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Examining the power of using primary sources in middle school social studies

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EXAMINING THE POWER OF USING PRIMARY SOURCES IN MIDDLE
SCHOOL SOCIAL STUDIES

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Honors in the Major Program in Social Science Education
in the College of Education
and in the Burnett Honors College
at the University of Central Florida
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ABSTRACT

Educational experts believe that utilizing primary sources opens new doors for students by allowing them to think like historians, which ultimately hones in on the purpose of developing critical thinking skills (Rodeheaver, 2009). Historians constantly question documents, events, and credentials in order to form their own opinions while using primary source documents (Drake, 2002). When students have the opportunity and freedom to question documents and events and form their own opinions, learning may be enhanced. This study examines the possible power of allowing students to explore primary documents and learn by doing during social studies instruction (Dewey, 1916).

This thesis examines middle school students' perceptions of the effectiveness of using primary source documents in social studies. Through a survey given to general education students and to ESE students, this thesis explored eighth graders' perceptions of using primary sources. The survey included questions pertaining to the depth of knowledge on using primary sources as well as questions about how to determine a primary source from a secondary source and which of the two is more interesting and/or of more benefit to the learning process. By analyzing the responses to the survey given, the results found that a number of eighth graders thought that primary sources were more interesting, but preferred to learn from secondary sources. These findings do not necessarily agree with what educational experts and historians are suggesting, yet, they may offer insights into the educational implications for middle school teachers and provide opportunities for future research.

DEDICATION

For John Christopher Howell

My Poppop, my angel, my world

“We will think of you every day”

Love always,

Petunia

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I would like to thank Dr. Sherron Killingsworth Roberts for absolutely everything; I'm glad and so lucky you inherited me. You have made this such a wonderful process and you are an amazing person!

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Preservice teachers learn many different strategies for effective teaching before they have the opportunity to get into the classroom and begin teaching. On paper, many different strategies seem as though they will work efficiently. However, those who have had the opportunity to be inside a classroom and address the varying levels of learning abilities know that no one particular teaching strategy will work for every student. Using more than one method of teaching is logical, and inevitable, for all classrooms. This is especially true when teaching exceptional students. Florida Department of Education defines exceptional student education (ESE) as any student between the ages of 3 and 21 who is either gifted or disabled in any way. Because Florida schools are inclusion schools, a middle school social studies classroom will likely include students who have learning disabilities as well as students who are considered to be gifted. At Blueberry Middle School, two teams of students coexist: the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) team and the ESE team. One teacher on the ESE team may have a classroom with: a student who is hard of hearing, a student with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), a student who is bored with the material because they are advanced, and one who is unable to grasp the material due to a specific learning disability. One pedagogical strategy that would be effective to reach the varying needs of any and all students would be to use primary source documents during instruction.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this thesis is to examine students' perceptions of the effectiveness of using primary source documents in middle school social studies. This research project will address a working definition of primary sources, as well as a rationale for using primary sources in the eighth grade social studies classroom. This thesis will explore eighth graders' perceptions of using primary sources through a survey given to general education students and from ESE students.

Educational experts believe that utilizing primary sources opens a new door for students by allowing them to think like historians, which ultimately hones in on their critical thinking skills (Rodeheaver, 2009). The purpose of using primary source documents is so that students develop necessary critical thinking skills. Historians constantly question documents, events, and credentials in order to form their own opinions while using primary source documents (Drake, 2002). When students have the opportunity to question documents and events and form their own opinions, they should feel as if they have academic freedom. Having academic freedom will allow the students to not feel pressured to determine the correct answer and will facilitate learning. When planning to use primary source documents for instruction, the teacher must choose the documents wisely. The reason for careful planning, much like planning for any other method of teaching, is that the teacher using the primary source has to anticipate learning and engage the student (Drake, 2009). The students will be able to retain more knowledge if they are able to directly relate to the material. This part of using primary source documents for instruction is where reaching students of different levels becomes effective. Reaching individual students can be as easy as probing, or guiding students toward the correct answer, during instruction.

For example, if the teacher has students learning about the Industrial Revolution, the teacher could simply introduce that lesson by asking students what types of advances in technology currently benefit them. When the students come up with answers, the teacher can explain that in the 1800s, the people wanted technology to advance their living situations. After a brief conversation about similarities in people today and people of the nineteenth century, the teacher can expose students to primary sources such as pictures or diaries of developing inventions of the Industrial Revolution. When analyzing these artifacts/photographs, students should start to understand how the technological advances made life easier for the masses. Students of all levels will have the ability to understand what types of resources make their lives easier and will therefore be able to relate to those of the 1800s. When students can relate to the material, they will gain deeper knowledge.

Teachers must understand that when first introducing primary source documents for instruction, their students may not understand the thinking process. Students may not even know how to correctly define a primary source. Students are not necessarily expected to become actual young historians, rather they are learning to make conclusions much like a historian would while interpreting past events; thus, they will need guidance for questioning the chosen documents and modeling of the thinking process (Keohane, 1946). When students are not familiar with the questioning process, they tend to overgeneralize and may not form concrete opinions (Drake, 2002). Using pre-made charts will greatly assist the students in their journeys of analysis (Appendix A). The charts can include observations and predictions so the students know what they are looking for in photographs. The Library of Congress (LOC) suggests three main steps to recognize when analyzing primary source documents other than photographs: observe, reflect

and question (<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/>). Although two effective ways, pre-made charts and the LOC's steps of primary source analysis were mentioned, the teacher has the freedom to choose what the students will focus on, as far as what they should observe and reflect upon, within each document based on student ability.

Rationale

Teachers are held accountable for student learning and are responsible for teaching students how to think critically by using higher order thinking skills. Not only are the teachers responsible for teaching these skills, but they are also held accountable for preparing their students for the End of Class (EOC) assessment. Many of the questions on the EOC include Document Based Questions (DBQ's) where the students must analyze documents in order to write an essay or answer questions about it. Although an array of pedagogical strategies are incorporating critical thinking into the curriculum, such as Bloom's Taxonomy, critical thinking and analysis should be practiced on a daily basis for middle school students. Learning how to think critically is important for middle school students because at the high school level they will be expected to have these skills mastered (Waring & Robinson, 2010). When teaching exceptional education students at the middle school level, pushing students to think for themselves may be difficult. By using primary sources for instruction, teachers are automatically incorporating how to think critically within every lesson taught. There is no need for teachers to pressure students because they will already start thinking for themselves when analyzing documents and photographs (Rodeheaver, 2009). According to the Library of Congress (2012),

“Examining primary sources gives students a powerful sense of history and the complexity of the past. Helping students analyze primary sources can also guide them toward higher-order thinking and better critical thinking and analysis skills”
(<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/>).

Primary source documents show students that people see things from different points of view (Waring & Robinson, 2010). Varying standpoints are encouraged all through the questioning period so no two students have the same answer. When analyzing documents, it is inevitable that students will have different interpretations of the subject material. Students’ ideas will differ from their peers’ and from the teacher’s ideas, even when the teacher thinks all interpretations have been exhausted. By using sources other than history textbooks, students understand that history is largely a compilation of interpretations rather than facts (Waring & Robinson, 2010). Not only will analyzing primary sources hone in on a student’s critical thinking skills, it will better prepare the students for the DBQ’s on the EOC.

In a learning environment that includes students with exceptionalities, students will have different levels of thinking but they can all advance. Because they may start the school year at different levels, all will not finish the school year with the highest order of thinking skills, but each student will gain more knowledge and higher thinking skills than they previously had. Students will not feel pressured; they will simply gain information by classroom participation and forming their own opinions through observation and analysis of primary source documents.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Definitions pertaining to primary source documents

While an exact definition for “primary source” does not exist, according to Merriam-Webster online dictionary, the word ‘primary’ is defined as “first in order of time or development” and the word ‘source’ is defined as “one that supplies information.” When the two definitions combine, primary source could be explained as a supply of information at its first stage of development. The Library of Congress (2011) defines primary sources as “the raw materials of history.” They are further explained as the original items of the time period being discussed (<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/>). Primary source documents guide students toward the use of critical thinking and analysis skills. Critical thinking is described by Dictionary.com as “disciplined thinking that is clear, rational, open-minded, and informed by evidence.” Therefore, this thesis will define primary sources as a supply of information at its first order of development that can guide individuals toward disciplined thinking that is clear, rational, open-minded, and can be backed up by evidence. Examples of primary sources are photographs, biographies, journal entries, diaries, and letters.

Teaching Students with Exceptionalities

Students, no matter the grade level, who have varying abilities or disabilities are considered to be exceptional students. Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) defines students with exceptionalities as those ages 3-21 who have disabilities and students who are gifted. Blueberry Middle School, a large school district in Florida, has two teams of eighth graders; one team is ESOL and the other is ESE. Students on the same team have all the same

teachers but not necessarily during the same periods. Many of the students on the eighth grade ESE team at Blueberry are scoring at levels three or lower (the highest score is a 4 and means the student will not need to be in any recovery programs, a 3 is a high enough score also to keep the student out of recovery programs) on the required state standardized test and are in the course recovery program. The course recovery program was designed to help failing students perform better in all their classes so that they have ample opportunity to advance to ninth grade. Students who do not succeed in the course recovery program are retained. Although schools will retain students who do not have the grades to pass middle school, studies show that retention is not the best strategy for improving learning skills nor does it improve the way students feel about school (Katz, 2008). Furthermore, one study showed that those students who were retained either did not improve academically or only improved for a short period of time (Katz, 2008). Rather than relying on retention, alternative routes should be taken before the only option is retention. Commonly suggested alternatives include summer school and tutoring, but sometimes this is not enough. Students do not want to waste their summers in school and some eighth grade students have after school responsibilities that could prevent them from tutoring sessions.

One alternative that has not been suggested is changing the way the students are being taught. If students can be taught in a more authentic way that intrinsically motivates them to learn the material, they may gain more knowledge. The use of primary source documents would be a great strategy to teach students with exceptionalities because students of all abilities are capable of providing their opinions when asked. Learning occurs in a more organic and natural way when students are forced to think critically about genuine historical documents.

The Use of Primary Sources

Through data analysis from a recent research study, Misty Rodeheaver (2009) found that students who experienced social studies with the use of primary sources improved their test scores. Students of all learning levels have the opportunity to be successful in gaining knowledge from primary sources as long as students understand how to analyze the documents or photographs in an effective manner. Before students are instructed on effectively analyzing the documents, it is crucial that they know what defines a primary source. In his research of primary digital sources, Waring found many college students were not familiar with what makes a primary source. “Many of the [college] students indicated that they had never heard the term or had the opportunity to work with primary source materials.”

When considering using primary sources with students, teachers might consider the following teaching strategies for analysis. First, “mind-walk” is one effective strategy introduced by the Library of Congress (<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/>) to introduce what, exactly, a primary source is. Students are asked to recall any activities they were a part of within a designated 24 hour period and produce evidence that proves they were present at these activities (Waring & Robinson, 2010). The activities and evidence are then to be discussed and this is where students will realize that the story about their past would be considered a primary source. The “mind-walk” activity not only introduces what a primary source is to the students, but also helps students form a personal sense of historical and authentic relationships with what they are learning.

Once the students have a clear understanding of what primary sources are, they should understand how to analyze them. In order for students to succeed in formulating concrete

opinions by analyzing primary sources, teachers need to ensure students' awareness and accuracy as well as focus. This is where using a pre-made chart is an effective teaching tool. Eighth grade students with exceptionalities may not understand the importance to noticing how many people are in the photograph or how old the people look in the photograph. These nuances are important aspects that the student needs instruction from the teacher to notice. Teachers should not expect that their students will transform into historians throughout this process, but they will gain the skills to analyze information and come to their own conclusion about the information presented (Keohane, 2011).

If the students do not have assistance in analyzing the sources, little gain will be made while using them. A librarian, Mary Johnson (2012), from Colorado, wrote an article about the use of primary source teaching for *School Library Monthly*. Johnson included certain steps for ensuring the success of teaching with primary sources. The steps she includes in her article are of the following: start simply, include the learning goals for the students, help students connect to the source, help them develop strong, critical questions, and help them with thinking routinely (Johnson, 2012). Johnson's third step, help them connect to the source, is very important as students will learn better if they feel a relationship or connection to the information being presented in some way. When students can recognize things they already know, they will be able to better recognize things they are not familiar with as well.

Johnson's fourth step, help them with thinking routinely, is a process of thinking while analyzing primary sources. "Thinking routines" play an important role in understanding how to analyze primary source documents; what are the students looking for and why? A thinking routine is simply the flow the teacher expects the students to use while analyzing documents.

There is not a specific routine; rather, it is the way the teacher prefers to get the students in the habit of recognizing what they need to be questioning about the documents. The Library of Congress (2012) suggests students become familiar with the following steps: observe, reflect, and question. One way to remember how to analyze photographic primary sources is to use the mnemonic device, “POSER(S).” “POSER(S)” can be explained as follows: who are the *people*, what *objects* are there, what is the *setting*, what are the people *engaged* in, how are the people or objects *related*, and to think through a *summary* (<http://historytech.wordpress.com/2012/03/23/nche-session-v-graphic-organizers-and-primary-sources/>). The reason for using POSER(S) is because it allows for lower-performing students to remember the highlights without requiring too much so as to overwhelm and it allows higher-performing students to take the analysis a little bit further. Lower-performing students may not have the ability to summarize a particular photograph, but they are likely to pull out the other information from the photograph.

It is important to keep in mind that all teachers introduce primary source analysis skills differently, “but the main goal is to be sure that the primary source document is going to allow the student to anticipate learning and engage directly in the document” (Drake, 2002). Once students master the routine set up by their teacher, they will develop a natural flow for this process (Johnson, 2010).

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

After gaining principal and IRB approval (see Appendix B), eighth grade students placed on the ESE team at Blueberry Middle School were informed about this study and invited to participate. Because they were minors, students needed parental permission which could be obtained by returning the Informed Consent form given to them (Appendix C for informed consent). They further realized that although it was voluntary, only by returning the parental permission form could they volunteer. The informed consent was necessary in giving minors permission from their parents to participate in the study which consisted of a three section survey. The purpose of the survey was to see what the students knew about primary source documents, if they were interested in using them for learning purposes, their perceptions, as well as the demographics of the participants. Voluntary participants were asked not to put their names on any survey research materials, and told that their participation or nonparticipation would not affect their status in the class in any way. Data in this study was gathered for the sole purpose of research.

Subjects

The study surveyed participants in an eighth grade, ESE, social science setting in one middle school in a large school district in Florida. There were currently 908 students enrolled at Blueberry Middle School which includes grades 6-8. Blueberry Middle School is located in the Southeast learning community and has been graded an “A” every year since it has been open. There are two teams of eighth grade students with four teachers per team. The purpose of this is

so that these teachers who have the same planning time can come together and integrate their curriculum for more effective teaching.

After the state's high stakes testing was complete, the researcher and the cooperating teacher proceeded to survey students. The informed consent form was given to a total of 110 students; 52 girls and 58 boys and of these students, 31 are considered exceptional education students. As previously mentioned, participation was completely voluntary and confidential. Eighth grade students with exceptionalities are interesting subjects to investigate if using primary source documents for instruction might be beneficial for students of all performance levels. Only 29 students returned signed informed consent forms: 13 males, 15 females, and 1 no answer. (A table of gender, ethnicity, and average social studies grades of the participants can be found in Appendix D.) Of the 29 participants, 3 students are recognized as ESE. The return rate for this survey was 29 out of 110 for 26% after the first request for surveys. Because it was the end of the semester and the end of the school year, unfortunately no follow-up requests for additional returns of surveys were even possible.

The survey was distributed in a confidential manner. Students who had permission to participate in the survey left the classroom and followed the researcher to a different room. As each student handed in their signed informed consent, they were asked if they agreed to participate in the survey. When the student agreed, a number was written on the informed consent and the same number was written on the survey in order to privately track the demographics of the participants, such as ESE. The informed consent papers were the only source of information to include the names of participants. These forms were kept in a folder in the teacher's secure desk while at Blueberry Middle School.

Surveys

The purpose of the three-part survey in this study was to acquire necessary data in regard to student perceptions and knowledge of primary source documents in the secondary social studies classroom (Appendix E for survey). A few things can be seen from this survey: what the participants believe a primary source document is; whether the students can distinguish between a primary and secondary source document; and, which documents they think are most interesting. The demographic part of this survey asked for gender and ethnicity data.

Before responding to the questions on the survey, it was necessary for students to read two different paragraphs: one being a primary source and one a secondary source. The time allocated for survey answering did not exceed more than twenty minutes although all students were given as much time as needed. Participants completed the first part of the survey by answering questions about the two paragraphs they read. The second part of the survey requires an 'agree or disagree' response in which students had the opportunity to provide any additional information they thought necessary. The third and final part of the survey was the demographic section in which students checked off boxes to indicate their gender, ethnicity, and their average social studies grades (Appendix E for the survey).

The researcher chose to have the participants read two different paragraphs in order to answer a few questions on the survey (Appendix F). The researcher gave them a primary source paragraph and a secondary source paragraph. The primary source paragraph was found at a website called Digital History and it was an autobiography written by a woman from Lithuania who watched a shoemaker work which made her want to come to America. The second paragraph, a secondary source document, was a paragraph within the required textbook for this

particular group of eighth grade students; it is titled *Working Conditions*, found on page 309 of the textbook. *Working Conditions* explained what girls did in the Lowell Factories during the Industrial Revolution. Participants had been previously exposed to the information of page 309 as they had learned about the Industrial Revolution prior to the survey. The following sections of this thesis include the paragraphs and explain the results of the survey.

Limitations

Limitations for this study include the number of participants, amount of time allocated for research, materials used, and questions asked. An explanation of potential different results without limitations will be discussed in this chapter.

This research study did not have as many participants as hoped. The informed consent form was given to 110 total students and only 29 students obtained parent permission. The students were given the permission form on a Thursday and had until the following Wednesday to return them. In retrospect, I think that the amount of time given to the eighth grade students to return the informed consent should not have been extended over the weekend because the students may have forgotten about it. I would have liked to give the informed consent on a Monday and collect the data on a Wednesday or Thursday, but this was not possible due to time restrictions at the end of the semester and at the end of the school year. Time restrictions also did not allow for even one follow-up request. It is also quite possible that the students who returned the forms on time are different in some critical factors from the nonparticipants and may have answered the survey differently. Also, it is possible that students simply forgot to bring back their form, even though it was in fact signed.

Before students were able to take the survey, they were asked to read two different paragraphs. A sheet of paper was placed in the center of the table where all students sat together. On the paper was Paragraph A typed in its entirety and where to find Paragraph B in the textbook (Appendix F). Because only one copy was provided, students had to take turns reading it silently. After seeing this take place, I immediately knew it would have been better for each student to have their own copy. Students did, however, have their own textbook in which they would find the second paragraph within. I should have had the paragraph from the textbook typed up on the same sheet as Paragraph A so that the idea of using the textbook did not somehow influence or conflict their answers on the survey. Although seeing the textbook literally as a secondary source was revealing to me as I reviewed and studied their responses.

Finally, after analyzing the answers of the survey, I realized that a few questions were so vague to the students that they were not sure of how to answer them. These questions could not be used to obtain results in this study; therefore, I specifically did not analyze results from questions 2, 4, 5, and 7. Now I see that I might have been able to be more specific with the questions so that there was no room for varying interpretations.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The survey given to the eighth grade social studies students (Appendix E) was based on two different paragraphs they read before given the survey. The paragraphs were distinguished by “Paragraph A” and “Paragraph B.” Although the students do not know this prior to reading, Paragraph A is a primary source and Paragraph B is a secondary source. The first paragraph (Paragraph A) is a small portion of an autobiography written by Antanas Kaztauskis found at Digital History, titled *From Lithuania to the Chicago Stockyards*:

“I can never forget that evening four years ago. It was a cold December... Between was a kerosene lamp on a table, and under it sat the ugly shoemaker on a stool finishing a big yellow boot. His sleeves were rolled up; his arms were thin and bony, but you could see how strong the fingers and wrist were, for when he grabbed the needle he jerked it through and the whole arm’s length up. This arm kept going up and down. Every time it went up he jerked back his long mixed up red hair and grunted. And you could just see his face bony and shut together tight. And his narrow sharp eyes looking down. Then his head would go down again, and his hair would get all mixed up. I kept watching him...”

The second paragraph (Paragraph B) found on page 309 of *The American Journey* textbook, which is the required textbook of this group of eighth grade students, is titled *Working Conditions* and explains the working conditions of the young women in the Lowell Factories:

“The young women who worked in Lowell’s Mills endured difficult working conditions. They put in long hours – from sunrise to sunset – for low wages. The volume of the

factory machinery was earsplitting and the work was monotonous. The women usually performed one task over and over again.”

It was necessary for participants to read both reading selections before moving forward with the survey. I observed none of the students were struggling while reading these selections. A few of them asked, however, to clarify which paragraph was labeled as “A” and which was labeled as “B”.

The first question in the survey has four sub-questions based on both paragraphs. Questions 2-15 are not specifically about the primary and secondary source paragraphs, rather they are questions based on knowledge of primary source documents; therefore, they are omitted from this discussion. All results are discussed in the remainder of this chapter, omitting Questions 2, 4, 11, and 12 (Appendix H).

Question 1A (Appendix G): After reading Paragraph A and B which paragraph was more engaging and why?

I wanted to know which paragraph the students thought was most interesting. Out of the 29 students who participated in this survey, 24 students chose Paragraph A to be more engaging. This 83% who chose Paragraph A mentioned that the reason it was more engaging than Paragraph B was because it gave more details and explained more. Of the 5 students, or 17%, who chose Paragraph B to be more engaging, 2 are considered ESE. Although there is not necessarily an exact answer for this question, as all students are engaged differently, I was expecting that participants would choose Paragraph A to be more engaging over Paragraph B. One particular student explained exactly what I was hoping all students would recognize,

“Paragraph A was more engaging because it was a story from an actual person rather than a paragraph explaining the topic” (Participant 12). The next question asks which of the two paragraphs would the students rather read for learning purposes. I thought that students would rather read Paragraph A for learning purposes because of the simple fact that 83% of participants said that Paragraph A was more engaging; however, this was not the case and can be seen in the analysis of the next question.

Question 1B (Appendix G): After reading Paragraph A and B, which paragraph would you rather read for learning purposes and why?

Asking the students which paragraph did they find more engaging would not be enough to determine if they enjoyed and benefitted from using primary source documents in the classroom. I needed to see which paragraph the students thought they would learn better from during social studies class. The difference between the two paragraphs was that Paragraph A was a primary source document and Paragraph B was a secondary source document. Because 83% of the participants thought Paragraph A was more engaging, as seen in the results of Question 1A, I was prepared to find that students would also choose Paragraph A to read for learning purposes. However, as the results show for Question 1B, Paragraph A was not the popular choice. Participant 12’s response to the second answer is particularly interesting. This student mentioned “...it gives you all the information you need.” This is the same student who thought that Paragraph A was more engaging. Participant 12 was not the only student to choose Paragraph B as 69% of all participants did the same. I was very shocked when reading over these results. I thought that because students were more engaged by Paragraph A, they would

want to use it for learning purposes over Paragraph B. Reasons why students would rather use Paragraph B were varied but one particular response caught my eye. Participant 14 gave an explanation that I had not taken into consideration when she mentions: “For learning purposes, I would choose B because it goes straight to the point and contains more information that you don’t have to infer.” What is interesting about Participant 14’s response to Question 1B is that when looking at the response from Question 1A, she chose Paragraph A as more engaging due to the fact that it “specifically described” certain working conditions. Participant 15 also mentioned a reason I had not previously thought of for choosing B when she mentioned that it was from more than one person’s perspective: “... it showed what most people experienced instead of one.” After analyzing the results of this question, I have to say that I can understand why participants may have felt that Paragraph B would be better to use for learning purposes over A.

The answers to this question really shocked me but it just goes to show that my earlier statement holds true. My earlier statement in the rationale section of this thesis, mentioned that students will develop their own opinions about primary source documents that will differ from their peers opinions and the teacher’s opinions beyond any interpretation the teacher can predict. I predicted that the students would rather use primary source documents for learning purposes but found out that a number of students chose the secondary source document for learning purposes.

Question 1C (Appendix G): After reading Paragraph A and B, which paragraph would be considered a primary source and why?

Asking the participants which paragraph they thought was a primary source is a crucial element of this study as it is the main focus of the study. Knowing which paragraph was most engaging and which paragraph the participants would rather use for learning purposes did not mean the students could recognize which of the two was a primary source document. Of all the participants, 72% chose Paragraph A to be a primary source while 28% chose Paragraph B. Of the 72% choosing A, 16 individuals mentioned that they knew it was a primary source document because it was a firsthand experience of someone who witnessed the event. One student, Participant 17, gives specific reasoning when she mentions that the reason for choosing Paragraph A is because, "...it is a person who was there and wrote it down at the time." Including that the person wrote it down at that exact time is important because it shows that this student has a good understanding of the meaning of a primary source document. Although most students chose Paragraph A as the primary source, some of those who chose Paragraph B concerned me with their reasons for doing so. Three of seven participants who thought Paragraph B was a primary source based their answer on the idea that it is primary because it came from the textbook. Students should know that textbooks are secondary sources; however, secondary sources may or may not contain pages primary sources. The concern is that this particular paragraph (B) was inside a textbook but not placed in quotations and it did not give any information that would deem it a primary source.

Question 1D (Appendix G): After reading Paragraph A and B which paragraph was easiest to visualize the scene in your head and why?

Personally, while reading Paragraph A, I could not help myself from visualizing the scene; therefore, I was not surprised when I found that most participants chose Paragraph A. Only 4 participants of the 29 chose Paragraph B to be easiest to visualize the scene. An ESE student, Participant 7, explained that Paragraph B was easiest to visualize the scene because it was easy to read and did not give too much information. In contrast, 86% of participants mentioned that Paragraph A was easiest to visualize the scene due to the great details included. In fact, Participants 2, 3, 8, and 13 all mention in Question 1A's response that Paragraph A gives so much detail and descriptions that they could picture it in their head. Here are their exact words regarding Paragraph A when answering which paragraph was more engaging and why (Q1A):

- “The words were so descriptive you could picture it” (Participant 2).
- “Paragraph A because it was more detailed. I could picture what was happening in my head” (Participant 3).
- “Paragraph A because it had more detail and you can picture what’s going on” (Participant 8).
- “Paragraph A b/c it’s got more details and paints a better picture in my head” (Participant 13).

Question 3 (Appendix G): An example of a primary source could be...

This question is an open-ended question in which the participants needed to have an idea of what a primary source document was. The answers varied greatly and some responses were:

autobiography, journal, document, letter, experience, original, or a combination of a few. Of all the responses, there were two most popular answers. The top two responses for what a primary source example could be are both a textbook and a diary. As previously mentioned, a current textbook is a secondary source. Comparing these responses to the responses of Question 1C, which asks the participants which paragraph would be considered a primary source, provides very interesting information. In question 1C, Participants 1, 18, and 19 chose Paragraph B to be considered as a primary source on the basis of it being from a textbook. These same participants recorded a textbook as an example of a primary source for Question 3. Looking again at Question 1C, Participants 4, 25, and 28 chose Paragraph A to be considered as a primary source based on the fact that it is a first-hand experience. These same participants said that an example of a primary source could be a textbook as recorded in Question 3. The number of participants recorded as mentioning solely a textbook as an example was 4, which was the exact same number as the participants recorded as mentioning solely a diary as a primary source.

Questions 6, 8, 9 and 10 ask participants to share how interested they are in reading or looking at certain documents or photographs.

Of the four questions, one refers to a secondary source while the other three are clearly primary source documents. The reason for choosing three primary source documents and asking if students think they are interesting in three different questions allows me to see the level of interest the participants have in these primary sources. Students answer by agreeing or disagreeing using a scale of 1-5; 1 is strongly disagree, 2 is disagree, 3 is neither agree or

disagree, 4 is agree, and 5 is strongly agree (there is also a N/A on the scale in case it is not applicable for a particular student). The four questions and student responses are outlined below.

Question 6 (Appendix G): Reading information in “The American Journey” textbook is interesting:

Asking students if they think reading from the textbook is interesting is important for me as a researcher because it is a secondary source and I am examining the power of using primary sources within social studies classrooms. Using the scale to agree or disagree, 14 students neither agreed nor disagreed that reading information in the textbook is interesting. Of the 14 participants who neither agreed nor disagreed, 2 participants provided additional information: Participant 4 said that “some stories are more interesting than others,” while Participant 6 mentioned that reading information from the text can be interesting only at certain times. Participant 25 agreed that reading information from the textbook was interesting, however she included in her response that, “...sometimes it gets boring.”

Question 8 (Appendix G): Reading a journal entry is interesting:

This question is important for me as a researcher because a journal entry is clearly a primary source document. Although participants did not include additional information about whether they agree or disagree in their responses, I found that eleven students agreed that reading a journal entry is interesting and three strongly agreed. The number of participants who disagreed or strongly disagreed is four, while ten participants neither agreed nor disagreed.

Omitting the 'neither' category, the results show that those who think reading a journal entry is interesting (48%) is more than the 14% of participants who do not think it is interesting.

Question 9 (Appendix G): Reading an autobiography is interesting:

This question is important as a researcher because an autobiography is a primary source document. Although participants did not include more than whether they agree or disagree in their responses, I found that 15 students agreed or strongly agreed that reading an autobiography was interesting. Furthermore, 12 participants were neutral about this question but because only 2 students disagreed, it appears that the majority of students believe reading an autobiography is interesting.

Question 10 (Appendix G): I really enjoy looking at photographs from the past to learn history:

Just as Questions 8 and 9 are important as a researcher, this question is also quite significant because photographs from the past are primary source documents. Participant 19 strongly agreed that looking at photographs from the past to learn history is interesting and even mentioned that it really helps him to understand. Participant 19 was not the only participant to strongly agree. He was joined by 13 others and in addition to that there were 11 participants to agree. Giving a total of 25 participants or 86%, who enjoy looking at photographs from the past to learn history.

After further analyzing and discussing the results of individual questions in this chapter, a formal conclusion will be included in the next chapter. The results will be organized in a way

that might provide teachers with information as to whether or not using primary sources in middle school social studies is beneficial and powerful.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Concluding remarks

While Chapter 4 was an analysis of the results from the Primary Source Survey given to the middle school participants, this chapter focuses on three particular participants. While analyzing participants' answers for Question 3, three participants had answers that stood out. Participant 4, 25, and 28 all said that a textbook would be an example of a primary source document. Any participant who said a textbook was an example of a primary source document prompted me to go back and check their responses to Question 1C which asks which paragraph (between Paragraph A and Paragraph B) would be considered a primary source and why. Participants 4, 25, and 28 chose Paragraph A to be the primary source, which it is! After seeing these two vastly different ideas of what a primary source document is from three different students, it was necessary to analyze all of their answers from the survey. The following is a breakdown of Participants 4, 25, and 28's answers to particular survey questions. It should be noted that they have the same answers for each question:

- Q1A: After reading Paragraph A and B which paragraph was more engaging and why?
 - Participant 4 – “A, because it was more descriptive and written in first person point of view”
 - Participant 25 – “Paragraph A was more interesting because it gave more detail about the person and also talked about his work ethic”

- Participant 28 – “Paragraph A; because it says what the man is doing what the man looks like and gives specific details”
- Q1B: After reading Paragraph A and B which paragraph would you rather read for learning purposes and why?
 - Participant 4 – “B, because it tells you more about working in the mills”
 - Participant 25 – “Paragraph B because its more educational than paragraph A”
 - Participant 28 – “Paragraph B; because it explains what women were working, how they were working on it, and how much they were paid”

These three participants all agreed that Paragraph A was more engaging than Paragraph B in Question 1A (see above), yet they would rather use the less engaging paragraph to learn from. Perhaps the reason for them choosing the secondary source document for learning purposes is because they are mostly exposed to secondary sources during instruction. If they are in fact exposed to mostly secondary sources during instruction, they may feel as though Paragraph B would be something their teacher would use to teach them; which would then make them assume that these secondary sources are the only sources acceptable for appropriate learning. If they were exposed to more primary sources during instruction, they would possibly be more inclined to choose Paragraph A for learning purposes because they would understand that learning does not occur when only using the secondary source documents. What is even more interesting is the response the three participants gave to Question 1C, (see below).

- Q1C: After reading Paragraph A and Paragraph B which paragraph would be considered a primary source and why?
 - Participant 4 – “A, because it is a true story and an autobiography”

- Participant 25 – “Paragraph A because it comes directly from the women herself”
- Participant 28 – “Paragraph A; because a person is saying what she sees and what is happening”

To summarize, thus far in the survey, Participants 4, 25, and 28 all agree that Paragraph A is more engaging and would be considered a primary source, and Paragraph B would be better to use for learning purposes.

- Q1D: After reading Paragraph A and B which paragraph was easiest to visualize the scene in your head and why?
 - Participant 4 – “A, because it was more descriptive”
 - Participant 25 – “Paragraph A because it gave much more detail about the man and his job”
 - Participant 28 – “Paragraph A; because it gave specific details of the scenery and how the man looked”

Paragraph A was easiest to visualize the scene in their heads, yet Paragraph B was the better choice for learning purposes.

- Q9: Reading an autobiography is interesting (participants either: strongly disagreed, disagreed, agreed, strongly agreed, neither agree nor disagree, or it was not applicable to them).
 - Participant 4 – Agreed
 - Participant 25 – Agreed
 - Participant 28 – Strongly Agreed

Just to be clear, autobiographies are considered primary source documents. Earlier responses indicate that they are engaged by primary source documents but would rather use secondary sources for learning purposes. Perhaps these participants are unaware that they are learning when they are reading these interesting autobiographies which are primary source documents. Perhaps they do not realize that autobiographies are considered primary source documents.

Although Question 2 was not analyzed in Chapter 4, it really plays an important role here. Question 2 (Appendix H) is “the best way for me to describe a primary source document is.”

- Participant 4 – “A source of information written by the person the story is about”
- Participant 25 – “A primary source to me is a document that comes from a reliable source”
- Participant 28 – “An information either written like a biography or read through a book”

None of these answers are correct; however, it is only because of the way these answers are written they are wrong. I would say that Participant 4’s answer is a misconception, Participant 25’s is all over the board, and Participant 28 is not correct at all. It seems as though these participants do not have enough information to be able to explain what a primary source document is in their own words. Interestingly enough, they were able to distinguish that Paragraph A was the primary source document. In order to conclude whether or not these participants have the right idea of what a primary source document is, taking a look at their responses to Question 3 which asks them to name an example of a primary source is important.

- Q3: An example of a primary source could be:
 - Participant 4 – “A textbook is an example of a primary source”
 - Participant 25 – “A document or textbook”
 - Participant 28 – “A textbook, biography”

It is clear that these three participants are confused as to what is considered a primary source document.

The participants seem to be able to distinguish between a primary source and secondary source document when the two are presented together, much like how Paragraph A and Paragraph B were presented together. Not only were the primary source paragraph and secondary source paragraph presented together to the participants, there were also many questions to go along with the paragraphs so as to enable the participants to make decisions based on them. One striking conclusion derived from this data is that teachers need to make sure that students must understand the difference of having a primary source within a secondary source because a textbook is a secondary source. That said, this concept of the primary versus secondary sources can get tricky, however, because a textbook from 1950 can act as a primary source in 2012 if discussing how subjects were portrayed in the 1950s. Teachers must work to ensure that students have the contextual experience to know the difference between a primary and secondary source and a primary source within a secondary source.

Limitations and recommendations

As mentioned above, it is important that the students understand the characteristics of primary source documents before the teacher uses them in classroom instruction. Equally important, is for the teacher to clearly state the type of document expressed while using it. For example, if the teacher is introducing a source during instruction, tell the students whether it is a primary or secondary source and clarify why it is so. Teachers cannot assume that their students have been exposed to primary source documents and are totally clear about the delinations between the two kinds of sources. This research project would have very different results had a few things happened differently. For that reason, I have included example scenarios of recommendations for future research and they are as follows.

Teaching students before survey

As it was already mentioned, it should not be assumed that all students participating in the survey have been previously exposed to any primary source documents. If there was more time allowed for this research study I would have liked to do an introductory activity with the students before having them participate in a survey. The activity would consist of a few different primary source and secondary source documents hung around the classroom on the walls starting with document A and going to document E (depending on the number of documents). The students would be in groups of 3-4 students and would all have a chart to fill out. The documents would not reveal whether or not it was primary or secondary, that way students have the opportunity to decide for themselves. Students would need to determine what type of source the documents are and they would need to be able to distinguish why. The reason why this would be beneficial to

the research project is because it would get the students more familiar with distinguishing between primary and secondary sources.

Atmosphere of survey

For this research study, because there were so few participants, those who had parent consent left the classroom and went into another classroom to take the survey. If there were an opportunity for this research project to be done again, I would recommend that the survey take place within the classroom. The atmosphere may not make a difference; however, there is a chance that it may. The history classroom may have a certain effect on the level of the student's performance. If they know they are in their history classroom, they may be more likely to hone in on their social studies skills. Leaving the classroom in the middle of their scheduled history time may have been exciting for them and may have caused them to lose focus. Rather than paying attention to the task at hand, the students may have been familiarizing themselves with the new atmosphere. Also, when brought to the other classroom, all students were sitting at the same large table rather than traditional desks like those in their classroom.

Reading materials

As previously mentioned, Paragraph A was a handout and there was only one copy of it. Paragraph B was not re-printed for the participants; rather they all brought their textbook to read from. Not supplying the participants with their own reading material for Paragraph A may have had a negative impact on the results. The students may have felt like they needed to rush through the reading because they had to share the handout with the other participants. Students may not have felt comfortable asking to re-read Paragraph A, whereas if they had own copy they

may have been more comfortable re-reading for clarity. While taking the survey, the students could have referred back to the reading materials if they had their own copy with them.

In addition to having to share the handout for Paragraph A, the way Paragraph B was read could have been different also. Paragraph B was read from the textbook. It was not in quotations, and to the researcher it did not appear to look like a primary source. However, the paragraph was placed next to a photograph that could have been a primary source. The students may have been thrown off by the photograph and may have thought that it was a primary source due to that.

When comparing the two paragraphs, the length could have been a factor in perception for the students. Paragraph A was longer than Paragraph B which could have made the students think a few things. They may have thought that because Paragraph B was shorter, it was better to use for learning purposes because it got straight to the point. In contrast, they may have thought that Paragraph A was better for the simple fact that it was longer than Paragraph B. Another issue regarding the length of the two paragraphs is that because of the length of Paragraph A, the students may have been reluctant to carefully read through it.

Educational implications

The research from my Honors in the Major project made me think back to my experience in middle and high school. I remember my social studies classrooms in both middle and high school always being decorated with primary source documents. Decoration is not enough, however, to familiarize students with primary source documents. I cannot recall one time analyzing a primary source document, aside from watching a documentary that showed and

explained primary source documents. I very much enjoy the content of social studies, but I did not always enjoy my social studies classes. I cannot blame students who think that social studies can be boring, especially when they are constantly using the textbook for reading, class work and homework. As I got older, I enjoyed social studies more and would even watch the History channel on my own free time; maybe because what I was watching was relevant to me and therefore more engaging. I feel as though students would be more engaged in social studies if the information was not only relevant, but actually more engaging! It seems safe to assume that primary source documents are more engaging, even though the study does not suggest that students have a firm grasp on what primary source documents are.

From this research project, I learned from this research project is that middle school social studies students have so much information being thrown at them that they do not know how to decide what is interesting to them. I realized that I will definitely use primary source documents in my instruction as a teacher as much as possible. Students need to start recognizing that it is okay to use things other than their textbook or internet searches for information because there can be so much to gain from using primary source documents. One way that I could use primary source documents in the future would be to use the “POSER(S)” strategy to analyze photographs. A potential way to use this strategy could be to make a chart for the students to fill out and try to familiarize them with the acronym as much as possible, and as early on as I can.

Future research

In working on this project surrounding primary source documents, I have thought of potential future research projects. If continuing with *Examining the Power of Using Primary*

Sources in Middle School Social Studies is an option, I would love to do something where I could follow up on the results a few months down the road. An example of this could be something where I have two groups of students, one group who learns with primary source documents and another group who learns by secondary source documents. What would be interesting is to ask them questions on this material within a month or two, just to see which of the two groups retained the information better.

Another project that I am interested in, that has nothing to do with primary source documents, would be something to do with the study of adolescents and the influence of music on their behavior. The reason this interests me is because, I know that middle school and high school students are listening to some songs that I hear on the radio daily. Because I am older, and more educated, I feel that I understand some songs better than younger adults and adolescents would. I wonder if the students feel that they can relate to the lyrics, and that is why they like these songs. Yet I also wonder if the students listen to the music and reflect their behavior in order to be able to relate to the lyrics, therefore relating to the artist who is singing the lyrics.

APPENDIX A

Pre-made Chart

Question	Response
What do you notice first?	
What can you infer?	
What do you have a question about?	
Who is the audience?	
Is this a primary source or a secondary source? How do you know?	

APPENDIX B

IRB Approval



University of Central Florida Institutional Review Board
Office of Research & Commercialization
12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501
Orlando, Florida 32826-3246
Telephone: 407-823-2901 or 407-882-2276
www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html

Approval of Human Research

From: **UCF Institutional Review Board #1**
FWA00000351, IRB00001138

To: **Sherron E. Roberts and Co-PI: Emily A. Richardson**

Date: **April 25, 2012**

Dear Researcher:

On 4/25/2012, the IRB approved the following human participant research until 4/24/2013 inclusive:

Type of Review: UCF Initial Review Submission Form
Project Title: Examining the Power of Using Primary Sources in Middle
School Social Studies
Investigator: Sherron E Roberts
IRB Number: SBE-12-08365
Funding Agency:
Grant Title:
Research ID: N/A

The Continuing Review Application must be submitted 30days prior to the expiration date for studies that were previously expedited, and 60 days prior to the expiration date for research that was previously reviewed at a convened meeting. Do not make changes to the study (i.e., protocol, methodology, consent form, personnel, site, etc.) before obtaining IRB approval. A Modification Form cannot be used to extend the approval period of a study. All forms may be completed and submitted online at <https://iris.research.ucf.edu>.

If continuing review approval is not granted before the expiration date of 4/24/2013, approval of this research expires on that date. When you have completed your research, please submit a Study Closure request in iRIS so that IRB records will be accurate.

Use of the approved, stamped consent document(s) is required. The new form supersedes all previous versions, which are now invalid for further use. Only approved investigators (or other approved key study personnel) may solicit consent for research participation. Participants or their representatives must receive a copy of the consent form(s).

In the conduct of this research, you are responsible to follow the requirements of the Investigator Manual.

On behalf of Sophia Dziegielewski, Ph.D., L.C.S.W., CF IRB Chair, this letter is signed by:

Signature applied by Joanne Muratori on 04/25/2012 02:24:48 PM EDT

IRB Coordinator

APPENDIX C

Informed Consent



Examining the Power of Using Primary Sources in Middle School Social Studies

Informed Consent

Principal Investigator(s): Sherron Killingsworth Roberts, Ed.D.

Sub-Investigator(s): Emily A. Richardson

Investigational Site(s): Odyssey Middle School

How to return this Consent Form: Parents, please return one copy of this form signed to Mr. Gotham in room 807 and keep one for your records. Please do this as soon as possible.

Introduction: Because the University of Central Florida is a researched based university, researchers study many different topics. In order for research purposes, we ask people to participate in our studies on a voluntary basis. You are being asked permission on behalf of your child to take part in a research study which will include students at Odyssey Middle School. Your child is being invited to take part in this research study because he or she is a student in Mr. Gotham's class at Odyssey Middle School. The person doing this research is Sherron K. Roberts, Ed.D. of the School of Teaching, Learning, and Leadership within the College of Education at the University of Central Florida and sub-investigator, Emily A. Richardson; undergraduate student at the University of Central Florida

What you should know about a research study:

- Someone will explain this research study to you.
- A research study is something for which you volunteer.
- Whether or not you take part is up to you.
- You should allow your child to take part in this study only because you and he or she wants to be involved.
- You can choose not to take part in the research study.
- You can agree to take part now and later change your mind.
- Whatever you decide, it will not be held against you or your child.
- Feel free to ask all the questions you want before you decide.

Purpose of the research study: The purpose of this study is to determine if the use of primary source documents used as instructional tools will improve knowledge acquired by students in middle school.

What your child will be asked to do in the study:

The methods of data used in this study will be a survey.

Procedures:

The study consists of a short survey to be completed by all students participating in the study. There are three parts to the survey; the first two ask participants to circle the answer that applies to them and the third section is open-ended questions.

Location: Odyssey Middle School

Time required: Participants will be asked to complete a survey which will take no longer than fifteen minutes. Students who do not participate in the fifteen minute long survey will have this time to read silently or work on other school work.

Risks: There are no expected risks for taking part in this study. There are no reasonably foreseeable risks or discomforts involved in taking part in this study. There is no penalty for not taking place in research activity.

Benefits: We cannot promise any benefits to you, your child, or others from your child taking part in this research. However, as a research participant, possible benefits include learning more about how research is conducted, about how historians engage in inquiry, and history-related content.

Compensation or payment: There is no compensation, payment or extra credit for your child's part in this study. If your child chooses not to participate, you or your child may notify his or her instructor and ask for an alternative assignment of equal effort for equal credit. There will be no penalty.

Confidentiality: We will limit your personal data collected in this study. Efforts will be made to limit your child's personal information to people who have a need to review this information. We cannot promise complete secrecy. Organizations that may inspect and copy your information include the IRB and other representatives of UCF. Survey information will be locked in a

cabinet off campus. The only individuals that will be exposed to the surveys will be Sherron K. Roberts, Ed.D. and Emily Richardson.

Study contact for questions about the study or to report a problem: If you have questions or concerns regarding this research study, please contact:

Sherron K. Roberts, Ed.D.
College of Education
University of Central Florida
4000 Central Florida Boulevard
Orlando, Florida 32816
Sherron.roberts@ucf.edu
407-823-2016

IRB contact about you and your child's rights in the study or to report a complaint:

Research at the University of Central Florida involving human participants is carried out under the oversight of the Institutional Review Board (UCF IRB). This research has been reviewed and approved by the IRB. For information about the rights of people who take part in research, please contact: Institutional Review Board, University of Central Florida, Office of Research & Commercialization, 12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501, Orlando, FL 32826-3246 or by telephone at (407) 823-2901. You may also talk to them for any of the following:

- Your questions, concerns, or complaints are not being answered by the research team.
- You cannot reach the research team.
- You want to talk to someone besides the research team.
- You want to get information or provide input about this research.

Your signature below indicates your permission for the child named below to take part in this research.

DO NOT SIGN THIS FORM AFTER THE IRB EXPIRATION DATE BELOW

<div>Name of participant</div>	
<div>Signature of parent or guardian</div>	<div>Date</div>
<div>Printed name of parent or guardian</div>	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Guardian (See note below)</div>
<div>Assent</div>	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Obtained</div>

Note on permission by guardians: An individual may provide permission for a child only if that individual can provide a written document indicating that he or she is legally authorized to consent to the child's general medical care. Attach the documentation to the signed document.

APPENDIX D

Demographics

Participant	Gender	Ethnicity	Social Studies Grades
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1	Male	White/African American	A's
2	Female	Hispanic	A's
3	Male	Hispanic	A's
4	Male	White	A's
5	Female	White/Hispanic	A's/B's
6	Female	Hispanic	A's
7	Male	Hispanic	B's
8	Female	Hispanic	A's
9	Male	White	A's
10	Female	Hispanic	A's
11	Female	Hispanic	A's
12	Male	White	A's
13	Female	White	A's
14	Female	Asian	A's
15	Female	Hispanic	A's
16	-	-	-
17	Female	Hispanic	A's
18	Male	White	A's
19	Male	White	B's
20	Male	White	A's
21	Female	Hispanic	A's
22	Male	African American	A's
23	Female	Asian	A's/B's
24	Female	Hispanic	B's
25	Female	Hispanic	A's
26	Male	Hispanic	A's
27	Female	Hispanic	A's
28	Male	Hispanic	A's
29	Male	Hispanic	C's

(Information in red indicates that particular participant is considered ESE)

APPENDIX E

Primary Source Survey

Primary Source Survey

Please respond to the following questions:

1. After reading Paragraph A and B...

a. Which paragraph was more engaging and why?

b. Which paragraph would you rather read for learning purposes and why?

c. Which paragraph would be considered a primary source and why?

d. Which paragraph was easiest to visualize the scene in your head and why?

2. The best way for me to describe a primary source document is:

3. An example of a primary source could be:

4. How often does your social studies teacher use primary source documents in class?

Instructions: Please indicate to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements by circling one answer for each statement below.							Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
							↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
5.	Listening to my teacher talk about Social Studies is interesting.						1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Anything more? <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>												
6.	Reading information in “The American Journey” textbook is interesting.						1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Anything more? <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>												
7.	Looking at pictures of technology during the Industrial Revolution is interesting.						1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Anything more? <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>												

8.	Reading a journal entry is interesting.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Anything more? <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>							
9.	Reading an autobiography is interesting.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Anything more? <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>							
10.	I really enjoy looking at photographs from the past to learn history.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Anything more? <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>							
11.	I really enjoy working in groups in my social studies class.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Anything more? <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>							

12.	I would much rather work individually in my social studies class.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Anything more? <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>							

Please check all boxes that apply to you.

13. What is your gender?

☐ Male

☐ Female

14. What is your ethnicity?

☐ White

☐ African American

☐ Asian

☐ Native American

☐ Hispanic

☐ Indian

☐ Other _____

15. My Social Studies grades are mostly:

☐ A's

☐ B's

☐ C's

☐ D's

APPENDIX F

Paragraph A and B

A).

“I can never forget that evening four years ago. It was a cold December... Between was a kerosene lamp on a table, and under it sat the ugly shoemaker on a stool finishing a big yellow boot. His sleeves were rolled up; his arms were thin and bony, but you could see how strong the fingers and wrist were, for when he grabbed the needle he jerked it through and the whole arm’s length up. This arm kept going up and down. Every time it went up he jerked back his long mixed up red hair and grunted. And you could just see his face bony and shut together tight. And his narrow sharp eyes looking down. Then his head would go down again, and his hair would get all mixed up. I kept watching him...” – Antanas Kaztauskis

B). “Working Conditions” – page 309, The American Journey

APPENDIX G

Questions 1 (A-D), 3, 6, 8, 9, and 10

Question 1A

Sheet1

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
1	Paragraph A was more engaging, it gave many details .													
2	A, because of the way it was written. The words were so descriptive you could picture it. → Q1D													
3	Paragraph A because it was more detailed . I could picture what was happening in my head. → Q1D													
4	A, because it was more descriptive and written in first person point of view.													
5	B - It looks very difficult but its good to help my family.													
6	B, because it was from a firsthand experience of a working woman													
7	I think that paragraph A was more engaging because it talk more about the cotton and explain more .													
8	Paragraph A because it had more detail and you can picture what's going on. → Question 1D													
9	Paragraph A because it felt more interesting and less boring to read from the persons point of view.													
10	Paragraph A, because it was more exciting to read a person's point of view as they were working.													
11	B was more engaging because it brought the information down to an 8th grade level.													
12	Paragraph A was more engaging because it was a story from an actual person rather than a paragraph explaining the topic.													
13	Paragraph A b/c its got more details and paints a better picture in my head. → Q1D													
14	Paragraph A was more engaging because it specifically describe s what the working conditions were in a first person perspective.													
15	Paragraph A because it had more details .													
16	Paragraph A because it gave more details for the working conditions.													
17	Paragraph A because it talked from a person who was actually there and recalled their first hand experience.													
18	A, because it had more detail about what was going on.													
19	Paragraph A because, It gave more vivid detailing .													
20	A. Because the paragraph had much more detail with the events in it.													
21	Paragraph b was more engaging because the women would perform over and over again.													
22	Paragraph A because it is more details and paragraph b isn't easy to understand.													
23	Paragraph A was more interesting + engaging because it was more detailed .													
24	Paragraph A was more engaging because it had better description and more details .													
25	Paragraph A was more interesting because it gave more detail about the person & also talked about his work ethic.													
26	I think the most engaging is working conditions because it talk about the young women who worked in lowell's mills endured difficult working conditions. (B)													
27	A, it had more details and was more entertaining; (that caught my attention)													
28	Paragraph A; because it says what the man is doing what the man looks like and gives specific details .													
29	A. It was longer and more interesting .													
30														
31														
32	Q1: After reading Paragraph A and B...													
33	a. Which paragraph was more engaging and why?													
34														
35														
36														

Question 1B

Sheet2

1 Paragraph B because its based on history and it gives you a good idea of how it was long time ago.

2 B, because it had examples of the work conditions and what they did for how long.

3 Paragraph B because it gave information of what women had to do in the mills.

4 B, because it tells you more about working in the mills.

5 Either one they both sound interesing and helpful.

6 Mostly B, because it's written in detial & in a way that could be entertaining.

7 I would rather read paragraph A because it had a lot of detail in the story.

8 The working conditions because it has more info. Paragraph A is mostly to entertain.

9 I think B because it was easier to follow in information and facts.

10 Paragraph A, it's more to me a primary source, like we can imagine ourselves in her shoes and see what she does.

11 A because it has a lot more complex information to learn about.

12 Paragraph B because that gives you all the information you need.

13 Paragraph B b/c it gives more info.

14 - * For learning purposes, I would choose B because it goes straight to the point and contains more information that you don't have to infer.

15 Paragraph b because it showed what most people experienced instead of one.

16 Paragraph B because it tells you how long they work and how much times they performed the task.

17 Paragraph B because it describes how repetitive work was and gets to the point quicker.

18 I would rather read A because it came from an actually person unlike B.

19 I would rather read paragraph a because, it was easier for me to understand.

20 B. Because it explained a lot more within the paragraph.

21 Paragraph b because it gives more details.

22 Paragraph A because it's more descriptive and gives more information.

23 Paragraph B, because it contains more learning information.

24 Paragraph B because it talks about the concept.

25 Paragraph B because it's more educational than paragraph A.

26 I think A because is describe the his life and how she feel about economic.

27 B, because it made a scene in my head of long hours for low wages.

28 Paragraph B; because it explains what women were working, how they were working on it, and how much were they paid.

29 A. It seems more interesting.

Q1: After reading Paragraph A and B...

b. Which paragraph would you rather read for learning purposes and why?

A	B	Other
28%	69%	3%

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Question 1C

Sheet3

- 1 Paragraph B because its coming from a textbook.
- 2 A, because it was a quote from someone who was there and saw the events.
- 3 Paragraph A because it was from a persons point of view.
- 4 A, because it is a true story and an autobiography.
- 5 A - someone wrote it about their own life.
- 6 B, from the eyes of the woman, her experience.
- 7 Paragraph A is a primary source because it helps more.
- 8 Paragraph A since you witnessed him/she saw what the man was doing.
- 9 Paragraph a because it was a persons exact words.
- 10 Paragraph A. it's her daily life of what she sees at her job.
- 11 A because it is from someones perspective.
- 12 Paragraph A because it is an **eyewitness account** from somebody actually there.
- 13 Paragraph A b/c it was written by a girl **first hand**.
- 14 Paragraph A would be a primary source because it is written by someone who was there and actually **witnessed it**.
- 15 Paragraph a because it's **directly from the person**. (I guess).
- 16 Paragraph A because it **what the woman saw**.
- 17 Paragraph A because it is a **person who was there** and wrote it down at the time.
- 18 B. Because it came from a textbook.
- 19 Paragraph B, because it comes straight out of the book.
- 20 B. It was explaining the **real life of the person** and a sounded like a story.
- 21 Paragraph B. it explaining the women exactly what she did.
- 22 Paragraph A because it's from a **witness** and paragraph B is a story.
- 23 Paragraph A, it was coming from a **person's view**.
- 24 I think paragraph A would be a primary source because it was explain and it **was a person describing**.
- 25 Paragraph A because it comes **directly from the woman** herself.
- 26 Paragraph A it is primary source because is 1 person.
- 27 B, since it had showed more of a history type of event.
- 28 Paragraph A; because a **person is saying what she sees** and what is happening.
- 29 B. It looks like a better book to get information from.

Q1: After reading Paragraph A and B...

c. Which paragraph would be considered a primary source and why?

A	B
72%	28%

Question 1D

Sheet4

- 1 Paragraph A was easier because it gave many detailed descriptions.
- 2 A, because the descriptive words could come together in my mind and you can imagine it.
- 3 Paragraph A because it showed the motions and how the motions affected the hair. It was more detailed.
- 4 A, because it was more descriptive.
- 5 A - it had much more details and more description.
- 6 B, she wrote in detail & wrote so that we could imagine it.
- 7 Paragraph B was easier to visualize to me because it didn't give us to many information it was easier to read. **interesting comment* →
- 8 Paragraph A because it had much more detail and sensory imagery.
- 9 Paragraph A because it was coming from a point of view and easier to follow.
- 10 Paragraph A, the way she used her words just made me imagine how her work was like and what she saw there.
- 11 B because it had more physical features explained.
- 12 Paragraph A because it was telling the story as the person in the story saw it.
- 13 Paragraph A b/c it has more detail.
- 14 Paragraph A was easier because it gave more details that allows you to see what is really happening better.
- 15 Paragraph a because the details paint a better picture.
- 16 Paragraph B because it tells and shows you how hard they work.
- 17 Paragraph A because it went into great detail of what the person who wrote it saw.
- 18 A, because it gave a lot of detail and was easy to visualize.
- 19 Paragraph A, because it gave better details.
- 20 A. Because it had so many details.
- 21 Paragraph A it described more physical features.
- 22 Paragraph A because it tells you more about the person and it's descriptive.
- 23 Paragraph A, it had a lot of details.
- 24 Paragraph A it describe the old man and his hard work.
- 25 Paragraph A because it gave much more detail about the man & his job.
- 26 Paragraph A is easiest to read.
- 27 A, since it mentioned sight & touch.
- 28 Paragraph A; because it gave specific details of the scenery and how the man looked.
- 29 A. It had a lot more detail than the 2nd story.

Q1: After reading Paragraph A and B...

d. Which paragraph was easiest to visualize the scene in your head and why?

A	B
85%	14%

Question 3

Sheet6

1 Textbook
 2 Diary, autobiography and picture
 3 A diary
 4 A textbook is an example of a primary source. —
 5 An autobiography
 6 A person who went hiking writing about their experience while hiking.
 7 My social studies textbook
 8 Diary, journal entry, photograph
 9 A document like the Declaration of Independence
 10 An autobiography
 11 A diary
 12 Autobiography, journal/diary entry, picture
 13 A journal entry
 14 A diary
 15 Diaries, journals, stuff like that.
 16 An original
 17 A diary entry.
 18 Textbook, biography
 19 A textbook
 20 A textbook, biography, book
 21 A letter
 22 Reporter
 23 An example could be a journal
 24 Paragraph A
 25 A document or textbook. —
 26 Diary, book, autobiography, your feels, photograph
 27 B since it was like History type of a thing that brought in my head
 28 A textbook, biography —
 29 A dictionary

Q3: An example of a primary source could be:

Textbook	4
Diary	4
Autobiography	2
Journal	2
Document	1
Letter	1
Reporter	1
Paragraph A	1
Paragraph B	1
Diary/Autobiog/Pic	1
Experience	1
Diary/Journal/Photo	2
Original	1
Textbook/Bio	2
Autobio/JE/diary/pict.	2
Text/Bio/Book	1
Document/Textbook	1
Dictionary	1

* top two responses for what a primary source example could be are: textbook (which is a secondary source) and a diary (which is a primary source)

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Question 6

Sheet9

1 _____ 2
 2 _____ 4
 3 _____ 4
 4 3 - some stories are more interesting than others.
 5 _____ 3
 6 3 - Sometimes it can, but other times not
 7 _____ 3
 8 _____ 4
 9 _____ 2
 10 _____ 3
 11 _____ 3
 12 _____ 3
 13 _____ 3
 14 _____ 3
 15 _____ 3
 16 _____ 3
 17 _____ 4
 18 _____ 4
 19 _____ 2
 20 _____ 4
 21 _____ 3
 22 _____ 2
 23 _____ 2
 24 _____ 2
 25 4 - Sometimes it is but sometimes it gets boring
 26 _____ 5
 27 _____ 3
 28 _____ 4
 29 _____ 3

reading the textbook can be boring

Q6: Reading information in "The American Journey" textbook is interesting.
 Anything more?

SD	D	Neither A/D	A	SA
1	2	3	4	5
0	6	14	8	1

Question 8

Sheet11

4 - You learn how people talked back then.

2 3
3 4
4 3
5 1
6 4
7 3
8 2
9 4
10 5
11 3
12 4
13 3
14 3
15 4
16 3

17 5 - It gives you a glance to what that person was thinking or saw

18 4
19 2 → doesn't think textbook is interesting but enjoys looking @ pics of Incl. Rev.
20 4
21 5
22 3
23 3
24 4
25 5
26 3
27 4
28 4
29 2

Q8: Reading a journal entry is interesting
Anything more?

1	2	3	4	5	N/A	(no answer)
1	3	10	11	3	1	1

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Question 9

Sheet12

1 2
2 3
3 4
4 4
5 4

Q 3 - It's nice because you learn about the person, but depending on the person, its not

7 4
8 3
9 3
10 5
11 4
12 2
13 3
14 3
15 4
16 3
17 5
18 5
19 3
20 4
21 3
22 4
23 3
24 5

25 4 - It depends if the autobiography is interesting

26 3
27 4
28 5
29 3

Q9: Reading an autobiography is interesting.

Anything more?

SD
1
0

D
2
2

NAID
3
12

A
4
10

SA
5
5

N/A
0

Question 10

Sheet13

1	4
2	3
3	5
4	4
5	4
6	4
7	2
8	no answer
9	5
10	5
11	4
12	5
13	4
14	4
15	5
16	4
17	5
18	4

Q10: I really enjoy looking at photographs from the past to learn history.
Anything more?

19 5 - It really helps me to understand * it is clear that this student likes to learn visually

20	5
21	4
22	5
23	3
24	5
25	5
26	5
27	5
28	5
29	4

SD	D	N/A/D	A	SA	N/A	(no answer)
1	2	3	4	5	0	1
0	1	2	11	14	0	1

APPENDIX H

Questions 2, 4, 7, 11, and 12

Question 2

Sheet5

★ Not written in chapters of G11

Correct	Wrong	Misconception	All Over
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
18			
19			
20			
21			
22			
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24			
25			
26			
27			
28			
29			
30			

Q2: The best way for me to describe a primary source document is:
(see word document for table of information)

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Only 6 students nailed it!
- 11 students weren't too far off, but perhaps their statements were unclear or lacking some info.
- 8 students were wrong

* more students were correct or had a misconception (17) than students that were wrong or all over (12) HOWEVER: more students were wrong (8) than right (6).

Question 4

1 Everyday in class. (Q3 = textbook)

2 Frequently, we read quotes and look at pictures. (Q3 = diary/autobio/picture)

3 He uses primary sources in textbook. There are quotes from the past. (Q3 = diary)

4 Our social studies teacher uses primary sources everyday. (Q3 said textbook)

5 About 30 to 40 percent. Not very much. (Q3 = autobio)

6 Probably half the time, other times it's plays or from the textbook. (Q3 = Someone's experience)

7 He uses a lot of primary sources. → on Q3 #1 mentions that an example of a PS is a textbook

8 He uses more secondary source. He hardly uses it. (Q3 = diary/JE/photo)

9 Every once in a while. (Q3 = document)

10 Well we use the textbook a lot so practically everyday. (Q3 = autobio)

11 We have done a good amount in previous bellworks but not a lot. (diary)

12 My teacher usually uses primary sources when he has one available that has to do with the lesson we are learning. (autobio/JE/DE/picture)

13 All the time. JE.

14 Very often. diary

15 Close to 1/4 to 1/2 the time. diary/journal

16 Most of the time. Original

17 When an event that has been well documented so for every lesson about 2 or three. diary entry

18 Everyday. textbook

19 About every other day. textbook

20 He uses them very often to give us a lot of information. textbook

21 Not often, only when he can provide it. letter

22 Very often. reporter

23 Not often. Journal

24 Once have talked about primary source. paragraph 4

25 Very often/everyday. textbook/document

26 The first week of school and before the FCAT. diary/book/autobio/photo

27 Sometimes, but not all the time. par. B

28 Often everyday we use primary sources in class. textbook/biography

29 Not that often. dictionary

Q4: How often does your social studies teacher use primary source documents in class?

Everyday	6
Frequently	8
Not very Much	6
1/2 the time	2
A lot	1
Once in a while	1
Other	5

* Omitting this question from results section because of previous responses about what a primary source doc. was explained as by participants

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Question 7

Sheet 10

1 3
2 3
3 5
4 3
N/A 5
6 4
7 1
8 3
9 4
10 4
11 4

12.5 - I like to see the ways technology changed during that period in history
13 4
14 4
15 4
16 4
17 3
18 5

19.5 - It helps me get a better view of things * on Q6 - disagreed that ~~the~~ reading the textbook was interesting
(→ thinks its interesting to look at PS)

20 5
21 4
22 3
23 2
24 no answer
25 5
26 5
27 4
28 5
29 4

Q7: Looking at pictures of technology during the Industrial Revolution is interesting.
Anything more?

SD	D	N/D	A	SA	N/A	(no answer)
1	2	3	4	5	1	1
1	1	6	11	8		

* omitting b/c question is vague - "pictures of technology" doesn't tell the participants if they're cartoons, photographs etc. therefore its unknown if these pictures are PS or SI

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Windows 7

Question 11

Sheet14						
	1	5				
	2	3				
	3	4				
	4	5				
	5	4				
Q5 - Working w/ others provides feedback & more views on the subject	7	5				
	8	5				
	9	5				
	10	5				
	11	5				
	12	4				
	13	5				
	14	5				
	15	5				
	16	5				
	17	5				
	18	5				
	19	5				
	20	4				
	21	5				
22 - I do better and accomplish more when I work alone	23	5				
	24	5				
25 - It helps give an insight on what other people are thinking	26	4				
	27	3				
	28	5				
	29	4				
Q11: I really enjoy working in groups in my social studies class.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Anything more?	0	1	2	6	20	0

Question 12

Sheet15

1 3
2 3
3 3
4 1
5 5

Q3 - I like both groups & individual work

7 1
8 2
9 2

Q3 - Kinda doesn't bother me if we work alone, it could be either way

11 3
12 3
13 1
14 3
15 3
16 2

Q3 - Depending on the work when I work individually

18 3
19 1
20 2
21 1
22 5
23 1
24 1

Q3 - It depends because sometimes you do need to work alone

26 3
27 3
28 1
29 2

Q12: I would much rather work individually in my social studies class.
Anything more?

1	2	3	4	5	N/A
8	5	14	0	2	0

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