

## **ABSTRACT**

LONG, EVAN RAYMOND. *Visions of the Possible: Case Studies of How Social Studies Teachers Enact the C3 Framework.* (Under the direction of John K. Lee, PhD.)

This multiple case study investigated how teachers utilized C3 Framework-aligned instructional materials created with the Inquiry Design Model in unique contexts. Contextual factors related to how teachers enacted and experienced the C3 Framework were explored, in addition to how they planned, implemented, and assessed C3 Framework-aligned instruction. The theories of social constructivism and pedagogical content knowledge were employed to investigate the quintain: teacher enactment of the C3 Framework. Data was analyzed using constant comparative analysis in order to reveal situational issues and patterns within each case before engaging in cross case analysis. Data sources included semi-structured interviews, observations, student artifacts, and teacher artifacts. Findings from this study indicated that teachers' beliefs, life experiences, and pedagogical skills were aligned with inquiry-based pedagogy and that their experiences teaching with the C3 Framework were generally positive and transformative. Teachers' instructional decisions were positively impacted by a school culture that granted autonomy. Also, teachers' instructional decision-making and planning became increasingly collaborative and flexible. Finally, the study found that teachers require explicit training in how to scaffold complex disciplinary texts across the social science disciplines, as well as how to attend to students' epistemic stances when engaging in disciplinary analyses.

Keywords: C3 framework, inquiry-based social studies, pedagogical content knowledge, disciplinary inquiry.

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Visions of the Possible: Case Studies of How Social Studies Teachers Enact the C3  
Framework

by  
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## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to my teachers:

To my first teachers, my parents, for teaching me the value of hard work

To Mr. Robert Moulton, for teaching me to open my mind

To Mrs. Paula Godfroy, for teaching me how to love history

To Mrs. Linda Doherty, for teaching me that I was worth more than I had thought

To Mr. Kenneth Hughes, for teaching me how to teach with passion

To the late Dr. Dan Davis, for teaching me that I belonged

To my advisor, Dr. John Lee, for teaching me how to belong

To my wife, Kaitlin, for supporting me through it all,

And to my two girls, Eleanor and Elizabeth, for serving as my inspiration.

## **BIOGRAPHY**

Evan was born in Lowell, Massachusetts into a hard-working, working-class family. His family's fortunes benefited greatly after both parents procured quality union-protected jobs, and the family moved to the nearby town of Dracut. His father worked for a local energy company repairing faulty natural gas lines, and his mother became a part-time clerk for the postal service. Evan attended Dracut Public Schools where he took an interest in cross country running and writing. He then attended college in Boston in order to pursue a degree in social studies education.

After graduation he returned to his hometown to teach high school social studies and worked alongside many of his former teachers. After three years he moved to Baltimore with his partner to work on their master's degree together, and in the process they got married. Upon graduation, the couple moved to North Carolina and had two happy and healthy daughters. In North Carolina Evan worked as a middle school social studies teacher in Johnston County before enrolling in a PhD program at North Carolina State University. Evan looks forward to continue developing his understanding and passion for inquiry-based learning, teacher preparation, social justice, community engagement, and brain-based learning.

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## CHAPTER 1

When I started my first social studies teaching assignment, I was inundated with words of caution from veteran teachers against the perceived ephemeral nature of educational initiatives and the cyclical nature of reform efforts in social studies. Some had grown apathetic or even hostile to any nascent instructional approach or initiative that came along. Many had reportedly once tried some inquiry-based methods and deemed them to be failures because they were perceived to be too difficult to manage or too challenging for students. One thirty-year veteran told me to “forget that [inquiry] stuff that doesn’t work...they keep trying to sell this idea to us over and over again, and it never works out. Just tune them out and teach how you want.”

It was my first lesson in what is known as curriculum gatekeeping- a concept that dictates that the teacher is the filter of what and how concepts, strategies, and approaches are included or excluded from social studies classrooms (Thornton, 2005; 2008). Teachers’ instructional decision-making is thus the cornerstone of successful teaching and learning (Engle & Ochoa, 1988). It is a deciding factor regarding the success of any reform or initiative. Soon I learned that not only were teachers instructional gatekeepers, but that they were quite good at it. As William Stanley (2013) suggested, “it has often seemed as if the more things change, the more they remain the same” (p. 337). I myself joined in as almost any new initiative that was promoted (e.g., thematic planning, using primary sources) was met with suspicion. I soon learned that many teachers had grown apathetic and some even hostile to any new instructional approach or initiative that came along. Numerous

discussions over the merits of alternative approaches led to a general consensus that almost any initiative had been tried before and that they had failed.

Hence, the takeaway was clear: incorporating these new/old approaches would not benefit students any more than the “tried and true” traditional practices that were found to be easier to manage and efficient to use. Some peers had been teaching long enough to recall the inquiry-based New Social Studies (NSS) movement in the 1960s and saw its perceived failures as intrinsic proof that inquiry-based learning was not cognitively suited to student learning or logistically suited to the practical everyday demands of teaching. Others may have tried some inquiry-related strategy at some point with marginal degrees of success.

Instructional gatekeeping is one of the main reasons that despite some periods of piqued academic interest and marginal classroom success, researchers continue to find traditional approaches dominating social studies instruction (Cuban, 1991; Grant, 2003; Lee & Weiss, 2007; Nokes, 2010; Paxton, 1999; Stanley & Nelson, 1994). Although trends in academic debates are dynamic, the history of enacted social studies in classrooms is as dull and static as the kind of classes in which students typically attend.

### **Defining the Problem**

Transmission pedagogical approaches continue to dominate social studies classrooms. This is in spite of the now century-long reform efforts to make inquiry more central to social studies instruction, a recent proliferation of research efforts supporting inquiry methods, and teachers now having access to unprecedented amounts of inquiry-based instructional materials. Students are still spending a majority of class time passively



absorbing (or ignoring) the all-too-often elitist, patriarchal, white, and nationalistic narratives of history and citizenship (Loewen, 1995; VanSledright, 2011). Reliance on such narratives has been found to promote an ahistorical, objectivist view of historical knowledge that is antithetical to the interpretive ethos of history (Loewen, 1995). Researchers estimate that 90 percent of social studies teachers lecture at least half of the time (Russell, 2010) and that only 19 percent of students reported participating in debate or discussion (Levstik, 2008). Students continue to find their classes boring and lacking in purpose (Russell & Pelligrino, 2008). They rarely have any opportunity to practice citizenship in authentic settings, and they may be prone to developing apathetic political and civic attitudes. As adults they may become unwilling and/or unable to participate positively in civic life. In this manner it is clear that traditional approaches in social studies classrooms have often served to undermine the essential goal of social studies education- to develop civic competence.

The College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards (NCSS, 2013) represents the latest wide-scale effort to move social studies classrooms away from transmission pedagogy towards inquiry-based pedagogy. It is perhaps the largest and most ambitious effort since the failed New Social Studies movement in the 1960s. Originally designed to support state standard revisions efforts, it also offers direct instructional guidance to teachers with its inquiry arc that threads through four dimensions or steps in the inquiry process. The C3 Framework's inquiry process begins in Dimension 1 with student- and teacher-generated compelling questions that are scaffolded with smaller-scale supporting questions. Next, students apply disciplinary (or interdisciplinary) concepts

and skills in Dimension 2 to evaluate evidence and make claims in Dimension 3. The inquiry process culminates in students constructing an argument and taking informed action in Dimension 4. The C3 Framework represents a clear alliance between two historically competing inquiry camps in social studies- disciplinary inquiry and reflective inquiry- aiming to incorporate the strengths of each approach while it mediates their individual weaknesses.

Authors of the C3 Framework created an instructional tool to support teachers in using the inquiry arc and bringing the C3 Framework to life in their classrooms. This instructional tool, called the Inquiry Design Model (IDM), provides teachers with a blueprint template to construct their own C3 Framework-aligned “inquiries” or learning segments that fall anywhere on the continuum between a lesson plan and a unit. Moreover, teachers can use IDM to adapt pre-existing inquiries for unique learning needs. Its unique features include a series of interconnected and sequenced questions, tasks/assessments, featured sources, and taking informed action experiences that follow the C3 Framework’s inquiry arc. IDM incorporates key curricula principles, such as Understanding by Design and Authentic Intellectual Work, which have been popularly used to structure rigorous and meaningful learning experiences. IDM itself is grounded heavily in theoretical and empirical support (Grant, Swan, & Lee, 2017). It was used in New York State to create 84 exemplary C3 Framework-aligned learning segments or “inquiries” to support state-wide implementation efforts that were made free and available to all teachers in 2014. Since then its usage has proliferated throughout the country.

The C3 Framework and IDM build off of past inquiry initiatives by offering a clear structure for students throughout the inquiry process. Their new approach to inquiry aims to be engaging, relevant, and rigorous, and they are both supported by a plethora of research efforts regarding teaching practices. However, empirical studies are nascent. To date little is known in regards to how teachers in the field are enacting the C3 Framework and/or IDM. Understanding how teachers plan for instruction, implement C3 Framework-aligned inquiries, and assess student learning in a C3 Framework-aligned curriculum is currently unexplored territory.

### **Purpose Statement and Research Questions**

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore how two social studies teachers utilized C3 Framework-aligned instructional materials created with IDM in their unique contexts. Specifically, the study aims to explore contextual factors that shaped their experiences, how teachers enacted the C3 Framework, and the experiences that they had teaching with the C3 Framework. Guiding this study was the following research questions:

1. What contextual factors help shape social studies teachers' enactment of the C3 Framework?
  - a. How do beliefs, skills, and life experiences influence social studies teachers' enactment of the C3 Framework?
  - b. How do social and environmental factors influence social studies teachers' enactment of the C3 Framework?

2. How do social studies teachers enact the C3 Framework into practice using instructional materials created by the Inquiry Design Model?
  - a. How do social studies teachers plan for instruction with C3 Framework-aligned instructional materials created with Inquiry Design Model?
  - b. How do social teachers implement C3 Framework-aligned instructional materials created with Inquiry Design Model?
  - c. How do social teachers assess student learning using C3 Framework-aligned instructional materials created with Inquiry Design Model?
3. How do social studies teachers experience enactment of the C3 Framework?

### **Significance of the Study**

The C3 Framework offers a historic opportunity to potentially move past century-long debates amongst competing camps in the social studies and to move the debate from whether or not inquiry should guide instruction to how inquiry can guide instruction (Swan & Griffin, 2013). The C3 Framework will likely have direct influence over classroom practices in all fifty states and beyond. Its usage of the inquiry arc embeds key components of two competing inquiry camps in social studies-- disciplinary inquiry and reflective inquiry—and seeks to build off of the strengths of both approaches while mediating each of their weaknesses. The findings from this study offer a small glimpse into how successful the C3 Framework can be in particular contexts regarding this task. In doing so, this study may help provide a clear snapshot regarding the potential of the C3 Framework to directly inform

instruction in particular classrooms towards rigorous and meaningful inquiry-centered learning. Moreover, both participants teach in a state that has not adopted the C3 Framework or prescribed any C3 Framework-aligned curriculum. This allows the study to potentially have direct implications to other contexts in which teachers are using the C3 Framework voluntarily to support existing curricula or standards.

The fact that both participants were relatively new to the instructional materials and approaches may increase the usefulness of this study as it can inform how some teachers that are still in a habituation stage attempt to enact the C3 Framework. The combined novelty and historical importance of the C3 Framework and IDM with the relative dearth of empirical studies so far help situate the importance of this study. As one of the first empirical studies on the C3 Framework and Inquiry Design Model, it may provide useful guidance for future research efforts on both initiatives.

### **Overview of Theoretical Frameworks**

An essential part of qualitative research is to understand the salient role of theoretical frameworks that thread through all aspects of a study. Some researchers have suggested that theory emerges from research (Anfara & Mertz, 2006). However, I agree with researchers who posit that all research is situated within at least some theoretical perspective (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). Personal experiences and understandings of various theories helped this dissertation research. They were used to guide all steps in the research process from research design to data collection to data analysis.

This study employed a social constructivist theoretical lens to capture some of the interplay between the individual participants in each case and the sociocultural milieu in regards to instructional decision-making. Social constructivism views learning as a process of enculturation (Creswell, 2013). I believe that it is particularly well-suited to a case study with a rare context. Furthermore, the goal of this study was to honor the participants' perspectives. Hence, a social constructivist approach was well-suited for this study. Exploring the participants' experiences, instructional decision making, and environmental influences is well-suited to the social constructivist approach that views knowledge as socially and historically constructed and co-constructed. Social constructivism helped guide (consciously and unconsciously) the research focus, methodology, and interpretation of findings in this study.

This study was also influenced by Shulman's (1987) pedagogical content knowledge theory which encompasses a teacher's content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and knowledge of learners. Moreover, it consists of knowledge of learning contexts and knowledge of purposes for teaching (Grossman, 1990). PCK is a helpful theoretical lens to understand instructional decision-making in specific contexts because it is linked with both instructional decisions and learning outcomes (Shulman, 1987). Specifically, it can help better understand how teachers plan for instruction with C3 Framework-aligned instructional materials because of the many aspects of learning that each participant will have to attend to within an inquiry learning experience.

## **Overview of Research Design and Methods**

This study was designed to provide insight, discovery, and interpretation in accordance with the qualitative ethos (Merriam, 2009). It was structured as an instrumental multiple case study as it investigates two cases of teachers enacting the C3 Framework in their own classrooms. A case study is “an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system” (Merriam, 2009, p. 40). A multiple case study explores a central phenomenon or quintain as it manifests itself in unique contexts across more than one case (Stake, 2006). Case studies are characterized by the unit of analysis and, unlike other qualitative approaches, are not associated with particular data collection or analysis methods (Merriam, 2009). The quintain in the study was teacher enactment of the C3 Framework. The fact that my interest began with the quintain made this methodology well-suited to this research effort because multiple case study research begins with the quintain (Stake, 2006). In this context, I was first interested in how teachers enacted the C3 Framework in their classrooms. The cases selected both served to illuminate understanding of the quintain; however, each was unique as it involved a teacher enacting the C3 Framework in an elective inquiry course that he himself designed.

Using multiple case research design allowed me to study the similarities and differences regarding both cases in order to understand the quintain (Stake, 2006). The unit of analysis was the teachers, and each case was bounded at the classroom level by time, activity, and grade band of students. Each case was unique in regards to the beliefs and practices of the participating teachers, students, and grade level. One case involved a veteran

middle school teacher and the other involved a novice teacher teaching at the high school level. Each case involved a teacher enacting the C3 Framework in a self-created elective inquiry course unbounded by any traditional external curricula demands.

Although this was a multiple case study interested in a central phenomenon—how teachers enact the C3 Framework in their classes---it was not designed to generate grand generalizations. Rather it was more concerned with understanding particulars in unique contexts (Stake, 2006). In accordance with Stakes' (2006) recommendations, this study started with an interest in the quintain, viewed situational issues within both cases, and then looked for patterns within each case. Finally, it engaged in cross-case analysis to make loose assertions regarding the quintain. This employed the notion of “fuzzy generalizations” in which readers themselves decide on the generalizability of the case (Bassegy, 1999). This case study design was well-suited to my inquiry worldview, especially considering the role of vicarious experiences within case studies and the applicability of a case study being determined by the reader (Stake, 2006). The novel nature of the instructional materials and approaches the teachers used within the study were also well-aligned for a case study as Merriam (2009) suggests that innovations are suitable for case studies.

The primary data collection tools were observational field notes, in-depth semi-structured interviews, student artifacts, and teacher artifacts. They were collected until a point of data saturation was found. Data was analyzed eclectically in an iterative cycle of inductive coding. Each of these methods will be elaborated upon in chapter three.



**Definition of Terms**

*C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards*- a guidance document published by the National Council for the Social Studies for state standards revisions and educators to centralize inquiry in social studies classrooms following four dimensions of an interconnected inquiry arc.

*Inquiry Design Model*- an instructional tool that serves as a blueprint or template for creating C3 Framework-aligned inquiries. Its features include compelling and supporting questions, staging tasks, formative and summative tasks, featured sources, argument extensions, and taking informed action.

*Disciplinary Inquiry or Social Science Inquiry*- one of the three classic camps in social studies (Barr, Barth, and Shermis, 1970). Disciplinary inquiry requires rigorous investigations that use tools of the discipline. In social studies these include the habits of the mind of experts in the field (e.g., historical thinking) and involves students applying disciplinary analyses onto evidence in order to make claims and construct arguments.

*Reflective Inquiry*- one of the three classic camps in social studies (Barr, Barth, and Shermis, 1970). It requires that students engage in personally relevant investigations onto questions of societal concern. The camp was popularized by John Dewey in the early twentieth century, had a resurgence during the Newer Social Studies movement in the latter half of the 1960s, and experienced another revival in the late 1980s with the works of Shirley Engle.

*Taking Informed Action*- part of Dimension 4 of the C3 Framework for social studies. Taking Informed Action tasks students with applying emerging understandings across the inquiry arc

onto authentic settings. Taking Informed Action begins with students working to understand a problem, assessing capacity and options for action, and finally taking informed action.

Combined with student-generated compelling questions, Taking Informed Action encompasses key components of the reflective inquiry camp in social studies.

*New York Toolkit for Social Studies*- This statewide project was designed to aid implementation efforts of New York's updated, C3 Framework-aligned standards in social studies. It led to the creation of the Inquiry Design Model (and its conceptual understandings), 84 piloted C3 Framework-aligned inquiries made by teachers from across the state, and professional development materials.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### **Scope and Sequence**

This literature review situates this research study within the now century-long debate in social studies education over the meaning and purposes of social studies and inquiry. It explores literature related to historical and contemporary iterations of inquiry in social studies, especially related to disciplinary inquiry as conceived by often-competing social science and reflective inquiry camps. It then explores the gap between cognitive and empirical support for, and teachers' actual enactment of, inquiry-based approaches in social studies. It is impossible to understand this gap without exploring the cognitive and logistical challenges that inquiry-based instruction places on students and teachers, as well as how some researchers and teachers have addressed many of these challenges. This literature review will explore this gap before examining the conceptual underpinning of inquiry in social studies---Authentic Intellectual Work---and its implications for authentic assessments in social studies. Finally, the review offers an explanation of how this study can help address existing gaps in the literature.

### **Historical Iterations of Inquiry**

The field of social studies education has long been engulfed in debates over the meaning, purpose, and role of the social studies in the classroom. Although most educators concur that the primary purpose of social studies is to produce effective citizens, no consensus can be found amongst them in regards to what actually constitutes effective citizens (Petrini & Fleming, 1990; Ross, 2006). Additionally, scholars do not even

necessarily agree that preparing students for effective citizenship is the primary goal of social studies, as some point to different primary goals for social studies such as disciplinary knowledge and understanding or social justice (Hicks, van Hover, Doolittle, & Van Fossen, 2012). Within the camp of those who advocate disciplinary knowledge as the primary goal of social studies is an enduring debate over whether such knowledge should be interdisciplinary or not.

The rich diversity in opinion over the meaning of social studies has led to ideological camps clashing internally and externally over why social studies is taught, what content should be included in it, what skills should be fostered, and what methods should be used. These clashes tend to reflect anxieties and culture wars of the day (Parker, 2010). And they have been ongoing for more than a century since the inception of social studies in 1916. Delving into historical and contemporary debates amongst and between these camps can illuminate contemporary reform efforts in social studies (Evans, 2007; Manfra, 2010; Rossi, 1992). This study is occurring within the context of a new curricula reform movement---the C3 Framework---thus raising the need to situate the study in past efforts.

Inquiry in a general sense can be thought of as an active exploration of a question in which a person constructs individualized meaning and seeks out solutions (Vygotsky, 1978). The use of inquiry as an educational tool can be traced back to Socrates, and scholarly interest in it has piqued in numerous time periods in various school subjects. The numerous forms of inquiry (e.g. authentic intellectual work, discipline-based inquiry, project-based inquiry, problem-based inquiry, challenge-based inquiry) may complicate efforts to

understand it (Friesen & Scott, 2013). This study will focus on the concept of disciplinary inquiry, which requires that students rely on domain-specific knowledge and skills in pursuit of an investigation. Although inquiry-based learning experiences are becoming increasingly popular again in classrooms (Friesen & Scott, 2013), wide scale enactment is still lacking in most social studies classrooms. Instead classrooms are dominated by lower order thinking tasks (Saye & SSIRC, 2013).

Inquiry in social studies can be conceptualized as a systematic investigation into issues or questions of historical and/or contemporary concern. Such investigations often involve investigating the past with historical questions and analytical tools (Levesque, 2008). Most historical inquiry initiatives include a focus around a student- or teacher-selected question that can frame instruction. Historical inquiries begin and sometimes even end with questions and mysteries (Bain, 2005). Historical inquiry was advocated at the dawn of social studies when the 1916 Social Studies Committee recommended that students apply knowledge following conventions of the scientific method (Saxe, 1991), although calls for inquiry-based pedagogies in social studies actually predated the birth of social studies as a school subject.

Early supporters of inquiry in social studies include prominent supporters like Herbert Spencer, Mary Sheldon Barnes, G.S. Hall, John Dewey, Fred Fling, Hilda Taba, and Maria Montessori. Historical inquiry was advocated by the American Historical Association's Committee of Seven (1899) which recommended use of primary sources in order to "make people and events of bygone times more real" (p. 104). The New England

Teachers' Association also recommended use of primary source investigations (Hazen, Bourne, Dean, Farrand, & Hart, 1902). Thus, although the C3 Framework advocates a new approach for inquiry-based learning in social studies, the overall vision for inquiry-related practices in social studies is certainly not.

Within social studies education are two competing inquiry camps- social science and reflective inquiry or social education- which are both embedded within the C3 Framework and IDM approach to inquiry (Barr, Barth, & Shermis, 1970). Advocates of a social science approach typically see disciplinary investigations as ends in themselves (Thornton, 2005). Thus, development of civic competencies is seen as residual to the development of disciplinary thinking. Advocates of the reflective inquiry camp, in pursuing their primary goal of developing effective citizenship, advocate that social studies instruction be centered around perennial ethical issues of societal concern (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Massaro, 1993). Social science advocates warn against inclusion of such dilemmas often on the grounds that they may lead to presentism or that they lead to thinking processes that are divorced from the thinking processes of experts in the field (Reisman, 2011). Both approaches meet the criteria for disciplinary inquiry as they require students to utilize domain-specific knowledge and skills. They differ in the domains from which students draw with social science advocates recommending that students use the tools of experts in the social science disciplines and reflective inquiry advocates looking to exemplar models of citizenship.

There is a plethora of research studies regarding specific cognitive processes that take place during historical disciplinary analysis, but less so for the inquiry approach advocated

by the reflective inquiry camp. Cognitive support the reflective inquiry approach is more grounded in indirect connections regarding autonomy and relevance supporting learner engagement (Pink, 2011). It is thus well established how expert historians think but not so regarding how expert social reformers think. Most empirical research efforts have focused on specific skills (e.g., historical argumentation) within a social science disciplinary inquiry, rather than attending to learning throughout the entire inquiry process. They also tend to focus on thinking processes inherent to history to the relative exclusion of the other social science disciplines. These studies that offer cognitive and empirical support to disciplinary inquiry will be further explored later in this chapter.

It should be noted that some researchers have advocated for a hybrid inquiry approach in which students use disciplinary investigations as a means towards accomplishing a civic ends in real-life settings (Newmann, Marks, & Gamoran, 1996; Saye & Brush, 2004). Thus, calls for a fusion across both approaches are not new; however, the C3 Framework provides a practical, wide-scale vehicle from which this fusion can occur. Combining discipline-specific and societal investigations introduces new challenges especially related to how teachers support students in attending to disciplinary-specific demands as well as working systematically to investigate less-structured societal problems. Hence, teachers may need to utilize different approaches in regards to supporting students in taking informed action than they use to support students in Dimensions 2 and 3 in the C3 Framework. To date, little is known as to how teachers are currently scaffolding the two interconnected, but still distinct goals of fostering discipline-specific analysis and applying such knowledge in a

taking informed action task. Moreover, knowledge regarding how historical knowledge is converted into civic activity is still emerging (Shreiner, 2014).

Perhaps the most prominent voice for the reflective inquiry approach in social studies came from John Dewey. He advocated for an approach to inquiry modeled after the scientific method in which teachers served as facilitators of knowledge (1910). Dewey later recommended that students apply knowledge learned through inquiry methods in the classroom onto social problems of the community. Central to Dewey's pedagogical approach was the concept that people learn best when they seek answers to questions that matter (Dewey, 1902; 1933). Dewey was no advocate of child-centered education, however. This came out clearly in his statement that "nothing is more absurd than to suppose that there is no middle term between leaving a child to his own unguided fancies and likes or controlling his activities by a formal succession of dictate directions" (1902, p. 130). His belief in situating learning at the intersection of the student interests and societal problems is embedded within the notion of the C3 Framework's compelling questions that are both intellectually rigorous and student-friendly.

Dewey's approach to inquiry was modified and radicalized by social reconstructionists like Harold Rugg, Charles Beard, and George Counts in the 1930s. Like Dewey, these men believed that an inquiry approach around issues of societal concern would lead to improved learning outcomes. Counts (1932) was especially critical of learning experiences that were divorced from lived experiences of students. Harold Rugg called for instruction to be planned around the problems of contemporary life



(Evans, 2004; Rugg, 1923). However, these men also embedded critical perspectives into their approaches, thus alienating many social conservatives who feared their radicalization of the curriculum. The reflective inquiry approach to social studies would fall out of favor and be resurrected in the late 1960s as part of the Newer Social Studies movement. This was spawned in reaction to the perceived failures of the earlier New Social Studies movements in regards to engaging students in meaningful disciplinary analysis work and addressing diverse learning needs (Evans, 2004; Evans, 2010).

James Shaver and Donald Oliver were two leaders of the Newer Social Studies movement and helped lead National Council of the Social Studies (NCSS) to adopt their reflective inquiry ethos (Rossi, 1992). This was evident in NCSS's (1971) statement that students "should apply their knowledge, abilities, and commitments toward the improvement of the human condition." However, by 1992 NCSS had dropped social improvement as a core goal of social studies instead focusing on civic competence (Schneider, 1994). Reflective inquiry would receive renewed interest with the work of Shirley Engle and others in the late 1980s and 1990s and is embedded within the inquiry arc of the C3 Framework.

Competing with the Deweyan reflective inquiry approach has been the social science inquiry approach. This approach typically has manifested itself as historical investigations using domain-specific knowledge and skills, which often fail to integrate disciplinary knowledge from other social sciences. Central to this approach is that students should engage in simulated investigations into problems that social scientists

face using the same disciplinary tools, concepts, and procedures. This social science approach was popularized briefly in the 1890s by Fred Fling before condemnation from the American Historical Association in 1897 led him to fall out of favor (Petrini & Fleming, 1990; Osbourne, 2003). It hit an apex in the 1960s after the National Science Foundation funded several initiatives that became collectively known as the New Social Studies (NSS). These, like IDM, were based on Jerome Bruner's notion that "any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development" (p. 33). These projects created rigorous social science-themed inquiries for students to complete and contained well-stocked learning packages full of primary sources and questions to help teachers facilitate the inquiry process.

Reasons for the perceived failures of the NSS projects abound. Critics saw these learning experiences as unconnected to the learning needs and interests of students (Evans, 2010; Shaver, 1967; Newmann, Massialas, & Gross, 1965). The NSS projects also lacked a focus on developing citizenship which may have led many to dismiss them as irrelevant to societal needs (Evans, 2011). Manfra (2010) also demonstrates that the struggles of teachers to integrate audio-visual aids may have blunted the impact of the projects. Perhaps the largest reason for the failure of these projects was simply that only 20 percent of teachers had even heard of the NSS materials (Evans, 2010) and only 10 percent had used them in any capacity (Rice, 1992).

Others have noted that NSS projects lacked an organizational structure to avoid inquiry projects becoming residual add-ons (Scheurman & Reynolds, 2010). This is a

particular area of concern in C3 Framework implementation. To date, it is unknown how teachers will posthole learning units within their curriculum. It is unclear what organizational structures teachers may employ in order to conceptually and logistically connect inquiries and units together. Furthermore, it is unclear how teachers will situate the inquiries within units. This study aims to fill this gap in knowledge, which can aid broader implementation efforts of the C3 Framework.

The NSS projects were plagued by some other issues. Ron Evans (2010) noted that teachers often resented the prescriptive nature of the materials, the top-down transmission of the materials from experts, and the lack of attention to low-ability learners. It can be inferred that many teachers were unable or unwilling to scaffold the inquiry process in order to support students. Many research efforts have shown specific ways that inquiry can be scaffolded by experts. However, it is still not clear how teachers in the field scaffold instruction during C3 Framework-aligned inquiry experience. It is also unclear how teachers perceive the C3 Framework and IDM-generated materials especially in regards to whether the materials are age appropriate or not.

Another problem that worked against the NSS projects was that many teachers also appeared to believe that the NSS was an ephemeral fad (Nelson & Drake, 1994). Thus, teachers may have been experiencing “reform fatigue.” To date little is known in regards to teacher perceptions of the C3 Framework or its approach to inquiry and whether or not they perceive it as a trend. Although this is a worthwhile line of research, this study would be ill-suited to investigate it as both participants are already

volunteering to enact the C3 Framework. Hence, exploring their perceptions on it is unlikely to reveal any new insights in this manner. However, future studies can and should explore teacher perceptions in this regard.

The *National Standards for U.S. History* called for a social science approach to inquiry that would thread through instruction (National Center for History, 1994). However, their impact was marginal at best. The C3 Framework represents the biggest inquiry movement the field of social studies has had since the 1960's failed NSS projects. It is the first wide scale attempt at promoting an interdisciplinary inquiry approach that synthesizes the social science and reflective inquiry approaches.

### **Cognitive Support for Inquiry**

Much of the scholarly support for inquiry-based pedagogy has come from the learning sciences rather than from empirical studies into classrooms themselves. Inquiry and constructivist teaching methods have become increasingly supported by cognitive psychologists (Barron, Schwartz, Vye, Moore, Petrosino, Zech, & Bransford, 1999; Davis, Sumara, & Luce-Kapler, 2008). Donovan and Bradsford (2005) made numerous recommendations that are threaded throughout the C3 Framework and IDM such as suggestions for teachers to introduce “just-manageable difficulties” which echo Vygotsky's (1978) notion of zones of proximal development. IDM uses questions and tasks as scaffolds to place students in such optimally challenging learning environments (Grant, Swan, & Lee, 2017).

Cognitive scientists also promote learning that is derived from students' interests (Donovan and Bradsford, 2005). IDM's use of compelling questions explicitly targets this aim. It holds that teachers and students can participate in the formulation of compelling questions that are intellectually rigorous and relevant to students. It is not as clear to the extent that a compelling question should be related to a perennial ethical issue of societal concern, although it can be inferred. Additionally, cognitive scientists suggest that meaningful instruction should provide opportunities for students to take risk (Donovan & Bradsford, 2005). Whether it be participation in meaningful debate in a formative performance task or taking informed action issues forum, students are encouraged to take such intellectual risks throughout various stages of an IDM-generated inquiry. However, little is known as to how teachers will be supporting such risk-taking in C3 Framework environments. This has important implications because cognitive psychologists have identified dispositions towards fixed mindsets as being incongruent to risk-taking (Dweck, 2006). This means that even high-achieving students may be at risk of failing in inquiry environments and that teachers will need to attend to these cognitive dispositions.

Research support for historical inquiry has largely come out of many expert-novice studies, which have helped to expand the knowledge base on disciplinary thinking across the social science disciplines. Many of these studies took place in the 1990s, which has been dubbed the "decade of the brain," and helped to uncover cognitive processes specific to the discipline of history (e.g., Wineburg, 1991; Hicks, Doolittle, Ewing, 2004). However, the enthusiasm for unlocking specific cognitive processes in particular learning contexts has only

recently begun to catch up in economics, political science, and geography (Saye, 2017). Significant research gaps still remain in regards to cognitive processes within these disciplines, especially regarding geography (Bednarz, Heffron, & Huyn, 2013)

Research on disciplinary thinking in history proliferated after Sam Wineburg's (1991) seminal work on expert-novice differences in approaching primary source analysis. Since then he and many others have worked to explore additional processes that undergird historical inquiry. The notion of historical thinking was developed from such work, and it involves framing questions, analyzing evidence, and constructing arguments (Lee, 2005; van Drie & van Boxtel, 2008). Others have identified historical thinking processes to include identifying relevant source information, contextualizing sources, making inferences, corroborating claims, and monitoring one's assumptions and emerging understandings (Barton, 2005; Britt & Aglinskias, 2002; Hicks & Doolittle, 2008; Wineburg, 2001). Van Boxtel and van Drie (2004) identified six components of historical reasoning: asking historical questions, contextualization, making evidence-based claims, using sources, organizing information to explain historical phenomena, and using historical concepts. Astute observers would note the overlaps between these six components across the inquiry arc in the C3 Framework.

Researchers have observed practical implications regarding the pedagogical use of historical thinking. For instance, it has been linked to improved acquisition of factual knowledge (Donovan & Bradsford, 2005; Reisman, 2012). It has also been linked to improved general reading ability (Reisman, 2012). Combined, these research efforts

provide empirical support to the efficacy of historical thinking. They offer strong support to C3 Framework and IDM's assumption that content acquisition and skills development are inter-related processes. It is important to note that advocates of historical thinking posit that it cannot be fostered through didactic means. Instead, students need practice, and such practice can only occur when students are engaged in the methods and materials of historians. However, such methods have been found to be rather dull when enacted improperly (Evans, 2010). Learning scientists have discovered that extended practice leads to both increases in learning and structural changes in the brain (Bradford, Brown, Cocking, 2008). The C3 Framework and IDM may help to foster such practice, and potentially brain changes, by blending novelty with practice. It offers students an opportunity to engage in extended practice in inquiry that scaffolds an inquiry experience with novel historical questions, performance tasks, and opportunities to apply knowledge onto real-life settings. However, little is known as to how teachers will go about planning and responding to emerging issues for such learning experiences.

The C3 Framework and IDM receive some support from the cognitive neurosciences. However, it should be noted that any connection is indirect and loose. Cognitive neuroscientists recommend that teachers link learning to students' own lives, teach students to solve open-ended problems, and establish a classroom of trust and respect in order to help students take risks (Immordino-Yang & Faeth, 2010). Researchers have discovered that positive emotions lead people to generate more ideas (Fredrickson, 2001). They have also found that learning can be linked with positive emotions to achieve improved performance

(Parrott & Spackmann, 2000). One hypothesis for how such emotions can improve performance is because of the positive engagement of the amygdala. The amygdala helps process emotions and impacts memory formation and retrieval (Ferry, Roozendall, & McGaugh, 1999).

Traditional social studies practices may be failing because they do not facilitate any emotional responses of students. IDM supports teachers to draw students more deeply into personally relevant issues which enact emotional arousal in the brain. Thus, IDM supports engagement that leads to content acquisition and retrieval instead of a traditional class that is devoid of any meaningful controversy (Loewen, 1995). However, teacher perceptions of what students will find compelling may not match what students themselves find compelling. It is unclear how teachers manage this issue, especially when existing standards and curriculum require teachers to cover particular content. How teachers manage the tension between disciplinary demands, curriculum demands, and student interests in a C3 Framework context is currently unexplored.

### **Empirical Support for Inquiry**

Some scholars have been less enthusiastic about the need for, and practicality of, implementing inquiry in classrooms. Barton and Levstik (2004) posited that research has never confirmed the superiority of inquiry to traditional instruction. However, many efforts have been conducted since then to showcase the benefits of inquiry-based practices in social studies classrooms. Kirschner, Sweller, & Clark (2006) provided perhaps the sharpest rebuke to inquiry-based pedagogy. They argued that inquiry-based instruction was not aligned to the



cognitive needs of students because it overtaxes working memory and interferes with long-term memory conversion. Likewise, Brown and Campione (1994) found inquiry to cause frustration and confusion in students. Others have gone so far as to suggest that lecture-based approaches are more effective than inquiry for general learners (Klahr & Nigam, 2004; Moreno, 2004; Mayer, 2004). However, almost all of these studies looked at unstructured self-guided approaches. These approaches do not align with disciplinary inquiry in which students apply criteria and domain-specific knowledge onto problems. The C3 Framework's approach to inquiry is highly scaffolded in regards to the inquiry process as well as the pedagogy (Grant, Swan, & Lee, 2017). Thus, these rebukes to inquiry are not applicable to the C3 Framework approach to inquiry. However, it is still unknown what additional hard and soft scaffolds teachers may utilize to support C3 Framework implementation.

Although inquiry can take many forms, it has been found to have a powerful effect on fostering deeper understanding (Hmelo-Silver, Duncan, & Chinn, 2007; Friesen, 2010). Perhaps the most encouraging findings on inquiry to date are that use of inquiry approaches has been found to be particularly effective for low-SES learners and argued as an essential component of achievement gap reform (Newmann, King, & Carmichael, 2007; Halvorsen, Duke, Brugar, Block, Strachan, Berka, & Brown, 2012).

Researchers have recently provided strong empirical support for the academic benefits of historical inquiry-related pedagogy specifically in social studies classrooms. Reisman (2012) conducted an intervention study on the effects of historical inquiry on student learning and found that the treatment group experienced increases in factual

knowledge, reading comprehension, historical thinking, and transfer onto contemporary topics. However, the intervention did not have equal impact across tasks within historical thinking. Most notably student performance on contextualization and corroboration were relatively unchanged. This finding was supported by other studies that found students to particularly struggle with corroboration and making sense of competing accounts (Saye & Brush, 1999;2002; Palmer & Stewart, 1997). It is unclear how teachers in the field support these particular endeavors. The C3 Framework-aligned materials created as part of the New York Toolkit offered some hard scaffolds in regards to contextualization of sources (e.g., context boxes added to primary sources); however, it is still unclear how teachers will use, adapt, or supplement such scaffolds.

Immersion into economic-themed inquiries was found to lead to improved content knowledge and performance measures in treatment conditions (Finkelstein, Hanson, Huang, Hirschman & Huang, 2010). One of the more interesting empirical findings was that skills acquired through disciplinary inquiry may transfer after students are exposed to just one unit of instruction (Bodzin & Cirucci, 2009). This finding is imperative as it suggests that interventions on historical thinking may not require extensive amounts of time.

Despite empirical support for historical inquiry, there still appears to be a dearth of studies on core practices in history (Fogo, 2014). However, researchers have investigated inquiry practices in middle grade classrooms (e.g., Monte-Sano, De La Paz, & Felton, 2014) and elementary classrooms (e.g., Barton, 1997; VanSledright, 2002). A consensus is clear: students in even younger grade levels can engage in disciplinary thinking in history with

proper scaffolding from teachers. Researchers have investigated the impact of student participation in inquiry on students with learning disabilities. They found that all students gained in terms of self-efficacy as learners and understanding of inquiry (Ferretti, MacArthur, & Okolo, 2001). Other investigators looked specifically at students' disciplinary arguments and found positive results with academically diverse learners (De La Paz, Felton, Monte-Sano, Croninger, Jackson, Deogracias, & Hoffman, 2014). The question of how teachers respond to particular learning needs within a C3 Framework context remains unanswered.

One particularly interesting empirical finding is that student motivation and ability to empathize historically were increased when teachers used group discussion and primary sources consistently (Kohlmeier, 2006). Use of primary sources was seen as more efficacious when students were given opportunities to corroborate evidence across multiple authentic texts (Levstik & Barton, 2005; VanSledright, 2002). The C3 Framework facilitates primary source analysis and corroboration across sources. It leaves room for teachers to employ discussion strategies, and many materials from the New York Toolkit include discussion-based formative assessments; however, it is unknown how teachers will manage discussions on controversial issues while using IDM materials. A related finding from Beck (2003) suggests that students were more engaged in inquiry tasks when they were given audience roles with social and academic purposes. This suggests the importance of Dimension 4 in the C3 Framework in which students are encouraged to present arguments to authentic audiences.

Walter Parker has led perhaps the most ambitious empirical research study on the use of inquiry in social studies. His series of ongoing studies are comparing a traditional approach to teaching an Advanced Placement (AP) U.S. Government and Politics course with an alternative Project-based Learning (PBL) approach. A study from year one revealed that students in the experimental group performed equally as well as students in the control group on the AP exam itself, and they performed better on a follow-up assessment that measured conceptual learning (Parker, Mosborg, Bransford, Vye, Wilkerson, & Abbott, 2011). A study from year two showed that students in PBL group scored better on the AP test (Parker, Lo, Yeo, Valencia, Nguyen, Abbott, Nolen, Bransford, & Vye, 2013). Of interest from these studies was that students in the PBL group reported a great deal of frustration in the first year, but that the frustration decreased in year two. Reports of frustration have been common on smaller-scale inquiry research efforts.

Empirical support for historical inquiry is strong. However, C3 Framework extends historical inquiry to include taking informed action experiences that mirror academic service learning projects. Such projects have received support from past research efforts. Service learning can be conceived as integrating community service and academics in structured reflection (Wade, 2008). They are often promoted by the reflective inquiry camp. As such, the idea of service learning is embedded within Dimension 4 of the C3 Framework. Unique features include collaboration, assessment of service and learning, student-directedness, and celebrations with communities (Conrad & Hedin, 1991). It is seen as a viable alternative to failed traditional civics instruction (Riedel, 2002). Researchers have found public school

service learning experiences to predict future civic involvement (Astin, Sax, & Avalos, 1999; Perry & Katula, 2001; Wade & Saxe, 1996; Youniss, McLellan, & Yates, 1997).

Additionally, highly politically active high school students have been found to be more politically active as adults (Beane, Turner, Jones, & Lipka, 1981; Fendrich, 1993; McAdam, 1989; Youniss, McLellan, & Yates, 1997).

Service learning has led to positive academic outcomes such as improving students' motivation to learn, performance on subject matter tests, and engagement (Wade, 2008). It has been linked to increased attendance and even tolerance for cultural diversity (Billig, 2000). Felten and Clayton (2011) findings on academic benefits to service learning were a bit blunted. Participants in service learning projects were found to have equal content knowledge, but their disciplinary critical thinking skills were enhanced. Academic gains in service learning projects increase when the service involves application of course content (Roots, 1997). Levstik and Barton (2015) attest that "historically informed" service learning improves historical agency and own sense of agency in the world. The C3 Framework appears to promote such historically informed service learning projects throughout the inquiry arc but most specifically in Dimension 4. IDM also offers space for students, teachers, and community members to take part in meaningful collaborative effort and celebration. Thus all components of IDM, from beginning to end, are individually and collectively linked with academic engagement and achievement. Of interest is that IDM does not explicitly support critical reflection, a key feature of service learning (Felten & Clayton,

2011). To date it is unclear how teachers will plan for, implement, and assess taking informed action in their classrooms.

### **Enactment of Inquiry**

Inquiry-based pedagogical approaches have been promoted in various iterations and across different subject areas with enormous zeal without ever fully becoming a core component of the curriculum on a large scale. Thus, most classrooms have not benefited from the proliferation of cognitive and empirical support for inquiry (Hiebart, Gallimore, & Stigler, 2002). Although many teachers seem to believe in a pendulum narrative in which traditional and inquiry-based approaches go back and forth in terms of dominant usage, researchers consistently find that traditional approaches have dominated social studies classrooms across eras (Cuban, 1991; Paxton, 1999; Barton & Levstik, 2004; Lee & Weiss, 2007). This led one scholar to conclude that “the more things change, the more they remain the same” (Stanley, 2013, p. 337).

Traditional instructional approaches even seem to have dominated the 1930s and 1960s which are often seen as the high-water marks of progressive pedagogy. Shermis and Barth (1978), in reference to the contributions of 1930s reformers like Dewey, Rugg, and Counts, found that “what changed, then, was not practice but language.” They go on to state that “despite the alluring wrapper [...] the curriculum is now what it has always been” (p. 32). Stanley (2005) has also questioned the actual impact of progressive reforms on classroom practices in the 1930s. The New Social Studies (NSS) materials of the 1960s had a similar fate. They generated decade’s worth of academic discussion and

debate, but their influence in classrooms was also minimal (Shaver, Davis, Helburn, 1979).

During the onset of the 1980s reactionary back-to-the-basics movement, Larry Cuban (1984) found that overall only one-quarter of teachers had even tried progressive educational ideas. More recently, researchers estimate that 90 percent of social studies teachers lecture at least half of the time (Russell, 2010) and that only 19 percent of students reported participating in debate or discussion (Levstik, 2008). Recent national survey data shows that 52.9 percent of middle school teachers and 40 percent of high school teachers occasionally, rarely, or never engage students in primary source materials (Halvorsen, 2013). This was corroborated by Hicks, Doolittle, and Lee (2004) who found that teachers' use of primary sources was limited. Moreover, 68.1 percent of high school teachers do not consistently engage students in historiographical issues (Halvorsen, 2013). However, researchers have found that teachers in the field are generally receptive to the C3 Framework (Thacker, Lee, & Friedman, 2017).

The picture is clear: inquiry remains a marginal practice in too many social studies classrooms. Despite recent efforts to promote critical thinking in middle schools, researchers have found it lacking in classrooms (Homana & Passe, 2013). Much of the inquiry practices observed by researchers have been of low quality or in situations where teachers revert back and forth between traditional and inquiry methods (Nokes, 2013). Nokes (2010) found that primary sources were used to emphasize points made in lecture. This has relevance to this study as it is unclear how teachers may situate direct instruction

within an inquiry. Inquiries themselves can be used as residual tools or as a core part of instruction.

Scholars have proposed multiple theories as to why inquiry appears to be lacking in classrooms, despite the lengthy history of people advocating on its behalf and the existence of promising research. VanSledright (2011) postulates that instructional traditions hinder efforts. Barton and Levstik (2004) noted that many people are suspicious about the utility of inquiry in early grades. Nokes (2010) points out that teachers' educational philosophies may influence their literacy-related decisions. However, the overall lack of receptivity to inquiry may result from teachers' beliefs that disciplinary-based inquiry represents another ephemeral initiative (as teachers did during the 1960s NSS projects). They may conflate disciplinary literacy with previous reading initiatives such as "reading across the curriculum" that never matched their epistemic beliefs about social studies (Kissner, 2006).

### **Challenges for Students in Inquiry**

Researchers continue to find that students sometimes struggle in inquiry-rich social studies environments due to academic language gaps, comprehension gaps, difficulties using evidence, and lacking motivation (Heafner & Massey, 2016). Researchers have shown that historical thinking is not a natural, or even an inherently enjoyable, cognitive process. Historical thinking occurs in disciplinary inquiry in which students analyze sources (Afflerbach & VanSledright, 2001, De La Paz et al. 2014, Monte-Sano). Researchers have consistently revealed that students require supports or scaffolds, and students who already struggle with general reading and writing skills will require even more support (Rossi &



Pace, 1998; Felton & Herko, 2004). Moreover, researchers have identified lack of practice (Lee & Weiss, 2007) and habituation to lecture (Barton & Levstik, 2004) as major hurdles to effective historical inquiry. This suggests that some students may initially struggle during a habituation phase to inquiry if they have not been exposed to it before. In fact, even high achieving students may struggle with inquiry as it may not align with their assumptions regarding learning (Grant & Gradwell, 2010). It also forces learners to be cognitively flexible (Levstik & Smith, 1996). Long-term efforts to investigate student and teacher usage of inquiry as they move from initial exposure to extended practice are still emerging, albeit promising.

Researchers have discovered that students need particular support in analyzing primary sources (Stahl, Hynd, Britton, McNish, & Bosquet, 1996). As novices, students may not possess proficient procedural or metacognitive knowledge needed to engage in a meaningful inquiry (National Research Council, 2000). Researchers have raised concerns regarding the usage of historical argumentation on students with learning disabilities (De La Paz et al., 2014). Impacting students' ability to analyze primary sources is often a lack of background knowledge (Saye & Brush, 2004), which is needed to help contextualize documents in historical thinking tasks. This may explain in part why many have struggled in regards to contextualizing source information (Husbands, 1996; Shemilt, 1983; van Drie & van Boxtel, 2008). Additionally, students have been found to struggle with corroboration (Palmer & Stewart, 1997; Rouet, Britt, Mason, & Perfetti, 1996). They have also struggled with metacognition; some have been found to ignore optional scaffolds even when they

would likely be beneficial (Girard & Harris, 2012). Researchers have developed SCIM-C as a hard scaffold to help support students across historical thinking tasks (Hicks, Doolittle, & Ewing, 2004). These struggles suggest that future research needs to explore ways that expert teachers help to foster specific processes such as contextualization and corroboration in their classrooms.

Students have been found to struggle in regards to remaining on task, as well as in managing data sources, in complex learning environments (Ehman, Glenn, Johnson, & White, 1992). One reason may be due to lack of motivation regarding readings (Heafner & Massey, 2016). Saye and Brush (2004) identified student motivation and readiness as the two largest challenges in historical inquiry. Moreover, they posit that disciplinary inquiries that also involve investigations into social issues pose cognitive challenges for students as they force students to construct multilogical models (Saye & Brush, 1999). Students are unlikely to be engaged in disciplinary inquiry if they do not see its relevance (Barton, 1997). Thus, teachers should be cautious about assuming that students will find particular inquiry topics relevant without getting student input. Student motivation may also be negatively influenced by deficits in reading comprehension, limited or misapplied background knowledge, or having unsophisticated views of knowledge production that negatively impact their performance (Nokes, 2011).

Researchers have revealed other affective challenges in inquiry environments. Endacott (2014) found that too much emotional arousal can erase many of the benefits of inquiry approaches. Likewise, Brown and Campione (1994) suggest that students need to feel

that their learning environments are safe for taking risks. This may be especially important in C3 Framework learning environments which encourage collaborative learning experiences. Researchers have found that such experiences can expose students' deficits publically (Beck, 2003). The question of how teachers work to stage C3 Framework-aligned inquiries (i.e., provide an engaging hook) and manage potentially volatile discussions on controversies throughout the inquiry process is unclear.

Researchers have discovered that students carry preconceived notions about the nature of history that impact their learning in inquiry environments (Donovan & Bradsford, 2005; Holt, 1990; Lee, 2005; Nokes, 2011; Wineburg, 1991; Wineburg, 2001; VanSledright, 2002). Reddy and VanSledright (2010) identified three epistemic stances, which can be defined as ways of thinking about how historical knowledge is created. Students who view history as an objective single narrative that is transmitted are labeled *objectivist*. Traditional pedagogy cultivates this stance. Wineburg (1991) found that many students become frustrated by contradictions; such students are likely operating with the assumption that the historical record is fixed.

Conversely, students who begin to view all competing historical theories and evidence-based claims as equally valid exhibit what researchers label a *subjectivist* stance. Such students view the historical record as unknowable and would be unlikely to become engaged within a historical inquiry due to their relativistic notions of knowledge. They approach historical argumentation as making a guess or selecting between two equally valid sides. Students can take on the more desirable (and suited to inquiry)

*criticalist* epistemic stance when they understand that multiple interpretations of historical evidence can exist, but that skilled disciplinary analysis can lead one to accept or reject certain accounts.

Students' experiences in social studies classrooms impact their epistemic stances. Likewise, students' epistemic stances impact their experiences in social studies classrooms (Maggioni, Alexander, & VanSledright, 2004; Reddy & VanSledright, 2010; VanSledright, & Reddy, 2014). This is particularly true within inquiry-related tasks. Researchers have discovered that epistemic stances can be shaped (Blevins, 2014; Clark, 2012) and are malleable in younger learners (Nokes, 2014, Reddy & VanSledright, 2010). Objectivist and subjectivist students are ill-equipped for the disciplinary assumptions made in IDM and unlikely to reap its benefits. Wineburg (1991) discovered that objectivist-minded individuals balk when faced with competing narratives in history. Objectivists-- in accepting tradition and rejecting ambiguity—and subjectivists---in viewing history in relativistic terms---may exemplify muted or possibly hostile reactions to history content and disciplinary work. VanSledright's (2002) work with historical thinking in a fifth-grade classroom revealed that an unsophisticated epistemic stance negatively impacted historical thinking. It is unclear how teachers may respond to these epistemological challenges in their classrooms before engaging students in C3 Framework-aligned inquiries; although it can be inferred that extended practice with inquiry can support students towards more nuanced epistemic stances without direction instruction or intervention.

### **Challenges for Teachers in Inquiry**

Disciplinary inquiry places the role of the teacher in stark relief as they attend to disciplinary processes, pedagogical implications from these processes, and unique student needs (Bransford, Darling-Hammond, & LePage, 2005; Monte Sano et al., 2014; Rossi & Pace, 1998). Teachers unaccustomed to literacy instruction may be faced with the task of supporting basic literacy for the first time (Monte-Sano, De La Paz, & Felton, 2014).

Researchers suggest that many teachers underestimate the amount of scaffolding required in inquiry-based learning (Monte Sano et al., 2014; Saye & Brush, 1999). Others underestimate the abilities of their students and may avoid inquiry altogether (Saye & Brush, 2004).

Disciplinary inquiry requires that teachers must understand student knowledge, as well as factual and disciplinary misconceptions (Ashby, Lee, & Shelmit, 2005). Additionally, inquiry requires the usage of effective questions that are both relevant to students and complex (Mueller, 2016). Added to the challenges of balancing student interests and disciplinary complexity is the fact that teachers are bounded by curricula restraints and requirements.

Combined, these research efforts suggest that teachers are not passive implementers; rather, they are active and central to the success of the overall learning experience. With these demands placed on them, it is no wonder that teachers' preparation time for enacting inquiry increases (Saye & Brush, 2004). It is unclear whether or not teachers will be required to spend more time lesson planning when they enact the C3 Framework. It possible that with collaboration that teachers spend less time; however, teachers will be managing numerous formative assessments.

Researchers have explored other reasons behind the gap between scholarly support for inquiry and teachers' overall enactment of it. Other teachers may be resistant to inquiry-based pedagogy because of their own objectivist views of knowledge or inability to tolerate ambiguity (Saye & Brush, 2004). This is supported by results from a national survey in which the strongest indicator of primary source usage was teacher beliefs in regards to the purpose of social studies. Teachers who viewed mastery of basic facts, concepts, and content were least likely to employ primary sources (Jewet & Ackerman, 2013). Onosko (1991) observed that teachers were impacted by broad curricula mandates that led to reliance on transmission pedagogy. These findings have a great deal of relevance onto wide-scale implementation efforts of inquiry-based pedagogy. However, participants in this study are unlikely to possess objectivist tendencies considering the fact that they have voluntarily enacted an inquiry-based curriculum.

Bain (2005) also found that history teachers may want to enact inquiry-based pedagogy but may be constrained by curricular mandates. Although disciplinary inquiry has been found to improve student performance on high-stakes tests (Parker et al., 2013; Saye & SSIRC, 2013), few teachers would likely be concerned about this issue unless they were teaching in such an environment. However, it can help to address concerns that disciplinary inquiry would not prepare students for such tests in particular environments.

## **Scaffolding Inquiry**

Although some critics have charged that disciplinary inquiry is not appropriate for all students (Rossi & Pace, 1998), this study affirms that all students can benefit from disciplinary inquiry with the guidance from a skilled teacher and purposeful use of hard and soft scaffolds. According to Saye and Brush (2002) hard scaffolds are pre-planned. They are typically physical products designed with an awareness of predictable student needs. Some researchers recommend use of disciplinary heuristics (Ferretti, 2001). These often include lists of questions or graphic organizers. Soft scaffolds are reactionary and often ephemeral responses to learning needs that arise. Novices require expert guidance (Brown & Campione, 1994). Without structure many students may be unable to engage in meaningful and deep learning experiences (Airasian & Walsh, 1997). Empirical research has shown that even young learners in elementary grades can engage in meaningful historical inquiry (Levstik & Barton, 20004). Bodzin and Circucci (20009) suggest that direct instruction and modeling about how to think can aid students at least in regards to developing geographic reasoning.

Saye and Brush (2004) identified nine core teaching practices for problem-based historical inquiry. They include practices that are embedded within IDM and others that IDM leaves up to the teacher. Practices that are embedded within IDM include: establishing relevance of tasks with introductory grabber, explicitly introducing the central question, setting tasks within context of overall unit purpose, providing feedback and support for student thinking, encouraging students to empathize with multiple viewpoints, and getting

closure. Practices that are left up to individual teachers include placing events within larger historical contexts, modeling historical thinking, and probing student thinking. To date nothing is known in regards to how teachers will be attending to these other core practices that are not embedded within IDM.

Researchers have revealed that the success of inquiry is dependent on the teacher making adjustments to manage obstacles, especially when dealing with low achieving students (De La Paz et al., 2014; Rossi & Pace, 1998). Additionally, researchers have found that successful teachers in inquiry learning environments were purposeful in enacting environments that were conducive to deliberation and free exchange of ideas (Saye & Brush, 2006). Exemplar teachers often scaffold discussion to help illuminate investigations into historical events (Kohlmeier, 2006). They can also use discussion as a formative assessment to plan and revise instruction (Ashby, Lee, & Shelmit, 2005). Expert teachers may support student learning by modeling explicit use of disciplinary scaffolds (Bain, 2005). Presently, more research efforts have focused on scaffolding learning related to historical inquiry and less so for inquiry experiences that focus on societal investigations (Barton, 1997).

### **Authentic Intellectual Work**

It is difficult to understand the C3 Framework without understanding its conceptual roots. It is largely based off of the notion of Authentic Intellectual Work (AIW), which provided an earlier call to blend rigorous disciplinary analyses with meaningful application into real-life settings. It should be noted that the C3 Framework is not the first framework in social studies to effectively integrate AIW standards. In 1994 the AIW-aligned Powerful and



Authentic Social Studies (PASS) framework were introduced; however, enactment and classroom influence was minimal (Harris & Yocum, 2000).

AIW was designed by Fred Newmann and his associates in Wisconsin as a response to the extreme approaches of dull essentialist transmission pedagogy and relativistic, anti-intellectual constructivism (Scheurman & Newmann, 1998). AIW operates on the premise that real-world activities are more valid and thus meaningful (Shepard, Flexer, Hiebert, Marion, Mayfield, & Weston, 1994). Newmann and his colleagues created a set of cross grade-level, AIW-aligned standards that could be used to assess instruction, student performance, and assessment across subjects. These standards have been used to improve upon and evaluate instruction in diverse learning contexts (e.g., Manfra & Lee, 2012; Swan & Hofer, 2013). They have also been used to help bridge the gap between instruction and assessment.

Newmann was not alone in his concerns over the value of rigor-less constructivist pedagogy (e.g., Airasian & Walsh, 1997) or irrelevant essentialist pedagogy (e.g., Dewey, 1902). It is unsurprising that AIW developed within the context of an essentialist back-to-basics movement in which advocates of core knowledge promoted student exposure to broad lists of easily-digested, but isolated facts, as the main goal of instruction. Leading essentialists of the time often criticized progressive pedagogy as lacking rigor and societal relevance and in promoting engagement at the expense of learning (e.g., Hirsch, Kett, & Trefill, 1988). Newmann found that both essentialist and rigor-less progressive approaches can lead to shallow understanding and constructed AIW as a useful framework for rigorous

and meaningful instruction and assessment. Newmann advocated for AIW as pathway to add rigor to constructivist learning (Newmann, Marks, & Gamoran, 1996). Like the C3 Framework, AIW sought to build of the strengths of competing approaches while mediating the weaknesses of each.

AIW has three core features that are all embedded within the C3 Framework and IDM. First, students are tasked with constructing knowledge through evaluation of complex, sometimes contradictory, information (Newmann, King, & Carmichael, 2007). However, this knowledge construction process is supported with the inclusion of discipline- or domain-specific processes that a teacher helps to scaffold. Thus, the learner is not left to her own devices completely to make meaning. Interestingly, this approach was largely advocated by John Dewey who argued against allowing students to construct meaning without any guidance (Dewey, 1902). The C3 Framework and IDM support this scaffolded, constructivist approach. They also expose students to competing narratives and evidence from which they must evaluate, make, and revise claims based on corroborating or invalidating evidence.

AIW also requires disciplined inquiry in which students use and demonstrate awareness of disciplinary procedures. AIW advocates that students apply knowledge to questions and issues within a discipline (Scheurman & Newmann, 1998). This coalesces with the social science approach to inquiry that is embedded within the C3 Framework and IDM. Hence, AIW-aligned instruction in social studies classrooms would include specific strategies employed by experts in a discipline. This approach has been long advocated in history instruction. However, Newmann et al. (1996) proposed that students could reject

disciplinary procedures in certain cases depending on the direction of the inquiry. This, of course, would require a sophisticated understanding, and it is not clear under what circumstances a student would be benefited by rejecting a disciplinary procedure.

Finally, AIW requires that learning have value and impact beyond the school. The C3 Framework and IDM explicitly incorporate this in taking informed action tasks, as well as in summative extensions that provide students opportunities to extend their conclusions in different formats and with different audiences. Researchers have confirmed that students perform at a higher level when they perform for real audiences (Levstik & Barton, 2015). Research has confirmed the value of AIW in improving student achievement on state-mandated tests (Saye & SSIRC, 2013). IDM, in incorporating all three core components of AIW, seems well- or even better-suited for enacting equally successful learning gains. The C3 Framework and IDM adopt these three AIW principles as they explicitly use disciplinary or interdisciplinary analyses in the service of, and sometimes as part of, taking informed action.

According to Newmann and associates (1996) students will be more engaged, learn more, and be able to transfer knowledge gained throughout a disciplinary inquiry if they view their learning to be meaningful and authentic (i.e., if it is authentic intellectual work). However, students and teachers may disagree as to what constitutes authenticity (Huang, 2002). In fact, Newmann himself warned against viewing authenticity as a dichotomy. He viewed it as occurring on a spectrum (Newmann & Wehlage, 1993). Thus, it is more valuable to ask “to what degree is an assessment authentic?” than to ask “is an assessment authentic?”.

However, it may be equally important to ask “who determines to what degree the assessment is authentic?” This notion has major implications for C3 Framework implementation as teachers attempt to create (or have students create) compelling questions that are intellectually rigorous but also related to student interests.

The question of whether or not knowledge has value beyond the classroom or whether a question is compelling may be in actuality unanswerable. Students may not have the experience or foresight to understand what knowledge is of societal worth and teachers may not be able to understand what would be intrinsically motivating to students. It may only be through true collaboration amongst teachers and students in constructing inquiry experiences that the right balance between disciplinary demands and relevance (including both societal needs and student interests) can be met. To date, little is known in regards to how teachers manage such challenges during their instructional planning.

AIW pedagogy has been linked to positive learning outcomes such as higher order thinking and in making student work more intellectually complex (Avery, 1999; Newmann, Bryk, & Nagaoka, 2001). It has also been linked to student engagement and achievement (Carmichael & Martens, 2012; Herrington & Herrington, 1999). Researchers have also noted that AIW increases quality and authenticity of assessment (Avery, Freeman, & Carmichael-Tanaka, 2002). Avery (1999) found that the authenticity of student performance was largely predicted by the authenticity of instruction. This has major implications for this study as the degree to which the materials and assessments represent AIW, as well as how the teacher

uses the materials, will influence overall authenticity and intellectual quality of student performance.

### **Authentic Assessments in Social Studies**

To date, most research efforts on assessments in social studies have focused on the role of high-stakes tests and the impact they have on curriculum and instruction (e.g., Grant, 2006) and less so on exploring the value and applicability of social studies-specific assessment practices. Overall, researchers have found the theoretical and empirical research base on assessment in social studies to be relatively weak (Grant & Salinas, 2008). Moreover, the literature regarding ways in which instruction can be adapted to address authentic assessment has been found to be lacking as well (Avery, 1999). The fact that assessments and instruction are often interwoven make it difficult to adequately evaluate the role or impact of assessments in classrooms. This section of this literature review will focus more on general principles in assessment and sometimes competing perspectives over assessment.

Assessments generally refer to methods that illuminate understanding of what students know. They can range from brief snapshot judgments of student performance to standardized tests that last several hours (Adeyemi, 2015). Assessments may have the largest influence on student learning as they narrow students' focus and attention to the most perceived to be salient information (Rust, 2002). They reflect the values of the teacher and often of the particular time period. For instance, if instructors value basic skills instruction, then the assessments should measure basic skills. However, if the goal is to help students

develop higher-order thinking processes, then assessments should work to that end (Gulikers, Bastiaens, & Kirschner, 2004).

One can trace the rise of assessments that measure lower-order thinking skills to the industrial age and social efficiency movement in which knowledge was compartmentalized and reduced into easily digestible segments for learners to passively absorb in preparation for their future careers as industrial workers. Edward Thorndike seems to have had a primary role in shaping such educational assessments. Thorndike (1918) wrote that “whatever exists at all exists in some amount. To know it involves knowing its quantity as well as its quality” (p. 16). This reductionist notion sought to quantify all knowledge into basic components, which could be easily measured in multiple choice form.

Traditional assessments rarely measure deep understanding or life application (Alleman & Brophy, 1999). This is in spite of the fact that schools seek to prepare students for future living and working conditions. In this manner most assessments lack validity and alignment to the goals of education. This is largely true because assessments are largely restricted to decontextualized multiple choice summative tests, which are rooted in an outdated behaviorist zeitgeist. They are often used to efficiently rank and reward students while enacting a culture of competitiveness (Gulikers, Bastiaens, & Kirschner, 2004; Mathison & Fragnoli, 2006). Such an approach suggests a false dichotomy between instruction and assessment, between learning and assessment. It also rejects the role of socialization within learning and is unaligned to findings from the learning sciences regarding learning and motivation (Pink, 2011).

Despite a push for alternative forms of assessment, multiple-choice tests still dominate most social studies classrooms (Martin, Maldonado, Schneider, & Smith, 2011). Likewise, researchers have found that teachers use essay tests even less in classrooms with lower ability students (Alleman & Brophy, 1999). One reason could be that high-stakes tests are working against alternative performance-based or authentic assessments (Mathison & Fragnoli, 2006). However, the fact that few states have such high stakes tests seems to dismiss this suggestion. The Document Based Question (DBQ) has been offered up as a promising alternative assessment tool in social studies. It requires students to analyze selected primary source documents and to answer a guiding question in a historical argument. However, researchers have found that students often rush through the process looking to find illuminating quotes without fidelity to the process of historical inquiry (Young & Leinhardt, 1998). Moreover, it is not clear what specific skills are being measured on the DBQ (Breakstone, Smith, Wineburg, 2013). It is clear that new approaches to assessment are needed in social studies.

Two kinds of alternative assessment approaches have been promoted as viable alternatives in social studies education: performance and authentic assessments. Performance assessments task students with demonstrating knowledge of a concept rather than providing an answer (Mathison & Fragnoli, 2006; Wiggins, 1989). In this view a demonstration or performance of a concept both shows and facilitates mastery (Earl, 2003; Wiggins, 1989). Performance assessments can be thought of as authentic within a school setting; however, they do not necessarily require application of skills that would be used beyond the school.

Authentic assessments help evaluate student performance in real-world contexts (Adeyemi, 2015; Reeves & Okey, 1996; Wiggins, 1989). For this reason, authentic assessments can be seen as a particular form of the more general performance assessments (Meyer, 1992). Both performance and authentic assessments can include projects, portfolios, and performance-based assessments (Schurr, 1998; Sleeter, 2005). They may prove a useful remedy to prepare students for a highly-skilled workforce (Kerka, 1995).

Some scholars have suggested that authentic instruction cannot be effective without authentic assessment. Instruction, learning, and assessment must all be aligned (Biggs, 1996). For this reason teachers may undermine their own efforts at authentic pedagogy if they attempt to evaluate it with inauthentic assessment strategies. Additionally, teachers may undermine authenticity if they do not carefully check to see if chosen assessments require the same kinds of cognitive challenges in the school setting as they would in a real-life or criterion setting (Savery & Duffy, 1995). Some researchers have suggested that authentic assessments require or encourage collaboration (Adeyemi, 2015; Birenbaum & Dochy, 1996; Herrington & Herrington, 1998). Morris (2001) considers the use of authentic assessments as enacting democratic values in social studies, thus helping them to foster the very kinds of values that are often merely lectured on in classrooms. However, there is scholarly disagreement on whether or not authentic assessment requires collaboration. For instance, Gulikers, Bastiaens, and Kirschner (2004) posit that authentic assessment should require collaboration only if the real world situation would require it. It is relatively unclear to what degree teachers believe that collaboration should play an integral role in authentic



performances or how they attempt to foster authentic real-world skill application in their classrooms.

Researchers have noted potential drawbacks to using authentic or performance assessments. Researchers have expressed concern over the high cost of open-ended assessment in standardized testing (Wiggins, 1990), as well as issues of reliability in terms of grading fairly (Tanner, 2001). Nickell (1999) recommends that scoring criteria be used to evaluate authentic work in social studies to simplify grading and improve reliability of grading. In terms of enacting performance-based assessment in non-high-stakes environments, Wiggins (1989) also cautions against providing students with arbitrary time constraints. Real-world projects rarely have the kinds of deadlines as found in schools. This, of course, poses logistical challenges to teachers. Mathison and Fragnoli (2006) noted that authentic assessments place time burdens on already overworked teachers. They also express worry about performance assessments being focused on hands-on application without attentiveness to a higher purpose. This is evident in their statement that “good performance assessment in social studies is about more than just involving students in ‘doing’; it must be assessment that focuses on students doing something within a larger curricular framework and oriented toward valued goals” (p. 207).

Educators need to consider other factors when they decide on using authentic assessments. For instance, researchers have found that student perceptions on assessments will positively or negatively impact learning (Boud, 1995). Sleeter (2005) suggests that teachers democratize assessment by involving students in planning of assessments. The C3

Framework does recommend teachers include students in planning inquiries. However, it is not clear how teachers will go about this, especially as many will likely be conditioned towards controlling the planning process themselves. Educators may also improve learning outcomes if they help students to connect assessment tasks to personal interests (McDowell, 1995) and consider social processes of work environments when they create assessments in order to create a more authentic experience (Resnik, 1987).

### **Addressing Gaps in Research Literature**

Despite the plethora of research studies in regards to student learning and teacher practice in inquiry, there is still surprising few research efforts into how individual teachers successfully enact disciplinary inquiry in their classrooms and respond to emerging challenges (Saye, 2017). According to Jewett and Ackerman (2013), “teachers use primary sources in a variety of ways, and yet we still need richer information about how they make these pedagogical decisions within the context of social studies curricula” (p. 227). The need for rich case studies on exemplar teaching practice specifically in disciplinary inquiry is clear. This study aims to fill part of this gap, especially as the notion of inquiry in social studies becomes increasingly complex in C3 Framework environments with the inclusion of disciplinary analyses and taking informed action. To date there are few empirical research studies on C3 Framework implementation and none on IDM. Thus, little is known in regards to numerous issues related to planning, implementation, and assessment that emerged in this literature review and have implications for C3 Framework implementation. These include:

- how teachers manage cognitive, affective, and logistical challenges created by adding societal investigations on top of disciplinary analyses.
- how teachers will create organizational structures to organize inquiries.
- how central inquiries will become to classroom instruction.
- whether or not teachers will implement interdisciplinary inquiries (as suggested by the C3 Framework) or if they will rely mainly on historical inquiries.
- how teachers will scaffold disciplinary analyses and taking informed action experiences.
- how teachers will attempt to balance the sometimes-competing disciplinary demands, curricula demands, and student interests.
- how teachers will attend to specific disciplinary demands like student struggles with contextualization and corroboration.
- how teachers will involve students, if at all, in the planning process.
- to what degree of fidelity instruction and assessment will have to authenticity
- how teachers manage large amounts of student data collected in an inquiry.

One finding from the literature is that teachers and students sometimes experience a habituation period in which benefits of inquiry are not maximized yet because of orientation to new logistical or cognitive challenges. This study will take place during this initial habituation period, thus providing a snapshot into these critical inquiry adjustment periods. Scholars have revealed that the last major inquiry effort in social studies (the 1960s New Social Studies Projects) failed largely because of inattentiveness to teacher practice. It would

be unwise to repeat the mistakes of the past in this regard. Overall, empirical support for inquiry has lagged behind cognitive support. This study seeks to build on the emerging empirical research base regarding C3 Framework implementation and teacher usage of disciplinary inquiry in general.

## Chapter 3: Methodology

### General Introduction

This study explored how social studies teachers voluntarily enacted the C3 Framework directly in their classrooms with the Inquiry Design Model. Specifically, it looked at how teachers planned instruction, implemented inquiries, and assessed student learning. Additionally, it explored teachers' experiences, as well as contextual factors that influenced their instructional-decision making. This chapter will review sampling procedures, data collection procedures, and data analysis procedures that were used to support the investigation. Framing this research effort were the following research questions and sub-questions:

1. What contextual factors help shape social studies teachers' enactment of the C3 Framework?
  - a. How do beliefs, skills, and life experiences influence social studies teachers' enactment of the C3 Framework?
  - b. How do social and environmental factors influence social studies teachers' enactment of the C3 Framework?
2. How do social studies teachers enact the C3 Framework into practice using instructional materials created by the Inquiry Design Model?
  - a. How do social studies teachers plan for instruction with C3 Framework-aligned instructional materials created with Inquiry Design Model?

- b. How do social teachers implement C3 Framework-aligned instructional materials created with Inquiry Design Model?
  - c. How do social teachers assess student learning using C3 Framework-aligned instructional materials created with Inquiry Design Model?
3. How do social studies teachers experience enactment of the C3 Framework?

### **Research Methodology and Rationale**

A qualitative approach was chosen for this proposed study based on the focus of the proposed study. Qualitative research can be defined as “a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible [and] transform the world” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p.3). Qualitative approaches are seen as being well-suited for exploring new phenomena and for developing hypotheses (Hancock & Algozzine, 2011; Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). The novelty and uniqueness of the phenomenon under study---how teachers use a new instructional approach--- made it well-suited to qualitative methodology. Additionally, qualitative approaches allow for an investigation that is deep and able to uncover fine details and contexts (Patton, 2002). The unique nature of both cases led to a small sample size, which is also well-aligned to an in-depth and detailed qualitative exploration.

Qualitative methodology is also aligned to my own epistemological assumptions that knowledge is constructed by individuals given historical and social realities (Creswell, 2013). In qualitative approaches, the researcher may identify themes and patterns, but the goal is to understand the perspectives on the ground. Often this is accomplished by reducing participant-observer distance (Guba & Lincoln, 1988). This study used collection methods

that are often used in qualitative research efforts: interviews, field observations, teacher artifacts, and student artifacts.

### **Specific Methodological Approach**

This study was structured as an instrumental multiple case study. Case studies require extensive analysis of a single, bounded unit. The unit of analysis in this study was individual teachers. Each case was bounded by place (e.g., their individual classrooms), time, and by grade band of their students. This study followed Stake's (2005) conceptualization of case study research being a choice of what to study instead of being a particular methodology. As is consistent with other case studies, this one sought to explore each case in a real-life or naturalistic setting and to provide an in-depth understanding (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2011).

The purpose of this study was to explore the central phenomenon of how teachers enact the C3 Framework in their classrooms. This central phenomenon, also known as the quintain (Stake, 2006), was explored within and across both unique but overlapping cases. The primary purpose of data analysis in multiple case studies is to understand the quintain as it manifests itself within and across cases. As Stake (2006) states:

the quintain is studied in some of its situations. It is supposed that the complex meanings of the quintain are logged, analyzed and hand-coded to identify emerging understood differently and better because of the particular activity and contexts of each case (p. 40).

Additionally, this study aimed to expand the knowledge base on instructional decision-making of teachers in inquiry-centric environments as well as offer some implications for C3 Framework implementation.

This study was designed as an instrumental case study because it began with a specific interest--- the quintain--- and then selected cases that could specifically illuminate it. Instrumental case study designs are recommended when “we [...] have a research question, a puzzlement, [or] a need for general understanding and feel that we may get insights into the question by studying a particular case” (Stake, 1995, p. 3). Although this study explored each individual context and the unique ways that the quintain manifested itself across the cases, the primary focus was on the quintain itself. According to Stake (2006), “when the purpose of case study is to go beyond the case, we call it ‘instrumental’” (p. 8). This study likewise sought to go beyond the cases; however, it does not seek wide-scale generalizability. Instead, it aims to provide readers with a chance to determine for themselves the applicability of findings onto other contexts.

The research questions, data gathered, and resources available help determine the number of cases needed in a multiple case study (Merriam, 2009). Although it would have been preferable to include more cases in this study, the novelty of the quintain and logistical realities of research led to an inclusion of two cases. However, each was explored holistically and in substantive detail.

Case study methodology is well-suited to research questions that begin with “how” because of their explanatory nature (Yin, 2011). A multiple case study design was well-



suiting to the research focus, the research questions, and the particular contexts in which two teachers are enacting the C3 Framework. Exploring multiple cases can increase the overall value of the study as it helps to provide a more contextualized view of the central phenomenon (Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, 2014; Yin, 2011). This design helped to provide insights into similarities and differences across both cases which helped yield assertions (Stake, 2006). The analysis included within-case and cross-case procedures as recommended by Merriam (2009).

### **Research Context**

**Participants and setting.** The study took place at Heritage Charter School (pseudonym), which is a small public charter school in a suburban setting serving about 300 students in grades 6 to 12. The school is located in the southeastern part of the United States, and it is now approaching its second decade of use. It was founded as a tuition-free school with a focus on scholarship, citizenship, and community service. The school is too small to even have a proper cafeteria. Although this study focused on the teachers' instructional decision-making, the student population likely had an influence on the teachers as well.

Heritage Charter School is fairly homogenous with less than 14 percent of the student population being students of color and only 3 percent of the population considered economically disadvantaged. Students eat lunches either packed from home or catered from one of the nearby fast food restaurants in their classrooms each day. The student population of the school is more homogenous than the populations of the local traditional schools, and

the students tend to be from affluent, conservative families. However, the school's uniform policy tends to make students' wealth less visible.

A democratic school culture is evident in both the Grecco-Roman architecture of the school and the somewhat informal interactions between students and adults throughout the building. The attractive main building is adjacent to a large, generic-looking modular building where classes are also held. This gives the school the feel of a college campus as swarms of students shuffle between buildings during class changes. Teachers and administrators can often be seen wearing polos and joking with students in the hallway. A relaxed vibe and authentic sense of community is palpable right away.

Mr. Murphy (pseudonym) is a second-year teacher currently teaching 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade American History as well as a self-created 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade elective course centered around historical inquiry. He received training in IDM as part of his master's teacher preparation coursework. His traditional curriculum is aligned with local skills-based state standards, and he began to use the C3 Framework-aligned IDM in his traditional courses last year. Prior to beginning his second-year teaching, he took advantage of an opportunity to create a new social studies elective based entirely around the concept of inquiry. He decided to structure the course entirely around inquiries that had been designed as part of a state-wide C3 Framework implementation initiative called the New York Social Studies Resource Toolkit. This study focused on his enactment of the C3 Framework in his high school inquiry elective course.

Mr. Johnson (pseudonym) is a veteran middle school teacher. In addition to his traditional eighth grade American history course, he is also teaching a new self-created elective social studies course centered on inquiry. Each participant will be expanded upon in chapter 4.

**Sampling methods.** Participant selection occurred via purposeful or criterion-based sampling (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). Purposeful sampling is well-suited to research projects that want to select information-rich cases (Patton, 2002). Case study sampling requires two levels of purposeful or criterion-based sampling (Merriam, 2009). The criteria for case selection was that a participant had familiarity with the C3 Framework and IDM. Secondly, the study required that participants agreed to use instructional materials that were created with IDM. Additionally, cases needed to meet Stake's (2006) criteria regarding relevance to the quintain, whether it provided diversity in context, and whether it provided an opportunity to learn about complexity.

### **Data Collection**

The main data sources from this study were observational field notes, semi-structured interviews, teacher artifacts, and student artifacts. Data was first analyzed throughout the six-week data collection period reflexively, and it was collected until a point of saturation had occurred. Before collecting data, I attempted to build rapport with the participants by hosting a pre-research meet-and-greet in their classroom. According to Bogdan and Biklen (2007) establishing rapport is an essential part of effective qualitative research. Before

entering the field I reflected on ways to be sensitive to insider-outsider issues in order to establish rapport with participants (Seidman, 1991).

Data collection involved a phase-out protocol in order to avoid the issue of researcher abandonment that sometimes happens after a study concludes (Sinding & Aronson, 2003). One way that I addressed this was to begin checking in with the participants bi-monthly via email (with their permission) after the study concluded to see if they required extra support with inquiry development or implementation. I have also offered free consulting services to both participants for the 2017/2018 school year as they attempt to improve their inquiry courses. This helped to address the issue of reciprocity which is often lacking in research (Forsey, 2012) and is an essential part of my axiological assumptions.

Family duties prevented me from going to the research site on Fridays throughout the duration of the data collection period, and work duties prevented in-person observations on two occasions. Classes were video recorded on those days, as well as every day that I directly observed, in order to capture a complete view of teacher's experiences. Data collection began on December 5, 2016, continued past the holiday break, and finalized on 1/18/17 during the last day both courses were held. Table 1 illustrates the data collection timeline.

Table 1

*Data Collection Schedule*

Data Source	Dates Collected	Features
Semi-structured Interviews	12/13/16 1/5/17 1/17/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• held in classrooms</li> <li>• 3 total</li> <li>• ~6 hours</li> </ul>
Observations	Week 1: 12/5/16 to 12/19/16 Week 2: 12/12/16 to 12/16/16 Week 3: 12/19/16 to 12/20/16 Week 4: 1/2/17 to 1/6/17 Week 5: 1/11/17 to 1/12/17 Week 6: 1/18/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• held in classrooms</li> <li>• 20 total</li> <li>• ~55 hours</li> <li>• ~260 pages field notes</li> <li>• ~45 pages transcriptions</li> </ul>
Student Artifacts	12/5/16 to 1/18/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formative performance tasks (e.g., claims, timelines, discussions)</li> <li>• Summative assessments (essays, presentations)</li> <li>• &gt;100 pages</li> </ul>
Teacher Artifacts	12/5/16 to 1/18/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning documents from Google Classroom folders</li> <li>• Course syllabus</li> <li>• Scope and Sequence</li> <li>• Reflections on educational website</li> <li>• ~30 pages</li> </ul>

**Semi-structured Interviews.** This study employed three semi-structured interviews with each participant that were specifically aligned to the research questions and theoretical frameworks. Each interview took place in the participants' classroom either during their prep period or afterschool. The first two lasted approximately 45 minutes and the third interview took about 75 minutes to complete for each participant. All interviews were recorded with an audio recorder app on a tablet and transcribed personally by hand. All interviews consisted of about 13 open-ended questions not including additional probing questions. I refrained from recording any notes by hand during the interviews in order to maintain the most natural conversation-style possible and in order to limit participant-researcher distance. Each interview began with an unrecorded brief social conversation, as advocated by Moustakas (1994), to help situate a relaxed atmosphere and to elicit more productive conversations. Interview protocols were intentionally designed to leave room to explore emerging issues that arose.

All interviews were designed and conducted with an explicit rejection of Seidman's (1991) notion that distance should be kept between interviewer and interviewee. Instead, they were designed to enter the participants' inner perspectives (Patton, 1990a). In this regard they reflected the notion of "romantic" interviewing in which an interviewer fosters rapport with her participants to elicit genuine and confessional data (Roulston, 2010). Questions were screened for jargon (Elliot, 2012), for dichotomous or leading questions (Merriam, 2009), and to filter out "why" questions as they tend to focus attention on positivist causal mechanisms (Patton, 2000).

**Observations.** This study employed 20 separate observations for each participant over the course of the six-week period. This helped to capture a vivid and holistic account of each case and allowed for an in-depth exploration into participant enactment of each feature of IDM throughout the duration of the study. Observations are an important vehicle from which a researcher can triangulate findings from other data sources or to discover new truths (Merriam, 2009). Before entering into fieldwork, I used Patton's (1990b) strategy of sensitizing concepts and reflected on my own biases. As the research instrument myself, I incorporated Merriam's (2009) field note protocol to focus my observations on physical setting, participants, activities, conversations, and subtle factors. I followed her guidance to write out field notes as soon as an observation was over.

**Teacher artifacts.** Artifacts typically are physical objects that represent information that is important to participants or the setting. Historically, they have been underused in qualitative research (Merriam, 2009). Participants' instructional planning documents, supporting instructional handouts, and assessments (both formative and summative) were collected throughout the six-week period. Artifacts provide valuable insight into conscious and unconscious phenomenon. The focus of the study on C3 Framework-aligned inquiry materials placed the value of these teacher artifacts in stark relief. These artifacts provided rich insight into the instructional decision making of the participants and helped answer each of the research questions.

**Student artifacts** Student artifacts or work samples were collected throughout the study. These included formative and summative tasks that students completed. Student

artifacts helped to explore the participants' approaches to assessment by specifically looking at the feedback provided.

### **Data Analysis**

This study was approached with an understanding that all data analysis is inductive and comparative. It followed the general progression from Creswell's (2013) representation of data analysis in qualitative research in which codes became increasingly sophisticated or abstract in each round as patterns, categories, or themes emerge. Before engaging in data analysis, I bracketed my own assumptions regarding how I feel the instructional materials should be used and the C3 Framework enacted. This is in accordance with Creswell's (2013) suggestion that constructivism is helpful when attempting to understand phenomenon without preconceived notions.

This study also followed Merriam's (2009) recommendation to analyze data concurrently while collecting it. All data was hand-coded in order to consistently maintain close proximity to the data. Data analysis occurred iteratively using an inductive approach. First, I read through every transcribed interview, field note, and artifact in order to orientate myself with the data and to begin recording emerging thoughts. This step also served to help prevent me from drawing hasty conclusions too early. The next step was to comb data word-by-word in order to begin identifying open codes (Charmaz, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1994). These were recorded as gerunds and attempted to capture the smallest bits of data available.

The next round of coding employed Merriam's (2009) recommendation to compare these open codes with each other to look for recurring regularities in the data. It was here that



patterns between data points emerged to reveal emerging subthemes, which others have referred to as focused codes (Charmaz, 2006).

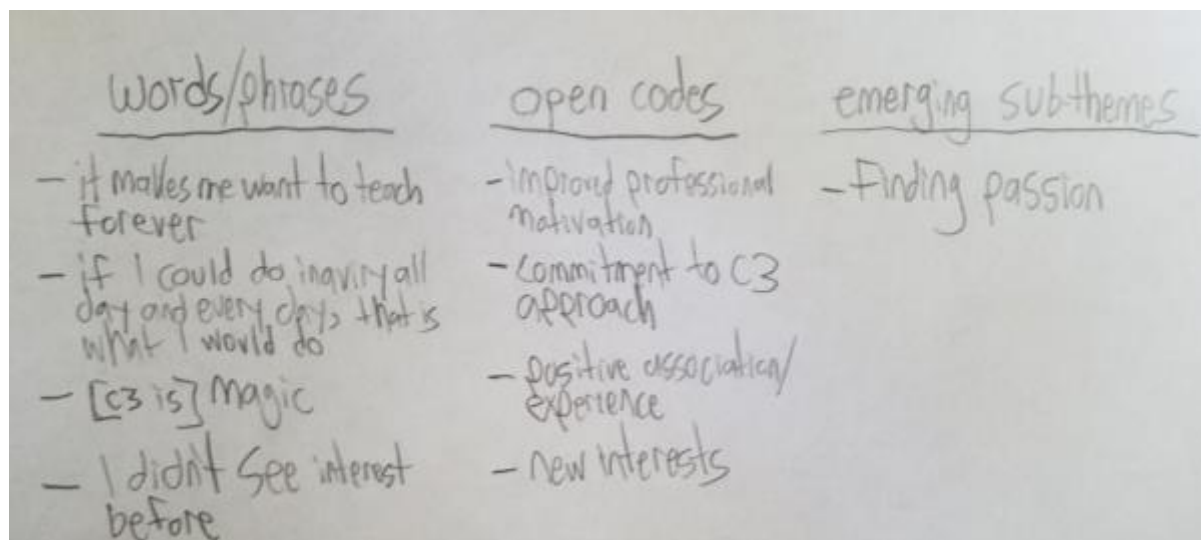


Figure 1. Sample of emergent codes and subthemes

These emerging subthemes helped me to rearrange, refine, and narrow the open codes until they were no longer producing new understanding on the issue (Creswell, 2007). The next step was to synthesize the subthemes or focus codes into broader themes. Finally, I engaged in a final round of coding across both cases in order to yield assertions.

### **Research Validity and Reliability**

This study aimed for fidelity to validity and reliability through numerous means. Triangulation across multiple sources of data and analytical methods helped to establish construct validity. Specifically, observation field notes, interview transcripts, teacher artifacts, and student artifacts. Corroborating themes or assertions across data sources helped to triangulate findings (Patton, 1990c). Aiding construct validity was the use of thick description and prolonged engagement in the field which combined to help to tell a vivid

account from an emic perspective. Thick description is essential to case study work as it provides the reader an opportunity to decide for herself whether or not the findings could be generalized to another domain.

Additionally, credibility was supported with the use of member checks throughout the data collection and analysis steps in order to ensure that the participants' voices were adequately heard (Corwin & Clemens, 2012; Maxwell, 2005). These member checks can reduce potential power imbalances that may arise. Finally, validity was improved by my articulation of my positionality in the subjectivity statement below that reveals intentions and biases. This study followed Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña's (2014) recommendation that researchers consider strategies to limit the influence of themselves as researchers on their participants in order to establish validity. Specifically, I made my intentions known, built rapport casually, kept research questions in hand throughout the duration of data collection.

The issue of validity is a major ethical issue in qualitative research (Merriam, 2009). Research participants invite researchers into their intimate work and home spaces and can make enormous sacrifices in terms of time and energy for a research project that does not reciprocate adequately. Because qualitative research is more focused on telling the stories of participants accurately, it is essential that researchers establish and maintain rapport and effective communication with participants throughout a study. To this end I worked to ensure that conversations and research instruments did not contain jargon, that my participants' voices were heard and respected, and that our relationship did not end abruptly without any reciprocity.

Reliability is a similar concept that can be seen as relating to the amount of care taken by the researcher. Researchers can help enhance reliability in case studies with protocols and case study databases (Yin, 2011). Reliability was boosted by clearly articulated research questions, articulation of positionality of the researcher, and by explicit operationalizing of research constructs (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). This helped me to situate my own biases and personal investments within the study and to recognize my role in shaping the study.

### **Subjectivity Statement**

Not understanding one's theoretical orientation and filter leads to a decontextualized understanding of the findings (Patton, 2002). Because researchers in qualitative research are the primary data collection and analysis instrument, it is impossible to conduct quality research without critical reflection on one's biases and thought processes. As the main research instrument, a qualitative inquirer openly admits and embraces subjectivities and must position herself within her study (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014; Creswell, 2013; Hancock & Algozzine, 2011).

My research perspective and worldview are inherently constructivist. It posits that all individuals construct their own truths and knowledge (Creswell, 2011). My interests in instructional decision-making have evolved since I began my research journey. I initially held a positivist lens and had hoped to identify universal brain-based constructs to extrapolate onto all learning contexts. In this manner, I was interested in uncovering the "black box" of learning and habituated to reductionist thinking. My naivety was quickly

exposed in graduate school when I was exposed to social constructivism and was able to observe teachers using similar instructional materials in dissimilar ways. Delving into questions related to why some strategies or approaches worked for some, but not others, led me to see that all learning is inherently contextual. I have come to reject the possibility of identifying universally beneficial teaching strategies and methods divorced from context. The learning process cannot be mechanized or be “teacher proofed.” In the same vein, my neoliberal worldview was shaken by the awakening of a critical consciousness in which I began to see behavioristic reform initiatives I had formerly endorsed as undermining learning processes and equity in classrooms. To deny the impact and value of individual perception is to deny reality.

My interests in inquiry were largely rooted in my earlier interests in brain-based learning which often promote constructivist pedagogical approaches. I became fascinated with what I saw as an apparent gap between the empirical support for actual teacher usage of inquiry-based pedagogical approaches. My interest in inquiry-based learning in social studies was piqued when I was hired as a graduate research assistant on a state-wide inquiry-based standards implementation project in New York. This project led to the creation of the Inquiry Design Model, which was used by teachers across the state to develop and pilot 84 C3 Framework-aligned inquiries and professional development materials. There, I worked behind the scenes to support inquiry writers and project managers with inquiry design and management of pilot data. Over time I began to see general themes emerging when teachers

used these materials, and hoped that a formal empirical research effort would be forthcoming.

**Ethical Considerations.** It is my ethical duty to reveal that I had a previous working relationship with one of the participants. Specifically, I served as his university supervisor during his student teaching experience and was able to observe him on three occasions. During that time I gave him constructive feedback concerning his pedagogical practices. I did not attempt to recruit him as a participant until our formal working relationship was over. This was important as I did not want him to feel coerced. However, I was able to see that he fit two of the criteria for selection. Additionally, I should disclose the fact that my dissertation advisor has worked with the participants during some of the pre-planning that went into the course development. This included general tips for unit selection; however, it did not include specific information regarding instructional decision-making. For this reason, I feel that it had minimal impact on the validity of the study. The study strictly adhered to all Institutional Review Board regulations.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The nature of this research study, particularly its small sample size, restricted the generalizability of findings. Moreover, it is difficult to make any extrapolations off of unique cases. Both cases involved a context in which the teacher was not bounded by prescribed standards or curriculum. This granted both participants more freedom regarding instructional decision making than is traditionally afforded to teachers. However, this study does provide worthwhile insight into the benefits of allowing teachers this kind of opportunity.

Additionally, mass generalizability is not a goal of this study, although it does seek to offer some implications for future C3 Framework implementation efforts. This study is more useful in regards to providing an understanding into how particular teachers enacted the C3 Framework in particular contexts.

## Chapter 4: Findings

The purpose of this research study was to explore how two teachers enacted the C3 Framework in their classrooms. This study sought to uncover contextual and implementation issues related to the C3 Framework. The study was framed by the following research questions and sub-questions:

1. What contextual factors help shape social studies teachers' enactment of the C3 Framework?
  - a. How do beliefs, skills, and life experiences influence social studies teachers' enactment of the C3 Framework?
  - b. How do social and environmental factors influence social studies teachers' enactment of the C3 Framework?
2. How do social studies teachers enact the C3 Framework into practice using instructional materials created by the Inquiry Design Model?
  - a. How do social studies teachers plan for instruction with C3 Framework-aligned instructional materials created with Inquiry Design Model?
  - b. How do social teachers implement C3 Framework-aligned instructional materials created with Inquiry Design Model?
  - c. How do social teachers assess student learning using C3 Framework-aligned instructional materials created with Inquiry Design Model?
3. How do social studies teachers experience enactment of the C3 Framework?

### Context and Participants

This study took place in two classrooms over a six-week period from December 5, 2016 to January 18, 2017. Participation in the study resulted from participants' familiarity with the C3 Framework and Inquiry Design Model (IDM) as well as their willingness to use instructional materials that were created using IDM. During the previous semester, I learned that Mr. Murphy, a high school teacher at Heritage Charter School, was interested in creating a new inquiry-based elective course at the school. I contacted Mr. Murphy, and he agreed to discuss the course and his process for creating the related curriculum. He had originally been asked to teach a sociology course that year, but was given permission by his principal to create a new elective course with few restrictions. Along with his colleague Mr. Johnson, Mr. Murphy developed a new semester-long, inquiry-based course and implemented the course in the 2016-2017 academic year.

The degree of trust that the principal placed in both teachers was clearly evident. As Mr. Murphy put it, "I never felt monitored. They have been very good about supporting us." However, he seemed to also be aware of the uniqueness of his situation as he later went on to say that "[my principal] might be more trusting than he should be." After discussing initial plans for their respective courses, both teachers formally agreed to participate in the study during the fall semester of 2016.

**Inquiry: A course covering 'inquiries.'** Both courses were simply named "Inquiry" and focused on a central theme related to American democracy. They were designed to be anchored by eight inquiry-related expanded lessons, which were referred to as "inquiries" on related topics. Both Mr. Murphy and Mr. Johnson selected inquiries that were created by an



educational network called C3 Teachers using the Inquiry Design Model and free for them to download. They designed their courses to be able to take advantage of collaboration between classes and as such planned on teaching four of the eight inquiries at the same time. Mr. Murphy and Mr. Johnson created a common syllabus for their courses which included a course description:

“In Inquiry, students will be interpreting different documents, cartoons, graphs, etc. as part of small units. Each unit will have an overall, compelling question with many sub questions to go along with it. Each unit will end with an ‘End of Inquiry Summative Assessment’ as well as students taking informed action and connecting the inquiries to contemporary issues....”

The syllabus included expectations for the course including a requirement for students to design an inquiry of their own using an online inquiry generator tool:

“Inquiry Project: Student will be required to design their own inquiry for class. This will be a semester long project in small groups. Students will use the inquiry generator to develop their inquiry. We will go over this project in detail after our first inquiry! The class will also develop an inquiry together to help you understand how to make one yourself.”

Additionally, the syllabus listed a requirement for students to complete two written essays and to participate in at least two separate community forums afterschool at some point during the semester.

The inquiries had been designed by teachers and educational consultants in New York as part of a state-wide curricula project in 2014-2015. Each inquiry consisted of a collection of resources that included questions, sources, tasks, and residual scaffolds. Combined, these worked together to help teachers lead students through investigations into questions of historical and/or contemporary concern. Most inquiries included a note that estimated it would take about one week of class time to complete them; however, the inquiries did not prescribe specific directions for how teachers should implement them. According to a teacher planning document created in the summer, Mr. Murphy's original plan was to incorporate inquiries that related to the theme of "striving for a more perfect union" and consisted of the following topics: Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, Affordable Health Care Act, Emancipation Proclamation, and the proper role of government. The same document shows that Mr. Johnson had planned on using "working through differences" as the theme for his middle school course and that he would implement inquiries that covered the following topics: Pilgrims-Wampanoag, the Great Compromise, Uncle Tom's Cabin, and equality. Both teachers planned on teaching the following inquiry topics at the same time in order to facilitate collaboration: religious freedom, national security, protest, and racism.

Each teacher ended up implementing five complete inquiries in total throughout the 18 week-long semester. They each began the course by introducing students to the course and the inquiry process and having them complete an inquiry originally designed for elementary school students. These became orientation inquiries and functioned to help students begin to understand the unique features of an inquiry and their roles as students in

terms of completing them. A complete list of all inquiry titles used in both courses is represented below (Table 2).

Table 2

*Inquiries Covered in Middle and High School Courses*

Course	No.	Compelling Question	Original Grade Level	Estimated Dates
H.S.	Orientation	Is this president the most important person in government?	1	8/24/16 to 8/31/16
M.S.	Orientation	Do we have to have rules?	2	8/24/16 to 8/31/16
H.S.	1	Why do countries declare independence?	5	9/1/16 to 9/19/16
M.S.	1	Why did the Pilgrim-Wampanoag Relationship go so wrong?	8	9/1/16 to 9/19/16
H.S. + M.S.	2	Should freedom be sacrificed in name of national security?	8	9/20/16 to 10/7/16
H.S. + M.S.	3	Did we overcome racism yet?	8-12	10/8/16 to 11/2/16
H.S. + M.S.	4	Is protest patriotic?	8	11/3/16 to 12/4/16
H.S. + M.S.	5	What should be done about gender wage gap?*	12	12/5/16 to 1/18/17

\*observed from beginning to end

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elementary school students. These became orientation inquiries and functioned to help students begin to understand the unique features of an inquiry and their roles as students in terms of completing them. A complete list of all inquiry titles used in both courses is represented below (Table 2).

After the orientation inquiries were completed, Mr. Murphy followed his initial plan to implement an inquiry on declarations of independence throughout the world. Mr. Johnson followed his initial plan to implement an inquiry on the problematic Pilgrim-Wampanoag relationship. Collaboration between the middle and high school courses began in part with the second official inquiry on national security and Japanese American internment, which had been originally planned as a cross-class inquiry. Neither teacher would implement any more of the inquiries that they had originally planned on doing by themselves.

Mr. Murphy and Mr. Johnson began to co-plan more directly and implemented two more inquiries collaboratively. These two inquiry implementations are worth exploring further to better understand the nature of the courses. The first inquiry dealt with the issue of racism and the Long Civil Rights Movement and was structured with the compelling question, “Have we overcome racism yet?” Unlike the rest of the inquiries selected in the course, it was not created as part of the New York Toolkit. Rather, it was designed by teachers participating in an online resource hub that features instructional materials from the Library of Congress. However, it was designed using the Inquiry Design Model just like the rest of the inquiries used in the Inquiry courses, and it included all of the basic features of the

other inquiries. The racism inquiry was also unique from the other inquiries in its heavy usage of oral interviews as featured sources.

In the Long Civil Rights Movement inquiry, students explored economic and social conditions behind the movement, actions taken to secure civil rights, and threats to civil rights since the signing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Teachers added a supplemental assignment that was not part of the initial inquiry in which they prompted students to write op-eds from the perspective of pro- and anti- Black Lives Matters activists. Teachers also decided against using a recommended taking informed action project that tasked students with conducting interviews with civil rights activists, recording them, and uploading them to StoryCorps.me at the Library of Congress Folklife Center. Both teachers ended up changing the assignment by having students participate in a public issues forum held after-school in their school's auditorium with about 100 family and community members attending. This forum consisted of the town's mayor, a local pastor, a police officer, and a school administrator discussing the issue of race and the criminal justice system. Students were tasked with introducing speakers, crafting questions for the panel to discuss, and moderating the forum. Students and teachers were surprised by the degree of civility displayed by all of the participating panelists, especially with the presidential election about to occur just five days later.

Teachers took advantage of growing interest in politics by having students begin an inquiry on the role of political protest in civic life just days before the presidential election. In this inquiry students explored the question of whether or not protest is patriotic in the

context of the Vietnam War. The inquiry blueprint itself includes a taking informed action prompt for students to investigate and take action on a contemporary issue involving military conflicts. However, fresh off the success of their first truly ambitious taking informed action project at the community issues forum, teachers were eager to continue taking creative risks. Each teacher tasked his students with researching and crafting arguments on real school-related issues that they could protest. Teachers narrowed down the combined classes' list to include the following topics: longer holiday vacations, student access to Wi-Fi, early release days, and vending machines. The teachers sent the list to the principal who then gave both classes permission to stage a protest in favor of bringing vending machines to the school. Student groups researched the economic benefits of vending machines in schools and began crafting protest signs and protest chants such as "the snack shack is whack, bring vending machines back" that would be used at the front entrance of school in the morning.

On the morning of the planned protest, Mr. Murphy and Mr. Johnson received word from their principal that they would have to cancel the protests. The principal had sent out a newsletter to parents informing them of the class activity and received numerous concerned emails from parents of students not enrolled in the class. Some cautioned about potential driver distractions in the carpool line leading to accidents. Others worried about student protesters walking out into traffic. One concerned parent even quoted a school handbook rule that barred all student demonstrations of any kind. The principal expressed his hope that the class could engage in the activity later on in the year. Frustrated by the first major setback in the course, both teachers turned their sights to planning their last inquiry for the year.

**Anatomy of an inquiry.** Data collection for this research took place during the last six weeks of the participants' courses during their experience implementing an inquiry on the gender wage gap. The inquiry was created as part of the New York Toolkit for Social Studies, and it was originally made for students in a 12<sup>th</sup> grade economics course. Totalling 50 pages in length, the inquiry description estimated it would take between six to eight 40-minute class periods to complete. The inquiry is structured around a compelling question, "What should be done about the gender wage gap?"

The Gender Wage Gap inquiry prompts students to explore the issue of wage gap inequality in the United States by investigating claims made by individuals and organizations on both sides of the issue in addition to key data found in featured sources. The inquiry begins with an activity called Staging the Compelling Question in which students are asked to investigate the reasons behind the Equal Pay Day and arguments made in support of and against it. It includes two supplemental readings, one of which was written by President Barack Obama and the other by Carrie Lukas, a director of the conservative-leaning Independent Women's Forum.

The next part of the inquiry is supporting question 1 which asks, "What are the challenges in accurately calculating the gender wage gap?" The related formative performance task prompts students to list the challenges associated with calculating the gender wage gap. Featured sources include an excerpt from the left-leaning Center for American Progress and a collection of graphs and charts depicting the gender wage gap from four different sources. The inquiry also comes with a supplemental chart teachers can provide

their students to support them in completing the task. The chart prompts students to record the following information: source/date of the chart, title of the chart, unique features, summary of gender pay gap according to chart, and challenges to using these data to calculate the gender wage gap. The inquiry also suggests additional links to online resources on the gender wage gap, one of which is an article from the *Wall Street Journal* and the other a research article published in the *Regional Economist*.

Supporting question 2 asks, “Why has the gender wage gap changed over time?” The formative performance task is for students to write a paragraph that explains why the gender wage gap has narrowed over time, and it is accompanied by three featured sources. The first source is a graph depicting the relationship between male and female earnings, and its information was based off of data from the Institute for Women’s Policy Research. The second source consists of an excerpted research article from the *Academy of Management Perspectives* that looked at the role of qualifications and discrimination. The third source consists of excerpts from a speech delivered at the American Economics Association Annual Meeting and published in the *American Economic Review* about the social, economic, and political changes behind female workers’ improved opportunities in the workplace. Additional resources that are recommended include hyperlinks to an article from a Harvard economist, a report from the American Association of University Women, and a blog post from the National Women’s Law Center.

Supporting question 3 asks, “Where is the gender wage gap the most pronounced?” The related formative performance task is for students to complete a graphic organizer that



shows where the gap is most pronounced at the local, state, and national levels. The inquiry also includes a pre-made chart prompting students to list key data/trends for the national, state, and local levels and to answer how the information helps explain the supporting question. Featured sources include an image bank compiled and published by the Pew Research Center, a map of the United States based on U.S. Census data that depicts the gender wage gap in each state, and a chart that depicts gender pay gaps across all of New York's 27 congressional districts made by the American Association of University Women. The inquiry also lists web links to additional resources such as a New York congressional map and a *Time* magazine article and infographic depicting the gender wage gap on a global scale.

Supporting question 4 poses the question, "Is there a political solution to the gender wage gap?" The formative performance task is to write a claim in response to the supporting question. It also contains excerpts from a *U.S. News & World Report* Debate Club article on the Paycheck Fairness Act and a report from the National Women's Law Center that discusses the impact of raising the minimum wage on the gender wage gap. This section of the inquiry also includes an example of a completed claims organizer that lists the supporting question at the top and prompts students to record their emerging claims, as well as evidence from sources that support their claims. Finally, the inquiry includes links to recommended readings published in the *New York Times* and *Atlantic* related to the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act.

The final part of the inquiry is a summative performance task. It prompts students to “construct an argument (e.g., detailed outline, poster, or essay) that addresses the compelling question using specific claims and relevant evidence using information from contemporary sources.” It then lists an *extension* which prompts students to write an op-ed stating an argument that addresses the compelling question. The inquiry provides exemplar argument stems for teachers and students to consider regarding the gender wage gap. It also provides an evidence chart for students to use to support them in crafting their arguments.

What makes this particular inquiry unique is the fact that the summative performance task is embedded with the taking informed action project. Most inquiries prompt students to complete a summative argument first and then to take part in a separate taking informed action activity with three components: understanding, assessing, and acting. This inquiry embedded the understanding component of taking informed action across supporting questions 1, 2, and 3. The assessing component of taking informed action was embedded in supporting question 4. Finally, the acting component of taking informed action is embedded in the extension component of the summative performance task.

The inquiry includes an ancillary chart depicting Common Core Anchor Standard connections to the inquiry in addition to a Gender Wage Gap inquiry vocabulary sheet that lists fifteen vocabulary terms specific to the inquiry along with accompanying definitions. The final page of the inquiry lists several additional books, articles, and websites that teachers may consider using to implement the inquiry.

The various components of the inquiry, as well as some of the ways each teacher implemented or adapted each component of the inquiry, are displayed below (Table 3). It also includes the dates where the component was observed being covered in class.

Table 3

*Teacher Enactment of the Gender Wage Gap Inquiry*

Blueprint Component	Blueprint Question/Task	H.S. Adaptations or Interesting Features	H.S. Dates (Days)	M.S. Adaptations or Interesting Features	M.S. Dates (Days)
Compelling Question	What should be done about the gender wage gap?	None	12/5 to 1/18 (20 days)	None	12/5 to 1/18/ (20 days)
Staging the Compelling Question	Investigate the reasons behind the declaration of Equal Pay Day and the arguments for why it should or should not exist.	Added 1 week research/presentation project on wage gaps (e.g., racial, socioeconomic, gender) at national, local, and state level	12/12 to 12/13 (2 days)	Added 1 week research/presentation project on wage gaps (e.g., racial, socioeconomic, gender) at national, local, and state level	12/13 (1 day)
Supporting question 1	What are the challenges in accurately calculating the gender wage gap?	Filled in supplemental chart, posted to whiteboard, and recorded themes across class.	12/13 to 12/15 (3 days)	Filled in supplemental chart, posted to whiteboard, and recorded themes across class.	12/14 to 12/16 (3 days)
Supporting Question 2	Why has the gender wage gap changed over time?	Answers recorded on class Padlet; students commented on each other's responses	12/15 to 12/20 (4 days)	Created whole-class timeline in lieu of formative performance task	12/16 to 12/20 (3 days)
Supporting Question 3	Where is the gender wage gap the most pronounced?	Filled in supplemental chart; Students post to whiteboard	1/2 to 1/4 (3 days)	Filled in supplemental chart; Students did modified 4 corners exercise (e.g., national, state, local)	1/3 (1 day)

Table 3 Continued

Blueprint Component	Blueprint Question/Task	H.S. Adaptations or Interesting Features	H.S. Dates (Days)	M.S. Adaptations or Interesting Features	M.S. Dates (Days)
Supporting Question 4	Is there a political solution to the gender wage gap?	Students recorded on notebook paper; Also asked to include quotes from sources in support of and against political solution and state emerging claim about gender wage gap	1/4 to 1/6 (3 days)	Student responses shared orally; nothing collected	1/4 to 1/6 (3 days)
Summative Performance Task	Construct an argument (e.g., detailed outline, poster, essay) that addresses the compelling question using specific claims and relevant evidence and information from contemporary sources.	Blended with TIA	1/6 to 1/14 (4 days)*	Blended with TIA	1/6 to 1/13 (4 days)*
Taking Informed Action	Write an op-ed for a local or national newspaper stating an argument for what should be done about the gender wage gap and address economic, historical, geographic, and political factors that have informed the argument	Blended with Summative Performance Task; replaced blueprint task with menu option (in-class presentation related to gender wage gap or presentation at school event on any topic from course)	1/6 to 1/14 (4 days)	Blended with Summative Performance Task; replaced blueprint task with menu option (in-class presentation related to gender wage gap or presentation at school event on any topic from course)	1/6 to 1/13 (4 days)

**Mr. Murphy: The scholarly neophyte.** Mr. Murphy does not fit the stereotypical image of a high school social studies teacher. He is soft-spoken, cerebral, and of short-stature; yet he maintains an orderly and calm classroom with a blend of confidence and positivity. This calmness dissipates only when students are engaged in a feisty political discussion. After talking with Mr. Murphy, it is easy to forget that he is only in his second year teaching and that he is balancing a heavy teaching load of five course preparations. Luckily for Mr. Murphy, he found that the inquiry-based social studies course he co-created required less preparation time than his standard history courses. Mr. Murphy comes across as more confident and mature than most second-year teachers. Perhaps it is because he is so willing to be innovative in his teaching and confident in his ability to manage those innovations in his classroom.

As a child Mr. Murphy spent time living in Europe and moving between several states. He attended a large public university to earn a history degree before obtaining a master's degree at a nearby university in teaching social studies. Although Mr. Murphy frequently discusses politics, he keeps his personal political opinions closely guarded unless asked directly. He identifies as a Christian conservative, and he is an active participant in his local Baptist church. However, one would be hard-pressed to see his political or religious worldview on display in his teaching.

Like many social studies teachers, Mr. Murphy was influenced by his own teachers. He recalls most of his social studies classes being taught in a traditional lecture- and textbook-based style. It was one exception to that norm that influenced Mr. Murphy's

thinking about how to teach. This teacher provided students with original documents and staged in-class debates. Mr. Murphy recalled liking the freedom to express his own beliefs in that class, and he credits that teacher with influencing his current teaching to move beyond traditional pedagogy. Mr. Murphy's conservatism is coupled with a self-admitted cynicism and bit of a rebellious spirit. He admits that he "loves challenging the status quo" and often talks about going off-script and his desire to innovate.

**Mr. Murphy's classroom.** When you first walk into Mr. Murphy's classroom, you are first greeted by a life-sized, cardboard cutout of a smirking President Trump, which is the first sign that current events dominate much of the content discussed in the classroom. The display is also a fitting reminder of the theme of the Inquiry course: *How do we make a more perfect union? or How do we make America great again?* which seemed to fluctuate depending on Mr. Murphy's mood. The room is quite modern-looking: full of natural light, desks that appear to be new, and a SMARTboard that sits in the front of the room. The democratic ethos of the classroom is palpable as the teacher's desk, which is rarely used, is tucked away in the back corner of the room, and student desks are grouped in pods or pairs. Every day students arrive to class with a question posted on the front board which tasks them with writing 6-8 sentences on an issue related to the day's lessons. As students walk into the room, it becomes clear that they are more homogenous than the student populations of nearby traditional schools.

After spending several weeks in Mr. Murphy's classroom, it appears that many of the days overlap into one another. This was intentional as Mr. Murphy had established a flexible

planning scheme that was meant to allow students to finish at their own pace. This means that many days would end with Mr. Murphy saying “we will pick this up tomorrow.” Other days Mr. Murphy could be heard letting students know that they will either continue working on the inquiry or exploring a new current event. Unlike most classes, students rarely reviewed for a test or wrote down their homework. There were no test or conventional homework assignments in Mr. Murphy’s inquiry-based class.

Mr. Murphy and his students referred to the course as *Inquiry*. It met every day for 75 minutes throughout the fall semester. The class had 19 students, all reading on grade level and all having volunteered to take the course. The majority of the class was white, affluent, and conservative; however, minority liberal voices were quick to refute many of the majority’s claims. It soon became clear that Mr. Murphy was right: “There is no shortage of opinions in this class.” Mr. Murphy’s focus on challenging students wherever they were, and the conservative bent of his students, made him appear significantly more liberal than he is.

Most class sessions consisted of students quietly reading and analyzing primary source information (e.g. historical documents, maps, newspaper articles, government records) and whole-class discussions in which Mr. Murphy would often allow students to go back and forth with minimal teacher interruption. However, Mr. Murphy did on occasion allow unsubstantiated claims to pass without refutation, although he could be quick to counteract or probe students. He would sometimes suggest an additional, perhaps even contradictory position or source. Mr. Murphy clearly seems to enjoy watching his students engage in controversy.

The first 15 minutes of class often began with students completing their initial assignment where they would respond to a question related to a current event or a discussion from the previous day. Students often posted responses to the whiteboard in the front of the class or to an online digital board using a tool called Padlet, where they can see each other's responses. Then, a whole-class discussion would usually ensue with students getting an opportunity to present and critique claims. After the initial assignment, students typically worked on their inquiry. They would analyze sources that came with the inquiry or search on their school-provided laptops in preparation for a formative task or some other inquiry task-related product. Mr. Murphy used Google Classroom to facilitate many of the inquiry assignments, and students were allowed to freely use their cellphones in class—a privilege not enjoyed by his students in other classes. Mr. Murphy spent much of his time in class roaming the classroom with a tablet as he was busy typing out feedback to students on either the current or previous day's assignment.

**Mr. Johnson: The playful veteran.** Mr. Johnson was in his 7th year teaching at Heritage Charter School. His boyish energy was coupled with curious eyes and a rather deep voice that fits his tall mesomorphic frame. It was rare for a class to go by without Mr. Johnson making at least one goofy impersonation, telling a corny joke, or engaging in some form of playful teasing. His playfulness appeared contagious as his students often joined in joking around with him. It was unsurprising to see him arrive one day in an ugly Christmas sweater, which not too surprisingly matched the cartoon reindeer that covered his classroom door.



Mr. Johnson appeared slightly uneasy about having another adult in the classroom and almost apologetic for his informal teaching style. He revealed numerous details about himself to his middle school students including his age, previous jobs he had, his wife's occupation, and his own family's background. It was clear that many of his students were smitten with him, and he seemed to relish in it. Students could be seen popping in before class to talk with him. It was in those interactions that you could see parts of his coaching persona come into fruition, although the numerous sports analogies he made in class were another giveaway in that regard. Mr. Johnson appeared eager to please, and he appeared genuinely enthralled with his new inquiry-centric approach to teaching. He seemed well-suited to this approach as he believes strongly that the primary mission of social studies is to prepare constructive citizens. Mr. Johnson enjoys using primary documents in his teaching and believes in the importance of making connections from history to both present issues and students' personal lives.

Mr. Johnson grew up outside a post-industrial mid-Atlantic city in a family of fast food franchise owners. He was raised in a church family, but he is not currently a regular member. He identifies as a liberal; although he is largely turned off by politics and requests that his own students refrain from political debates in class. He attended a highly-ranked state school in pursuit of a golf management degree before finding his studies to be overly-general and lacking relevance. He credits a neighbor, a grandfatherly-figure, with helping him to decide to switch majors and to become a social studies teacher. Close to home he found it difficult to obtain full-time employment in a pro-union state where teaching positions are

harder to come by, and he eventually relocated with his wife to his current state in the South where he at first sold life insurance.

He began his teaching career as a long-term substitute before teaching briefly at a private school and then moving to Heritage Charter School. He decided to make the switch because he was attracted to the fact that he could help build a middle school from scratch. When he started at the school, there were only 12 middle school students enrolled. Mr. Johnson remembers his own social studies teachers being quite traditional and yearning for something different, which is perhaps the reason that he takes pride in challenging students to get out of their comfort zone and in convincing them that history itself is an interpretative and evolving discipline.

**Mr. Johnson's classroom.** Mr. Johnson's classroom is quite cavernous, and the numerous sinks that align the back wall hint that it was originally designed for science classroom experiments. The fact that it was a middle school classroom became immediately apparent when Mr. Johnson allowed his students to choose their own seats. This resulted in the class being separated with girls and boys sitting apart from one another. Paraphernalia of his favorite sports teams adorn the classroom walls, and glimpses of his playful personality were evident on the whiteboard in the front of the classroom with zany messages such as "Happy National Cat Herder's Day" written on it each week. The somewhat unconventional classroom environment matched some of the off-task conversations that often arose in Mr. Johnson's class ranging from NHL hockey games to reports of real-life Hunger Games occurring in Russia.

Mr. Johnson taught several sections of social studies and two sections of an elective *Middle School Inquiry* course that was designed with the theme *working through our differences*. Each section of the course met daily for 45 minutes throughout the fall semester. The courses had relatively low enrollment, 10 in one section and 11 in the other; thus, whole-class discussions felt like small group discussions. Mr. Johnson saw many of his students in his regular social studies courses, and he seemed to know a lot of details about his students. Although both classes were electives, many students were involuntarily placed in them because of scheduling conflicts earlier in the year. This meant that some students initially resisted being in the rigorous elective course. However, by the time this study began, Mr. Johnson seemed to have won them over. The students ranged from 6th to 8th grade and were of mixed ability. Some students were on Individual Education Plans (IEP), and it was evident that they struggled with many of the disciplinary sources that Mr. Johnson exposed them to in the course.

Mr. Johnson's class did not operate like a standard middle school classroom. Students alternated between reading primary source documents, independently researching or fact-checking information, discussing, and presenting. His students were discussing controversial issues almost daily and completed work on inquiry lessons designed for both middle school and high students.

#### **Within-case Emergent Themes: Mr. Murphy**

This research study revealed four themes and subthemes that were particular to Mr. Murphy's experiences enacting the C3 Framework in his high school classroom (Table 4). In

the sections that follow, each theme and subtheme is presented and unpacked with relevant supporting data.

Table 4

*Emerging Within-case Themes: Mr. Murphy*

Themes	Sub-themes
1. Changing perceptions and attitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Connecting instead of covering.</li> <li>● Experiencing a tipping point.</li> <li>● Finding passion and seeing purpose.</li> </ul>
2. Becoming a scholar.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Creating experts and taking ownership.</li> <li>● Sourcing as a habit</li> <li>● Wanting to read more.</li> <li>● Responding to unsubstantiated claims.</li> </ul>
3. Overcoming challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Convincing others.</li> <li>● Waiting for the payoff.</li> <li>● Establishing patterns of scaffolding.</li> <li>● Changing plans</li> <li>● Grading more purposefully.</li> </ul>
4. Creating a democratic community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Fostering empathy and tolerance</li> <li>● Democratizing the feedback.</li> </ul>

**Theme 1: Changing perceptions and attitudes.** The C3 Framework offers teachers a novel way to teach inquiry-based social studies. This theme encapsulates how Mr. Murphy's perceptions and attitudes after teaching with the C3 Framework changed in regards to both how he views inquiry-based social studies and social studies in a more general sense. Three descriptive findings, each described below, illuminate the changes that Mr. Murphy experienced.

*Connecting instead of covering.* Mr. Murphy came to the C3 Framework understanding the importance of making connections from the past to the present, but he admitted having “a hard time explaining how the past applies to the present.” At the onset of the planning phase for Mr. Murphy’s inquiry class, he focused on trying to cover content. He wanted the course to focus on the concept of creating a more perfect union, but was also concerned about making sure students learned specific things about the founding of the American democracy, such as the Declaration of Independence and the process for creating the Constitution.

Along the way, Mr. Murphy began to push himself to incorporate current events into every lesson. Even in his regular classes, Mr. Murphy credited his emerging understanding of the C3 Framework with leading him to rely less on content coverage. Mr. Murphy came to view such approaches as privileging compartmentalized tidbits of knowledge. Instead of asking how particular historical events unfolded, Mr. Murphy wanted to prompt students to consider “how did these apply to today?” Throughout the six weeks of this study, Mr. Murphy made these connections with an expanding focus on current events. A myriad of current events topics were observed throughout the semester as displayed below (Table 5).

Table 5

*Observed Occurrences of Current Event Topics*

Date(s)	Current Event Topic(s)	Activity
12/7/16	Pearl Harbor Anniversary	Watch documentary video clip and discussion
12/9/16	U.S. national soccer team gender wage gap	Reading and discussion
12/15/16 12/19/16 1/6/17	Donald Trump and Barack Obama policies	Independent student research and discussion
12/16/16	Russian hacking in presidential election	Discussion
12/16/16	Facebook policies regarding fake news	Discussion
12/19/16	Electoral college	Reading and discussion
1/3/17	Student choice: Donald Trump Twitter habits, North Korea missiles, Edward Snowden, Russian hacking:	Independent student research and discussion

In planning the inquiry course, Mr. Murphy was originally looking for content that fit a coherent historical narrative without worrying much about connections to the present. When Mr. Murphy first began teaching with inquiry-based materials, he felt that his teaching was focused more on helping his students to complete specific tasks. Over time, Mr. Murphy became concerned that this was dampening his students' motivation. Despite all of his efforts to motivate students to focus on their analyses of primary source documents, he often heard students complaining about busywork. Mr. Murphy was concerned about the effect of the inquiry-based performance tasks on students' motivation. He knew that making connections

to current events was a good idea but had yet to experience the power of such connections, that is until student completed the third inquiry in the course on racism. Over time, he learned to “seek out controversies” and contemporary issues that would lend themselves to higher student engagement.

Instead of using historical inquiries that could be deemed disconnected to students’ lives, Mr. Murphy began looking for inquiries that connected to current events where he could make curricular connections more explicit. He stated that his focus “shifted from just answering the questions based on the documents to considering the sources and what is going on right now and how it applies.” This became evident after he moved away from his initial list of inquiry topics and selected an inquiry that covered racism and the Civil Rights Movement when numerous news stories had been reported around that time in regards to police mistreatment of African American citizens. In selecting the fourth inquiry in the course, he sought to find one that would connect to the upcoming presidential election. According to a reflective memo that Mr. Murphy wrote, he intentionally selected an inquiry that focused on the role of protests in civic life to begin the week before the presidential election in anticipation that protests would break out regardless of the election outcome.

***Experiencing a tipping point.*** Mr. Murphy found that the inquiry course hit a “tipping point” during the inquiry on the Long Civil Rights Movement framed by the compelling question, “Have we overcome racism yet?” The inquiry was the third inquiry used in the high school course and took place from 10/8/16 to 11/2/16. Students investigated both the Civil Rights Movement and emerging threats to civil rights since the landmark Civil

Rights Act of 1964 through a series of interviews students accessed from the Library of Congress website. Mr. Murphy extended the inquiry by having students explore the perspectives of Black Lives Matter activists and critics in preparation of writing an op-ed from both points of view. Black Lives Matter had been a particular contentious topic throughout the 2016 presidential election and the semester in which inquiry took place.

Mr. Murphy then prompted his students to compile discussion questions and to help facilitate an after-school community issues panel that discussed the issue of racism in the criminal justice system he helped co-plan and implement during the first week of November. Although Mr. Murphy was nervous, especially at the potential explosiveness that could come from discussing divisive issues, he later reflected that “everyone still got along with nobody yelling at each other. The ceiling didn’t fall.” According to Mr. Murphy that is when “they finally understood empathy. They finally realized the way people believe today are affected by the past.” Students had not been engaged civically in that manner before and Mr. Murphy experienced what he called a “metaphorical high.” Perhaps most importantly, Mr. Murphy felt like his students were making some connections. As he put it, “I think it opened a lot of what we do here could actually matter. What we do in school could actually matter.”

After this tipping point Mr. Murphy appeared to become more ambitious in terms of the scope of his taking informed action projects. His first experience with taking informed action came at the end of an inquiry on declarations of independences throughout the world. He followed the inquiry blueprint’s taking informed action prompts and had student list grievances of an independence movement happening in the world today and then create a T-



chart with reasons for and against independence. Following the successful community issues forum, Mr. Murphy began an inquiry on political protests and concluded it with a planned taking informed action project in which students participated in a mock political protest at the school. Although the taking informed action project ended up being cancelled, it showcased that he was willing to take more risks. He concluded the course with a Gender Wage Gap inquiry with an initial plan to stage an official *TedTalkX* event at the school but was unable to obtain official TedTalkX status because of a lack of time.

*Finding passion and seeing purpose.* Mr. Murphy's attitude on teaching became increasingly positive as a result of teaching with the C3 Framework. Teaching with the C3 Framework made him "want to teach forever. If I could do inquiry all day and every day, that is what I would do." As a student in a master's level social studies education program, Mr. Murphy was admittedly skeptical about some of the lofty progressive ideals he heard: "what we learned in college is what [teaching] should be or what dreamers think it is...and then at the end of inquiry I was like wait, but it could be." Mr. Murphy's skepticism about the practical utility of inquiry-based pedagogy was largely erased as a result of his experiences teaching the C3 Framework. In this sense, it helped him to "go all in on my beliefs" and to continue seeking innovations in the field. For Mr. Murphy, the C3 Framework, and inquiry-based teaching and learning kindled an inner excitement in regards to pedagogical innovation.

Mr. Murphy's students appeared to see a greater purpose to their learning as a result of taking his course. As he put it, "in inquiry class they were always engaged and following a

pattern, always going in a certain direction.” They did not showcase as much enthusiasm in his traditional history course, which included some inquiry-based instruction from time-to-time but did not possess as clear of a thematic or pedagogical structure. According to Mr. Murphy, the C3 Framework helped lead students to “understand the value of understanding [current happenings].”

Although Mr. Murphy had included discussions of current events, he did not believe that his students really understood how events personally shape their lives or how they could personally shape events. The fact that student motivation was maintained throughout lengthy disciplinary analyses in a voluntary elective course is further testament to the value of the inquiries in terms of engaging students. He reported that students did not complain about busywork in his inquiry course, despite the large quantity of disciplinary sources that students were asked to analyze.

**Theme 2: Becoming a scholar.** Mr. Murphy’s experiences enacting the C3 Framework through inquiry-based teaching and learning in his class led to a greater focus on scholarship. Although there were some missed learning opportunities, Mr. Murphy’s students regularly used disciplinary tools in social studies as they examined disciplinary sources and developed the scholarly habits of mind related to making claims and using evidence.

*Creating experts and owning the material.* It was apparent in observations of his classes and in interviews that Mr. Murphy wanted his students to become experts about the content they were studying and that they needed to “own the material.” The focus on expertise was even mentioned as a core course goal. As Mr. Murphy put it to his students,

“part of the reason that this class is important is that you guys are getting informed at becoming experts on this material.” One of Mr. Murphy’s considerations when grading formative performance tasks in the inquiries students were completing was the level of intellectual ownership and understanding evident with the material. Mr. Murphy believed that the students in his inquiry class, “could run circles around [his students in traditional classes] in discussion...and in terms of navigating historical thinking between documents.” Parents appeared to be convinced at the growing expertise of their students as evident in Mr. Murphy’s assertion that “we had multiple parents be like my student is talking to me like they are an adult.” Expertise among students was a goal for Mr. Murphy, and the process for getting there was largely due to a focus on sourcing.

*Sourcing as a habit.* Dimension 3 of the C3 Framework encourages teachers and students to focus on making claims and using evidence. In exposing students to inquiry-based materials throughout the 18 week course, Mr. Murphy created a culture where the act of making claims and using evidence became a habit amongst the students. Mr. Murphy used the term “sourcing” as a catch-all term to refer to the scholarly habit of making claims with evidence and properly attributing the claims and evidence to sources. Mr. Murphy attempted to teach sourcing habits and even explicitly talked about scholarly definitions of sourcing. He referenced it explicitly in preparing students for readings on supporting question 1:

Teacher: What do we call it when we research author and background we are reading?

Student: Stalking?

Teacher: The scholarly term is Sourcing. It is what a lot of historians do before they read...you want to understand the holistic picture of background, what direction they are leaning, so you can understand a little more. It's not to say it's not credible, but it can help to understand. It gives you the larger picture of what you are reading.

At different points throughout the semester students could be overheard asking each other where they got their information. A question Mr. Murphy regularly posed to students was, "where did you read this and where is the evidence?" When he assigned one formative performance task, which prompted students to write a paragraph that explains how the gender wage gap narrowed over time, he told his students to "make sure you mark in your paragraph where you are getting your information from with specific quotes and paragraph numbers so that when we are discussing your post you know where to go to." Mr. Murphy insisted on citing, even if the inquiry blueprint did not explicitly prompt students to do so in this instance.

Mr. Murphy's class was discussing featured sources associated with in supporting question 3 in the Gender Wage Gap inquiry regarding where the gender wage gap was most pronounced. One featured source was a series of graphs compiled and published by the Pew Research Center which showcased various statistics related to the gender wage gap. When a particularly opinionated student questioned the credibility of the author of a source that contradicted his personal view, Mr. Murphy prompted the student to look up the author to check the accuracy of his claim.

Student: I don't think any of this data is at all reliable. It looks great on paper. But there is nothing behind this.

Teacher: What do you mean?

Student: There are no factors. It doesn't show how many men and women were surveyed. There is nothing behind to show where they got the data from to show they are accurate.

Teacher: What do you mean?

Student: I could have surveyed a 100 men and women and got the same figure. It never says.

Teacher: So yes, I agree. It doesn't say on the bottom, but what do we know about the first 4 graphs? Let's go back to sourcing just for a second. If we are talking about sourcing, where do graphs come from?

Student: Pew research

Teacher: What do we know?

Student: Nothing

Teacher: So if you know nothing about an organization, what do we do?

Student: Look up

Teacher: Yes, google it. Someone google Pew Research

Student: What if the site is not reliable?

Teacher: Let's see what he finds first. Let's not go down the black hole.

[Teacher reading to class information from Wikipedia on Pew Research Center]

Teacher: Based on that little amount of information, what does that tell you about the Pew Research Center?

Teacher: They are probably reliable. They are non-partisan, trying to present information to you. You can do a Google search to see Pew Research. Bad research? Is it a scam?

Teacher: I agree with your concern [about being skeptical] but if you want to go further down, you can look at raw data yourself.

This exchange highlights how Mr. Murphy often taught sourcing in his class. When sourcing was observed in the classroom, it was usually dictated by the teacher and not a daily requirement of students. However, Mr. Murphy mentioned the importance of sourcing several times in the semester suggesting that he valued it and hoped to model scholarly sourcing habits amongst his students even if he did not explicitly require it in assignments.

***Wanting to read more.*** Mr. Murphy prepared for each new inquiry by reading up on related current events articles and by looking for new information on the topic. According to Mr. Murphy, “I am almost studying more myself to be able to ask appropriate questions to be able to bring in current events and different topics.” Mr. Murphy said that he read more current events as a result of teaching inquiry. One of his favorite sources for information on current events was the *Washington Post*, and on many days he would bring stories from the newspaper into class. From time to time Mr. Murphy would give students an article to read independently. Mr. Murphy observed that his students enjoyed reading materials more in his

inquiry class and even wanted to read more on particular subjects after having engaged discussion in class.

*Responding to unsubstantiated claims.* Mr. Murphy's tolerance of students' opinions sometimes led him to miss opportunities in terms of correcting unsubstantiated claims or faulty logic. Mr. Murphy wanted to allow all student voices to be heard and would correct misstatements from time to time; however, he sometimes let faulty claims go unchecked. Sometimes he would affirm opinions that were not grounded on evidence. This was clearly evident in one exchange between students when they were discussing documents in supporting question 4 related to whether or not raising the minimum wage would positively impact the gender wage gap.

Student A: I'm just not seeing a wage gap there. This is something that has to be there for a capitalist country to work. You want opportunities for the rich to show the poor people, you want to be here, you need to work and have the motivation to get these opportunities?

[...]

Student B: You start off by saying there isn't a gap but now saying gap is natural, so what is your point?

Teacher: No personal. I get what [student A] is saying.

In this exchange a frustrated student can be seen correcting another student for making two contradictory statements. This came after several observed moments in which Student A had dismissed featured sources that contradicted his initially strong-held belief that a wage gap

did not exist. Mr. Murphy missed an opportunity to correct the error in logic and instead affirmed the students' opinion that was grounded more in his political ideology than in an analysis of the evidence presented in class.

Students explored the issue of accurately calculating the gender wage gap during supporting question 1. Students listed many of these variables on the class whiteboard in completion of the formative performance task. Evidence presented in the featured sources suggested that the commonly posited claim that women make 77 percent of the salaries of men for the same work is flawed because it does not account for numerous variables. However, at no point were students presented with any empirical evidence that disproved the existence of a wage gap. The featured sources that students read suggested that the 77 percent claim is invalid, that a wage gap does exist none-the-less, and that one of the reasons the gap exists is because of social pressures on women to seek employment in occupations that are low-paying. A few weeks later the class was having a discussion on supporting question 4 and whether or not there is a political solution to the gender wage gap.

Teacher: Let's go to overall claims. I think most people fell on no, no political solution...Who did this one [pointing to a claim posted on whiteboard]?

Student A: I'm just completely over it. When we first started talking about it, I was like yes there is definitely a wage gap. It is a huge problem. Once we did more research and analyzed the graphs, I was like no this isn't legit. There is no question about it. I thought that there was one, but now there isn't one now.



Student B: I think there are two groups of people. Those who did research and those who didn't. Once you do, you see there isn't a problem.

During the same class Mr. Murphy polled the class to see if they believed a gender wage gap existed, and the amount of hands raised indicated that a majority did not. The fact that a majority of students, many from conservative backgrounds, came to a conclusion that the gender wage gap does not exist because economists have had a difficult time calculating the exact difference in pay between men and women may attest to the difficulties of attending to confirmation bias and the limits of inquiry in terms of leading students to evidence-based conclusions. Mr. Murphy affirmed his students for demonstrating a variety of viewpoints on the issue of the gender wage gap, but he did not address the fact that a majority of his class came to a conclusion on an issue that was not supported by evidence.

**Theme 3: Overcoming challenges.** Mr. Murphy's experience teaching inquiry-based social studies for the first time met internal and external challenges, many of which he successfully overcame. These challenges are presented below as five descriptive findings related to how Mr. Murphy explained the inquiry course to others, his persistence in working on the course, specific approaches to scaffolding student learning, altering initial plans, and grading purposefully.

**Convincing others.** When Mr. Murphy first decided to create the elective course, he was given a great deal of autonomy by the administration at Heritage Charter School. Mr. Murphy pitched the course to his principal as a "cutting edge" and the first of its kind in the country. His administration was easily sold. In the early stages of planning, he had only five

students signed up for the course, and there was some concern that the course would not be offered. As an advisor to high school students, Mr. Murphy pitched the course as a “tool to prepare them for college.” At an open house held at the school, he sold the course to parents on the grounds that it would prepare students for college, career, and civic life. He reportedly received little pushback from parents as he found that “there is nothing really to disagree with when you say that we want your students to be better prepared for college, career, and civic life.”

After the course began, Mr. Murphy experienced the same level of support from administration and parents. However, during one inquiry on protests, Mr. Murphy was asked by his principal to cancel his class’s plans to engage in a taking informed action task in which they would stage a mock protest to get vending machines into the schools. Although Mr. Murphy received sympathetic emails from his administrators and even a board member, he was unable to convince his principal to allow the campaign to go on.

*Waiting for the payoff.* In his traditional courses, Mr. Murphy felt great pressure to cover content because, as he puts it, “that’s just the way my education was in social studies.” He claimed that the district curriculum shaped what social studies instruction should look like. Like many districts, the social studies curriculum for Mr. Murphy’s district was very dense with an overwhelming number of topics and concepts packed into each course. As an elective, Mr. Murphy did not have to follow the district curriculum in the inquiry course. Despite this relative curricular freedom, Mr. Murphy still felt pressure to implement the inquiries following the conventions of traditional courses.

During his first two inquiries, Mr. Murphy reported feeling rushed as he was attempting to follow a strict two week-per-inquiry schedule. Students were stuck in the “trenches of the material” and “it felt more like busy work [with no] lightbulb moment.” Students wanted to discuss readings before doing related analysis. Mr. Murphy thought carefully about his students concerns and found himself agreeing that was important as a way to maintain student engagement. Mr. Murphy was confident that his students were engaging in quality reading and analysis, although they often felt “swamped” and impatient. According to Mr. Murphy “when they get to the end of the [inquiry] there is a realization...that they know all of the materials without having to look at or read from something.” Thus, Mr. Murphy’s experiences teaching inquiry consisted of trying to convince both himself and his students to remain patient during the early stages of inquiry when things had not yet clicked. Both Mr. Murphy and his students experienced a habituation period to inquiry that began to dissipate after about the fifth week in the course.

*Establishing patterns of scaffolding.* Most of the inquiries that Mr. Murphy used were originally designed for use with 9th or 10th grade students. The inquiries were carefully designed and included sources, tasks, and scaffolds for teachers and students to use, but they required considerable teacher attention to the details of supporting students as they completed the tasks. For many of the inquiries, Mr. Murphy added current events related readings to engage his class and help them make more-meaningful connections. In an effort to orient students to the Inquiry Design Model and overall inquiry process, Mr. Murphy had his students complete an inquiry designed for elementary students during the first week of the

course framed by the compelling question, “Is the president the most important person in government?” According to Mr. Murphy:

I didn’t really care what they believed about whether or not the president was the most important person because it’s a first grade inquiry. The whole goal was to get them familiar [with the blueprint]. I didn’t want to challenge them on the material. This first week served to scaffold the inquiry process for students, to reduce the cognitive load required when dealing with this novel inquiry process, and to get students familiar with both the structure of an inquiry blueprint and their own role in terms of completing the inquiry.

The second inquiry that Mr. Murphy chose for his students was a comparison of various declarations of independences around the world. This inquiry was designed for fifth grade students. The remainder of the inquiries were generally on students’ grade level as they were written for high school students. Mr. Murphy mostly stuck to the scaffolds that were already built into the inquiries themselves. He used some pre-made charts and had prompted students to use some basic literacy strategies (e.g., annotating, underlining), and used some basic soft scaffolds as he would probe students to think more deeply on a subject or find evidence. He also provided some soft scaffolds in terms of reminding students about appropriate forms of civic discourse. However, in observations he tended to be more reactive than preventative in regards to how he encouraged civility in class discussion.

Students sometimes complained about the length of readings and referred to the inquiry materials as “another packet.” Mr. Murphy adapted by using a “jigsaw” technique

where students would only read one or two of the featured sources related to a supporting question and would then share with a partner or team.

Mr. Murphy learned the benefits of flexible lesson planning and assessment after a few early struggles. With time Mr. Murphy came to accept the fact that many of his initial plans would have to change. He began to add more of his own personality and brought his own pedagogical personality to the inquiries. These elements of flexibility include adjustments to the IDM blueprint, focusing on collaborative teamwork, and using grades more strategically.

*Changing plans.* Mr. Murphy often did not complete inquiries in the manner of which he first planned. His original plan for the entire course was to cover nine inquiry topics and to have students create their own inquiry blueprints from scratch using an online tool called the *Inquiry Generator*. Mr. Murphy intended to teach four inquiries alongside the middle school inquiry class. This plan required that each inquiry would be completed in about two weeks. However, he soon realized that inquiries were taking longer to complete than expected. The average inquiry ended up taking 3.5 weeks long thus preventing Mr. Murphy from getting a chance to cover half of his initially planned inquiries (Table 6).

Table 6

*Comparison of Inquires Planned with Inquiries Covered*

Original Plan for Inquiry Topics	Inquiry Topics Covered
1. Independence Movements around world	1. Independence Movements around world
2. National Security/ Japanese Internment*	2. National Security/Japanese Internment*
3. Racism and Civil Rights*	3. Racism and Civil Rights*
4. Protest and Vietnam*	4. Protest and Vietnam*
5. Johnson vs. Reagan	5. Gender Wage Gap*
6. Religious Freedom*	
7. Affordable Health Care Act	
8. The Constitution	
9. Emancipation Proclamation	
10. <i>Student-created Inquiry</i>	* Taught alongside middle school class

One factor that led to the extension of inquiries from 2 to 3.5 weeks was that Mr. Murphy felt that students were struggling with background information. This was especially true during the first inquiry on independence movements around the world. He decided to add one week of independent pre-inquiry research. Students would have an opportunity to explore the compelling question or a related issue and then present their findings to classmates at the end of the week. The first week of the Gender Wage Gap inquiry was spent with student groups exploring the more general issue of wage gaps before they began the Staging the Compelling Question activity.

Mr. Murphy changed his plans regarding individual components of inquiries from time to time. For instance, on the opening day to the Gender Wage Gap inquiry, he informed his students that their taking informed action project would involve them inviting family members to participate in an issues discussion forum where they would share opinions and

perspectives regarding the gender wage gap. However, after the second week of the inquiry, Mr. Murphy changed his mind after watching a TedTalk video and having an “epiphany.” He decided to contact officials at TedTalkX to see if they would be willing to give his school official status for student presentations on the gender wage gap. The following week Mr. Murphy informed his students of another change. He had not been able to obtain official TedTalk status, but he was going through with the general concept. Students would still be giving presentations at an open forum afterschool in what would be called HeritageTalks. Students would now be able to present on any topic of interest that had been discussed in the course, including the gender wage gap.

Mr. Murphy had broadened the taking informed action project that was originally intended to address the gender wage gap to be a summative course experience and allow students to present their arguments on any course topic. Being sensitive to the fact that students were being asked to present arguments in front of a large audience, he offered reticent students an opportunity to complete their taking informed action projects in class. However, they were given a specific menu of options to choose: research and present on Donald Trump’s gender wage gap stances and policies, present on whether or not there is a political solution to the gender wage gap, or conduct a survey on local community members’ perspectives on the gender wage gap and present findings to class. These projects were presented in class during the final week of the gender wage gap. In total about half of the students completed in-class taking informed action projects on the gender wage gap and half participated in HeritageTalks. Students presented on national security, racism in the police

force, and political protests. Two students presented on the importance of a living wage, which had been a residual issue that arose in Gender Wage Gap inquiry during the readings on supporting question 4.

Mr. Murphy's syllabus stated that students would be required to complete two essays in the course. His students wrote their first essay after completing the independence movements around the world inquiry. However, he did not assign any more formal essays for the remainder of the course as he stated that he felt the essay dampened students' interest in the material. As Mr. Murphy reported,

For essays, we don't write many [chuckle] because that takes a couple weeks. We did one essay which wasn't bad, but I'm learning flexibility with my assessments. If I say you are all writing an essay to answer this question especially an inquiry class, I have just blocked off half of my class from being interested and actually discovering.

Mr. Murphy began to offer students more options and to allow them to display their arguments in alternative forms of expression. Students' taking informed action projects and summative performance tasks were often embedded. He stated that instead of essays, "I used creative-type assessments where they need to think more about something they are interested in." This suggests that Mr. Murphy moved away having students construct arguments in response to the compelling question. Instead he allowed students to complete independent extension tasks they came up with that were not originally part of the inquiry. This was highlighted in the Gender Wage Gap inquiry in which students were able to choose any topic that arose in inquiry for their HeritageTalk.



**Grading more purposefully.** Mr. Murphy’s initial experience with enacting the C3 Framework was dampened by what he perceived as burdensome grading demands. He had by his own account been too rigid with an “expectation that there had to be this amount of grades.” This led him to formally grade every formative performance task listed on the inquiry blueprints. However, he did not provide feedback as he went along. Instead he created a whole-inquiry rubric sheet that was handed back to students after the inquiry was over (Figure 2). According to Mr. Murphy, many students ended up submitting summative arguments that contained inaccurate claims. He felt that he could have helped to correct students’ misunderstandings by offering more immediate feedback throughout the course of the inquiry instead of waiting until the end to give it.

<b>Name:</b>	<b>[Student Name Removed]</b>
<b>Category</b>	<b>Points (4 Pts Each)</b>
Supporting Q Assignments (1-4)	3 - Good work on these. Only issue with S1, it was lacking in information.
Informed Action Assignments	1 - lacking a good bit of information. Plus the formative parts of the assignment.
Paper Thesis	3 - All the right elements are there, the thesis is well developed but make sure it is all in one sentence.
Topic Sentences	3 - You did these great and made sure the reader knew what was coming. It might help in the future to use them to help transition as well like...secondly or next or finally...
Use of Evidence	2 - You have good evidence in a few paragraphs but others are missing it. You are making great points but you need to put evidence in more places.
Analysis	3 - You wrote a really strong paper but just need more evidence to help it out. You need to make sure that your points, even if you know they are correct, that they have evidence backing them up.
Informed Action Paragraph	3 - Great. You are tying it in and using examples to make it fit. More evidence would have helped.
Comments:	Overall, good work. You need to make sure to put more effort into the supporting work as well but you did great work on the paper.

Figure 2. Summative feedback form used on first inquiry

However, Mr. Murphy felt overwhelmed by trying to formally grade student assignments on an almost daily basis. Taking the advice of a mentor, Mr. Murphy learned to provide more informal feedback to his students, often without numbers, in class. When students were charged with independently reading in class, Mr. Murphy would then take out his tablet and begin grading whatever assignment had just been posted in Google Classroom. He learned that “grading and materials are much better if I do a lot of the checking on the front end” and began providing quick, to-the-point feedback on students almost daily.

**Theme 4: Creating a democratic community.** Mr. Murphy’s classroom procedures and his structuring of the classroom helped to create what he saw as a democratic ethos. Through their inquiry experiences, the class began to establish a unique culture and sense of group pride. This sense of community was defined by the space within which Mr. Murphy and his students worked, the democratic nature of the feedback Mr. Murphy provided, and the civil nature of the discourse in the class.

*Fostering empathy and tolerance.* Mr. Murphy took pride in establishing a safe space where any opinion, no matter where it was on the ideological spectrum, would be welcomed in his classroom. He aimed to “safely challenge” students, and was careful to not judge their statements. As Mr. Murphy put it,

I think it is important to let them know that no matter what side they are on that I am not judging their statements. And at the same time when they hear my voice they are hearing both sides.

Mr. Murphy often referenced presidential debates between Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton as a non-example of how to have a civil debate. Students were discussing supporting question 4 in the Gender Wage Gap inquiry and the minimum wage when the conversation got rowdy. “We will have civil discourse,” shouted Mr. Murphy over the crosstalk. “We will be better than our political candidates. Be able to talk without yelling at each other.” Mr. Murphy reported that he had to do less behavioral corrections during discussions after the class had completed a few inquiries, which also coincided with the election season coming to an end.

One of the core skills in history as emphasized in the C3 Framework is the notion of historical empathy. Mr. Murphy attempted to foster a sense of historical empathy throughout the inquiry course. Mr. Murphy was forthcoming to students about his goal to foster empathy. During one class session he told them:

The reason we are doing all of these inquiries is to broaden the scope of your thinking. I want you to think beyond the daily life that you live to think beyond where to live, grocery shop. Think beyond the degrees or jobs your parents may or may not have. Think about different peoples and societies.

Providing students with competing narratives was an intentional part of the process in terms of helping students to develop historical empathy. Mr. Murphy questioned “why would we present to students views that are right now the middle when they are never going to be presented with that again?” In this manner, Mr. Murphy saw the need to expose students to

diverse competing narratives as part of the process of building students' historical empathy and their ability to relate with others.

**Democratizing the feedback.** Students provided each other feedback on their emerging claims and arguments throughout the inquiry. Instead of collecting individual responses, Mr. Murphy consistently allowed his students to share their opinions in communal spaces and to receive peer feedback. One strategy Mr. Murphy used was to have students post their inquiry-based claims to a Google Classroom discussion board, on the front of the board itself, or on an online Padlet. Students would then be expected to explain their claims and listen to classmates' critiques. Mr. Murphy sometimes would ask students to identify patterns or themes that cut across the claims posted (Figure 3).

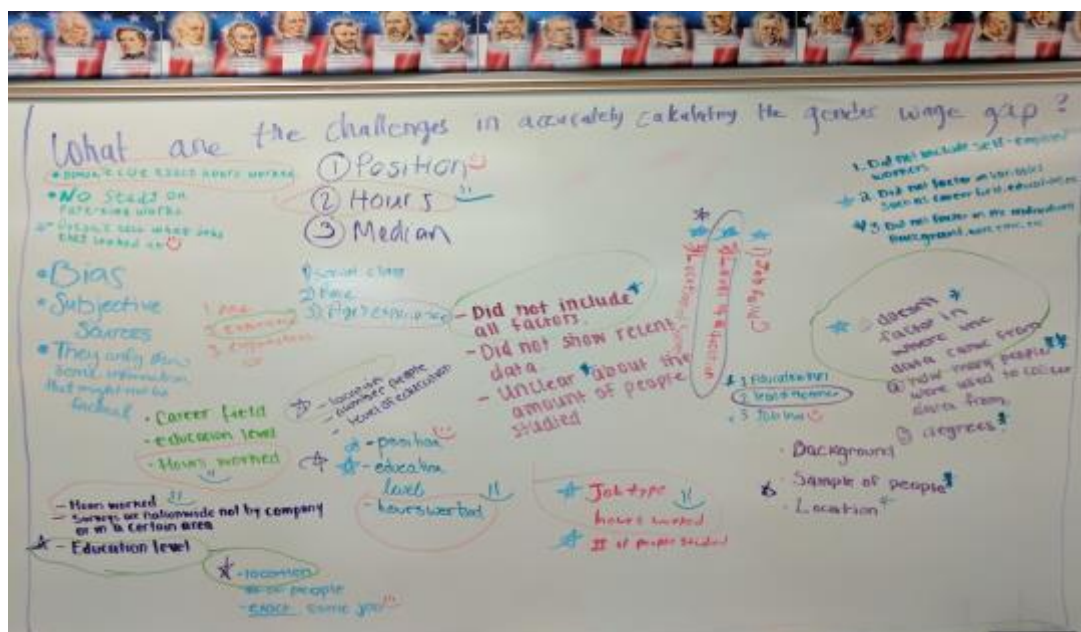


Figure 3. Student work collaborating on claims for supporting question 1.

Mr. Murphy also added to the original formative performance task 2 listed on the blueprint which called for students to write a paragraph explaining how the gender wage gap narrowed over time. He had his students post their paragraphs in an online discussion board using Padlet and then prompted students to respond to other posts. This exposed students to the emerging claims and arguments of classmates and created a culture in which students were frequently offering peer feedback.

Each student gave at least two presentations during the course of the Gender Wage Gap inquiry. The first one occurred at the end of the first week after student groups had researched the gender, racial, or socioeconomic wage gaps at the local, state, or national level. Mr. Murphy provided feedback using a more formal rubric, and he had his students provide feedback to each other (Figure 4)

Group 2 (Race Wage Gap)	
Positives	Places to Improve
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Large amount of information</li> <li>- Lots of good points</li> <li>- Awesome graphs. they know their stuff well.</li> <li>- Great information, and graphs, this was helpful to keep up with what they were presenting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Too many people at once. It was distracting. They should still have at least three to four people up there not all at once though.</li> <li>- Need to work on tone and inflection</li> <li>- Needs to be more organized, too much back and forth....</li> <li>- Patrick's quote</li> <li>- Needs less opinion outside of closing thoughts</li> <li>- Very "scattered"</li> </ul>

*Figure 4.* Peer feedback on racial wage gap presentation.

## Summary

Themes that arose from data analysis of Mr. Murphy's teaching experiences include changing perceptions and attitudes, becoming a scholar, overcoming challenges, and creating a democratic community. This offers a glimpse into the quintain in the study: how teachers

enact the C3 Framework. In this particular context, the teacher experienced a shift in attitudes regarding instructional practice. He adapted to internal and external challenges by learning to be flexible and adapted his instructional practices. He fostered a democratic culture in his classroom and attempted to encourage scholarly habits in students. However, it is in these last two themes where the case reveals perhaps the most significant aspect of the quintain. The teacher's attempt to create a democratic community was at times at odds with his desire to encourage scholarship. Overall, the teacher's experiences enacting the C3 Framework were positive and powerful.

#### **Within-case Emergent Themes: Mr. Johnson**

This research study revealed several themes and subthemes regarding Mr. Johnson's experiences enacting the C3 Framework in his middle school classroom (Table 7).

Table 7

#### *Emerging Within-case Themes: Mr. Johnson*

Themes	Sub-themes
1. Buying into inquiry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Seeing a greater purpose for oneself</li> <li>● Convincing others</li> <li>● Fostering student ownership</li> <li>● Spilling over</li> <li>● Planning for the future</li> </ul>
2. Adapting to inquiry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Slowing down</li> <li>● Moving beyond the blueprint</li> <li>● Grading more efficiently</li> </ul>
3. Learning disciplinary habits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Struggling with disciplinary demands</li> <li>● Scaffolding the learning</li> <li>● Fostering empathy and democratic habits</li> <li>● Balancing teacher-student roles in learning</li> </ul>

**Theme 1: Buying into inquiry.** Analysis of data revealed that Mr. Johnson came to see a greater purpose for inquiry-based instruction in middle school social studies classrooms as well as sought ways to convince others of the benefits of inquiry. Mr. Johnson began to see the benefits of inquiry spill over into his other classes as students took greater ownership over, and pride in, their learning. Mr. Johnson's positive experiences with inquiry led him to begin planning ambitious initiatives for his future classes.

*Seeing a greater purpose for oneself.* Mr. Johnson's enthusiasm for the C3 Framework was evident from the first observation in his classroom. He had already incorporated some aspects of the C3 Framework's approach to social studies, such as use of primary source documents and guiding questions; however, he came to see a greater purpose for the C3 Framework. When I asked Mr. Johnson what a perfect social studies class might look like, he said, "it would look a lot like inquiry where kids can lead." There appears to be little difference between Mr. Johnson's ideal teaching environment and the inquiry class that he taught. His suggestions for improving the course related to logistical challenges, such as having workable technology and expanded class periods. To Mr. Johnson, the most essential part of the C3 Framework is the taking informed action component. He claimed that,

it shows the kids each day that what they are doing is applicable to life. Everything they are doing in this class applies to something that is going on in our world and they can have a voice in it. They can make a change.

He went on to refer to the C3 Framework as,

the way that teaching should be. You see the kids build up for weeks learning and

talking and doing all these different things to build up to this point where they ask questions and get these great responses from all these adults.

To Mr. Johnson the C3 Framework is a vehicle from which to teach students to “learn how to be humans.” Inquiry-based questions are like “exploding grenades” to Mr. Johnson as he watches his students get riled up by evidence-based discussions on relevant civic issues.

***Convincing others.*** At the end of one of our interviews together, Mr. Johnson mentioned that he thinks the architects behind the C3 Framework have to “get their voice out more somehow.” Mr. Johnson informed me that he would like to invite pre-service teachers to observe his inquiry classes. He was observed telling his students that they were part of the first ever inquiry class in the country and as such should be proud. At the beginning of the school year Mr. Johnson had encouraged some of his middle school students to enroll in the inquiry class because it would serve them well in high school. At a back-to-school open house night Mr. Johnson informed parents that students “are at a point where it has got to be about their views.”

***Fostering student ownership.*** Mr. Johnson observed that inquiries became increasingly student-led over the course of the semester and that an inquiry community culture had developed. Mr. Johnson found that his students “feel that inquiry is theirs.” However, the inquiries were not student-directed per se, as observations revealed that the class generally followed the Gender Wage Gap inquiry up until the summative assessment in which students were given options regarding the topic and format of final projects. However, Mr. Johnson felt that as the course went on that students were engaging in deeper, more-



meaningful conversations. He found that his students “were really able to take over and talk about documents...they are ten times more advanced than I was at their age.”

Mr. Johnson worked to create a sense of community in his classroom. Mr. Johnson felt the influence of parents was visible in his students’ initial views on particular subjects, and he worked to help students find their own voices and formulate their own opinions. The nature of inquiry meant that he was able to learn more about his students’ backgrounds and worldviews. He observed students in his regular class frequently talking about what they were learning in his class. It became a class habit to blurt out “hashtag inquiry” whenever students made mention of the inquiry-based topics.

Mr. Johnson took a great deal of pride in the community that he helped foster, and he believed that students did too. According to Mr. Johnson, “they feel that they are part of something because they talk to students about inquiry....it is almost like being part of a small family.” He visibly beamed when he spoke about parents approaching him at the conclusion of a community forum event, thanking him, and asking him to do more community events. He was particularly proud of the performance of students at the race forum and in giving TedTalk presentations at a summative course event. These experiences made him feel like a “proud papa.” Mr. Johnson was clearly attached to his students and even admitted that he might cry on the last day of class thinking that he won’t be able to continue delving into issues with those students.

***Spilling over.*** Mr. Johnson’s positive experience enacting C3 Framework-aligned inquiries in his elective class had carryover effects on his regular social studies courses. He

found that “when you teach a normal course, the one thing you are more led to do is teacher-led things.” However, he stated that he began using some of the materials in his regular class, specifically sources from the Pilgrim-Wampanoag inquiry. He also expressed excitement over trying a paideia discussion in his regular classroom on the Trail of Tears. Since teaching his elective course he decided to add guiding questions to all of his regular units and to identify a clear purpose for each day. Finally, Mr. Johnson’s decision to grade more purposefully in order to decrease the workload in his inquiry course carried over into his regular classroom. According to Mr. Johnson, “It was a freeing experience to change my overall assessment that much. And I have been doing that over the last month and a half with [my other] social studies class.” Mr. Johnson believed that the inquiry class helped motivate students in his regular classes, and he noticed a sharp decrease in motivation of students in the beginning of the spring semester when inquiry had ended.

*Planning for the future.* Mr. Johnson often reflected on ways to improve his inquiry course for the following year. He spoke of his desire to have both the middle and high school electives held during the same period so that students in both classes could collaborate more directly. He also hoped to extend the course to be a whole-year long so that students could explore a greater variety of topics. Mr. Johnson aimed to continue selecting inquiry topics that related more strongly to modern issues, and he wanted to avoid compelling questions that he deemed overly leading. He taught two inquiries that he felt had leading stances. The first one asked, “How did the Pilgrim-Wampanoag relationship go so wrong?” The second one was the inquiry for which the data was collected in this research on the gender wage gap.

He pointed out that the Pilgrim-Wampanoag inquiry led most students to formulate pretty narrow arguments and that the gender wage gap appeared slanted towards a liberal viewpoint because it presumes that a gender wage gap exists. Mr. Johnson also spoke of his desire to expand the school's relationship with my university and to potentially use his classroom as a kind of teaching lab for inquiry-based social studies where pre-service teachers could observe throughout the semester as part of their coursework.

**Theme 2: Adapting to inquiry.** Throughout the study Mr. Johnson was still in the process of creating a new course based on a new concept. Learning how to adapt to inquiry was one of the most salient themes that emerged from data analysis.

*Slowing down.* A valuable lesson that Mr. Johnson learned from his first two inquiries was to “slow down.” Mr. Johnson was originally following suggested timeframes listed in the inquiry materials he was using that typically recommended about two weeks of instruction per topic. During his implementation of his first inquiry on Pilgrims, he felt that he was “jamming it in” to “get it through.” He soon came to believe that “it can't be done in two weeks” and began loosely allotting three-and-a-half weeks per inquiry topic.

Mr. Johnson would explicitly work towards slowing his students down in order for them to dive deeper into material. He often was observed telling them to take as much time as they needed to complete tasks. Classes typically ended with students packing up unfinished formative performance tasks or partially reading a featured source document. This was according to Mr. Johnson's plan, as he asserted that, “we plan on what we're going to do and how we're going to go about it, but we don't set days like we have to get this supporting

question done by [a certain day].” Mr. Johnson believed that he was able to successfully slow students down in terms of document analysis over the course of the semester.

*Moving beyond the blueprint.* Mr. Johnson had a very positive attitude towards the inquiry blueprints he used in class. According to Mr. Johnson:

The [C3 Teachers] website and the inquiries themselves have made it so unbelievably easy. The work that has been put into them has made it easy for us teachers to teach them....the only thing that is a question is how many days it takes.

Eventually, however, Mr. Johnson would learn that he had to do more do adapt the blueprints.

He came to believe that students did not have enough background information and that the supporting questions and staging tasks did not do enough to overcome this. He believed that, because the inquiry course was not taught chronologically, any attempt to provide historical context in a single class period would fall short. He attempted to alleviate this problem at first by lecturing, but he then switched to including an extra week of pre-inquiry independent student research that often culminated in student presentations of what they found. Although Mr. Johnson did not have much residual time, he did use some current event articles (e.g., a *Washington Post* article on gender wage gaps of the U.S. soccer team) that the high school teacher had shared. After a few attempts at inquiry enactment, Mr. Johnson came to believe that summative performance tasks and taking informed action tasks should be combined, although it is not entirely clear as to why. His stated rationale was that “we are trying to get them to do both together so that they can get an idea of both.”

**Grading more efficiently.** At the beginning of the semester, Mr. Johnson was experiencing increased stress because of his soccer coaching duties on top of a feeling of being overwhelmed by the amount of grading that he thought he was expected to do in his inquiry course. According to Mr. Johnson, “we were trying to grade everything, so it was hectic.” Mr. Johnson, like his new high school co-planner, approached a mentor who gave them advice to be more purposeful with their grading. He stopped grading every formative performance task and began providing more informal feedback. Formative performance task 2 on the inquiry blueprint tasked students with writing a paragraph about historical trends regarding the gender wage gap. Mr. Johnson changed the assignment to a whole-class visual timeline in which individual students each listed relevant information and included drawings. He did not grade students’ work on this assignment. When Mr. Johnson did grade assignments, he often added a few brief comments and provided a numerical grade on the following scale: 4-advanced, 3-proficient, 2-emerging, 1-incomplete (Figure 5).

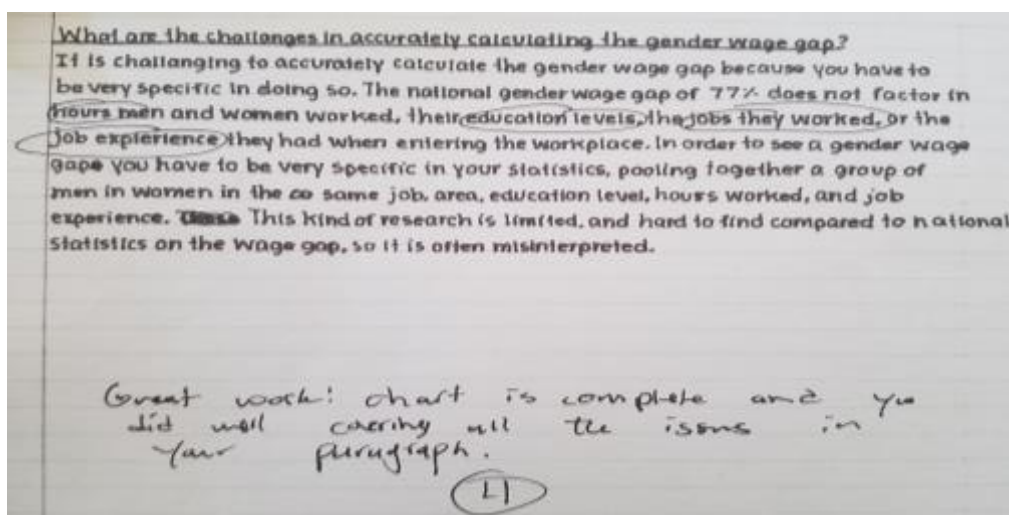


Figure 5. Informal feedback on formative performance task 1

Observations became an important means by which Mr. Johnson monitored his students' progress. Mr. Johnson came to view this informal, "less-is-more" style of grading as being helpful in terms of preparing students for future college expectations in which students may only receive a handful of grades throughout a semester. Mr. Johnson came to feel less overwhelmed as he no longer waited until the end of inquiries to hand back substantive feedback to students. Mr. Johnson also decided against grading every taking informed action task. Some tasks (e.g., participation in issues forum) were graded strictly in terms of participation. In summary Mr. Johnson came to view assessment in more holistic terms and as a result of the switch came to rely more on formative feedback than summative.

**Theme 3: Learning disciplinary habits.** Mr. Johnson sought to foster disciplinary habits in his students by exposing them to disciplinary sources and concepts that required them to think like disciplinary experts. In doing so, he relied on mainly on hard and soft scaffolds to support students in disciplinary analysis with inconsistent results. He also worked to foster empathy and democratic habits in his students.

*Struggling with disciplinary demands.* Some of the students struggled with the reading complexity associated with various reading materials and assignments. The first week of the observed Gender Wage Gap inquiry consisted of students independently researching information on racial, socioeconomic, and gender wage gaps at the local, state, and national levels. Early on students were having some successes, with one student even researching information using Google Scholar. However, student presentations on the material at the end of the week showcased a lack of basic understanding. Most groups read

verbatim from charts they did not seem to understand in spite of Mr. Johnson asking students to put all the information in their own words more than ten times throughout the week. Some groups were so chaotic that co-presenters did not even know when it was their turn to speak. Mr. Johnson expressed disappointment in his students' behavior and lack of preparation for the presentations. However, he did not seem to account for the fact that the content may have been too sophisticated for a majority of his students without more attention to the disciplinary demands of the inquiry source material.

Students were exposed to numerous disciplinary sources throughout the Gender Wage Gap inquiry and were tasked with making evidence-based claims in various discussions and tasks. Many students appeared to draw heavily on personal experience when making claims, instead of relying on evidence. One day the class was discussing whether or not it was fair for people with more educational attainment to get paid more. A student claimed that it was not fair because a doctor once misdiagnosed her thumb injury when a nurse was able to identify it right away. Mr. Johnson was excited to hear this usual reticent student speak up and seemed to miss an opportunity to remind students of the importance of drawing on empirical information instead of limited personal experience. In this particular class, it appeared that students enjoyed discussing personal stories in lieu of evidence from their disciplinary readings.

Students' struggles with disciplinary sources led them to often appear lost in discussions and reliant on Mr. Johnson to explain graphs and charts throughout the inquiry. Mr. Johnson prompted students to attend to features of a graph depicting the racial wage gap

in the United States and asked students to share their opinion. One student answered that it was a bad graph because it was biased. Mr. Johnson accepted the answer without pushing back on the students' baseless claim that suggested a relativistic view of evidence and lack of understanding in the topic. By the end of the inquiry, it appeared that many students had adopted problematic views of statistics and knowledge. Supporting question 3 asked students where the gender wage gap was the most pronounced. After evaluating statistics that showed New York was one of the best states in terms of the gender wage gap, five out of ten students made a claim that the wage gap was more pronounced in New York than at the national level. Instead of correcting the statistical mistake, Mr. Johnson praised the class for having diverse opinions.

*Scaffolding the learning.* The Gender Wage Gap inquiry was designed for a 12th grade economics class, and Mr. Johnson attempted to modify some sources by removing difficult vocabulary and removing some sentences. For instance, he switched the term "equity" to "equal" in one reading. He did not provide any scaffolds specific to economics and gave students economic charts and graphs without much support beyond him roaming the room and drawing meaning for the students. One student struggled enough with the reading and writing demands in class that Mr. Johnson began transcribing the student's comments for him before class met in the morning.

Students in the class sometimes struggled with the length and the quantity of the primary sources. According to Mr. Johnson, most students had not had much exposure to primary documents before taking the class. Mr. Johnson supported students in terms of



reading by jigsawing readings so that students wouldn't have to read all of the featured sources within an inquiry. Instead, they would master one document and share it with their partner or group. Mr. Johnson also recognized that students seemed to suffer from fatigue when reading long passages and thus shortened some of the longer passages. He used some generic reading strategies, such as popcorn reading, highlighting, and summarizing, to support students in their reading comprehension. However, there were several days where it did not seem that Mr. Johnson modified documents for students, and some less-motivated students appeared to rely on him to explain the meaning of charts and graphs.

***Fostering empathy and democratic habits.*** Mr. Johnson appeared particularly excited about the opportunity to challenge students in terms of their comfort zones and saw inquiry as a tool to help students to look at multiple perspectives regarding key issues. When asked about which inquiry topic he had been most excited to teach at the beginning of the course Mr. Johnson chose an inquiry on racism because “it would challenge kids outside their comfort zones. I was excited to challenge those kids to get outside their viewpoints.”

As part of the racism inquiry, students were tasked with writing a 500 word op-ed from the perspective of a pro-Black Lives Matter activist. One student refused and opted instead to write an alternative 750 word essay on why he disagreed with the Black Lives Matters movement. Not intent on allowing the student to lose out on the point of the lesson, Mr. Johnson requested that he re-do it as a report on what the Black Lives Matter organization purports to do to help local communities. The student accepted, redid the assignment, and said that he didn't agree with the organization but that “it really opened my

eyes as to what they're trying to do." Mr. Johnson viewed the C3 Framework inquiries as possessing a slight liberal bent; however, he liked that they would challenge students with reserved, conservative backgrounds.

Mr. Johnson attempted to foster empathy amongst his students throughout the semester. He created a gender wage gap simulation in which students were assigned a mock job and weekly salary. Each week students would check in. The simulation was designed to give students a first-hand experience of what unfair compensation might be like. When discussing issues, Mr. Johnson often prompted students to make connections to their own families. For instance, he asked students to consider the perspective of their sisters, mothers, and aunts when thinking about the fairness of the gender wage gap. Mr. Johnson told his students that "if it is fair in your eyes that is fine, but if it's not fair that's fine to." He also attempted to generate emotional responses from male students by asking them how they would feel if the situation was reversed. Although Mr. Johnson encouraged students to share personal stories and opinions, he did not allow students to discuss personal political views. To him his classroom "is a place to talk about politics, but not share our political opinions."

***Balancing teacher-student ownership of learning.*** Mr. Johnson's desire to give students' ownership over learning was sometimes at odds with his commitment to meeting the cognitive needs of his students. He attempted to model, albeit problematically at times, sourcing habits, and at times frontloaded a lot of information. As part of a Staging the Compelling Question activity, Mr. Johnson had his students read an anti-Equal Pay Myth

article from Carrie Lukas of the Independent Women's Forum. Before engaging in a whole-class reading of the document, he performed a sourcing think aloud:

Who was the author? What group was she from?

The Independent Women's Forum. So a woman wrote this.

So that shows you she has a background in independent women.

He went on to discuss that she was likely more credible on the issue because she was a woman. Mr. Johnson would often model sourcing or have engage students in a whole-class discussion on sourcing. His students were not observed engaging in extended practice with independent sourcing.

Mr. Johnson attended to students' lack of background knowledge and challenges with unpacking meaning from economic charts and graphs by sometimes providing extra information, thus supplementing some of the intellectual work for students. At the beginning of the course, Mr. Johnson lectured more in order to frontload students with necessary information. According to Mr. Johnson:

You have to lead the kids sometimes...sometimes you are going to have to discuss with them and lecture a little bit. If they don't have any background beforehand that is where it really slows them down.

Later he adjusted to allowing students to conduct pre-inquiry research over the course of a week and believed that students were taking more ownership over their learning. However, at times he appeared to provide detailed summaries of sources for students. For instance, before

having students read part of a presidential proclamation by President Barack Obama on the National Equal Pay Day, he told his students that the source they were about to read:

gives you the trends about why it is hard to determine wage gap because women are working different jobs, hours, times, things with childcare men aren't doing which makes it harder.

In response to this one alert student blurted out, "you just gave away a bunch of answers," as he looked down on a worksheet and saw a question about why it is difficult to calculate the gender wage gap.

Mr. Johnson prided himself on posing open-ended questions, creating an evidence-based culture, and allowing students to come to conclusions on their own accord. Given his students' limited experience with sources, he sometimes led them in a particular direction. This occurred in a discussion related to supporting question 4 in the Gender Wage Gap inquiry over the utility of a minimum wage increase. A whole-class discussion was taking place about whether or not a minimum wage increase was a viable political solution towards closing the gender wage gap. Mr. Johnson posed a series of questions that all led students to conclude that a minimum wage increase to \$15 would lead to millions of dollars of lost profits, widespread layoffs, and sharp rise in prices. He suggested that middle class wage earners may lose their motivation to do their jobs. No counter perspective was offered, no evidence presented, and no opportunity for students to evaluate the validity of Mr. Johnson's potentially-leading claims.

**Summary**

Themes emerging from analysis of Mr. Johnson's teaching experiences focused on buying into inquiry, adapting to inquiry, and learning disciplinary habits. This case highlights a particular enactment of the quintain under investigation: how teachers enact the C3 Framework. In this case Mr. Johnson came to embrace the philosophy of the C3 Framework and its approach to teaching. He observed noticeable differences in his students' willingness and ability to analyze and discuss disciplinary sources; however, many students struggled to independently read some of the reading materials and came to rely on him to unpack meaning. Moreover, Mr. Johnson expressed excitement in regards to observing his students discussing complex issues, and he showcased a commitment to tolerating diverse opinions. In order to support students through complex disciplinary work, he used an array of scaffolds. Overall, Mr. Johnson's stated and observed experiences with the C3 Framework were positive.

**Cross-case Assertions**

The purpose of this study was to explore how teachers enact the C3 Framework within and across unique contexts. However, it avoids making broad generalizations. The results of this cross-case analysis yield three salient assertions in regards to the quintain: how teachers enact the C3 Framework. These assertions are:

1. Teachers' beliefs, life experiences, and pedagogical skills were generally aligned with inquiry-based pedagogy.

2. Teachers' instructional decisions were positively impacted by a school culture that granted autonomy and support to teachers and by a lack of external curricula demands.
3. Teachers' instructional decision-making and planning became increasingly collaborative and flexible.

Readers are encouraged to determine the applicability of these assertions onto other contexts on their own accord. The following section unpacks each assertion and offers relevant ancillary data.

**Assertion 1: Teachers' beliefs, life experiences, and pedagogical skills were generally aligned with inquiry-based pedagogy.** The two teachers' beliefs had a palpable impact on their experiences enacting the C3 Framework and generally served to bolster their receptiveness and fidelity to its inquiry-based pedagogical approach. The teachers' stated beliefs in the nature of history and purposes of social studies aligned with the C3 Framework and its inquiry arc, which all but require participants to reject objectivist or absolutist understandings of historical knowledge if they are to successfully engage in authentic disciplinary investigations.

Each teacher described history as an interpretive discipline and expressed a commitment to challenging student assumptions and beliefs with evidence from competing perspectives. According to Mr. Johnson:

I wanted to do things that would challenge the kids to get them out of their comfort zone...It is about challenging the students to formulate opinions because history isn't

all black and white. History is what they interpret.... Everything they are doing in this class applies to something that is going on in our world and they can have a voice in it. They can make a change.

Mr. Johnson sought to expose students to disciplinary questions, but also provide them with opportunities to both connect and apply emerging understandings onto issues of contemporary concern---thus showcasing a commitment to Dimensions 1 and 4 of the C3 Framework. Mr. Murphy also displayed a philosophical alignment to the goals and purposes of the C3 Framework. According to Mr. Murphy:

My primary goal as a teacher is that they come into the classroom with certain views, opinions, and beliefs in my classroom and they can come, express those, and they can learn more about how their ideas fit into them being part of civic live....[I hope] they can make connections to something that is going on today or something that will help them beyond the classroom.

Both teachers viewed the purposes of social studies as cultivating sound civic habits, and they were both philosophically aligned to key aspects of the C3 Framework. They both believed in the importance of civic discourse and creating comfortable spaces for challenging students as evidenced in their numerous comments regarding the need to challenge students' beliefs regardless of what they may be. This interpretive epistemological-pedagogical alignment may have led both teachers to remain committed to the inquiry-based methods despite their initial frustrations regarding assessment overload.

Comments from both teachers showcased a degree of enthusiasm regarding their students' abilities and dispositions, but at times also displayed a seemingly defeatist attitude regarding the abilities of some students. Mr. Murphy reported a belief that some of his students were too partisan to ever be objectively receptive to evidence. This attitude was most evident in his references to Jared [pseudonym], a particularly conservative student who often shared long diatribes against the federal government. As Mr. Murphy put it, "there are students that believe what they're going to believe no matter what the information is in front of them." However, it should be noted that researchers have found that students rely more on a priori beliefs, rather than evidence, in terms of constructing meaning (Damico, Baildon, Exter, & Guo, 2009). Thus, Mr. Murphy may have actually been displaying a nuanced awareness of students' meaning-making in disciplinary inquiry environments. Despite this attitude, Mr. Murphy continued to challenge students for dismissing sources on ideological grounds through probing questions or prompts. For instance, he would ask them, "if you think they are a left-wing nut, then why don't you look it up?" or "if you believe that source is right wing then show me that it is." Although Mr. Murphy may have been skeptical, he consistently sought to refocus students back to evidence and believed that he had made an observable impact on students.

Likewise, Mr. Johnson reflected a somewhat defeatist notion of students' ability in regards to drawing meaning from disciplinary text. According to him, "for some students I am looking for them to get more of the basic facts. They can see black and white, but they can't necessarily see the gray area and expand on why that is a gray area." For such students,



he hoped that they were able to “pull out the right facts.” Mr. Johnson continued to expose students with reading difficulties to largely unmodified disciplinary readings. He often sought to mediate the reading difficulties by allowing students to read passages together in small groups and discuss as they went along. This allowed students who struggled with the reading demands to access some of content in a second-hand nature via discussion with classmates or Mr. Johnson himself. Despite displaying a somewhat defeatist mindset, both teachers continued working to alleviate the perceived unsurmountable deficits of their students. Thus, their beliefs did not negatively impact their enactment of the C3 Framework in this instance.

The teacher's' skill levels did not have an observable impact on their experiences teaching inquiry-based social studies. Mr. Murphy had taken graduate level social studies methods courses that offered more formal training in the C3 Framework than Mr. Johnson received. However, Mr. Murphy was in his first full-year of teaching, and as such might be deemed high risk for struggling with disciplinary inquiry. Mr. Johnson, on the other hand, had six more years of teaching experience but no formal training on the C3 Framework. This seemed to place both teachers on equal footing in terms of their comfort level with teaching the material. By the end of the course, they came to see themselves as co-teachers. As Mr. Murphy stated, “I would feel like if inquiry was it department we would be chairs of it.” The fact that both teachers were largely inexperienced in terms of using disciplinary inquiry and each had a great deal of success may suggest a high degree of utility of the resources in terms

of structuring the learning process proficiently for novices. Teachers' lack of experience with disciplinary inquiry may have also been mediated by their decision to collaborate together.

Earlier experiences in traditionalist classrooms shaped teachers' expectations of sound pedagogical practice and early experiences enacting the C3 Framework. Both stated that their experiences in K-12 social studies classrooms had been quite traditional and that this impacted their instruction. According to Mr. Murphy, "I'm pretty sure all my social studies teachers were male teachers. Very content driven, very lecture-heavy with a couple build pyramids with sugar cubes-type projects." These experiences impacted his initial approach to teaching as he stated that:

there was this inner pull that said no, you must cover from this date to this date and you must do all the terms in bold. And you must follow the TB and to this, this, and this. And it's not like I never learned that in a class about education. I think that's just the way my education was in SS.

Mr. Johnson's motivation to provide students with competing narratives came directly out of his experiences. As he put it:

[My classes did] nothing for me as far as like challenging myself and so when I started getting in the social studies I always thought to myself that I did not want to be the person who said 'open up your book, questions 1 through 5 on this page and be done.' I wanted to do things that would challenge the kids to get them out of their comfort zone kind of thing.

These negative earlier life experiences in social studies classes had a direct impact on how the teachers viewed best practices in social studies and the C3 Framework in general. Of relevant interest is that fact that Mr. Murphy's personal beliefs did not lead him to shy away from controversial issues as has been found in other research efforts (James, 2014). In fact, Mr. Murphy frequently incorporated discussions on controversial subjects and encouraged students to develop their own thoughts on issues. He did this significantly more than Mr. Johnson, who identified as liberal (see Table 8 below).

Table 8

*Comparison of Current Event Topics Observed*

<b>Topics</b>	<b>Mr. Murphy</b>	<b>Mr. Johnson</b>
Pearl Harbor Anniversary	Yes	No
U.S. national soccer team gender wage gap	Yes	Yes
Donald Trump policies on gender wage gap	Yes	No
Russian hacking in presidential election	Yes	No
Facebook policies regarding fake news	Yes	No
Electoral college	Yes	No
Donald Trump Twitter habits	Yes	No
North Korea missiles	Yes	No
Edward Snowden	Yes	No
Russian Hunger Games	No	Yes

This finding suggests that a particular religious worldview need not lead to teaching aligned with that worldview or avoidance of controversial topics in class, although it is not clear as to what exact factors were behind these phenomena.

It should be noted that Mr. Murphy had almost double the amount of instructional time as Mr. Johnson, and he worked with older, more politically-conscious students. Thus, it is not clear that beliefs necessarily prevented Mr. Johnson from incorporating more current events. However, he did state that “anytime anything political popped up, we kept it down...because we don’t do politics here.” This suggests discomfort over possible ramifications from political discussions. However, Mr. Johnson did “do politics” almost every day as students were engaged in a relevant discussion and debate on the politically-charged gender wage gap. His students even explored perspectives of Black Lives Matter activists. In this instance, it becomes clear that Mr. Johnson meant that he avoided unnecessarily charged discussions on the presidential election.

**Assertion 2: Teachers’ instructional decisions were positively impacted by a school culture that granted autonomy and support to teachers and by a lack of external curricula demands.** The school environment played an important role in shaping the experiences of both teachers. Mr. Murphy and Mr. Johnson taught in a public charter school with an experimental ethos and a stated mission that includes “an emphasis on scholarship, citizenship and community service...to prepare students to be tomorrow’s leaders and lifelong learners.” Parent involvement was evident in the turnout at two after-school events that the teachers hosted with over 100 persons for each event. The teachers both reported

feeling supported by the family members of their students. Mr. Murphy stated that when he first introduced the concept for the course, “parents loved it. They were thrilled.” Parents were perceived to be supportive and active. Both teachers reported having several parents mention that their children were sharing what they were learning about in inquiry class and engaging in “adult conversations” at home. The positive relationship with parents may have released the teachers from a fear of parent pushback in regards to including controversial issues. Neither teacher reported any negative feedback from parents of their students, despite the fact that each class discussed a myriad of contentious topics.

The small size of the school impacted teachers’ experiences enacting the C3 Framework. The school required that teachers teach multiple course preps including elective courses and that they serve as official advisers for students on course selections. This, coupled with the small class sizes, created an opportunity for teachers to help encourage certain students from their previous courses to enroll in their new inquiry courses, and likely to get to know all of their students at a more personal level.

Mr. Johnsons’ class sizes were about half the size of Mr. Murphy’s. It appeared to lead him to have a greater influence over his students’ emerging understandings as he was able to devote more individual time and attention to specific students. Mr. Johnson’s class was often broken up into two groups of five students, and he worked with each group during independent student readings. This meant that he was able to respond to students’ questions in a more immediate fashion than Mr. Murphy, but it also meant that his students came to rely on him often to unpack meaning. Mr. Murphy, on the other hand, was more likely to sit

at his desk and grade his students' prior assignments while his students were doing independent reading. In this manner Mr. Johnson's class was significantly louder than Mr. Murphy's because readings were almost always completed by student groups rather than by individual students.

Another important contextual factor was that teachers were not bounded by external standards, curriculum, or administrative requirements in this study. However, it should be noted that four out of the five inquiries were aligned to the New York state social studies standards. Past research efforts have found that curricula mandates can lead teachers to rely on transmission pedagogy (Onosko, 1991). In both cases teachers reported having curricula freedom and support from their administration.

Both teachers were able to create their own thematic structures, scopes and sequences, and other curricula planning documents. Neither was ever asked to submit or seek approval for lesson plans. Teachers devised their courses using a thematic structure that they themselves chose. Neither teacher felt pressured by the administration in regards to content that would be included in the course, nor did they not feel unfairly pressured to alter the course at any time. There was one episode in which the principal intervened to prevent a taking informed action protest activity from occurring. However, both teachers reported that they understood the reasons for doing so.

Having curricula autonomy allowed both teachers to explore topics of their choosing as well as allowing them to make adjustments to the course as they went along. Curricula freedom allowed teachers to efficiently make necessary adjustments when initial plans did

not go as smoothly as they had hoped. For instance, they each mentioned initially feeling overworked from grading duties and feeling that students were rushing through inquiries without seeing real-world connections. Together, they sought a mentor's advice in terms of how they should structure the courses and began to adjust their planning and assessment schemes without any administrative interference.

**Assertion 3: Teachers' instructional-decision making and planning became increasingly collaborative and flexible.** Inquiry had originally been designed as two separate, but overlapping courses that were split largely due to the age differences of students, the classes being held at different time periods, and the fact that the high school schedule operated on a block schedule thus giving the high school inquiry class nearly twice as much time. Teachers selected a range of inquiry topics to include in their courses that would be structured around a central theme. They anticipated co-planning and implementing four inquiries at the same time in order to facilitate cross-class collaboration, and they planned to implement four or five inquiries individually. However, they soon learned that inquiries were taking longer than expected to complete and were not meeting expectations. Additionally, Mr. Johnson's first attempt at inquiry produced less-than-desirable results. He blamed part of the problem on the content of the inquiry being related to historical issues (e.g., pilgrims) instead of being more rooted in a modern issue. Mr. Murphy himself noted that students seemed to view the initial inquiries more as busywork and were "not having lightbulb moments." He continued, "We weren't as open to letting what happened or bringing other materials into the class or letting them spend lots of time on staging the question."

Teachers stated that they originally followed IDM blueprints strictly and made few adjustments to the questions, sources, and tasks that were included.

Given their experiences after those initial inquiries, they decided to meet to rethink their initial organizational schema and to each simultaneously teach an inquiry on the compelling question, “Have we overcome racism yet?” Students in the two classes critiqued summative podcasts they created and jointly participated in a race forum as a culminating taking informed action project. Both teacher independently referred to this race forum as a “turning point” in terms of their courses. According to Mr. Johnson:

Parents were coming up afterwards coming up and saying that was amazing. You need to do more of these. That was fantastic...[People] were willing to get up there and talk about things and share their points of view about their experiences in their lives. It was just what teaching should be. It is what I should have said at the beginning, it is what teaching should be.

Mr. Johnson credited the positive experience at the forum with cementing support from administrators and parents. Mr. Murphy saw the forum as a pivotal moment in terms of shaping his students’ civic efficacy and commitment to the course: “I think it opened [them to believe] well what we do here could actually matter. What we do in school could actually matter. And I think that's where they realized that in that inquiry.”

They realized the benefits of partnering and decided to integrate their courses completely for the rest of the semester. According to Mr. Murphy, “we quickly found out that we are probably pretty much teaching the same course now despite developing different



courses...If inquiry was a department we would be co-chairs of it.” The new partnership was evident in almost every observation as Mr. Johnson would stop by each morning and do a quick check-in of where his class was, what had been going well, and what next steps would be taken in the courses. According to Mr. Johnson, “we liked using each other as resources,” and they were often observed sharing news stories and articles with one another. The idea of embracing teamwork was evident in Mr. Murphy’s assertion that “I don’t think I could successfully do inquiry if I was teaching it by myself.” By the end of the study, it was difficult to even know which ideas originated from which teacher.

The two teachers began allotting 3.5 weeks for each inquiry, and they stopped planning in order to get through each component of an inquiry on specific days. This led many classes to spill over to the next day. Both were observed several times ending class with statements like “we’ll continue working on this tomorrow.” Teachers also began selecting inquiry topics on the basis of how well students could relate to the material, rather than how they fit with the original thematic structure. As Mr. Murphy put it, “current events now drive inquiry.” They decided to teach an inquiry on racism in direct response to increased media attention on racial justice-related issues in police departments. They selected an inquiry related to political protests to coincide with the 2016 presidential election. Teachers even engaged in cross-class assignments, one of which was podcast activity in which students from across the middle and high school inquiry courses recorded and shared perspectives on the issue of Japanese Internment with one another (Figure 6).

<p><b>Feedback for HS Podcasts</b>  Name of Podcast Maker: _ Removed_____ Name of Reviewer: __Removed____</p> <p><b>Did they have a thesis or a main point? Is it clear?</b></p> <p>[She] did have a thesis in her podcast. It was one of the first things she said so it was clear.</p> <p><b>Did they use convincing evidence? Does it help prove the points they are making?</b></p> <p>[She] stated the documents and the sources as well as the people that said it in her podcast. I think most of the points helped prove her points, she was very clear, and explained how her evidence help prove her point.</p>
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*Figure 6.* Sample of cross-class feedback on national security podcast

Teachers began adding a pre-inquiry assignment to every inquiry in which students independently researched the topic using information they collected online and then presented their findings to the whole-class at the end of the week. This served to alleviate a problem both teachers noticed: students initially struggled with a lack of historical background knowledge. According to Mr. Johnson, “if they don't have any background beforehand that is where it really slow them down.” This pre-inquiry add-on also served to give students opportunities to independently research issues related to the compelling question and to explore residual issues that may have not come up in the inquiry resources.

Students began working on IDM materials only during the second week of a unit in which they then received hard copies of the blueprint itself and staging the compelling question task. Every class period from the second week onward began with a bellwork question that would be completed on a Padlet or on an individual slip of paper. The bellwork question was often used to review the previous day's supporting question or to get students to brainstorm their initial thoughts on the current day's supporting question. Teachers would

often review bellwork, discuss the meaning of the day's supporting question with students, and then provide them with hard copies of related featured sources for individuals or groups to read through.

Both teachers worked to create a collaborative class culture in which students had a plethora of opportunities to express their ideas in communal spaces and respond to the ideas of classmates. For instance, both teachers held whole-class discussions in which students identified themes and responded to each other's' views and emerging claims. This was particularly true during formative performance task 1 in which both classes listed problems economists face in calculating the gender wage gap on the white board and then coded each other's responses for patterns.

The differences in the teachers' approaches were most visible during formative performance task 2 which prompts students to write a paragraph explaining historical trends of the gender wage gap. Mr. Murphy's students individually completed their paragraphs in an online format and then posted responses to individual classmates. Mr. Johnson prompted students to create a whole-class visual timeline that would depict historical trends and allowed pairs to work on individual decades. This highlights how students in Mr. Murphy's class often engaged in individual meaning-making before sharing their ideas with students, while Mr. Johnson's students tended to engage in collaboration throughout the entire learning experience. Mr. Johnson's approach appeared to lead to less diversity in student thought, as students often seemed to repeat a classmate's responses. Mr. Murphy's class, on the other hand, tended to have a broader range of opinions on topics.

After both teachers decided to expand the length of each inquiry, they began to provide students with more flexibility in terms of finishing readings or tasks. Mr. Murphy and Mr. Johnson also began jigsawing readings to prevent reading fatigue in students. This allowed students to read smaller selections of featured sources, focus more intently on them, and share them with a partner or group. Neither teacher provided many hard scaffolds to support reading comprehension beyond those that were included in the inquiries themselves (e.g., graphic organizers, charts). However, Mr. Johnson did alter some sources by either excerpting them or replacing challenging vocabulary terms with more age-appropriate ones.

### **Summary**

The study's findings suggested that teachers' beliefs and experiences were generally well-suited for inquiry-based pedagogy, that teachers benefited from autonomy, and that instructional decision-making became increasingly collaborative and flexible over time. Initially, teachers selected topics based off of fidelity to a thematic structure and then shifted to selecting topics based off of perceived relevance to recent political events or to students' lives. Teachers also shifted their planning in terms of how closely they followed an inquiry blueprint's recommended time schedule and recommended formative performance tasks, as well as how often they included current events topics in their classrooms.

## **Chapter 5: Discussion and Implications**

### **Introduction**

This study examined the experiences of two teachers enacting the C3 Framework in their classrooms. In doing so, my goal was to explore unique contextual factors that influenced teachers' experiences, how teachers planned, implemented, and assessed instruction, and how teachers experienced inquiry-based instruction. Chapter one introduced the purpose and main features of study. Chapter two explored the notion of inquiry in social studies and helped to situate my study in the existing body of research, as well as place it in a historical context. Chapter three explained the methodology used in the study. Chapter four revealed salient themes and subthemes within and across the two cases explored in order to reveal three main assertions on the quintain. In this chapter I discuss implications for ongoing research and practice. This chapter also discusses how the study's main findings and assertions contribute to the existing research literature, as well as provides recommendations for future research efforts.

This study helped to address the dearth of empirical research studies related to inquiry-based classroom practices in social studies and addresses specific calls for rich case studies regarding disciplinary inquiry in social studies (Saye, 2017). The findings reported here yielded numerous insights about how teachers conduct disciplinary inquiry and service learning in their classrooms in particular contexts. This study provided a rare glimpse into teachers' experiences enacting disciplinary inquiry and the C3 Framework and a rarer glimpse into how teachers engage in curricula decision-making outside the confines of

existing curricula constraints. This study's findings attest to the utility of IDM materials in terms of helping ambitious teachers anchor coherent and meaningful disciplinary learning experiences throughout a middle school and high school level course.

### **Discussion and Implications for Curricula Development and Enactment**

Findings suggest that teachers' beliefs were generally aligned with the disciplinary nature of the C3 Framework and IDM materials, that their instructional decisions were positively enhanced by having increased autonomy, and that their instructional decision-making became increasingly collaborative and flexible over time. These offer numerous implications into how administrators and teachers engage in inquiry-based curricula development and enactment.

**Administrators should grant ambitious teachers autonomy and leadership roles in curricula and course development.** The teachers in this study were provided a rare opportunity to construct an elective course from scratch with minimal oversight, which appears almost anathema to the current accountability zeitgeist in which teachers are granted increasingly fewer opportunities to make curricula decisions. Few social studies teachers are afforded an opportunity to independently construct their own curricula, much less create their own courses with anywhere near this level of autonomy. This is in spite of the fact that cognitive psychologists have determined professional autonomy to be one of the primary motivating factors in work settings (Pink, 2010). Past inquiry-based social studies efforts have stalled when teachers struggled to posthole inquiry-based lessons within existing curricula sequences (Brown, 1996). This had led to inquiry learning, whenever it is enacted

at all, to serve in an ancillary, marginalized capacity in the social studies classroom (Scheurman & Reynolds, 2010).

Teachers in this study were unburdened by such constraints and were able to select inquiry topics that were relevant to student interests and explicitly tied to current, but enduring, issues in which students could conduct ongoing, scaffolded disciplinary investigations throughout the entire course. Both teachers shifted away from a *thematic approach* to topic planning to a *relevance approach* to planning in which they selected controversial topics that were currently or recently in the news and deemed relevant to students' interest. This followed guidance from cognitive scientists for teachers to promote learning that is derived from students' interests (Donovan & Bradsford, 2005). It also supports Day's (2015) research that suggests that inquiry materials should meet teachers' desires to provide real-world experiences for students. However, it would have been logistical difficult, if not impossible, for both teachers to shift to the relevance approach had they been bounded by traditional hierarchal curricula structures. Despite little training in course development, both teachers were able to develop quality curriculum materials and engage students in disciplinary civic investigations every observed class session throughout the study. This was in contrast with previous research efforts that have found that teachers alternate back and forth between traditional and inquiry-based approaches (Nokes, 2013).

The success of these teachers suggests that administrators should empower teachers at various experience levels to construct their own inquiry-based elective courses. These could even include inquiry-based elective courses in other subject areas. IDM has begun to branch

out into other school subjects, and teachers could use existing inquiries or create new materials to anchor their own courses. Teacher teams may be encouraged to construct collaborative interdisciplinary inquiry elective courses that include multiple subject areas and disciplinary lenses. Such courses would have the added benefit of offering students extended collaborative practice using a variety of disciplinary procedures, presenting to an array of authentic audiences, and participating in ongoing service projects that benefit the school and community.

The fact that the IDM instructional materials were originally designed as part of a state-wide standards implementation project in New York certainly played a role in terms of ensuring rigor within each inquiry. However, both teachers, despite having minimal training in curriculum development, created a conceptual thematic structure and scope and sequence to coherently link quality inquiry-based learning experiences with one another that led to more purposeful and rigorous teaching. Thus, quality curricula materials, like the IDM materials in this study, may mediate any deficits inexperienced teachers have in terms of curricula development. They may serve to anchor quality teacher-constructed social studies courses with or without them possessing extensive training in curricula development.

Granting teachers more autonomy in terms of designing engaging civic courses may fundamentally alter the role of social teachers from curricula gatekeepers to curricula engineers. The fact that neither teacher was required to cover a certain amount of content allowed both of them to expand the scope of each inquiry, to take more than the recommended allotted time per inquiry, and to grant students more opportunities to take



ownership over learning. If the teachers had not had that autonomy, it is possible that they would have continued to rush through inquiries and not afford students opportunities to engage in elongated discussions on controversial issues. They certainly would not have been able to add an extra week's worth of independent student research to front-load each inquiry, help support students' background knowledge, and allow students to become independently interested in topics related to the inquiry. Thus, the autonomy provided to the teachers trickled down into autonomy for students, which in turn enhanced a sense of ownership for both teachers and students.

**Teachers should seek out opportunities to engage in ongoing teacher-teacher collaboration even across grade levels.** This study found that both teachers initially were not seeing the full benefits of IDM, as they were frustrated by a large assessment load and believed students were rushing through sources and tasks. Consequently, students were not seeing the full relevance of course content or real purpose to the inquiry course, as it did not appear to be much different from a typical social studies course that incorporated a lot of primary source reading activities. Both teachers were able to alleviate these issues by exchanging ideas and resources with one another, in order to find joint solutions to their common problems. Neither believed that they would have achieved their goals on their own. It is likely that they might have independently found some ways to improve the learning experiences; however, both teachers independently stated that collaboration was essential to their successes. Moreover, students' engagement levels appeared to rise after the teachers began collaborating with one another.

Despite teaching different grade levels, both teachers benefited from ongoing collaboration with one another and began including opportunities for their students to engage in cross-class activities and more-meaningful taking informed action experiences. Rarely do teachers have the opportunity to engage students in shared learning experiences across classes, much less grade levels. Providing middle school students opportunities to share their work with high school students seemed to complement the middle school students' natural desire to engage in adult-like conversations, and it provided both groups of students with broader audiences with which they could share their arguments and showcase their ability to engage in quality civic discourse.

Teachers began taking more creative risks in terms of planning taking informed action experiences after they started working with one another. It was not until they began collaborating together that they each engaged in an out-of-class taking informed action task where students from both grade levels organized a community panel on the issue of race and criminal justice in the local community. This forum became the turning point in both classes in which students saw the benefits of informed civic discourse and overall benefit of disciplinary inquiry. In a sense, teachers may have been spreading the risk if something had gone wrong. Collaboration may thus help to alleviate teachers' concerns related to teaching controversial issues and engaging in service learning projects that bring together diverse community voices.

**Curriculum developers should employ flexible course sequences that allow teachers to incorporate and adapt to emerging current events.** The teachers in the study

each moved away from their initial scope and sequence plans and began selecting topics based on relevance to students' lives or current events. Instead of selecting a topic based on how it fit with a theme, they selected a topic based on how relevant it was to students' lives. This began with teachers selecting an inquiry on the issue of racial inequity in the judicial system to coincide with a surge of controversial incidents of alleged police brutality against African American citizens and the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement that had come to dominate many news cycles. Teachers then selected an inquiry on the issue of civic protest to coincide with the election results from the 2016 presidential election.

By incorporating the most relevant topics for their students to investigate, students were able to see a clear link between recent news stories, course content, and taking informed action experiences. This in turn may have improved their civic efficacy and interest in political events as they may have seen themselves as active participants, rather than passive observers of political news stories. Students may still benefit from taking informed action experiences on issues that are not particularly relevant or have widespread news coverage; however, flexible curricula sequencing can allow teachers to tap into current issues in seemingly real-time and to allow students the opportunity to feel as if they are taking part in the news itself. This may increase interest in featured sources and the perceived authenticity of the taking informed action tasks. Instructional coaches could aid teachers by offering suggestions on how to include particular topics, highlighting existing inquiry resources that relate to the issue, and offering insight into how others have engaged their communities on related taking informed action projects.

**Teachers require support from administrators to include controversial topics in social studies classrooms and engage students in meaningful taking informed action experiences.** Social studies classrooms are often devoid of meaningful controversy, and students are often disconnected from social and civic life (Wade & Saxe, 1996). They often ignore topics seen as taboo like racism and sexism (Crocco, 2002) and thus promote a deeply flawed commitment to cultural colorblindness. This study's findings testify to the utility of the C3 Framework in disrupting such facts and serving as a useful avenue for social justice education. Both middle and high school students in this study engaged in discussions on a range of controversial topics in their class and exposed students to competing, often emotional, narratives both in text and in person.

This could not have happened without the active support of the school administration, which not only allowed the teachers to organize a community issues forum, but also took part in it. One administrator from the school even served as a panelist where she provided personal testament about her experiences with racial discrimination in public and private spheres. Mr. Murphy and Mr. Johnson received ongoing support and words of encouragement from the building principal and even a member of the school board. IDM may itself help teachers win approval from school leaders to discuss controversial issues because of the nature of inquiry as being an open-ended investigation, often into competing narratives and contradictory evidence. Principals need not fear that social studies teachers are attempting to indoctrinate students when they engage them with open-ended investigations and/or investigations that explore multiple perspectives. After all, it becomes difficult to

engage in political proselytization when the purpose of a lesson is to investigate the empirical evidence behind competing claims and lead students to construct meaning on their own.

### **Further Discussion and Implications**

This chapter has explored implications related specifically to curricula development and enactment. The next section explores more general implications and the relevant research that informed this study.

**Scaffolding disciplinary texts and habits.** Teachers require more explicit training in how to scaffold complex disciplinary texts across the social science disciplines. The Gender Wage Gap inquiry was designed for a 12<sup>th</sup> grade economics course and was used by both teachers in this study. Although IDM materials came with many hard scaffolds (e.g., graphic organizers and modified text) for teachers to use, they require that skilled teachers make their own adjustments according to their own students' needs. One finding from this study was that the middle school teacher sometimes struggled to provide necessary modifications for his students to independently comprehend some of the economic source material without relying on him to unpack essential information. This was especially true when students were asked to independently analyze economic charts and graphs. However, it is not clear if these sourcing difficulties were more due to issues with reading comprehension per se, students' inexperience interpreting graphs, or general deficits in economic reasoning. Regardless, this finding suggests that teachers will need more training on how they can scaffold learning experiences that require students to independently analyze economic charts and graphs.

Teachers will also require more than general content knowledge or general content area literacy strategies in order to meet this need. They will require training in disciplinary literacy, which necessitates that teachers learn how to think, read, and write like experts do across the social science disciplines. However, teachers may also benefit from training in how to use, adapt, or construct specific scaffolds within each social science discipline. Such training may also need to be coupled with guidance on dealing with students' epistemic stances. This study found that students sometimes employed relativistic notions of historical knowledge when faced with contradictory evidence, and that they sometimes posed unsubstantiated claims or arguments that went unchallenged. Thus, teachers may benefit from having more guidance on how they can manage students' misconceptions, logical fallacies, and/or misunderstandings that may arise in an inquiry-based setting. Professional development could include examples of how model teachers manage these disciplinary issues based on specific case studies that will emerge as a result of the C3 Framework being adopted in more and more states.

**Utility of the C3 Framework: A historical contrast.** The C3 Framework represents the largest and most ambitious collective effort since the failed New Social Studies (NSS) of the 1960s to promote inquiry-based pedagogy in social studies classrooms. As one of the earliest research efforts to look at implementation of C3 Framework materials in the classroom, this study helps to elucidate, at least in part, whether or not the C3 Framework successfully learned from the mistakes of the NSS. It also speaks to the utility of C3

Framework materials in terms of leading to positive learning experiences for both student and teachers.

The NSS projects were seen as unconnected to learning needs and interests of students (Evans, 2010). Of interest in this study is the fact that the teachers' first inquiries were perceived to be disconnected to students' interests, although not necessarily to their learning needs. This suggests that C3 Framework inquiries themselves may not necessarily be intrinsically interesting, although they can be seen as relevant to students when teachers purposefully decide to use them to coincide with a current event. However, it is not entirely clear that students' interests in inquiries went up simply because teachers selected topics tied to current events, as this change also coincided with teachers adding pre-inquiry independent research to inquiries and allocating more time for students to complete assignments. These pre-inquiry mini-research projects allowed students to explore topics and sub-topics that related to the upcoming inquiry and thus may have helped students make personally-relevant curricula connections that served to increase their engagement in the inquiries themselves. Moreover, past research efforts have noted habituation periods in inquiry-based classrooms in which student engagement is initially dulled by an increased cognitive load that diminishes with practice. Thus, it is possible that teachers' pedagogical and planning adaptations did not have as real of an impact on students' engagement as they may have believed.

NSS projects, like C3 Framework inquiries, lacked a comprehensive organizational structure (Scheureman & Reynolds, 2010). Teachers in this study, like the teachers who used the NSS inquiries in the 1960s, determined how they would posthole inquiries within their

curricula. The difference was that Mr. Johnson and Mr. Murphy created their own curricula and were not restricted by existing restraints. This allowed them to centralize inquiry in their courses instead of alternating between inquiry and transmission pedagogy or using inquiry projects as residual add-ons, as has been frequently observed (Nokes, 2013; Scheurman & Reynolds, 2010). Neither teacher was observed lecturing at any point during the duration of the study. This study found that teachers' organizational structures shifted from a thematic approach to identifying topics that were most relevant to students' interests. It is unclear how applicable their approaches would be in traditional settings.

Teachers' experiences using NSS inquiry materials contrasted sharply with teachers using IDM materials in this study. In the past, teachers resented the prescriptive nature of NSS materials (Evans, 2010). In contrast, both Mr. Murphy and Mr. Johnson reported feeling professionally efficacious and exemplified a newfound passion for teaching that impacted their overall views of education and best practices. Both talked about the C3 Framework in admirable terms, and they expressed a deep commitment to it and a desire to spread awareness of it. Although both felt a little constrained at first by the recommended timetables to complete inquiries, they soon came to take advantage of the adaptable nature of the inquiries. They were able to supplement and extend inquiries, going so far as to even attempt to conduct an official TedTalk event at the school.

NSS project users also were found to resent the top-down transmission of the materials from experts, often finding the materials to be developmentally incongruent with their students (Evans, 2010). In this research effort, Mr. Johnson and Mr. Murphy both



believed that all of their students could engage successfully in inquiry, even if some might experience reading difficulties and did not necessarily grasp all disciplinary concepts independently. The inquiries used in both courses did include numerous scaffolds and reading modifications designed for specific age levels, which provided teachers with a starting reference to continue adding their own modifications and supports. However, teachers were not observed making substantial modifications to the featured sources provided in the Gender Wage Gap inquiry. This suggests that teachers believed that the inquiries themselves provided enough scaffolds (e.g., the inquiry arc itself, questions, tasks, ancillary charts) to support a successful learning experience for all students. The fact that Mr. Johnson's middle school students had a successful learning experience in a disciplinary-challenging inquiry designed for 12<sup>th</sup> grade economics students testifies to the utility and adaptability of IDM.

**Teacher education and pedagogical content knowledge.** Teacher education programs have long endorsed Lee Shulman's notion of pedagogical content knowledge, which is often oversimplified to merely represent the confluence of pedagogical knowledge with content knowledge. Pedagogical content knowledge has helped to bring about a more-balanced approach to teacher preparation and to move beyond the false dichotomy of choosing either pedagogy or content as a primary focus in teacher education. Shulman (1987) posited that pedagogical content knowledge consisted of six interconnected elements:

1. knowledge of representations of subject matter;

2. understanding of students' conceptions of the subject and learning and teaching implications that were associated with the specific subject matter;
3. general pedagogical knowledge;
4. curriculum knowledge;
5. knowledge of educational contexts;
6. knowledge of the purposes of education.

Combined, these elements have helped to reshape teacher education programs to better prepare teachers for the contextually-nuanced scenarios teachers deal with every day.

However, these elements of pedagogical content knowledge appear insufficient given the C3 Framework's shift to disciplinary inquiry and the experiences of teachers in this study.

Although the purposes of social studies remains the same---to prepare informed citizens---the C3 Framework's inclusion of disciplinary analyses and civic application of knowledge and skills represent new challenges that teachers must negotiate in order to enact successful learning experiences. Thus, pedagogical content knowledge should be reconceptualized to include disciplinary knowledge and disciplinary pedagogy. The first two elements of pedagogical content knowledge as described by Shulman would then be revised as:

1. knowledge of representations of subject matter, including disciplinary procedures;
2. understanding students' conceptions of content and disciplinary knowledge and teaching implications that we associate with the specific subject matter

Mr. Murphy's teacher education included training on historical thinking and inquiry, and it was evident in his consistent modeling of historical sourcing throughout the study. Mr.

Johnson did engage in sourcing; however, he did so with less nuance and consistency. Both teachers consistently probed students to rethink their assumptions, but they would have benefited from more training on attending to relativistic epistemic stances that arose when students were faced with evidence that contradicted their initial beliefs.

Such a reconceptualization requires that social studies pre-service teachers be exposed to, and be provided extensive practice engaging in, disciplinary procedures across the social sciences. This requires that they learn to think, read, and write like experts in each discipline as part of their teacher education coursework. Additionally, and perhaps more importantly, they should learn how and when to use developmentally-appropriate scaffolds that promote disciplinary literacy within each of the social sciences. In other words, pre-service candidates would learn pedagogy within the social science disciplines, rather than general social studies strategies that can be used across the social sciences. They would also be better served to receive explicit training on how they can assess specific disciplinary skills and help students to transfer such skills into civic activities. Although, such an approach may prove logistically difficult, it would benefit teachers as they navigate the challenges inherent to disciplinary inquiry.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

This study was one of the first research efforts to look at implementation of IDM and the C3 Framework directly in classrooms, and it answered the call for rich case studies into how successful teachers implement disciplinary inquiry in social studies settings (Saye, 2017). There are a myriad of ways that this research effort could be extended to deepen or

broaden understanding of how teachers enact the C3 Framework. Future research efforts could continue to explore teachers' usage of IDM materials in elective courses and to specifically explore personal and school-wide factors that hinder or enhance teachers' experiences implementing inquiry. Such explorations could work together to deduce positive traits that successful teachers and schools commonly share.

In this study both teachers appeared to be receptive to the C3 Framework; after all, they both volunteered to enact it on their own. However, it is still not clear how teachers with more traditional attitudes or bounded by traditional curricula constraints would perceive and use IDM materials to structure an elective course. Although it should be noted that researchers recently found that the C3 Framework resonates with a majority of surveyed teachers and that most already used instructional practices that were aligned to the C3 Framework (Thacker, Lee, Friedman, 2017). Future research efforts would yield valuable insights by exploring teacher experiences across various contexts with different levels of administrative and community support. It is unclear how receptive most communities would be to this new approach. It is also unclear what teachers' long-term experiences would be. This is particularly important as neither teacher in this study experienced any pushback from parents of their students in this study, and it is unknown how they might have gone about managing a more-serious roadblock to their ambitious teaching approach. Longitudinal studies could also explore whether or not teachers' increased professional passion lasted beyond the first year habituation period and how experiences with the C3 Framework directly impacted their approach to teaching in other courses.

Future research efforts could aid C3 Framework implementation efforts by evaluating students' engagement, political efficacy, and disciplinary skill acquisition with quantitative measures. This would help situate the findings of this study in a broader context and help attest to the efficacy of the C3 Framework in terms of fulfilling its primary goals. It would also serve to measure students' content and disciplinary knowledge and help to compare the inquiry-based approach with traditional approaches across numerous indicators.

Such efforts could be coupled with qualitative investigations into the lived experiences of students, as this study only explored the experiences of teachers. A particularly valuable phenomena worth exploring would be student perceptions of taking informed action experiences and whether or not they perceive them to have value and impact beyond school. Researchers could also observe the short- and long-term impact of disciplinary inquiry on students' civic attitudes and behaviors. This would help determine whether or not the positive experiences of teachers and students observed in this study would be sustainable and to test the efficacy of the C3 Framework in terms of accomplishing its central goal: creating informed and active citizens.

Future research efforts could explore ways that other teachers go about assessing the individual components of an inquiry. They could also explore how teachers attend to the divergent disciplinary demands found in analyses of featured sources with the skills required to engage successfully in taking informed action. It was clear that teachers in this study did not have a comprehensive assessment system and that they may have viewed student engagement as evidence of student learning. They stopped using essays as summative

assessments and provided a grade for taking informed action that was largely based on participation and not necessarily by specific civic skills. Future research efforts can look at ways other teachers assess the disciplinary skills and knowledge developed across the inquiry arc.

It was also unclear how the selection of an economics inquiry impacted this research effort. The Gender Wage Gap inquiry contained mainly graphs and charts as featured sources, and the texts that were included were all from contemporary authors. This could have mediated some of the students' difficulties with reading comprehension or general issues of motivation often observed in disciplinary-based classrooms where students may be asked to independently analyze information from long, often-archaic, historical texts. In this manner, the selection of the particular economics inquiry may have decreased the need for both teachers to modify texts and in turn made their experiences enacting the inquiry more positive. Future research efforts could explore teachers' experiences teaching inquiries that draw heavily from particular social sciences, and then to work to illuminate understanding of teachers' strengths and weaknesses both within and across the social sciences.

## **Conclusion**

This instrumental case study in many ways raised more questions than it answered. Although it encapsulated an exceptionally rare context, its findings reveal a broader implication: the need to rethink the value of social studies classrooms. The primary purpose of social studies is to produce informed citizens. Yet, after 100 years of trying, the social studies community continues to fail in its primary goal, and it appears to be losing ground as

large segments of the American populace become increasingly hostile to evidence-based claims, rationality, and civil discourse. The United States is in a very real existentialist civic crisis, and our social studies classrooms must be reformed to respond accordingly.

This study provides a vision of the possible, a snapshot into a new alternate reality in social studies classrooms worth bringing to life. Social studies classrooms can do what they were originally designed to do: inform and engage future citizens. This study shows that students can partake in rigorous investigations into enduring controversies that are personally relevant and intellectually fruitful. They can learn how to “do” social science and how to “be” active and informed citizens at the same time. Teachers can be empowered to design meaningful courses and curricula with ongoing support from administrators, parents, and community members. Of course, none of this could happen without the keystone of democracy itself: communal trust. Administrators can trust and empower teachers who can then in turn empower students to take ownership over their own learning. Teachers do not have to serve as mere curricula gatekeepers in which they begrudgingly implement, if at all, the top-down curricula mandates of others. Rather, teachers can work as curricula engineers in which they enact quality civic learning experiences that now matter more than ever.

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**APPENDIX A: Interview 1 Protocol**

<b>Participant:</b>		
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Time:</b>	<b>Location:</b>
<b>Purpose:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collect new data to answer research question 1: How do teachers plan for instruction with C3 Framework-aligned instructional materials created with IDM?</li> <li>• Triangulate with reflective journal entries, documents, and observational field notes</li> </ul>		
<b>Introduction:</b> I want to thank you for meeting with me today and agreeing to share your experiences and insights. As you know, I am conducting this dissertation study to investigate how teachers use the C3 Framework in their classrooms. As part of my dissertation study, I would like to talk to you about your experiences and perspectives so far on the C3 Framework. I am particularly interested in how you go about curricular and instructional planning while using the C3 Framework.		
1. What do you see as the primary mission of social studies?		
2. What kinds of instructional approaches (i.e., lessons, assessments) do you think can help social studies teachers fulfill the primary mission of social studies?		
3. How would you describe the C3 Framework approach to inquiry?		
4. Tell me about the scope and sequence and overarching organizational structure in your courses.		
5. In your traditional course: how do the state standards and local curriculum impact the way you use the C3 Framework?		
6. Take me back to when you first started planning for your courses this year. What kinds of decisions did you make in regards to planning your courses?		
7. For your inquiry course: If you were to go back in time, what changes might you make to your course planning process?		
8. For your traditional course: What do you see as the role of inquiry in your course?		
9. Do you involve students in the planning process? If not, why not? If so, how?		
10. To what degree is it important to you that students engage in interdisciplinary inquiries (i.e., investigations that use tools of geographers, political scientists, economists in addition to the tools of historians)?		
11. How, if at all, is planning for inquiry in an elective course different from planning for inquiry in a traditional course?		
12. Tell me about an inquiry that you are particularly excited to teach.		
13. Is there anything else you would like to add to our conversation on instructional planning for inquiry? Is there anything I should have asked?		

**APPENDIX B: Interview 2 Protocol**

<b>Participant:</b>		
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Time:</b>	<b>Location:</b>
<b>Purpose:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collect new data to answer research question 2: How do teachers implement C3 Framework-aligned instructional materials created with IDM?</li> <li>• Triangulate with reflective journal entries, documents, and observational field notes</li> </ul>		
<b>Introduction:</b> Thank you for meeting with me again to share your experiences and insights. Today we will continue our conversation about how you are using the C3 Framework in your class with a focus on how you are implementing C3 Framework-aligned inquiries.		
1. What has been your overall experience so far using the C3 Framework in your classroom?		
2. How have you responded to logistical challenges regarding usage of the C3 Framework?		
3. How have you responded to specific challenges that your students have faced during an inquiry?		
4. In your view which specific IDM strategies or activities have been the most and least successful?		
5. How do you determine if a question is <i>compelling</i> ?		
6. Tell me about an inquiry that has been particularly successful so far.		
7. Tell me about an inquiry that didn't go as well as planned.		
8. What do you think could have made that inquiry go smoother?		
9. What kinds of modifications or additions have you made to existing inquiries?		
10. How do you support students for source analysis?		
11. How do you support students for crafting arguments?		
12. How do you support students for taking informed action experiences?		
13. Is there anything else you would like to add to our conversation on how you have been implementing inquiry in your classroom? Is there anything I should have asked?		

**APPENDIX C: Interview 3 Protocol**

<b>Participant:</b>		
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Time:</b>	<b>Location:</b>
<b>Purpose:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collect new data to answer research question 3: How do teachers assess student learning using C3 Framework-aligned instructional materials created with IDM?</li> <li>• Triangulate with reflective journal entries, documents, and observational field notes</li> </ul>		
<p>I really appreciate you meeting me for our final conversation in this study regarding how you are using the C3 Framework in your classroom. Today I would like to find out more about how you assess student learning throughout a C3 Framework-aligned inquiry.</p>		
1. To what extent, if any, has your approach to assessment changed since you started using the C3 Framework?		
2. How are you logistically managing the data collected throughout an inquiry?		
3. What specific skills are you looking to assess throughout an inquiry?		
4. In your view which assessments have been the most helpful?		
5. What have your assessments revealed so far in regards to what students are (or are not) learning?		
6. What kinds of criteria have you used to assess formative assessments?		
7. What kinds of criteria have you used to assess summative assessments?		
8. What kinds of criteria have you used to assess taking informed action?		
9. What do you see as the role of student collaboration during an inquiry?		
10. In your view how successful have your inquiries been in terms of balancing rigor and student engagement?		
11. In your view how successful have your inquiries been in terms of helping to prepare students for real-world tasks?		
12. A few themes have emerged from the data collected so far. Could you elaborate on these themes from your perspective? (Probes for two or three central themes)		
13. Is there anything else you would like to add to our conversation on how you have been assessing student learning? Is there anything I should have asked?		