade U.S. history class in an urban high school in central Alabama. The participants were a history teacher, Mr. Cooper, and 25 11th graders who were enrolled in his class during the Fall 2020 school semester.

To accomplish the purpose of this study, three data sets were analyzed: interview transcripts, student work products, and observation field notes. The researcher attempted to analyze Mr. Cooper's perceptions about the benefits of a curriculum that fosters historical empathy through interview questions. The interview transcripts were coded to gain insight into whether Mr. Cooper believed students were able to better connect with historical figures, especially those from marginalized groups. In addition, the researcher looked for progress in perspective recognition, using textual evidence, and contextualization through the analysis of student work and observation notes. The three sets of qualitative data worked to form a picture of how perspective-writing activities in the form of historical dialogues helped to foster high school students' historical empathy skills. Due to the fact that historical empathy pulls on numerous

threads in best practices in social studies education, there were surprising conclusions from the analysis of the data examined in chapter four.

Conclusions

Conclusion #1: Historical Empathy and Culturally Responsive Teaching

Students were presented with counter-narratives that introduced them to the experiences of groups that have been historically marginalized throughout U.S. history. As a result, it appeared that they were more easily able to connect to these historical figures. People of color, women, and the poor have had to struggle due to obstacles such as racism, sexism, disenfranchisement, and living in poverty. The students seemed able to empathize with these groups because of shared experiences and challenges. The primary sources in my study provided the opportunity for these high school students to understand the "otherness" in history. In other words, they read the voices of those whose stories have often been left out of history because it does not fit master narratives that focus on the accomplishment and actions of noted historical figures (Bickford & Clabough, 2019; Hawkman, 2017; Hawley et al., 2017; Woodson, 2016). In addition, writing first-person perspective narratives allowed students to demonstrate their ability to recognize that actions, decisions, and motivations of each marginalized group were influenced by societal, cultural, and political factors. The inclusion of counter-narratives and perspective-writing activities reflects the criteria that are inherent in culturally responsive teaching.

Ladson-Billings (1995a) argues that culturally responsive teaching engages learners whose cultures and experiences are underrepresented in education, and more specifically, in classrooms. There are three components to a culturally responsive pedagogy: a focus on academic success, a willingness to nurture cultural competence, and the development of students' social, political, and critical consciousness (Banks, 2016; Ladson-Billings, 1995a;

Willis & Lewis, 1998). Culturally responsive teaching connects to a curriculum that fosters historical empathy because all high school students should learn to appreciate the perspectives and experiences of all groups, especially those that are different from their own.

Further research will need to be conducted to measure the effects of pairing culturally responsive teaching with a historical empathy curriculum for the high school social studies classroom. A possible research question is "To what extent, if any, does a historical empathy curriculum help high school students to develop a critical consciousness?" When students possess a critical consciousness, they analyze the cultural norms, values, and institutions that perpetuate inequalities in a society (Ladson-Billings, 1995b). An example of an activity that would be included in this study is one where students are assigned letters to read that are written by Native American children who attended the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in the early 1900s. Other primary sources include those written by parents of the children and the founder of Carlisle Indian School. Students analyze the texts with a document analysis sheet in order to gain all perspectives of Native American assimilation at the hands of the U.S. government. Then, they write a dialogue as a Native American child being interviewed by a reporter regarding his or her feelings about being in the boarding school, race relations, assimilation, and how it feels to be Native American in the United States. The teacher follows up this assignment with a discussion about how students think the effects of this loss of Native American culture in the early 20th century still impacts this marginalized group today. A study that examines the benefits of such a curriculum may develop students' critical consciousness that may result in high school students being aware of and empathizing with the experiences of marginalized groups in the past. They may be provided with the skills and knowledge to take part in dialogue that questions the status

quo about the cultural, societal, and institutional norms that perpetuate the inequities in the past and the present (Freire, 1970; Journell, 2016).

Conclusion #2: Contextualization and Historical Empathy

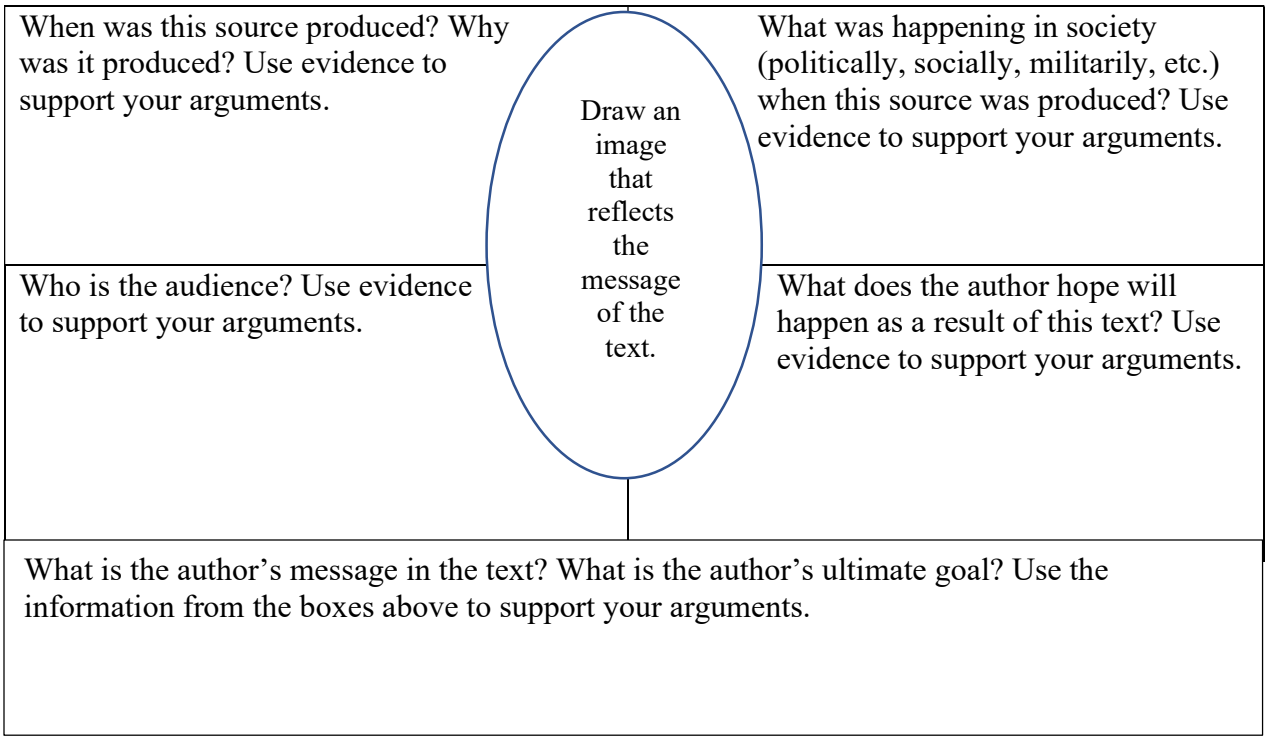
Contextualization was a skill that many high school students in the study did not find easy to master. They appeared to find it difficult to avoid delving into presentism when writing from the perspective of a historical figure whose beliefs and values differed from their own. In addition, it also seemed to be a struggle for most high school students to understand that people of the same race, culture, and/or gender may have had differing perspectives about the same issue. For instance, when writing from the perspective of Booker T. Washington, students tended to insert their own ideas and feelings about equality and social justice. Even with the use of primary sources, they took Washington's ideas about what it would take for African Americans to gain equal right out of context. The language used in Washington's narratives was aligned more with W.E.B. Du Bios' ideas and even Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s ideas. In contrast, those students who took on the persona of historical figures whose values and feelings were more in line with their own, appeared to find it easier to contextualize the past. This was especially true regarding issues such as racism, social injustices, and poverty. These types of issues have the potential to evoke a variety of powerful emotions that are a result of heterogeneous political ideologies, values, and current hyperpartisan politics in America, which are present in the classroom (Journell, 2016).

The students' responses lead the researcher to believe that there is a need for a social studies curriculum that focuses on teaching students to master contextualization. Contextualizing is attempting to understand events, people, and their decisions and actions as they existed and occurred in their historical eras (Reisman & Wineburg, 2008; Wineburg et al., 2013). The result

is that students see people and what happened in the past as products of that era, and comprehend they are to be judged by the standards of that time, not by modern ones (Wineburg et al., 2013).

Curricula that includes activities which develop contextualization skills should lead students to ask questions that create a portrait of the time period (Reisman & Wineburg, 2008). A graphic organizer allows students to answer questions and have a visual of how information connects to form a bigger historical picture. One such graphic organizer is called the Five Ways of Contextualization. It consists of five squares with a circle in the middle for an image or name of the text. Four squares contain context questions. The fifth square has a question that is an open-ended question requiring students to use their responses from the context questions as supporting evidence. An example of the graphic organizer is below:

The Five Ways of Contextualization



The graphic organizer requires students to analyze why the document was made, what was happening around the time of the production of the document, and if the author may have

possessed any biases that would have influenced what was written. It is important for students to understand how these factors influence historical figures, their thoughts, and their actions. Not only will understanding these influences result in helping students to avoid presentism, but they also begin to see history as rich and complex (Reisman & Wineburg, 2008).

Conclusion #3: Local History and the Power of Place

The students' work samples in the study reflected that they were able to more easily empathize with historical figures who were victims of racism, disenfranchisement, and other forms of social injustice. The researcher's rationale for students' ability in being able to step into the proverbial shoes of people of color with little difficulty, is because there is a connection of similar life experiences. Many students in urban schools have been subjected to racism, prejudice, or have experienced its effects by being victims of stereotypes. A disproportionate number of high school students in urban schools live in poverty, come from low-income homes, and live in communities that lack green spaces and have high incidences of crime (NCES, 1996; Teale et al, 2007). In addition, the high school students in the study live in Alabama, a Southern state whose history is steeped in racist laws, actions, and protests to stop social injustices (Clabough & Bickford, 2018; Inwood, 2011).

Empathic connections are especially meaningful when students are aware of their local history and the role their own city played in the unfolding story of the past. Teachers should take into consideration the "power of place" and its ability to reinforce the reality of the past (National Park Service, 2015). A local historical site may impact students more because they see its relevancy to their daily lives. When these places evoke feelings that students can relate to, such as anger, hope, rejection, and triumph, they understand the idea that the past does not live in

a vacuum, but that it truly impacts the present and potentially the future (Clabough & Bickford, 2018; Witherspoon et al., 2017).

There is a need for more research into benefits of a social studies curriculum that includes local history. Place-based education is an approach that connects student learning with the local community. The goal is to increase student engagement and academic achievement by providing relevant and meaningful knowledge about their own surroundings, which will hopefully instill a sense of agency. Students will recognize their own role in their communities, the world, and their ability to impact, alter, and change economic, social, cultural, and political institutions in these places (Bickford & Clabough, 2019; McInerney, 2011; Resor, 2010).

An activity included in a place-based curriculum may be one that focuses on the Birmingham company mining towns in the early 1900s. Students listen to a song recorded in 1955 by Tennessee Ernie Ford called, “Sixteen Tons.” The song’s lyrics tells about a miner’s life and the debts he has occurred as a result of working for the mine and living in a company town. Students analyze photos of town layouts, company stores, the houses, and what life was like in the towns. They also read primary sources from people who lived in the mining towns, which describe the conditions, the wages, and compare the towns to living on farms. The documents and pictures are analyzed with an analysis sheet. The worksheet asks questions such as “What is the author’s purpose for writing the text?” “What is the author’s perspective about the purpose of the company town?” and “What evidence supports the author’s perspective?” Then, the class comes together for a debriefing with the teacher. The teacher makes sure that students connect how Birmingham mining companies had a paternalistic relationship with its workers. As a product, students pretend they are a coal miner in the 1920s and write a song about working in the mines and living in a company town. They use the photos and primary sources to write their

lyrics. The goal of the activity is for students to understand the roots of the coal and mining industry that was a major part of Birmingham's origins and also connect how its effects can still be seen in the human, geographical, and industrial costs today (Clabough & Bickford, 2018).

Conclusion #4: Teaching Public Issues to Develop High School Students' Historical Empathy Skills

The analysis of these high school students' work indicated that they struggled with connecting that people of the same race, culture, and gender may have differing perspectives about the same issue. When confronted with an activity where students had to write from the persona of people from the same marginalized groups who had conflicting ideas, they tended to delve into presentism and rely on their own belief systems. This was especially true when confronted with public issues such as racism, voting, sexism, and unfair wages. There is a need for further study into how to teach students public issues to examine all perspectives, even when those views are in direct conflict with their own. High school students need to learn how exploring different perspectives about public issues helps us analyze people's ideas about their values, biases, and idiosyncrasies based on economic, political, geographical, religious, and cultural factors (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Colby, 2008; Endacott & Brooks, 2013; Endacott & Sturtz, 2014; Lee & Ashby, 2001; Yeager & Foster, 2001).

In their seminal work, Oliver and Shaver (1966) argue that public issues are persisting social and political dilemmas and value conflicts that are related to historical and contemporary public policies. By nature, these public issues are controversial because they involve people having multiple perspectives connected to people's values, biases, and beliefs (Ochoa-Becker, 1996). The 21st century social studies classroom is an ideal place for high school students to learn to talk about public issues. Teachers should create an environment where students listen to

each other, are comfortable speaking their minds, and voicing their opinions (Clabough, 2020). A social studies curriculum that focuses on discussing public issues may also help high school students to develop historical empathy skills. They learn to recognize perspectives, place people, their thoughts, and actions in context, and use evidence to draw conclusions. These are also the same skills that may help students to be productive citizens in a democratic society, where they are required to weigh the views presented by all sides of an issue and then make an informed decision (Clabough, 2020).

One activity that may be included in a social studies high school classroom is asking students to make a connection between the elements of racism in the 1960s and today. A photo is shown of two water fountains from the 1960s, one that says "White" and the other says "Colored." Another picture is displayed, this one of a sink with yellow water coming from a faucet. The teacher leads a class discussion to see if students can make any connections between the two pictures. Then, they are told the picture with the yellow water is from the Flint, Michigan Water Crisis. The public issue put before high school students is whether the Flint, Michigan Water Crisis is a sign of systemic racism, much like the water fountains of the 1960s. The argument is that this crisis disproportionately affected communities of color. High school students would use a graphic organizer to analyze texts that reflect both sides of the arguments.

As part of the activity, students will pretend to be a newspaper writer and create an op-ed piece that voices their opinions based on the evidence. It is important that students' writings demonstrate acknowledgement of other perspectives and competing solutions, even as they argue their own feelings and ideas (Oliver & Shaver, 1966). The researcher has included an example of the graphic organizer and the prompt below:

A Tale of Two Texts

Title of the text			**Notable similarities between the authors' perspectives and/or texts.**
Author of the text			
According to the author, what is the problem/issue/topic? Cite evidence from the article to support your argument.			
According to the author, what is the cause of the problem/issue/topic? Cite evidence from the article to support your argument.			
According to the author, what is the solution, if any, to the problem/issue/topic? Cite evidence from the article to support your argument.			

Opinions Matter: An Op-Ed Writer Speaks

You are an op-ed writer for the *Flint People Speak* newspaper. Your editor has assigned you with writing a piece on the Flint Water Crisis. There has been a large debate about whether this crisis has been a result of systemic racism because people of color have been largely affected. You do your research on both sides of the argument. Write a two-paragraph op-ed piece that voices your opinion based on your research. Describe the water crisis, who you believe is responsible, and how it should be resolved. Make sure to state the opposing arguments and why you believe they are not credible. Cite evidence from your research to support your arguments. Remember, op-ed pieces are to the point, provide information, and express a clear point of view.

A curriculum with activities such as these that focuses on discussing public issues and

developing high school students' historical empathy skills encourages them to tackle and discuss

questions that concern humanity and the common good (Oliver & Shaver, 1966). High school students learn to recognize that issues impacting society require thorough deliberation, critical analysis of all perspectives, and making informed decisions based on evidence (Endacott, 2010; Yeager & Doppen, 2001; Yeager & Foster, 2001). High school students take this a step further by challenging themselves to discuss possible solutions that would benefit society as a whole (Clabough, 2020; Ochoa-Becker, 1996).

Conclusion #5: Adding Depth with Interdisciplinary Teaching

These high school students appeared to realize that factors such as economics, geography, and politics affected many of the historical figures they encountered in the primary sources. For instance, many immigrants were hindered from achieving the "American Dream" because of low pay and living in poverty. In addition, African Americans and women were faced with having to fight political battles, such as disenfranchisement from voting. Most of the high school students from the study connected that these challenges were a result of racism, sexism, or being subjected to the cultural and societal norms of the era. Interdisciplinary teaching introduces high school students to a richer and deeper view of the past. It helps them to understand that history is complex, and there are rarely simple reasons for people's motivations, decisions, and actions (Clabough & Wooten, 2019; Lintner, 2013).

When writing first-person perspective narratives, students draw upon the information from other disciplines to gain a richer understanding of the reasons why these groups endured certain struggles. For example, when writing as an African American who left the South for the North, high school students in the study understood it was not simply for a better job. Their writings also reflected that racism, unfair laws, and the violent culture these created made it so it was no longer acceptable to live in the South. The first-person perspective narrative written as an

African American during the Great Migration includes topics connected to civics, geography, and social justice issues. These disciplines, when used in conjunction with each other, provide a more in-depth glimpse into an historical era.

There is a need for further research that explores the benefits of interdisciplinary teaching in the social studies classroom. An interdisciplinary curriculum is defined as one that deliberately pulls from more than one subject area in order to examine an issue, topic, or event in more depth (DiCamillo & Bailey, 2016; Lintner, 2013). A deeper understanding of history allows high school students to more easily understand and connect to historical figures. Factors such as economics, geography, and civics that influenced people in the past, are relevant because they still impact people today (NCSS, 2013a). Students may find that these are factors that influence their daily lives. This may allow high school students to better empathize with historical figures.

High school students may benefit from using an activity that helps them to visualize how economic, social, geographic, cultural, and political factors work together to influence a person or situation. They may complete this activity alone or in pairs. On a large sheet of paper, students draw the outline of a body. The teacher assigns an historical figure, and students must draw images or write words on the "body" to analyze and interpret the person's experiences, challenges, feelings, actions, decisions, and relationships. Students would build upon the body, as it relates to the essential question. They may also add clothes or accessories that help tell the historical figure's full story. For example, this activity may be used when teaching about the Great Depression and why the migrants, known as Okies, left Oklahoma for California to escape the Dust Bowl. Each body part on the drawing would represent an aspect of an Okie's life and the reasons for moving further west. Students could write words or draw pictures near the feet to show the action of the Okies moving to California or do the same near the hands to illustrate how

many were farmers whose crops were failing in the Dust Bowl. In addition, they could also highlight the Okie's pants pockets to reflect the lack of money that drove the decision to migrate west. These examples weave in other disciplines, such as geography and economics. It is important the teacher brings the class together to discuss the students' drawings to ensure they have connected how all the factors worked together to create the Okie phenomenon. An interdisciplinary curriculum that includes activities such as this, helps high school students to understand historical figures and their experiences with depth and many layers, thereby making it potentially easier to empathize with individuals from the past.

Conclusion #6: Thematic Teaching to Potentially Develop High School Students' Historical Empathy Skills

The research findings led the researcher to believe there is a need for further investigation into the possible benefits of thematic teaching in the high school social studies classroom. During the research study, the teacher, Mr. Cooper, noticed how writing activities that foster historical empathy helped his students to make connections between the past and the present. These high school students' work suggests they began to see how the events in one task were related to the events in another historical era. Mr. Cooper stated the activities put "a dash in between A and B to help [students] a bit more." For instance, many times, there is a tendency for high school students to think that the only Civil Rights Movement in the United States occurred during the 1960s. However, reading primary sources written by W.E.B. Du Bois and Booker T. Washington, and then having to write in their personas, has the potential to guide these students to see that the groundwork for the 1960s Civil Rights Movement was laid at the turn of the 20th century.

Thematic teaching is an approach that purposefully guides high school students to make connections and see how an issue develops over time (Metro, 2017). This type of instruction encourages an understanding of the historical process and causality of events. The traditional manner of teaching chronologically has several disadvantages. These disadvantages include not being able to cover all the content material in one school semester, and sometimes, high school students fail to see the relevance of events to the present. A research study over a school semester where a high school teacher implements thematic social studies units may shed light on how students make connections among the past and present.

Thematic curricula consist of units that revolve around an essential question. A possible unit may be "What is the definition of an American citizen?" In this unit, the activities would include primary sources from several historical eras that pertain to this question. Such documents may include excerpts from the Declaration of Independence, the U. S. Constitution, the Dred Scott Case*,* Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s *I Have a Dream* speech, and Barack Obama's *A More Perfect Union* speech. The purpose is to include documents that have differing ideas about American citizenry. High school students analyze the documents and speeches with a document analysis sheet that asks questions about the author's perspectives and the historical context of each text. The document analysis sheet contains the following questions:

1. When was the text produced?
2. What was the purpose of the text?
3. What was the author's perspective about who was an American citizen?
4. What evidence supports the author's perspective about who was an American?

These questions help high school students examine the document's historical context and how certain factors may have led to the authors having differing perspectives about American

citizenship. They are also required to analyze the texts for supporting evidence, which helps students to support their arguments when completing the writing assignments.

For the culminating activity, students work in groups of three. One student will be a moderator, and the other two students pretend to be two of the historical figures that wrote the documents they analyzed. In groups, they write a script where the moderator interviews the historical figures about their concepts of American citizenship. The script is supported by textual evidence and must reflect how this concept changed from different historical eras. A study that implements thematic units like the one mentioned here has the potential to help high school students understand how an issue reoccurs throughout history and is relevant to their daily lives.

Conclusion #7: Breadth vs. Depth

Mr. Cooper, the teacher in the researcher study, found that one challenge he faced was the conflict of covering the history content quickly or allotting enough time to cover the content in depth. In education research, this dilemma is called breadth vs. depth (Pearcy & Duplass, 2011; VanSledright, 1997). Mr. Cooper thought the activities that were a part of my research study would take approximately 70 minutes. However, he quickly discovered that most of his high school students took one and a half, and sometimes two class periods. This led to the realization that if high school students were to gain as much from the activities as possible, he would have to take the extra time, at the expense of covering the social studies content quickly.

Mr. Cooper found due to time that he was not able to complete three of the activities included in the original curriculum. There was a need to cover other content before the end of the semester. As a result of the findings, the researcher believes there is a need for further research into strategies that will help teachers to achieve a balance between breadth and depth in the high school social studies classroom.

Current research indicates there is no true way to overcome breadth vs. depth. There are complex historical issues that should be thoroughly explored (Parker et al., 2011; VanSledright, 1997; Wineburg, 1997). A semester-long study in a high school social studies class that utilizes a thematic curriculum consisting of inquiry-based strategies would be ideal to examine how to find a better balance between coverage and content. This type of curriculum is one that embraces inquiry, is student-centered, and allows students room to deliberate on, plan, form, and answer questions. Inquiry-based activities increase students' depth of knowledge as they must research, analyze documents, evaluate evidence, and draw conclusions based on evidence (Clabough et al., 2017). These are all the hallmarks of higher order thinking. Thematic units would allow high school students to cover content from different historical eras. They would be able to see how events and certain issues are connected over time and are still relevant to today. Thematic units enable the high school teacher to cover more of the social studies content.

An activity that utilizes inquiry may require students to analyze documents written by the same historical figure and examine how and why a person's ideas changed over time. For instance, in a thematic unit about race and equality in the United States, the teacher gives students three documents written by Abraham Lincoln. Each text illustrates Lincoln's views on slavery and/or the equality of African Americans. The texts are Lincoln's *Response to Senator Douglas*, written in 1858, in which he states that Blacks will never be equal with Whites. The second primary source is Lincoln's 1862 speech *Address on Colonization*, where he claims it is not Black people's fault they are intellectually inferior because their minds have been clouded by slavery. It would be best if they were colonized in Central America, a place where they would be better acclimated. The last source is the *Emancipation Proclamation*, penned in 1863, where Lincoln states that all slaves are free. Students would research why Lincoln's views changed and

how events happening during his era in politically, socially, and militarily terms impacted his documents. Were there any influential people in his life that may have impacted his way of thinking? Students also examine how Lincoln fits into the overall picture of racism in America. This may be first activity in a thematic unit. Not only have high school students completed an in-depth analysis of Lincoln's views on slavery, but they also cover content, because they will have researched what was occurring in the United States during the Civil War era. A study that examines how to balance breadth vs. depth by incorporating thematic units and inquiry has potential benefits to high school students. Thematic units may allow the teacher to cover more historical eras, while at the same time, using inquiry-based activities provide the opportunity for high school students to examine important people and events in depth.

Conclusion #8: Next Steps in Historical Empathy Research: Using Historical Dialogues to Discuss Controversial Public Issues

The research study attempted to explore to what extent, if any, historical dialogues helped high school students in an urban high school in central Alabama to contextualize the past and develop other historical empathy skills. The findings indicate that when writing historical dialogues these high school students were able to contextualize the past to some degree. In addition, they seemed able to recognize perspectives and use primary sources to support their writing, as was evidenced by most students being capable of writing a dialogue that showed multiple perspectives. When writing a dialogue between two historical figures who were from the same culture, race, or of the same gender, most students tended to struggle with avoiding presentism. In contrast, writing a dialogue that featured two people with contrasting and distinctive point of views appeared to be less difficult because it was easier for students to empathize with the marginalized historical figures.

Due to time limitations and the implementation of the curriculum starting later than expected, these high school students were not given the opportunity to complete more activities writing dialogues. They completed two activities where the products were monologues and wrote a dialogue as a final project. Students may have benefited from having more activities to practice writing dialogues. This might have provided them more opportunities to better master contextualization skills. Therefore, based on the findings, the researcher believes there is a need for further research about how high school students will benefit from a curriculum that uses historical dialogues to foster historical empathy skills.

One such study should explore how to utilize historical dialogues to discuss controversial public issues. During my research study, students analyzed primary sources that focused on topics such as racism, nativism, equality under the law, unfair wages, and sexism. These topics are public issues that are still very relevant and present in contemporary U. S. society. They evoke strong feelings and opinions that vary for multiple reasons. The high school social studies classroom is a place where it should be safe to explore these controversial public issues (Hess, 2011, 2018). Teaching students to discuss these issues shows that there is a way to disagree productively and have civil discourse that allows for an appreciation of multiple perspectives, even if they directly conflict with one's own (Hess, 2011; Kawashima-Ginsberg & Junco, 2018; Ruffing & Arbetman, 2018).

To discuss a controversial public issue and write a dialogue that demonstrates an understanding of multiple perspectives, high school students are required to conduct research, analyze primary and secondary sources, and draw conclusions based on evidence. They also must recognize the racial, political, socioeconomic, and cultural factors that influence a person's feelings, behaviors, and decisions. This allows for a better understanding of why people have

differing views (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Endacott & Brooks, 2013; Lee & Ashby, 2001; Yeager & Foster, 2001). Writing a dialogue between two historical figures that disagree allows high school students the opportunity to model civil discourse and respectful disagreement.

A research study conducted over a high school semester would examine the benefits of a curriculum that utilizes historical dialogues to discuss controversial public issues. An activity in such a curriculum may ask, "Is it patriotic to protest in times of war?" Students analyze several primary sources from different historical eras, such as the Sedition Acts of 1798, the Sedition Act of 1918, the Enrollment Act of Conscription, and first accounts from those who were for and against the Vietnam War and the Second War in Iraq. The texts are examined with the help of a document analysis sheet. The sheet asks such questions as, "When was the text produced?" "What is the author's perspective about freedom of speech and/or right to protest during war?" and "What evidence from the text supports the author's perspective?" After completing the analysis documents, high school students would come back as a class and discuss the differing points of views that were presented in the documents. This serves as a forum for high school students to share their ideas about how historical context may have influenced the authors of each text as well as practice discussing their own perspectives in a productive manner.

The product for the activity is a historical dialogue where high school students write a conversation between two historical figures who have opposing views about any of the wars from the texts. Even though students may have their own ideas, the historical dialogue is an opportunity for them to demonstrate that they understand how an issue is rarely straightforward with one right or wrong answer. Students deconstruct the primary sources and use the content to present multiple sides of an issue and how people from the same time period may view an event in different ways. Ultimately, this activity teaches students to research a controversial public

issue, analyze the reasons why people disagree, consider factors that may influence people's feelings and thoughts, and then model through a dialogue that resolution is possible through civil dialogue. These are all hallmarks of productive and effective citizenry in a democratic society (Clabough, 2020; Journell, 2016).

Afterthoughts

Leading research in the field of historical empathy has primarily been focused on best practices in the high school social studies classroom (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Colby, 2008; Endacott & Brooks, 2013; Retz, 2015; Yeager & Foster, 2001). Less research has been done concerning the format in which students best learn how to develop historical empathy skills. Exploring the researcher's conclusions about the need for further research in historical empathy as outlined in this chapter will expand the existing body of research. The recommendations for further research meet the current focus of secondary social studies education as outlined in the C3 Framework. The C3 Framework has its foundation in inquiry. It is through inquiry that students analyze, explain, and argue concepts that are taught in the social studies classroom (NCSS, 2013a). This prepares students to be critically conscious thinkers, who deliberate over public issues and make informed decisions. When they enter society as productive citizens, students are able to appreciate and be tolerant of multiple perspectives, especially those that differ from their own (Journell; 2016; NCSS, 2013b).

NCSS (2016) argues that powerful and authentic teaching in the 21st century social studies classroom must be meaningful and draw on other social studies disciplines. Doing so draws on the totality of the human experience because it provides depth to the human story. When high school students understand the factors that drive people to think, act, and behave in certain manners, they are more likely to understand why people are motivated to commit certain

acts. Some of these actions may be hard to reconcile, but the high school social studies classroom should be a place where students feel safe to voice their thoughts and opinions, especially about issues that are controversial. It is in such an environment where our students are prepared to be future democratic citizens. A productive citizen thinks with empathy, considers other perspectives, examines and weighs evidence, and makes informed decisions based on evidence (NCSS, 2013b).

In this way, developing historical empathy skills are relevant to high school students' daily lives. In a few short years, high school students will enter the real world and participate in a democratic society where they can affect change to public policies. Knowing how to recognize and appreciate other perspectives, weigh evidence, and make sound decisions based on evidence are skills that are taken from the high school classroom and used in students' daily lives. The world is becoming more diverse, and it is vital that students know how to operate and succeed in a world where people have different beliefs and experiences. Historical empathy skills provide high school students with these skills and allows them to be successful in the classroom and in the real world.

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APPENDIX A

IRB APPROVAL LETTER

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM
Office of the Institutional Review Board for Human Use

470 Administration Building
701 20th Street South
Birmingham, AL 35294-0104
205.934.3789 | Fax 205.934.1301 |
irb@uab.edu

APPROVAL LETTER

TO: Yancie, Nefertari A

FROM: University of Alabama at Birmingham Institutional Review Board
Federalwide Assurance # FWA00005960
IORG Registration # IRB00000196 (IRB 01)
IORG Registration # IRB00000726 (IRB 02)

DATE: 08-Aug-2019

RE: IRB-300003186
Using Perspective Writing in the Form of Historical Dialogues to Foster Historical Empathy

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The IRB reviewed and approved the Initial Application submitted on 05-Aug-2019 for the above referenced project. The review was conducted in accordance with UAB's Assurance of Compliance approved by the Department of Health and Human Services.

Type of Review: Exempt
Exempt Categories: 1
Determination: Exempt
Approval Date: 08-Aug-2019
Approval Period: One Year

The following populations are approved for inclusion in this project:

- Children – CRL 1

Documents Included in Review:

- consent(teacher).clean.1900804
- consent(student/parent).clean.190804
- hsp.190804
- datacollection(observationsketch).190710
- pptletter(parent/student).clean.190710
- datacollection(observation).190710
- interview.clean.190710
- pptletter(teacher).clean.190710