

Teachers Navigating Change:  
The Implementation of Standards into One's Planning and Teaching

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## **Dedication**

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## Abstract

As the content knowledge of the world grows, so do the demands placed upon our educational system. These demands come from a variety of sources—local, state, national, and corporate agencies. Critical to meeting these demands are the knowledge, skills, and practices teachers need to educate today's youth. Researchers in the area of teachers' thinking and reflection have worked to construct a realistic portrayal of teaching, including teachers' thinking, reflection, and planning. However, little research exists on how these three activities work together as teachers seek to implement standards-based instruction.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to document the thinking and planning processes of two elementary school teachers (one from grade 4 and the other from grade 5) as they aligned *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects* to their social studies teaching. Using case study methods, the study examined how the teachers planned curriculum and moved it into practice, how they understood their actions as they reflected on their practices, and how their reflections affected future planning. Interviews, observations, field notes, audio reflections, and teacher supplied artifacts were analyzed for patterns of thought and practice to offer insight into the two teachers' thinking as each selected and aligned standards to instruction.

Findings from the study revealed that educators need to understand: (1) how to read standards statements, (2) how to integrate standards across discipline areas, (3) how to develop meaningful lessons and assessments of student learning, and (4) how to foster the knowledge and skills students need to demonstrate competency. By fostering ongoing

teacher learning and reflection, researchers and school leaders can contribute to the knowledgeable, meaningful, and flexible use of standards by teachers to help students learn key concepts within specific discipline areas.

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

Learning to teach is not a linear process. Teaching is a deeply contextualized profession in which experiences both shape the learner and must be continuously reexamined and interrogated. (Buchanan, 1994, p. 52)

When I first began teaching, I had the distinct privilege of teaching and being the principal of a one-room parochial school with thirteen students encompassing grades one through eight. After my first year of teaching, I felt I had a better understanding of the school's curriculum, including the abilities and needs of my students. Realizing what skills and content expectations were in place at the various grade levels allowed me to tailor instruction to meet the needs and interests of my students. This reflection upon and continual adjustment of my teaching was an ongoing activity. As our school grew, we often received transfer students from various public and private schools. It became evident to me early on that the accompanying reports cards filled in with As, Bs, and Cs did not offer a clear picture of the content and learning experiences these students had had. To better understand the educational world of my students, I immersed myself in the study of both our state and county's educational standards for various content areas. This immersion helped me develop an understanding of the concepts and skills that were being taught at the different grade levels in our public schools. At the same time, I realized that the standards offered a framework for the various school curricula that these students experienced—not only from their previous schools, but for my current teaching as well.

This is the background I carry with me to this day as a professor of education at Martin Luther College, a private college in New Ulm, Minnesota, operated by the

Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. At my institution, I prepare teacher candidates and foster advanced learning with practicing teachers. My primary area of expertise is literacy, but I am a generalist in elementary education by necessity due to the small staff and program at my college. It is also the lens through which I conducted this study. Specifically, I am not only interested in conveying information, be that theoretical, philosophical, or pedagogical, but also concerned about portraying and modeling this information in its practical application. As teacher candidates learn about standards in their content and methods courses, it is important that they understand the practical nature of the standards as a framework upon which they can develop their given curriculum.

The study I conducted and that is reported in this dissertation offers evidence of the practical application and use of standards by two teachers as they planned, taught, and reflected upon their instruction. Shortly after I joined the world of higher education, the *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects* (CCSS; National Governors' Assoc. Cntr. for Best Practice & Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010) were introduced. Various opinions about the standards were shared across national media. Many teachers in the parochial schools of our church body were confused by the standards because they had never worked with standards before nor had they ever been told to align their teaching to standards. I was asked to talk to a number of groups of teachers about the purpose and use of standards. This I willingly did, but I also anticipated pushback and frustration about standards. Many of the teachers complained about the number and detail of the standards. Some of these teachers felt that they would have to teach a single lesson for each standard. Other teachers felt that these standards were dumbing down education

because they believed that they should teach more than what was stated in the standards. The documentation of the standards included examples of literature that could be used with the standards. Many teachers took these examples as titles that must be used. This misunderstanding caused even more frustration as teachers expressed their disdain for certain titles and sadness that their favorite title was not listed.

A number of the elementary schools in our church body were concerned that the government would attach their Title II funds to the adoption of these new state and national standards. Some teachers feared that families would leave the school if the standards were not adopted, while other educators feared that families would depart if the standards were adopted. With no background in using standards, many of the principals in our schools wrestled with the dilemma of adopting textbooks and curricular materials labeled as aligned with the Common Core Standards, not to mention locating funding if such an adoption became necessary. They continued with other questions such as these:

How does our faculty learn about these standards?

How do we use the standards to inform instruction?

Where will we find time to create new lessons that are aligned with these standards?

Is using a textbook labeled as aligning with the Common Core enough?

What type of documentation will we need if we adopt standards?

The inbox of my email account was never empty as principals and teachers continually asked me questions about the topic of standards.

Numerous educational resource books began to circulate to help teachers understand the CCSS (Allyn, 2013; Calkins et al., 2012; Marzano et al., 2013; Reeves et



al., 2011), but the actual act of implementing standards on the classroom level was still ambiguous, especially if teachers had never worked with these ideas. Public school districts were touting professional development (PD) focused on the CCSS for their teachers, but in our church body school circles, no such PD existed, and individual schools and teachers were left on their own to navigate the standards.

At the same time, the elementary social studies methods course at Martin Luther College was added to my teaching load of literacy courses, expanding my responsibilities. This new assignment stretched my thinking about the use of standards even more. Now I was considering both the K-6 English Language Arts (ELA) standards, the CCSS, and the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies (2011) as I taught my courses, all while asking myself, “What would I do if I were in the shoes of the teachers back in an elementary school?” I thought that standards could be used with almost any curricular material, so rather than implementing a scripted or commercially prepared set of texts “aligned to the CCSS” curriculum, I began to think how I might study the phenomenon of implementing standards. My goal was to gain background knowledge that I could use to inform the teacher candidates I work with and to inform and encourage the veteran teachers in our church’s schools as they work to better understand and implement standards into their planning, instruction, reflection, and assessment.

### **Setting the Purpose**

Educators have the opportunity to influence and shape the minds and attitudes of children every day. In addition to a teacher’s attitude and belief system affecting student

learning, there are other factors that influence how the written curriculum is enacted or lived out:

- the subject matter (the content to be taught);
- the curriculum (how the subjects fit together for that particular grade and school);
- the instruction (pedagogy, instructional routines, classroom management;
- an understanding of diverse learners);
- self-awareness (understanding one's thought process, abilities, and biases);
- the milieu of the school where the teacher and students interact (factors impacting school and classroom life—teachers, students, administrators, and more). (Elbaz, 1981)

The purpose of my dissertation study was to document the thinking and planning processes of two elementary school teachers, one from grade 4 and the other from grade 5, as they aligned the standards with their social studies content area teaching, to examine how they plan curriculum and move it into practice, and how they make sense of their actions as they reflect on their practice.

### **Research Questions**

There are four main questions that guide this study:

1. What knowledge and beliefs do the teachers draw upon as they come to understand the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies (2011) as well as the recent *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects* (2010)?

2. Which standards do the teachers select? What rationale do they give for their selections?
3. How do the selected standards shape lesson planning and enactment?
4. As teachers reflect on their selection and use of particular standards to teach social studies content, what do they see as being effective in their lesson design? teaching practices? student learning? What changes do they suggest for future lesson planning and enactment?

In order to answer these research questions, I conducted a qualitative study comprised of two case studies; the focus was two elementary school teachers, one from grade 4 and the other from grade 5, within the context of one elementary school during the fall of 2021. As part of my study, I observed and analyzed teaching planning sessions, interviewed the two teacher informants, and reviewed artifacts from lessons and reflections on teaching. What follows is an overview of the remaining chapters of my dissertation.

### **Overview**

In Chapter 2, I share the review of literature I conducted for this study in relation to my research questions. I focused on three areas: teacher thinking, teacher reflection, and the process of implementing standards. It was important for me to include the historical context of each of these topics to inform readers of the study about how the foci in these areas have changed over time. This background information is helpful to understand research that has been conducted as well as to inform current practices. At the end of this Chapter 2, I discuss gaps in the literature, some of which are addressed in my dissertation.

In Chapter 3, I outline the theoretical frameworks my study is grounded on, along with the research methods, data collection and analysis strategies, and interpretation routines I used. In this chapter, I provide a detailed description of the context of the study.

In Chapter 4, I present the first of the two case studies I undertook, and report the analysis of findings from Joyce, a 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher. I detail how she explored aligning her social studies instruction, about Minnesota history, with standards within the state of Minnesota, particularly the *Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies* (2011) and the MN-ELA Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects (CCSS, 2010). I organized the chapter into three parts: an introduction to the participant and her setting; my findings with rationale based upon the data analysis; and guiding questions with my analytical synthesis and interpretive commentary, based on field notes from interviews, observations, and teacher-supplied planning artifacts.

In Chapter 5, I follow a parallel construction to Chapter 4 but report the findings generated from my second case study of Laura, a 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher. I detail how she explored aligning her social studies instruction, about the Southeast region of the United States, with standards within the state of Minnesota, particularly the *Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies* (2011) and the MN-ELA Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects (CCSS, 2010).

Last, in Chapter 6, I synthesize my study by presenting the major findings from the two case studies presented in Chapters 4 and 5. I point out the similarities and

differences with implications and discussion. The chapter closes with suggestions for future research.

## Chapter 2

### Literature Review

In this literature review, I seek to establish insight into the ever-evolving practices of teacher thinking and teacher reflection and the effect of both on the implementation of standards into teachers' planning and instruction. I will address these three areas broadly, situating them within historical, theoretical, and practical frameworks and then I will narrow the focus down to their implications within the discipline of literacy.

### Teacher Thinking

Teaching is a complex vocation with a spate of decisions and actions guiding students and teachers on a daily basis. Researcher Philip Jackson, in his book *Life in Classrooms* (1990), said elementary teachers have 200 to 300 exchanges with students every hour, most of which are unplanned and unpredictable. All of these exchanges call for decisions by individual teachers. The concept of teacher thinking brings to mind thoughts about instructional planning, decision making, implicit theories, expectations, content knowledge, classroom management, and life outside of the classroom, including professional development (Clark & Peterson, 1984; Clark & Yinger, 1977; Nicholson, 1996; Nielsen et al., 2008; van Manen, 1977; Yinger, 1986). Various descriptions of the teacher, such as clinical processor, decision-maker, planner, diagnostician, and problem-solver have been used to describe aspects of teacher thinking (Erkmen, 2012; Schön, D. A., 1987; Solas, 1992; van Manen, 1977; Yero, 2002). As I seek to understand how teachers select and implement standards into their planning and instruction, it is important to understand how the act of teacher thinking has been investigated, what tools were used to learn about teacher thinking, and how this practice is carried out today.

## Historical Context

People often think of the late 1960s as the beginning of research into the world of teacher thinking with the introduction of two important individuals: Nathaniel Gage and Philip Jackson (Borg, 2009; Clark & Peterson, 1984; Clark & Yinger, 1977; Kuo, 2004; Solas, 1992). The first *Handbook of Research on Teaching* (1963) included an article entitled, “Paradigm for Research on Teaching” by David C. Berliner. In this article Berliner referred to Gage as “the father of the field of research on teaching” and noted that early scholarship made use of the criteria-of-effectiveness paradigm, which later became known as the process-product approach to research (Behar-Horenstein & Morgan, 1995; Berliner D. C., 1990; Borg, 2009; Freeman, 1991). Within this process, researchers were concerned with the relationship between teachers’ classroom behavior, students’ classroom behavior, and student achievements (Behar-Horenstein & Morgan, 1995; Berliner D., 2005; Clark & Peterson, 1984; Fang, 1996; Yero, 2002).

Developments in this tradition of research evolved into a more mechanistic view of teaching through the works of B. F. Skinner and behaviorism, which set the stage for future research into teacher thinking (Berliner D. , 2005).

Philip Jackson’s *Life in Classrooms* (1968/1990) was one of the first studies describing mental constructs and processes that underlie teacher thinking and behavior. His work called attention to the importance of describing the thinking and planning of teachers as a means to better understand classroom processes (Clark & Peterson, 1984). Zahorik (1970) conducted the first empirical study in the area of teacher planning as he examined the effect of structured planning on teachers’ classroom behavior. Zahorik generalized that teachers following the typical model of lesson planning exhibited less

honest or authentic use of the students' ideas, resulting in insensitivity to pupils (Clark & Yinger, 1977; Zahorik, 1970). The works referenced above are critical in setting a benchmark for all other investigations into teacher thinking. From this early work, we learn that teacher thought in planning excluded the interests and attitudes of the students. Teacher thought was concerned with disseminating content information in a routine fashion without thought to how students learn or the background knowledge students may or may not have for the content being taught.

On the heels of this research came the formation of "Panel 6: Teaching as Clinical Information Processing," chaired by Lee Shulman in June, 1974. This panel argued for research on teacher thinking to reveal "that which is uniquely human in the process of teaching" (Clark & Peterson, 1984, p. 5). This group constructed an image of teachers as professionals such as physicians, lawyers, and architects more so than technicians who operate according to prescriptions (Clark & Peterson, 1984; Kuo, 2004; Schön D. A., 1983; Zeichner & Liston, 1996). An outgrowth of this meeting was the establishment of the nation's first large program of research on the thought processes of teachers, "The Institute for Research on Teaching," at Michigan State University. Early studies in this area focused on the instruction and other verbal exchanges in learning through teacher-student dialogue. Educational psychologists and researchers looked for relationships between input and output and between stimulus and response as they investigated what thoughts and actions went with measures of adjustment to the environment (Behar-Horenstein & Morgan, 1995; Berliner D. , 2005; Fang, 1996; Solas, 1992, p. 206). This movement to examine teacher thought and interactions with students shows a shift in teachers connecting and interacting more with students in their instruction.



Summaries of previous research on teacher thinking credited Shulman for his contribution to the *Third Handbook of Research on Teaching* (1986), suggesting that early research on teachers' thinking had been too narrowly focused and was thus less impactful on teachers and teacher educators (Calderhead J., 1993; Clark & Peterson, 1984, p. 4). Growing benefits from research on teachers' thinking included the ability to inform and educate pre-service teachers with ways they might think about professional education, how they might ask questions of their own practices, and ultimately how they could mentor themselves (Calderhead J., 1993; 1989; 1987; Clark C., 1988). The practice of teacher thinking now seemed to be fostering self-awareness, not just with pedagogy, but to improve one's self as an educator. This practice would also include professional development for teachers.

### **Theoretical Context**

Research on teacher thinking centered on three areas:

- teachers' decision making prior to instruction (pre-actively) (Clark & Yinger, 1987; Kuo, 2004), during instruction (inter-actively), and after instruction (postactive) through the use of self-reported methodologies such as think alouds and stimulated recall (Calderhead J. , 1981; Ethel & McMeniman, 2000);
- teachers' judgment and policymaking (Reid, 1979, p. 201);
- teachers' knowledge (Bell, 2007; Clark & Peterson, 1984; Mitchell & Marland, 1989, p. 115; Wilson & Berne, 1999).

Additional areas included the study of teachers' beliefs (Calderhead, 1987), practices, planning, and decision making. The idea of teachers' judgment is often viewed as a

cognitive process used by teachers in their planning and interactive decision making (Berliner D., 2005; Berliner D.C., 1990; Clark & Peterson, 1984; Clark & Yinger, 1977, pp. 285–292; Mitchell & Marland, 1989; Prawat, 1992; Reid, 1979, p. 202). All of these areas have rather fluid boundaries as they influence decision making and affect each other to varying degrees depending on the context of the situation at hand. Teacher knowledge, beliefs, practice, decision making, and planning are all discussed below.

### ***Teacher Knowledge***

The table that follows depicts the categories Elbaz (1981) developed, which was later enhanced information later by Chen (2005). Both researchers sought to define the complex idea of teacher knowledge. At a quick glance, the information in both columns seems similar, but the difference Elbaz was trying to point out comes in the second column where teacher thinking is focused on a certain grade level classroom setting or content area to be taught. This is important to teacher thinking, because it demonstrates the vast array of knowledge teachers draw from as they make decisions that affect their planning and instruction.

**Table 2.1***Teacher Knowledge Categories*

Teacher knowledge, in general (Elbaz, 1981)	Teacher knowledge, more practical (Elbaz, 1981)
Situational—refers to the body of knowledge related to a particular practical context where the teacher uses intuition and reflection on general issues, goals, and beliefs	Knowledge of subject matter—refers to the basics of the content to be taught
Social—refers to ethical and economic concerns which the teacher uses to structure social situations while trying to balance making learning relevant to the learner, addressing the students' own concerns, factoring in the teachers' goals, meeting standards, and meeting the school's expectations	Knowledge of curriculum—refers to the basics of what was to be taught for that particular grade level and school
Personal—refers to varying viewpoints between teachers and students and the need to make one's experiences integrated, ordered, and meaningful	Knowledge of instruction—refers to teachers' knowledge derived from practice, including instructional routines, classroom management skills, and student needs
Experiential—refers to the spontaneity of the teacher, the teacher's level of attentiveness, and the teacher's manner of working through tensions of thought.	Knowledge of self—refers to the self-knowledge the teacher possesses as they work toward meaningful goals in their teaching
Theoretical—refers to the way teachers seek to expand their understanding, what theories are accepted or rejected, and how knowledge is related to theory	Knowledge of the milieu of schooling—refers to the effect on teachers' knowledge of a variety of influences—teachers, students, administrators, the society, the environment, and even other researchers

The work of Chen (2005) focused on expanding teachers' practical knowledge around the milieu of schooling. Teachers were not just aware of their surrounding influences, but Chen's research demonstrated how teachers used those influences to be

agents of change and make changes for the betterment of their students. This application of knowledge to the larger contextual view was critical in moving the field of teacher knowledge forward.

Donald Schön (1983) did not separate knowledge into such categories but rather envisioned these ideas as one cohesive concept, referring to it as “knowledge-in-action.” Shulman (1987) condensed Elbaz’s categories into three types of content knowledge: subject-matter (content) knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and curricular knowledge. Simplistically speaking, subject-matter (content) knowledge is seen as the depth of knowledge a teacher has about a subject, both procedural and conceptual understandings. Pedagogical knowledge refers to the knowledge teachers have and use to instruct their students. It also includes general psychological knowledge and classroom management techniques (Clark & Peterson, 1984; Keiny, 1994; Tsangaridou & Siedentop, 1995; Wilson et al., 1987). Curricular knowledge refers to the knowledge of alternative curriculum materials as well as knowledge of other topics and subjects that are being studied by the students concurrently (Fang, 1996). Research in the area of teacher knowledge kept expanding. Beattie (1995) added a fourth dimension, personal practical knowledge, which encompasses the teacher’s knowledge of students’ learning styles, interests, needs, strengths, and difficulties as well as a repertoire of instructional techniques and classroom management skills (Fang, 1996). The overarching categories which stand out to me include the combination of Shulman (1987) and Beattie (1995): subject (content) knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, curricular knowledge, and personal practical knowledge (Chen, 2005). A chart overview of these categories is located in Appendix A.

Addressing teacher knowledge, Wilson and Berne (1999) reviewed studies of professional development (PD) in schools where staff members thought about both the what and how of teacher learning. They defined teacher knowledge as knowledge of subject matter, individual students, cultures across groups of students, learning, and pedagogy. They also noted the complex and puzzling issue of how to document teacher knowledge. Their review points out the benefits of professional development to enhance and further investigate teacher knowledge. They proposed a model for professional development (PD) that includes collaboration, a focus on a central issue or problem, sessions conducted on a regular and on-going basis to promote gains in knowledge, skill, confidence, and content related to current research and professional habits. These scholars noted that challenges to conducting PD in a manner that makes a difference to educators may include the poor reputation of traditional 1-day PD workshops with no follow-up; limited teacher knowledge about books clubs, networking, and study clubs to enhance their knowledge; the difficulty of studying a topic while trying to teach it oneself; the varying depth of research for various PD topics; the understanding that leaders cannot mandate learning during PD session, only attendance; and the difficulty in bridging the gap between teachers' wants and expectations and the participant's own goals for learning (Wilson & Berne, 1999, p. 197). The belief system each teacher holds and how that belief system is shared compounds the challenge of enacting PD.

### ***Teacher Beliefs***

The studies by Zhang (2008) and Marzano et al. (2012) demonstrated the effect teachers' beliefs, learning styles, and preferences can have on their teaching, which, in turn, affects how students are taught by particular teachers and how they learn. Different

views exist on where and how this thinking occurs. Scholars wonder whether it is a private or collaborative act? Research by Engeström (1994) demonstrated the necessity of teachers' beliefs being internalized privately but also shared publicly or collaboratively as a way to communicate ideas with others. Marton (1994) argued that thinking is something taking place between individuals and the world; it is not something that takes place only within a person or something that belongs to a person. He contended that research on teacher beliefs should be directed toward teachers' awareness and intentionality in addition to subject-specific content. This awareness of beliefs and intentionality has a direct impact on how teachers plan and instruct, especially in relation to subject-specific areas. For example, teachers might give a different priority to subject-specific areas they are interested in or know a lot about versus areas where their interest or knowledge is lacking.

Calderhead's research in 1987 shared elements with the work of Elbaz (1981), Chen (2005), and Shulman (1987) that a teacher's belief system is affected by four features: knowledge, professionalism, situations, and skillful action. For example, teachers, as with other professionals, possess specialized knowledge through their training, experiences, and personal investigations. For teachers, this knowledge often pertains to curriculum, teaching methods, subject matter, and child behavior (Bell, 2007; Wilson & Berne, 1999). Second, teachers also exhibit professionalism. While the act of teaching involves students directly, teachers are answerable to other constituencies including parents, administrators, advisers, employers, curriculum agencies, and even politicians. Each of these constituencies has some influence in determining the condition and beliefs under which teachers work. Teachers encounter numerous expectations that

can be in conflict with each other as well as with the beliefs of the individual teacher, such as the role of standards. If a teacher is instructed by a principal to develop and teach lessons only associated with certain standards, this directive might be in conflict with what the teacher believes is necessary, especially if the teacher believes standards are a minimum of what to teach. The third feature involves the often complex and ambiguous situations that teachers face. Calderhead (1987, p. 2) writes, “At any one time, teachers may be faced with a series of incidents to manage—keeping their classes working quietly, for instance, while dealing with a particular child’s difficulty and postponing or redirecting other children’s requests for attention.” The fourth feature, skillful action, is directly related to professional activity. Teachers must draw on their extensive knowledge in the areas of content, child development, and pedagogy as they seek to establish relationships with students, manage the classroom, decide how best to teach a topic, maintain students’ interest, and instruct. By examining these four features, we see how teachers’ belief systems are closely connected with the knowledge that they possess. The challenge now comes when teachers are asked to put their beliefs and knowledge into practice independently, collaboratively with colleagues, or across an entire staff.

### ***Teachers’ Practice***

Within teacher-thinking research, some assert that the highest form of research is when teachers and researchers construct knowledge together (action research) (Calgren et al., 1994, p. 4; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Marcos et al., 2009). This act of constructing knowledge and reasoning may help us better understand (and perhaps even predict) teachers’ practices, if we find out their ways of thinking, making decisions, and problem solving (Buswinka, 1993; Choy & Oo, 2012; Copeland et al., 1993; Solas, 1992, p. 206;

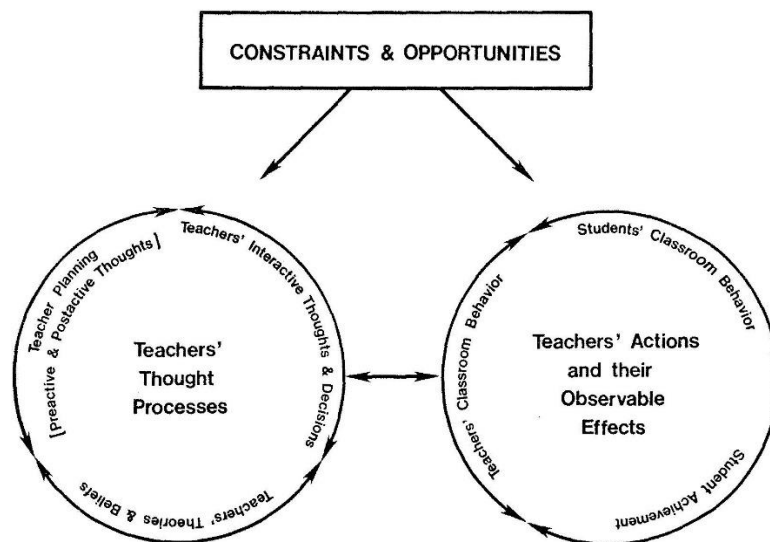
van Manen, 1977). Some teachers might be able to articulate why they teach the way they do or why they select certain standards, texts, resources, or assessments, while other teachers might just say, “Well, that’s what the school wants me to do.” Teachers’ articulating their thought process may not be easy for them to do right away, but doing so can be beneficial to anyone trying to understand teachers’ practice—what they do—and how articulating their thought process can shape instructional practice in the classroom and school.

Teacher practice (behavior) is influenced and even determined by teachers’ thought processes (Buswinka, 1993; Clark & Peterson, 1984; Fang, 1996). While one may wish to envision teacher thinking as linear, actions and thoughts are affected by a host of influences, not to mention the element of time (Calderhead, 1987; Clark & Yinger, 1979). Clark and Peterson (1984) proposed a cyclical model (see Figure 2.1) which places teacher thinking into two domains, both affecting the other. Both domains differ in the extent to which their processes are observable. A 6-year study by Wagner (1987) confirmed this cyclical approach as teachers’ and students’ thoughts during class instruction were examined. Wagner’s findings illustrated that teachers’ thinking is cyclical—non-linear—with teachers posing questions to themselves without always resolving them as they “jump” from one issue to another considering goals, strategies, students, and the situation at hand. A teacher’s thought process is affected by many variables, but being aware of these variables can assist a teacher in addressing these concerns all the while adhering to a school’s curricular goals while planning instruction.



**Figure 2.1**

*Cyclical Model of Teaching Thinking by Clark and Peterson (1984)*



### ***Teachers' Decision Making and Planning***

It is important to consider the decision-making process of teachers because it is often affected by beliefs, prior decisions, and solutions to problems they have encountered, and the process then affects planning (Choy & Oo, 2012; Copeland et al., 2002; van Manen, 1977). Decision making, according to Berliner (2005) and Marton (1994), involves processes such as perceiving, interpreting, and reflecting upon students, objectives, and materials. Teachers must adapt their thought processes and style based on many factors, such as available time, expectations of leadership, and daily constraints, including the needs of their students (Gill & Hoffman, 2009, p. 1266; Soodak & Podell, 1994; Yero, 2002).

The earliest study of teacher decision making in America, cited by Clark and Peterson (1977), examined 12 experienced teachers in a lab setting as they taught a social studies unit to three different groups of eight junior high school students. Findings

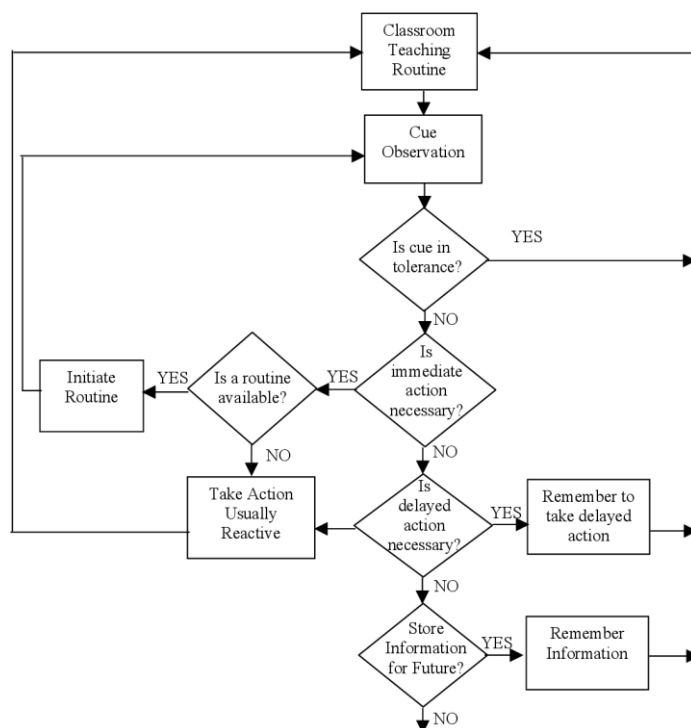
showed teachers considered alternative strategies only when their instruction seemed to be going poorly. Teachers relied heavily upon student involvement and participation to gauge the success of their teaching. Findings from Morine and Vallance's 1975 study of 40 second- and fifth-grade teachers revealed teachers who focused on the process of instruction rather than student characteristics or behaviors when commenting on the meanings (focus) of the decisions they made while teaching (Clark & Yinger, 1977).

Teacher thinking has also been categorized through zones (McAlpine et al., 2006b). These researchers studied the thinking and actions of two teachers, a mathematics lecturer, and an education lecturer through open-ended questions and interviews over the course of 1 year. The analysis of interview transcripts yielded four fluid zones of thought. The most abstract zone, conceptual, includes abstract statements and beliefs about teaching. The most concrete, enactive, refers to thinking in-the-moment, similar to Schön's reflection-in-action (1983). Two additional zones, strategic and tactical, occupy the middle spectrum. These zones refer to approaches towards teaching. Broad designs of instruction and relationships throughout context make up the strategic zone. The tactical zone encompasses thinking through specific processes and procedures. This model supports the idea that context situates thinking, conceptions, values, beliefs, knowledge use and goal setting which affect teaching actions. According to their model, teachers use the interplay of reflection and teacher thinking in planning and instruction to implement knowledge, actions, or goals as the teacher considers how the actions may turn the experience into a form of knowledge (McAlpine et al., 2006, p. 149).

While the decision-making model outlined above may describe the conscious planning of teachers, there are other models that help to uncover more of the subconscious activity of teacher thinking, such as the problem-avoidance model, the teacher-reaction model, the mood assessment model, and the improvisational model (Mitchell & Marland, 1989). Two models of teachers' interactive decision-making processes are prominent in teacher thinking research. The first one (Figure 2.2, left) is taken from Shavelson and Stern's work (1981; Kuo, 2004). The second model (Figure 3, right) is from Peterson and Clark's work (1978, p. 557; Yinger, 1986, p. 265) and often credited to Snow (1972). The simplicity of each model is deceiving as one considers the many details which affect the thoughts and cyclical actions of a teacher.

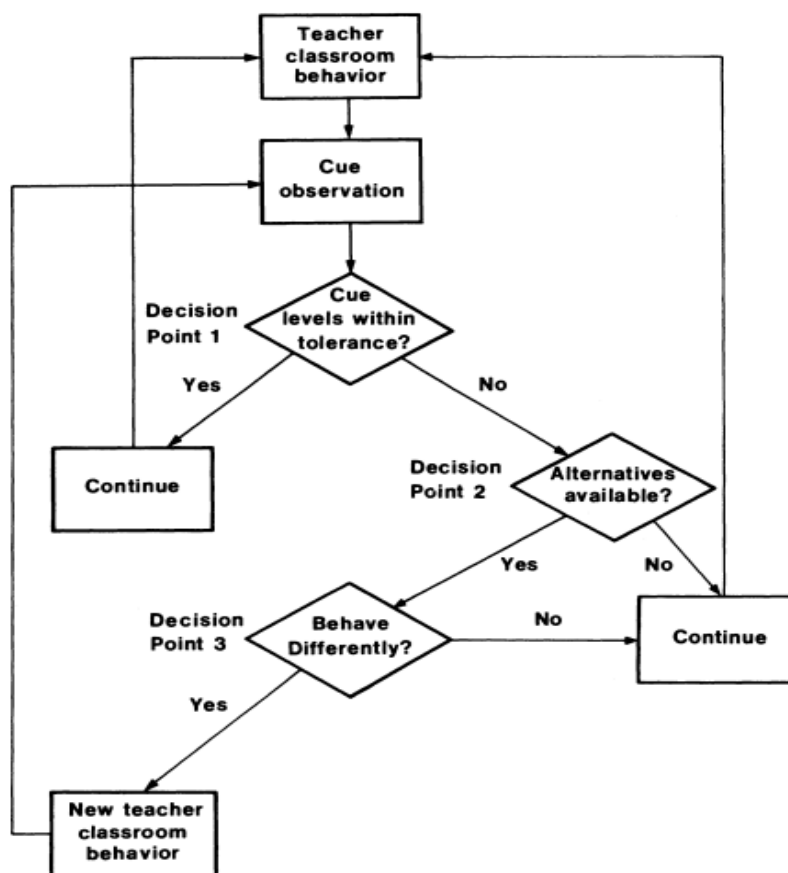
### Figure 2.2

*Model of Teachers' Decision Making during Interactive Teaching (Shavelson and Stern, 1984)*



**Figure 2.3**

*Model of Teachers' Cognitive Processes during Teaching (Peterson & Clark, 1978; after Snow, 1972)*



The starting point for both of these flow-chart models is when something goes wrong—a problem (Buswinka, 1993; Choy & Oo, 2012; Copeland et al., 1993; Solas, 1992; van Manen, 1977). Researchers often refer to this starting point as a problem space (Solas, 1992). However, both of these models seem to ignore cognitive processes involved in interactive teaching. Another issue with the two models is the impression that teachers must choose from a stated option. Quite often more than one or two choices are available at a juncture in classroom planning and instruction. Further, where does the act

of improvisation fit in? While planning shapes the broad outline of what may occur during teaching and is useful for managing transitions from one activity to another, the finer details of classroom teaching are often unpredictable and therefore not planned. Deciding what to do given the circumstances must be a conscious decision and involves choosing among possibilities at a given time (Yinger, 1986).

Teachers' planning is viewed by David Berliner (2005) as "a basic psychological process in which a person visualizes the future, inventories means and ends, and constructs a framework to guide his or her future actions—what Yinger calls thinking in the future sense!" (Berliner, 2005, p. 6). Early models of planning, based on the work of Tyler, Taba, and Popham identified four linear steps for planning: specifying objectives, selecting learning activities, organizing learning activities, and specifying evaluation procedures (Clark & Yinger, 1977, 1979; Reiser & Mory, 1991). This "rational means-ends" model focuses on orderly, careful thinking to accomplish the focus of a lesson. This model of planning did not consider the background of students or the setting (context) of instruction. It was primarily taught in methods courses as a way for pre-service educators to plan their instruction.

Two opposing models of lesson planning, the "integrated ends-means" model and the "separate ends-means" of Zahorik (1975), were suggested by MacDonald (1965) and Eisner (1967). The "integrated ends-means" model proposes that teachers do not begin their planning by thinking about routine or objectives but rather first focus on learning activities to engage the students and then other aspects to formulate their planning (Clark & Yinger, 1977). By asking teachers to write down the decisions they make prior to teaching and the order in which they make them, Zahorik's "separate ends-means" model

classified teacher thoughts into eight categories: activities, content, objectives, materials, diagnosis, evaluation, instruction, and organization. Four major findings come from his work:

- the greatest number of decisions concerned pupil activities (projects);
- the content to be taught ranked higher than objectives, assessments, and even pedagogy;
- teacher planning decisions did not always follow logically from specific objectives;
- the objectives were not a particularly important planning decision.

Zahorik's work raises the question of whether teachers would place the selection and use of standards in the same category as objectives if this study were to be replicated today. Similarly, when examining the verbal "think aloud" statements of the planning process of 12 junior high teachers as they prepared to teach a new unit, Peterson et al. (1978) analyzed the verbal "think aloud" statements from their planning periods and discovered that most planning time was spent dealing with the content to be taught, then strategies and activities. The least amount of time during planning sessions focused on objectives to guide the lesson.

It is important to notice Clark and Yinger's work in 1977 and their mention that the work of Morine (1976) was pivotal to their thinking. These researchers began to move away from laboratory research and enter the semi-controlled classroom situation, conducting a study using lesson plans in mathematics and reading to determine the kind of information teachers considered important for planning. Their results indicated that, as a group, teachers tended to be fairly specific and used an outline to plan their lessons, yet

paid little attention to behavior goals, student needs, evaluation procedures and alternative courses of action.

A study by Yinger (1977) and another by Reid (1979) shifted to examine a more reactive stance to planning as their work investigated teacher planning framed around problem-based learning. Yinger's study (1977) of one first-second grade teacher's planning decisions revealed three stages of planning: finding the problem finding, formulating a plan to solve the problem, and implementing the plan. Activities were described as the basic structural unit of planning and action within the classroom, often a result of a problem. Seven features within these instructional activities were identified: location, structure and sequence, duration, participants, acceptable student behavior, instructional moves or routines, and content and materials. Similarly, Reid (1979) identified five stages of decision making in planning around the similar concept of a problem, not necessarily sequential. These stages included

- appreciation: how the problem is to be defined;
- reality judgment: what the relevant facts are;
- value judgment: what solutions would be acceptable;
- generation of alternatives: what might be done;
- proposals: what should be done.

Overall, the literature reviewed on teacher planning up to the early 1990s indicated a progression from the routine of instruction to a focus on activities (projects), with content being more of a priority than objectives. The manner in which data was collected also shifted from laboratory settings and self-reported surveys to field

observations. Findings from the literature also suggested that the needs of students and the instructional setting gradually began to influence teachers' planning decisions.

Research that followed the work in the early 1990s focused on examining the planning of two experienced teachers over the course of one science instructional unit (Reiser & Mory (1991). They investigated the extent to which two experienced teachers incorporated systematic planning techniques into their written and mental planning practice, one who had received formal training in the use of those techniques, and one who had not. Through interviews, questionnaires, and observation during one instructional unit, Reiser and Mory found that the teacher who received the formal training employed the ideas gleaned, while the other teacher adhered to the principle of keeping objectives in mind, but in a less formal manner. The study points to the benefits of professional development (PD) to assist teachers in aligning objectives, instruction, assessment, and activities. It also highlights the need for teachers to reexamine their plans in light of student performance to determine any remediation or revision. Although objectives may not be in written form, teachers plan their activities with them in mind. This study validates the previous work of Brown (1988), Clark and Peterson (1986), and McCutcheon (1980) and opens the door for educators to examine the benefits of PD with shared planning for instruction by teachers as a key component.

In shared planning, the identification of teachers' beliefs becomes important as nonjudgmental discussions between teaching peers—with free expression and autonomy for pedagogy and instructional materials—allow teachers to take more academic risks, propose more ideas, and experiment with more novel methods (Ahlstrand, 1994; Gill & Hoffman, 2009; Hart, 1996). Gill and Hoffman (2009) investigated the rationale behind



teachers' decision making during shared planning time in the area of mathematics. Their study revealed benefits (discussion, free expression, the exchange of ideas, the fostering of autonomy) and cautions (individuals who override discussion, who ignore, who discount, or who claim ideas as their own) of team planning and mentoring that offer insights into beliefs which influence practice. They suggest investigating planning to better understand the thought and decision-making processes of teachers (why certain activities are chosen, why certain methods of instruction are used, etc.). Like the research of Zhang (2008), their research revealed incongruities between teachers' philosophies and how teachers carried out instruction in the classroom. Further discussions helped teachers realize this and work to better align practices

### **Practical Context**

#### ***A Critique of the Work on Teaching Thinking and Planning***

Although a great deal of new information emerged from the research focused on teaching thinking, findings were also limited due to the methodologies employed by researchers at that time. For example, findings from research studies on teacher thinking depended heavily on various forms of self-reporting by teachers (Clark & Yinger, 1977; Gill & Hoffman, 2009). Work by Ericsson and Simon in 1980 suggested that verbal reports are the most reliable and valid when a person is reporting on the content of short-term memory. Less reliable and valid data results from inquiries that are vague and general or that require respondents to use inferential processes to complete or elaborate partially remembered information (Clark & Peterson, 1984, p. 14; Eley, 2006; Gomez, 2009). Ericsson and Simon (1980) argue that probing for verbalization of thoughts takes place in one of three conditions:

- while information is happening (concurrent probing);
- while information is still in short-term memory;
- after the completion of the task (retrospective probing).

The timing of interviews and discussions can be critical. If the teacher's reflection takes place too far removed from the experience, details may be lost or become unclear.

Regardless of the timing, it is still difficult to pinpoint exact ways to measure teacher thinking because much of their knowledge gained is through experience and is not always articulated clearly (Hart, 1996; Wilson & Berne, 1999).

In later studies, participants and researchers made use of a combination of inquiry methods:

- interviews both structured and open-ended;
- process tracing methods: think-alouds, stimulated recall (also known as video recall and retrospective interview) (Berliner D. C., 1987; Calderhead J., 1981; Ethel & McMeniman, 2000) and journal keeping (Boyd & Boyd, 2005; Stover et al., 2011; Tillman, 2003; Ziolkowska, 2007);
- policy capturing (Reid, 1979);
- repertory grid (Rep Grid) technique (Solas, 1992; Menmuir & Christie, 1999).

These methods were a significant improvement in more deeply understanding teacher thinking and planning, allowing researchers to work collaboratively with participants to varying degrees.

In a typical think-aloud procedure, teachers verbalize their thoughts while actually doing instructional tasks. Stimulated recall, first used by Bloom in 1953 in his "Thought-

processes in Lectures and Discussion” to compare college students’ thought processes about two learning situations, involves looking at or viewing one’s self performance of a task and then recounting what was happening at that time (Erkmen, 2012, p. 143). The first use of videotape as a stimulus for recall was by Kagan & Krathwohl in 1967 (Yinger, 1986). A typical set of structured interview questions for stimulated recall may include

- What were you doing in the segment and why?
- Were you thinking of any alternative actions or strategies at that time?
- What were you noticing about the students?
- How are the students responding?
- Did any student reactions cause you to act differently than you had planned?
- Did you have any particular objectives in mind in this segment, and if so, what were they?
- Do you remember any aspects of the situation that might have affected what you did in this segment? (Peterson & Clark, 1978; Yinger, 1986, p. 272).

Policy capturing makes use of simulated cases or vignettes, curriculum materials or teaching episodes to study teachers’ judgment processes (Reid, 1979). Researchers ask teachers to make judgments about certain features and record these thoughts on a Likert scale. Relative weighting is assigned to the features being studied. While this procedure may give insight into predicting key variables in a teacher’s decision-making process, it may not give an accurate picture of classroom life. Most of these studies have been

conducted in laboratory-like settings and thus may not provide a valid portrayal of judgment and decision-making in a real-life classroom (Fang, 1996).

The repertory grid (Rep Grid) technique is meant to discover the personal constructs that influence individual behavior through a series of statements or scenarios (Menmuir & Christie, 1999; Pope & Denicolo, 1993; Solas, 1992). Researchers ask participants to select which statement or scenario best corresponds to their beliefs about the topic being studied. While this technique gives insight into teachers' hypothetical thoughts, it does not measure or speak to what teachers do in actual instructional settings (Clark & Peterson, 1984; Fang, 1996).

### *Analysis of Data*

Several studies in this review had a qualitative design component and were analyzed from a participant-observer stance (Bausch, & Voorhees, 2008; Buswinka, 1993; Clark, & Yinger, 1977; Ethel, & McMeniman, 2000; Erkmen, 2012; Giaimo-Ballard & Hyatt, 2012; Gill, & Hoffman, 2009; McAlpine, 2006; McCutcheon, 1980; Seymour & Osana, 2003; Yinger, 1986). Other studies employed a mixed-methods design that were analyzed accordingly (Alexandersson, 1994; Allen et al., 1995; Kale et al., 2009; Orange & Horowitz, 1999; Peterson & Clark, 1978). The reporting and analysis of data often took the form of a case study (Merriam, 1998; Seymour & Osana, 2003; Udvari-Solner, 1996; Yin, 2010), with variations such as case records (Bage et al., 1999) and evaluative case design (Kale et al., 2009). Some of the studies were structured from a phenomenological (Alexandersson, 1994; Elbaz, 1981; McAlpine et al., 2006) or ethnographic (Bannink & van Dam, 2007; Hug, 2010) point of view and then analyzed for themes following grounded theory (McAlpine et al., 2006; Rodriguez & Solis, 2013).

Yet, key questions in the area of teacher thinking and ways of addressing these questions still remain.

While research has been done in the past on various methods of instruction, this is an ever-evolving area, so continual research on the planning and implementation of methods of instruction would be beneficial to teacher education researchers and practitioners. Studies utilizing multiple paired participants (two teachers from the same grade level or two teachers teaching the same class to contrasting groups) would also be helpful in demonstrating different perspectives in teacher thinking and beliefs while showcasing teacher knowledge or lack-there-of. More specifically, a gap exists in the research regarding how teachers navigate their understanding and enactment of standards (CCSS and content specific standards) into planning and instruction at the middle and upper elementary levels, especially in the content areas of science and social studies.

Likewise, a gap exists in the area of teacher reflection during and after teacher thinking as they plan and enact instruction. Huang (2015) summarized teacher thinking as “a habit and a strategic process for collecting information, reflecting, understanding, solving problems, making decisions, initiating action, and accumulating practical wisdom” (p. 255). Whether this practice is fostered during pre-service teacher education, induction, day-to-day teaching, or PD, the analysis of thoughts, beliefs, and knowledge happens only through reflection. Reflection helps build practical wisdom, and such wisdom will aid teachers in their thinking and decision making process as they work to meet the instructional needs of their students. Sharp (2003) said: “Teachers who think reflectively about their own teaching are better equipped to be lifelong learners; they are also in a more favorable position to initiate changes in their existing practice through

personal awareness of their classroom and its culture” (p. 24). The next section of this chapter examines the practice of teacher reflection historically, theoretically and in the area of literacy.

### **Teacher Reflection**

The practice of teacher reflection has a variety of meanings. For some, it simply means thinking about something, whereas for others it is a well-defined and crafted practice that carries a very specific meaning and associated action (Roskos et al., 2001). Dewey (1916) described reflection “as running over various ideas, sorting them out, comparing one with another, trying to get at one which will unite in itself the strength of two, searching for new points of view, [and] developing new suggestions” (p. 197). Current definitions indicate that reflection places an emphasis on learning through questioning and investigation to develop understanding. (Loughran, 2002)

The act of being reflective may occur spontaneously; however, it is not an instantaneous act. Instead, it is a time-consuming practice that involves personal risk. Honest reflection, on both positive and negative classroom experiences, can improve teachers’ understanding of past experiences and beliefs that influence present choices and actions in an effort to enhance teacher thinking, beliefs, actions, and practices. (Berliner, 2005; Marcos & Tillema, 2006; Valli, 1997) The act of reflection is not over when a task has been completed but continues on, possibly affecting thoughts, emotions, and further action (Dewey, 1916; Rodgers, 2002; Schön, 1983; Zeichner & Liston, 1996). Parsons et al (2018) worked with a team of researchers and conducted a comprehensive literature review (1975–2014) studying teacher adaptability across academic disciplines. This synthesis of the literature revealed the attributes and practices of reflective and

metacognitive teachers and highlighted factors influencing reflection, including teachers' beliefs, knowledge, experience, and thinking. These attributes are influenced by student assessment, the instructional context, and professional development (PD). In the next section of this review, I examine the literature on these attributes to see how the link between teacher practice (action) and reflection (thinking) has been strengthened and studied for decades (Bereiter, 2002; Clark & Hollingsworth, 2002; Schön, 1983; Shulman, 1987).

### **History of Reflection in Education**

Early research in the area of reflection was conducted by Dewey (1933). This work focuses on defining reflection and the dimensions associated with this action. For example, Dewey explained reflective thinking as “active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in light of the grounds that support it” (Dewey, 1933, 2007, p. 9). Reflection extends into how one perceives educational theories, practices, and curricula surrounding the success of the individual student. These qualities, although present, do not automatically lead to change and improvement; they must be put into action (Brookfield, 1995; Loughran, 2002).

Building on the work of Dewey, van Manen (1977) suggested three categories of reflection: technical, which examines the efficiency and effectiveness of skills, strategies, and methods to reach goals; practical, which considers underlying assumptions of methods, goals and outcomes for students along with their value; and critical, which focuses on the moral and ethical power of practice (Campoy, 2010). Application of these categories came in the 1980s and early 1990s and focused on instruction and other school practices encompassing social equality (July et al., 1996; Zeichner, 1991.). Research by

Zeichner (1994) revealed similar categories of reflection but added the dimensions of standards and lesson objectives to his explanations.

Research by both Schön (1983, 1987) and Shulman (1987) worked to close a gap between professional knowledge and the practical implementation of that knowledge. Schön's (1983) reflective practitioner paradigm included three aspects: knowing-in-action, reflection-in-action, and reflection-on-action. While looking at various professions, he defined "reflection-in-action" as an "on-the-spot experiment." As Schön (1987) noted: "We think up and try out new actions, test our tentative understandings of them, or affirm the moves we have invented to change things for the better. On-the spot experiment may work, or it may produce surprises that call for further reflection and experiment" (pp. 28–29). This systematic process located reflection both during and after instruction as the teacher looked back at what occurred and sought to reconstruct, reenact, and recapture events, emotions and accomplishments (Eby, 1997; Giaimo-Ballard & Hyatt, 2012; Marcos et al., 2009; Schön, 1987; Shulman, 1987, p. 19). Later researchers such as Yinger (1986) and Silcock (1994) tied the practice of teacher thinking about knowledge with Schön's (1983, 1987) reflection in- and on-action by studying teachers' procedural knowledge in action (for example, what they are thinking of at that exact moment), and reviewed details of teachers' actions that allowed teachers to modify and broaden their application beyond the immediate use. This process of reflection into action has been coined by Schön (1983).

Adding to the research on definitions, researchers have proposed various models and traditions for reflection. Griffiths and Tann (1992, as cited in Zeichner & Liston, 1996, p. 47) proposed a cycle of action, observation, analysis, and planning at different



levels of speed and consciousness similar to the ideas of Schön's reflection-in and on-action. They suggested five dimensions of reflection:

- personal and private—rapid reflection, routine, and automatic;
- repair—quick pause for thought, still reflection-in-action, but the teacher is adjusting his or her actions and reactions to student responses;
- review—the beginning of reflection-on-action, happening both individually or with others throughout the day;
- research—a particular issue is investigated through the teachers' thinking over a period of time;
- retheorizing and reformulating—more abstract and rigorous reflection where beliefs and theories are examined in the light of public academic theories.

This last dimension of reflection considers the adoption, use, and evaluation of school policies, mandated curriculum, and standards.

Korthagen et al. (1999, 2001, 2005) proposed an onion model of concentric circles revealing various levels of reflection (e.g., inside to out: mission, identity, beliefs, competencies, behavior, and environment) which can influence the ways a teacher functions. In this model, questions such as these guide reflection: What was the context? What did you want? What did you do? What were you thinking? How did you feel? What did the pupils want? What did the pupils do? What were the pupils thinking? How did the pupils feel? (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2005, p. 50). The authors of this model agree with the findings of Zeichner and Liston (1996); the research is important because it seeks to examine not only the teacher's knowledge, thoughts, and actions, but also the thoughts and actions of the students. Zeichner and Liston (1996) added that a reflective teacher

may ask, “What are my students experiencing?” “What can I do to improve this situation?” “How does my students’ performance relate to the way I am teaching this material?” These questions may help teachers develop a proactive search for information, clarify values and moral principles, and improve their creativity, persistence, and task commitment, as well as improve communication skills (Eby, 1997, pp. 9, 22–23).

A second model of reflection, the Action-Looking-Awareness-Creating-Trial model (ALACT), was also proposed by Korthagen et al. (1999, 2001, 2005). Each letter in the acronym stands for a step in the structured process of reflection: action, looking back on the action, awareness of essential aspects, creating alternative methods of action, and finally trial. These models demonstrate an additional step to reflection, one that is commonly referred to as core reflection. In core reflection, the focus is more about creating room for more possibilities rather than deeply analyzing the situation or problem at-hand (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2005, p. 54).

Based on the research on definitions and dimensions for reflection, four historic traditions of reflection in North America surfaced in reviewing the literature: academic, social-efficiency, developmentalist, and social-reconstructionist (Jay & Johnson, 2002; Zeichner & Liston, 1996). The academic tradition stresses reflection on subject matter. Work by Shulman (1987) emphasized the deliberate thoughts and actions teachers use to convey subject-matter content. This thought process (reflection) “involves thinking through key ideas in the text or lesson and identifying the alternative ways of representing them to students” (Shulman, 1987, p. 328; Zeichner, 1994, p. 15).

The social-efficiency tradition takes a more scientific approach with teachers focusing their reflections on how well their practice matched what research says they should be doing. (Zeichner, 1994)

The developmentalist tradition considered the thinking, understandings, interests, and development of the students. In this tradition, teachers ground their classroom practices in the observation and study of students, their development, and literature based on the research in the tradition. Teaching involves interaction with learners and a society that are both in a constant state of flux. To deal with the inevitable uncertainties and tradeoffs in everyday decisions that affect the lives of students, teachers must constantly be nurturing, adapting, and refining their academic knowledge and professional skills (Gillentine, 2006; Larrivee, 2006; Margolis & Deuel, 2009; Smyth, 1989; York-Barret et al., 2006; Zeichner & Liston, 1996). This act of reflection is directly applicable to today's teachers as they consider how students can demonstrate their understanding of the material being taught.

The social-reconstructionist tradition is viewed as political. Here teachers focus on their own practice and take into consideration the social conditions in which these practices are situated. Social conditions include national, state, and local mandates and have a significant place in our society as teachers consider the application of the state standards (MN-ELA and MN-Social Studies standards) in light of political and racial tensions (Barrett-Tatum & Dooley, 2015).

In addition to these four traditions, a generic tradition exists that reflects the overarching idea that teaching must be done with purpose—a deliberate or intentional reason (Dewey, 1933, 2007; Zeichner, 1994, p. 17). Knowing all of these models and

traditions is informative, but teachers need to understand how to begin the reflective process in order to put it into action.

Teachers typically begin reflection by examining their own beliefs, thoughts, and knowledge. This important fact connects the reflection research to the research presented earlier in this chapter. By examining their thoughts, beliefs and knowledge, educators position themselves to not only evaluate but also justify actions (Parsons, 2018). They can think about the origins, implications, and consequences of this information, especially beyond the boundaries of the classroom and the school (Grant & Zeichner, 1984). As mentioned before, questions typically guide the reflection process. David Smyth (1989) proposed four forms of general action questions to guide reflection: describe (What do I do?), inform (What does this mean?), confront (How did I come to think or act like this?), and reconstruct (How might I do things differently?). Teachers may ask these questions to develop a proactive search for information, to help clarify values and moral principles, and to encourage creativity, persistence, and task commitment as well as improve communication skills (Eby, 1997, pp. 22–23).

McGregor's research (2011) did not offer a sequence for reflection but offered seven characteristics to consider when applying reflection to teaching. Teachers should do each of the following:

- maintain an active focus on the aims and consequences of their teaching;
- take a cyclical approach to regularly monitoring, evaluating, and revisiting their practice;
- use evidence to weigh success and progress;
- retain open-mindedness, responsibility, and wholeheartedness;

- refine pedagogy from research, judgments, and evaluations of their own practice;
- stress the benefits of collaboration with colleagues to foster and improve PD, learning, and personal fulfillment;
- integrate information, frameworks, and other models of practice in a creative fashion.

Research by Çimer et al. (2013) and by Vines et al. (2020) echoed similar advice. These characteristics could serve as cautions applied to any model of reflective practice.

Edwards and Thomas (2010) cautioned researchers not to turn reflection into a purely technical matter of whether students and teachers have acquired or display certain skills. Instead, they urge scholars to use reflection to examine the purpose, value, and effectiveness of instruction. They caution teachers to not rely on only one model or tool for reflection but instead consider combining teacher reflection with other opportunities for co-inquiry to consider how information learned can be used in other situations and contexts (Heinz et al., 2010; Juzwik et al., 2012; Kucan, 2007, 2009; Silcock, 1994). Whether one speaks of categories, levels, traditions, or processes of reflection, it is important to realize that reflection is more than surface observation. It is a deep and rich process capable of yielding insight to enhance planning, instruction, and learning for all who are involved (Clark, 2001).

### **Application of Reflection**

The potential for reflection is limitless, and consequently there is little consensus on what ought to be the object of reflection and how reflection should be enacted (Çimer et al., 2013; Marcos & Tillema, 2006; Tsangaridou & Siedentop, 1995; Risko, et al.,

2008). The same could be said about selecting tools for reflection. The studies reviewed showcase a wide array of tools including but not limited to participant diaries, journals, video and audio files, interviews, surveys, observations, teacher planning notes, and student-created evidence.

Like teacher thinking, reflection often frames itself around the theme of knowledge—subject knowledge (substantive and syntactic), curriculum knowledge (skills and frameworks), pedagogical knowledge (practical knowledge, beliefs about teaching, and knowledge of learners), knowledge of educational values (learning settings, values, morals, etc.) and knowledge of personal constructs and identity as they all come together in the classroom and lives of the students and teacher (Loughran, 2002; McGregor, 2011, p. 9; Marcos et al., 2009; Tillman, 2003; Tirri, 1999)

Reflection is also often associated with the notion of a problem—a puzzling, curious, or perplexing situation (Choy & Oo, 2012; Copeland et al., 1993; Grant & Zeichner, 1984; McGregor, 2011; Schön, 1983; Sharp, 2003; Zeichner & Liston, 1996). Teachers may reflect upon student learning, instructional processes, and subject matter objectives and content by asking themselves, “Why do I have this rule?” “Why do I care so much about what happens in my classroom?” “How did I come to believe so strongly about this element of my teaching?” (Eby, 1997, p. 10). This reflective problem-solving process digs deeper and investigates the nature of the problem while linking theory and practice (thought and action) to improve (Marcos et al., 2009, p. 194). Regardless of the impetus for reflection, teachers can fuse the acts of reflection and research into practice by linking thoughts and actions through goal setting, planning, observation, and possible collaboration (Çimer & Paliç, 2012; Hong & Lawrence, 2011; Marcos & Tillema, 2006;

Shulman, 1987). In the next section, I will review the literature that demonstrates this fusion.

### **Teacher Reflection Studies**

The literature reviewed pertaining to teacher reflection focused predominantly on in-service teachers in elementary and middle school settings (I will note exceptions to this below). General categories of teacher reflection became evident through this literature review. These categories include classroom practice, which includes general instruction; implementation of new curricula; and planning (Gutierrez, 2019; Marsh et al., 2017). The use of professional development (PD) (Camburn & Han, 2017) and literacy coaches (Kissel et al., 2011; Stover et al., 2011) seemed to permeate all areas of reflection. It is difficult to separate these two areas because the reflective practice was often part of PD. I have organized the studies in this section in the following fashion: classroom practice (to situate the act of reflection), literacy and its subcategories, professional development, and the use of literacy coaches.

Like the literature reviewed on the planning of instruction and the implementation of standards, many of the studies on teacher reflection were embedded in PD experiences. While investigating this research, I found that search results often showed reflection used in a cursory fashion, such as “the teachers reflected.” Results using teacher reflection as a key term were often in the areas of teacher evaluation (Marsh et al., 2017), technology (Beschorner & Woodward, 2019; Hadad et al., 2021), mathematics (Lovemore et al., 2021; Miller & Lindt, 2018; Martin et al., 2017), science (Gutierrez, 2019; Lin et al., 2013; Smith, 2015), and physical education (Beni et al., 2021; Sato & Hodge, 2016). In

the next section of this chapter, I outline literacy studies with teacher reflection components, arranged by topic. I also identify gaps within the research.

### **Classroom Practice**

To some, the idea and practice of reflection may be new or minimally used. Findings from Atkinson's (2012) year-long cross-case study with eight elementary teachers investigating their reflective narrative offers benefits for others to consider when being reflective. These benefits include the following, among others:

- teachers learn from reflection on practice;
- pressures from colleagues, administrators, parents, students, and self can affect reflection;
- reflection may challenge professional education and professional development (What have I learned? What is being practiced? What is best for the students?);
- being professional means avoiding extremes in emotional, controversial, and personal reflection;
- self-control is the mark of a professional.

This study aligns with the work of Eby (1997) and Marcos & Tilleman's review of research contributions (2006). Choy and Oo's study (2012) examined the necessity of training teachers in the area of reflective practice. This study with 60 teachers showed that many did reflect to comply with administrators' wishes, but their self-reported levels of reflection on their teaching practices indicated that they did not make deep or meaningful connections between what they do in the classroom and how it could influence student performance. This study revealed that even with training, teachers often



implement only some portions of the practices researchers hope to teach them during PD sessions.

The practice of reflection helps teachers be more aware of their thoughts, knowledge, and actions. Applying this awareness to instruction is critical. As teachers plan instruction, they consider and reflect upon many elements—content, standards, objectives, the needs of their students, and much more. The next area of this review examines the history of and insight into the implementation of standards.

### **Implementation of Standards**

The history of standards in American education is often traced to the publication of *A Nation at Risk* in 1983 by the National Commission on Excellence in Education (Sleeter & Stillman, 2009, p. 306). Later, in September of 1989, President G.H.W. Bush convened a summit in Charlottesville, VA, of state governors who agreed upon six broad goals for education to be reached by 2000. This led to the formation of the National Education Goals Panel; the members of which focused on the creation of national education standards across states (Wixson & Dutro, 1999). The idea of national standards was endorsed by Congress in June 1991 as the National Council on Education Standards and Testing (NCEST) was established. In January 1992, NCEST issued its first report addressing national content standards and a national system of assessment. The first models studied were California's education reform program and the earliest set of standards published, *Curriculum and Evaluation Standards for School Mathematics*, published by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics in 1989 (NCTM, 1989). In the early 1990s the Department of Education endorsed the idea of standards-based reform (SBR), focusing on the creation of voluntary national standards. The goal of SBR

was to change teaching and thereby improve students' learning and reach higher standards (Wixson & Dutro, 1999, p. 90).

By 1996, no less than 17 national commissions and organizations, such as the National Committee on Science Education Standards, had designed national standards prior to the design of state standards (Guskey, 2005; Perna & Davis, 2007). As a result of the report *A Nation at Risk*, all but one state (Iowa) developed new standards for the achievement of school children in K–12 education by 2000. As states developed standards, no consensus arose among the states on their nature, and many educators wondered if standards would fall by the wayside (Perna & Davis, 2007; Wixson & Dutro, 1999). To date, standards have not fallen away.

As the idea of standards became more entrenched in our educational systems, navigation and implementation of standards placed more focus on curriculum development. Perna and Davis's work (2007) provides a framework through which educators construct, analyze, prioritize, align, and implement standards. These researchers proposed the use of the CAST dialogue process (Communicating About Students and Teaching) for various stakeholders in the education process to reflect upon or learn about the rationale behind instruction. CAST focuses on four essential questions: Why do teachers teach what they teach? What are they teaching? What standards are essential to achieve twenty-first century skills? and How can students demonstrate what they know and can do? These questions echo the thoughts of Ralph Tyler, who stressed two questions before any teaching event: What do we want student to learn and be able to do? What evidence would we accept to verify learning (Guskey, 2005, p. 38). Similarly, Perna and Davis (2007) suggested that the best way to align curricular objectives in terms

of standards is to define the standards in terms of authentic student performance. This finding promotes the idea that the classroom teacher should determine the means of instruction and the method by which students will demonstrate their acquisition through authentic assessment. This process involves the continuous actions of teacher thinking and teacher reflection. For example, a study from Queensland, Australia, sheds light into the craft of implementing standards in literacy at the primary grade level (Ryan, 2005). Reported through case studies, Ryan offers perspectives from a fictitious policy maker, administrators, and teachers. Findings from this study demonstrate the necessity of a shared vision by all involved in order for the implementation of standards to be carried out in an effective manner.

To address the growing concern of planning and implementing standards, the topic of professional development (PD) for teachers moved to the forefront for researchers. Guskey (2005) outlined five understandings associated with standards as the basis of professional development, all geared to help students learn at high levels:

- standards are not a new idea;
- standards reflect our philosophy of schooling;
- ideas are more important than the terminology we use;
- good ideas can be implemented poorly or not at all, and;
- success hinges on what happens at the classroom level.

Research by Kirschner (2004) pointed to the benefits of teachers' working collaboratively with standards by focusing on the needs of the students. This study documented a 2-year shared collaboration between five language arts teachers charged with writing a middle school curriculum aligned to the Michigan Curriculum Framework

(MCF) Standards and Draft Benchmarks for the English Language Arts. They were also asked to write their evaluation of the impact of standards-based teaching on student achievement. As teachers wrote the new curricula, their beliefs, knowledge, and ideas about language arts evolved. This shift showed itself through changes in the physical arrangement of their classrooms, grouping patterns, and instructional and assessment practices. Along with teacher changes, student attitudes toward reading changed positively as they began to internalize the reading process and content.

In an effort to provide a common set of standards in mathematics and English language arts (ELA) from state to state, authors of the Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI) finalized a set of standards in June of 2010. By 2012, 46 states adopted either both sets of standards or one or the other. Initially 45 states adopted the standards, but by 2019 seven states removed federal standards in favor of their own state standards (Castronova & Chernobilsky, 2020). Four states never adopted the standards: Virginia, Texas, Alaska, and Nebraska.

Numerous authors and textbook companies began touting implementation guidelines and preparing curricula aligned to the Common Core State Standards (Allyn, 2013; Baker et al, 2015; Fisher et al., 2019; Haycock, 2012; Hollenbeck & Saternus, 2013; Malloy & Gambrell, 2013; Ogle, 2013; Pearson & Hiebert, 2013; Rasinski et al., 2013; Roskos & Neuman, 2013). According to Eilers and D'Amico (2012), there are six essential elements critical to successful implementation of the CCSS:

1. establishing a purpose;
2. setting priorities;
3. aligning personnel with curricular needs;

4. practicing professional discourse;
5. encouraging risk taking;
6. and providing feedback.

When examining each of these elements, we can see the link between teacher thinking, reflection, and the implementation of standards. However, as Valencia and Wixson (2013) noted,

The CCSS will not be achieved simply by asking students to engage in more challenging tasks with more challenging texts. Rather, the success of the Standards depends on educators' ability to understand and implement the core vision and intent of the Standards, and their ability to carefully craft instruction to meet the needs of their students.

This statement reminds us of the importance of reflecting on the elements of implementation as teachers select standards aligned with the content and skills of their lesson.

### **The Implementation of the CCSS**

Because states and districts were given autonomy in their implementation of the CCSS, they have not conducted the implementation uniformly. For assistance in implementation, many districts looked to their curriculum teams for leadership. PD was created to better understand and implement standards, but the content of PD sessions did not always have a consistent format or message. Many teachers received prepared lessons and materials they were told aligned to the CCSS and used these as they moved forward in their instruction. Other teachers were asked to create their own lessons to align to the standards. While public schools may have received various PD opportunities on how to

implement and work with the CCSS, private and parochial schools have not followed suite, leaving many teachers on their own to understand, implement, and assess these standards.

### **Beliefs**

The studies that follow highlight the unique foci of implementing the CCSS. Working to better understand the thoughts and feelings of teachers as the standards were first implemented, Liou et al. (2016) developed an instrument to measure educator beliefs about the implementation of CCSS called the CCSS Beliefs Instrument (CCSSBI). Findings revealed that educators' beliefs may influence the extent to which they make sense of and carry out the implementation of the CCSS. While the majority of teachers were aware of the CCSS, they did not feel prepared to teach to these standards. Specifically, teachers reported that they needed additional resources such as professional development focused on the requirements of the CCSS, student-centered technology to help students learn to the new standards, and new curricula and learning tools aligned to the CCSS. The belief systems of those selecting the standards, planning instruction, instructing, and assessing learning affect the implementation of the CCSS (Barret-Tatum & Dooley, 2015). A study by Liou et al. (2021) not only investigates this issue but also adds to the existing knowledge base on educator beliefs by asking researchers to examine potential factors that may influence the implementation of standards and standards-based reform.

Through a one-time, online survey, Endacott et al. (2016) investigated teachers' views of the CCSS and what factors affected their views, including job satisfaction. Findings from this study revealed that teacher participants' views on CCSS

implementation, teaching conditions, job satisfaction, and leaving the profession early were significantly related to the leadership characteristics of district and building administration (e.g., did administrators promote parent involvement, visit classrooms, and provide for collaboration in relation to the CCSS). Findings from this study also indicated that teachers have an important role to play in the successful implementation of the CCSS. Teachers may take the roles of both teacher-leaders and followers, with both roles significantly affecting interactions. Successful implementation results from the distribution of expertise across a school. When teachers are knowledgeable about the standards and also about effective instructional practices, they can contribute cogent ideas and criticisms about implementation. The onus is on teachers and teacher educators, therefore, to develop these understandings about standards and how to use them to frame instruction, in order to be prepared for successful implementation of the Common Core and for future school improvement initiatives. As Endacott et al. (2016) noted, “Teachers and teacher educators have the responsibility for developing professional capacity to create and participate in meaningful interactions such as collaborative curriculum design, formative assessment, and reflective practice.”

### **Special Populations**

Educators were quick to question the rigor of the standards and were concerned about how the standards would affect instruction for English language learners (ELL) and students with disabilities (SWD). Murphy and Haller (2015) sought to gain insight into the experiences of teachers of English language learners (ELLs) and of students with disabilities (SWD) as they aligned the new Common Core State Standards (CCSS) with previously used standards and instructional approaches during the first year of CCSS

implementation. The participating teachers cited time, professional development, strategies, scaffolding, conversations with other teachers, and their own resourcefulness in finding information from websites, books, and other sources as crucial factors in making implementation a success.

### **Literacy**

Jaeger (2017) conducted one of the more interesting studies examining teachers' confidence in their ability to integrate the CCSS into their classroom. In this study, the cooperating 4th-grade teacher and six students in the classroom were interviewed three times throughout the academic year about their thoughts and beliefs about literacy as the CCSS were implemented into the district supplied literacy curriculum. Additionally, Jaeger collected unit assessments from the curriculum along with scores from state standardized tests and an Informal Reading Inventory from Fountas and Pinnell. Findings from this study revealed

- gains by all students, particularly those who struggled, on all assessment measures;
- increased metacognitive awareness and positive changes in beliefs about reading on the part of focal students because students were asked to reflect on their growth;
- increased teacher confidence in and commitment to the new curriculum;
- a growing use of mediational tools (comprehension strategies) by students.

This study also promoted the development and use of PD based on classroom practices related to the CCSS and encouraged further investigation into how ELL students would engage with the CCSS.



Barrett-Tatum and Dooley (2015) traced the implementation of CCSS-based ELA lessons in two primary-grade classrooms addressing the following research questions: How are teachers implementing ELA CCSS into their literacy instruction? and What learning opportunities are created in this enacted curriculum? Data collected included teacher interviews and classroom observations. Both classrooms used modified reading workshop and writing workshop blocks. Based on data using Engeström's (1999) third general Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT), these researchers examined both teachers' and students' perspectives and found that, despite commonalities between classrooms—related to, for example, student populations, district requirements, and instructional routines—learning opportunities differed. Although both teachers attended closely to the standards, the first-grade teachers' scripts were flexible and responsive to student needs and interests. In the second-grade classroom, instruction was fully teacher-centered, and classroom discourse followed a traditional initiation-response-evaluation interaction pattern where students were primarily receivers of knowledge. Analysis in this study demonstrated that while standards may drive the what of instruction, the enacted curriculum was influenced by each teacher's experiences, worldviews, and pedagogical beliefs. This study raises questions for further research around teachers' epistemological beliefs about children's learning and development and how teacher instruction influences the standardized curriculum. For example, how might a teacher's perceptions of political and cultural components influence instruction? Since the study made use of predetermined units with aligned standards, future research could probe how teachers select standards when they are not given a district- or pre-made curriculum.

**Writing**

The idea of assessment of student performance of the CCSS is a concern of educators. Wilcox et al (2015) focused on how teachers would evaluate student writing on high-stakes assessments. Findings from their study revealed that teachers in the majority of schools were using evidence-based practices such as peer collaboration, prewriting/planning/drafting, using rubrics, and writing to learn. The teachers also focused on comparison/contrast and writing based on research tasks. Teachers shared a generally positive view of the CCSS for writing. However, teachers expressed a more negative view regarding the small emphasis on creative writing in the CCSS. Wilcox et al. (2015) offered considerations regarding aligning CCSS instruction to evidence-based practice and providing teachers with guidance on scaffolding writing in an effort to develop engaged, motivated, and independent young writers.

**Social Studies**

Noticing the requirement for social studies teachers to teach nonfiction reading and writing skills in their content area courses, many educators and researchers have suggested strategies to assist in this matter (Cervetti & Hiebert, 2015; Howard, 2016; Roberts & VanDeusen-MacLeod, 2015; Valbuena, 2020). For example, Britt and Howe (2014) spent a year discussing ways to align the social studies standards with the CCSS-ELA standards using literacy, inquiry, and small group strategies. They cited the work of Jones and Thomas (2006), who argued that the development of reading and writing skills in context helps to deepen students' understanding of social studies content. Britt and Howe (2014) concluded that it is important to implement standards without limiting the content to be addressed. Adding to this area of research, Evans and Clark (2015)

compiled examples of teaching strategies and instructional methods to assist middle-school social studies teachers in integrating literacy skills into their content-area instruction to help strengthen students' understanding of social studies content material. Many of the strategies provided in these articles would be transferable to other content areas as teachers work to build both the critical-thinking and literacy skills needed by students in today's world. Teaching strategies to students was deemed helpful, but more research is needed to prove that student learning results from these practices. Next, I will look at studies in which the ELA standards have been coupled with social studies instruction.

Heafner (2018) studied six classroom teachers and an administrator in a school with a district mandate to lengthen the school day and to implement social studies testing in all grade levels beginning in first grade. In this yearlong study, the administration also decided to move to an integrated model for ELA and social studies instruction to fit all of their school subjects into their school day. Interviews, class observation, and a teacher's lesson journal provided data for the study around this guiding question: To what extent has the use of integration influenced how teachers approach social studies instruction in elementary schools?

Participating teachers reported ambiguity and confusion about how the integration was to happen. The district purchased a new social studies curriculum, but it was intended to be taught as stand-alone content. No specialized training was offered beyond a district-supplied correlation guide and pacing guide that aligned literature from the district-approved reading series with topics from the standard social studies course. While integration of the two subjects was intended, many teachers, especially in the primary

grades, taught two separate lessons each day: one focusing on language arts and reading, and the other focusing on social studies within the allotted “integrated” time period.

In this setting, social studies under the guise of ELA created learning environments in which literacy overshadowed social studies content objectives. In addition to a lack of guidance for integration, and the poor follow-through of PD noted in the study, the process for aligning planning, instruction, or assessment with any of the ELA or social studies standards was not discussed in this study. Overall, this study leaves readers questioning how teachers select standards for their lessons without district-supplied or pre-made curricula materials. This study also raises questions about whether social studies standards and content should be taught within the English language arts framework or vice versa. It was unclear in the study if social studies units were thematic or if the curriculum was chronological through history.

In 2019, Huck studied two classroom teachers (one 3rd grade and the other 4th grade) to identify progress in their district’s recent policy toward practical application of social studies instruction with ELA standards through an interdisciplinary approach. Class observations, teacher interviews, and document analysis demonstrated that planning by both participants began with examining their district’s curriculum maps, which had begun to integrate content with skills. Next, the teachers examined ELA skills from the standards and applied them to social studies related readings (in small group reading instruction) so that students could later apply those same skills when reading during social studies class. Both teachers utilized aspects from prepared ELA modules that offered suggestions for integrating ELA and social studies or ELA and science. The teachers in the study both felt that integrating content with ELA standards helped

students make connections, which promoted the importance of the content and assisted learners in comprehending complex ideas and content (Huck, 2019, p. 14). What is absent from Huck's study is a description of the professional development that informed the practices of these two teachers. While they could be selective with information in their units of instruction, did their professional development or educational background provide them with the skills to design an interdisciplinary unit effectively without the use of premade curriculum maps and units?

Bickford and Taylor (2020) investigated the integration of history, civics, and English language arts in a month-long study of Frederick Douglass and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Researchers were not interested in how the teacher accomplished the integration but focused on how the 4th-grade students interacted with primary and secondary resources, strategies, and scaffolding offered by the teacher. The cooperating teacher taught a fourth-grade class in three different 45-minute subjects: Reading, Writing, and Word Study. She intertwined these lessons for interdisciplinary learning so that students read, wrote, and critically engaged with age-appropriate sources and discipline-specific strategies centered on a central, history-based theme. The writing-in-the-discipline approach was a common experience for these students, but the teacher provided outlines to help new students navigate the process. The teacher also helped elementary students explore, extract meaning from, and articulate understandings about complicated texts. Data for this study included student work samples for evidence of the students' abilities to scrutinize and extract meaning from dozens of sources and the value of revision for text-based writing, particularly its effect on the clarity, criticality, and complexity of students' writing. Researchers interested in finding out which standards were used by the

teachers and how and when they applied those standards would need to work through Bickford & Taylor's study and match the standards with the skills mentioned (drafting, organizing ideas, extracting meaning from and articulating comprehension of complicated texts, thinking critically and historically). Overall, this study adds to a positive body of evidence demonstrating how teachers can integrate ELA skills into the social studies framework, but it did not offer background on how the teachers selected standards or class materials.

### **Professional Development and the CCSS**

Teachers' professional development (PD) is key to any educational change and is critical when directed towards leading and assimilating change, such as introducing standards into the classroom. As teachers lead the way into the new Common Core, professional development becomes integral to the successful implementation of standards. What follows are suggestions from the existing literature described within this review.

As simple as it may sound, some people take for granted or overlook the idea of examining the language of the standards. While outside of the world of literacy the approach taken by Castronova and Chernobilsky (2020)—to investigate science teachers' initial thoughts about the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) at a conference where they were first presented—could be very beneficial in unpacking ELA standards with teachers. The researchers viewed uncovering the nature of teachers' thinking during PD as an important step toward trying to determine how future PD opportunities could be structured to help teachers' thinking align with the NGSS. While it is certainly important to understand how teachers' thinking continues to develop post college or graduate

school, the researchers were only interested in capturing the spontaneous thinking that occurred while teachers attended the institute. Through reflection strips, respondents were encouraged to elaborate on instances in which they heard, saw, or did something that caused them to recognize a (mis)alignment between their current teaching practices and the NGSS.

Understanding the layout of standards documents and how to navigate the documents is critical to understanding standards. If teachers struggle locating standards and understanding how they are organized, their frustration often discourages them from spending time getting to understand the standards. To facilitate the navigation of the CCSS, McLaughlin and Overturf (2012) developed a list of recommendations for PD that they felt would help classroom teachers better understand the CCSS and what they needed to know to help their students achieve the standards. The researchers asserted that it would be easier for teachers to focus on the content once they understood how the standards were organized.

Marrongelle et al. (2013) outlined their vision of PD when working to implement the CCSS with the following questions. How do teachers position and prepare themselves to enact these new standards in ways that support the intended student learning outcomes? What is the nature of the professional development needed for teachers throughout the nation to lead the way? In addition, Barrett-Tatum and Dooley (2015) suggested that PD focus on understanding the epistemological stances of teachers for the adoption of standards instruction. The understanding of teachers involved in PD is critical to their acceptance of the standards and their follow through with topics presented in PD. Hubbard et al. (2020) worked with one school to understand and implement the CCSS

English language arts standards into the content areas of science and social studies. Their model of planning for PD focused on understanding the current practices and the beliefs of the teachers about PD, instruction, and standards before presenting new ideas or initiatives to integrate standards across subjects.

### **The Need for Further Research**

The studies in this literature review offer a wide spectrum of ideas for future research utilizing reflection with in-service teachers. For teachers and administrators to make use of reflection, Ness (2007) has advocated creating an inquiry-based school environment where teachers critically reflect on their instructional goals and priorities. Research that examines the relationship between teacher beliefs and practices should use a combination of qualitative methodologies, such as case studies involving interviews and observations, stimulated recall, and journaling (Fang, 2006; Phillip, 2007; Thompson, 1992) because studies using only self-reported data raise questions about validity. Multiple sources of inquiry are needed to understand complex questions about the role of teachers' beliefs, the use of standards, planning, and reflective practices.

### ***Instruction and Curriculum***

Research utilizing reflection to improve instruction has been suggested in a general sense by Bean et al. (1997). More specifically, Atkinson (2012) proposed more study in the area of teachers' knowledge-in-action. Building on the work that has been done, a critical gap in the literature is the need for researchers to closely follow teachers as they think about lesson planning, as they use standards within their plans, as they reflect on the teaching of lessons, and as they think about student learning. In addition, Parsons (2012, 2018) advocated for research into the adaptations teachers make in their



instruction and how these adaptations are related to student outcomes (in a general sense) as well as student outcomes from self-regulated learning. Bintz and Dillard (2007) proposed studies that investigate the relationship between teacher beliefs on curriculum and student achievement as well as studies that examine the effect of different models of curriculum on student achievement. Unintentionally, many of the studies take for granted the use of research-based best practices for instruction. Thus, there is a need for researchers to study how teachers gain an understanding of research-based practices and how they are able to articulate why they use the practices they do in their instruction.

### ***Planning***

Future investigation into the connections between content area teachers' practices in lesson planning and observations of their classroom teaching through the use of case studies could offer insight into how teachers accomplish planned (and unplanned) tasks, and their thought processes in doing so (Nixon et al., 2012). Examining connections between learning standards and domains with attention to engagement and motivation at various grade levels has also been proposed (Halvorsen et al., 2012). Eley (2006) noted that reflection upon one's thinking, while it may happen, may "be irregular, loose, and unplanned, or very deliberate and strategic" (Eley, 2006, p. 209). His six categories of teacher thinking—sensitivity to student knowledge, promptness of student engagement, awareness of student thinking during teaching, student thinking as a basis for planning, introspection as a source of models of student thinking, and explicit use of teaching conceptions in decision making—support the findings of Iddings and Rose (2012), Gomez (2009), and Lee (2004) and could be an important framework to use within future

research studies to investigate teachers' reflections on planning and their enactments in the classroom.

### ***Professional Development***

In this area, Atkinson (2012) suggests that more research needs to be done to make reflection a habit that teachers follow to heighten their professional skills. Having the professional community examine reflection could facilitate developing such a habit. General topics for investigation may include teachers' examining their assumptions, viewing their own teaching through the eyes of others, examining and reflecting upon bumpy moments in teaching to provide practicing teachers with the opportunity to consider alternatives that may lead to changes in their teaching practice (Romano, 2006).

### **Conclusion**

The studies reviewed in this chapter offer insights into teachers' thinking and reflection and how the Common Core State Standards for English language arts have been explored and integrated into social studies instruction. Many studies utilized district supplied, pre-made curricular materials with standards already aligned. Studies connected with the integration of ELA and social studies offered glimpses into strategies and activities to demonstrate the integration but did not reveal close analyses of teachers or their practices.

The usefulness of reflection is important as educators are called upon to implement standards and equitable learning for all students, yet all too often teachers must implement curriculum packages with scripted lessons that do not necessarily consider the students immediately in front of them. Educators must consider a lot of information and many mandates as they formulate the best instruction for their students.

Overall, there is a gap in research to demonstrate how teachers implement social studies and ELA standards as they teach social studies, specifically without the use of district-supplied guides with pre-aligned standards. Investigation into the purposeful selection, rationale, and implementation of standards into an existing curriculum does not exist, but such research would benefit educators as they seek to implement standards into their local design of lessons and units.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Methodology**

#### **Purpose**

This chapter describes the role of the researcher, study design, research methods, data collection and analysis procedures used with two (2) middle school teachers as they explored aligning their Social Studies instruction with standards within the state of Minnesota, particularly the Social Studies Standards (2012) and the Common Core State Standards (CCSS, 2010).

In an effort to provide a common set of standards in mathematics and English language arts (ELA) from state-to-state, the Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI) finalized a set of standards in June of 2010. By 2012, 46 states had adopted either both sets of standards or one or the other. At the onset of my research in 2012, there were no recorded studies which outlined how elementary teachers have gone about planning for and implementing the CCSS into their individual class instruction. Since 2012, a number of studies have been conducted in areas related to CCSS such as teacher perceptions about standards (Butterfield & Kindle; 2017; Matlock et al, 2016; Stair et al, 2017), leadership requiring the use of CCSS (Filippi et al, 2019), professional development to implement CCSS (Hubbard et al, 2020; Stair et al, 2017), critiques comparison, and analysis of CSS with other standards (Eppley, 2015), planning for mathematics instruction (Estes et al., 2014). More specifically, there are no studies which demonstrate this in the content area of elementary social studies outside of studies about attitudes and professional development (see Chapter 2). Numerous authors and textbook companies are touting implementation guidelines and prepared curricula aligned to the

CCSS, but research substantiating their effectiveness is limited and highly circumstantial (Allyn, 2013; Eilers & D'Amico, 2012; Haycock, 2012; Hollenbeck & Saternus, 2013; Malloy & Gambrell, 2013; Pearson & Hiebert, 2013; Ogle, 2013; Rasinski et al., 2013). When examining each of the elements these authors above propose, it is clear to see the link between teacher thinking, reflection, and the implementation of standards.

The purpose of my study is to document the thinking and planning processes of two elementary school teachers (grade 4 and grade 5) as they aligned standards with their content area teaching to examine how they planned curriculum and moved it into practice, and how they made sense of their actions as they reflect on their practice.

### **Research Questions**

There are four questions which guided this qualitative study:

- What knowledge and beliefs do each of the teachers draw upon as they come to understand the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies (2011) as well as the recent *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects* (2010)?
- Which standards do the teachers select? What rationale do they give for their selections?
- How do the selected standards shape lesson planning and enactment?
- As the teachers reflect on their selection and use of particular standards to teach social studies content, what do they see as being effective in their lesson design? Teaching practices? Student learning? What changes do they suggest for future lesson planning and enactment?

## Theoretical Frameworks

My study is considered qualitative and interpretive because it focuses on understanding how teachers interpret and make sense of their experiences and the world in which they live and work to plan instruction for their students' learning. Rooted in an epistemology of a constructivist theory, this study also incorporated portions of social construction and drew upon ethnographic theories. The purpose, questions, and goals of my study required a framework that allows the concerns and realities of real-world practices to speak for themselves.

*Constructivism* supports the view that humans (the participants) generate and construct their own knowledge and understanding from their interactions with the world around them, both socially and experimentally (Patton, 2002; Vygotsky, 1978). In this study teacher participants operated in their classrooms using a personal set of beliefs based on their individual experiences and learned knowledge of both content and teaching pedagogy. The teachers' knowledge and experiences worked hand-in-hand as each teacher tried to plan instruction around both content knowledge and skills they felt were appropriate and necessary for their students to learn. In doing so, they took into consideration students' background knowledge, interests, and abilities. Each lesson and interaction the teachers had with their content, skills, and students created an experience which shaped the culture of their classroom environment as well as the knowledge gained by each student. Also known as interpretivists, constructivists believe in multiple realities that are "socially constructed, complex, and ever changing" (Glesne, 2011, p. 8). The teacher participants in this study demonstrated the understanding that each class of students is a unique culture in and of itself with varied levels of knowledge, interests, and

abilities. The aim of constructivist research is to understand the world experiences of the participants (Schwandt, 1994).

*Social construction* deals with the construction of knowledge about reality – what is actually happening (Patton, 2002; Schwandt, 2000). From this point of view, all of the understandings, assumptions, and interpretations in this study are contextually embedded. Each participant brought a different set of experiences, beliefs, and perceptions to the study. While both teacher participants are in the field of education, both have taught at different age/grade levels and in different environments. While one teacher participant has taught the material in this study four times, the other is working through her material for the first time. Understanding this aspect sheds light on not only the understanding of content, but also the degree of detail planning and reflection.

### **Study Design**

This study made use of qualitative methodologies to explore teachers' thinking and reflection during planning as they relate to the alignment of standards to their social studies curriculum. Ethnographic methods were used because this study was impacted by the culture of the school in which it was set, the teachers' backgrounds, and the make-up of the classrooms and student bodies (Shavelson & Stern, 1981; Stewart, 1998). Five characteristics of ethnographic study methods were utilized throughout this study. First, the study took place in a natural, non-controlled setting. Second, I created a social relationship with the participants through interviews, allowing for firsthand observation and participant observation (Zaharlick, 1992). Third, as the work of Hammersley (2006) contends, I focused on what happened in a particular work locale or social institution when it was in operation, so that in this sense my participant observation was part-time

(2006, p.4). The fourth characteristic of ethnography is that, as the ethnographer, I played an important role as a research instrument. The depth of information gathered in this study depended on my research questions and desire to capture a full picture of the phenomena under study. To that extent, the fifth characteristic was my use of an electric yet planned approach, allowing me to use various data collection techniques in order to crosscheck the accuracy of data, such as comparison of preliminary interview data with lesson planning materials, observations, and post-teaching interviews. Because I was the only observer, observations and interviews, along with teacher participant audio reflections, offered an inward, first-hand look into the behavior patterns and belief systems of the teachers, allowing me to shed light on what is considered standard or acceptable practice within each teacher's planning process in its natural setting.

My study was also based on case study methodology. I used a holistic, multiple-case design, where each teacher (grade 4 and grade 5) served as an independent case. This is commonly referred to as a Type 3 case study design (Yin, 2014, p. 50). Common studies of this type often include implementation of new curricula, rearranged school schedules, or new educational technology. My study was limited to the social studies content area with integrated literacy instruction by each teacher. While the 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher utilized *Harcourt Social Studies States and Regions* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing, 2012) and the 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher used *Northern Lights: The Stories of Minnesota's Past*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Kenney, 2003), the case studies were not bounded by the textbook. In fact, each case study allowed for the curriculum to be met by each teacher's discretion.



Yin (2014) offers four types of criteria to be addressed as a case study is designed. These include *construct validity*, *external validity*, and *reliability*. *Internal validity* was not a concern for my study because it is used primarily with explanatory or causal studies. Construct validity makes use of multiple sources of evidence during data collection (interviews, observations, artifacts, etc.). My goal was for evidence from each case to converge to show possible patterns of similarity. External validity was supported by the development of a *chain of evidence* that can be traced and followed by another researcher to replicate the study's procedures. The sharing of interview and reflection transcripts in addition to class observations allowed for participant input and clarification and adds to the study's external validity (Yin, 2014). External validity was also addressed by defining the intended audience, as stated below, for which the study's findings will be meaningful.

I do not attempt to generalize the findings from this study. Instead, this research provides a detailed description and analysis of two individual classroom case studies and allows transferability of these findings to similar settings, such as the current practices in the approximate 300 elementary schools of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) schools. Until this past decade, faculty at many of these WELS schools historically had not been trained to examine and implement standards into their curriculum (content area, CCSS, etc.). Findings from this study may assist faculty members in this matter. Reliability of this study was demonstrated by making the steps of the research process clear and operational. The documentation of the case study protocol and the development of a case study database will allow subsequent researchers studying similar settings the ability to arrive at similar findings and conclusions.

### **Researcher's Role**

When I first began teaching, I had the distinct privilege of teaching and being the principal of a one-room school with thirteen students encompassing grades one through eight. After my first year of teaching, I felt that I had a better understanding of the school's curriculum, including the abilities and needs of my students. Realizing what skills and content expectations were in place at the various grade levels allowed me to tailor instruction to meet the needs and interests of my students. This reflection and adjustment was continual. As our school grew, we often received transfer students from various public and private schools. It became evident to me early on that the accompanying reports cards filled in with As, Bs, and Cs did not offer a clear picture of the knowledge which these students were exposed to and possessed. To better understand the educational world of my students, I immersed myself in the study of both our state and county's educational standards for various content areas. I realized that the standards offered a skeleton for the various school curricula that these students experienced—not only for their previous schools, but for my current teaching as well.

This is the background, my personal bias, which I carry with me to this day as a professor of education as I work with teacher candidates and throughout this study. I am interested in not only conveying information, be that theoretical, philosophical, or pedagogical, but also portraying and modeling this information in its practical application. As teacher candidates learn about standards in their content and methods courses, it is important that they understand the practical nature of the standards as a skeleton upon which they can develop their given curriculum. This study offers evidence of the practical application and use of standards in planning, teaching, and reflection.

This background was shared with the teacher participants prior to the study to help them understand the background I brought to the study. It also served as a window into my thought process throughout our interview and post-observation meetings.

In this study, my role as researcher was that of an observer-participant (Merriam, 1988, p. 93). As such, I observed things first-hand, especially things that the participants may not have noticed (Merriam, 1988, p. 88). To account for any bias I brought into the study concerning these observations (internal bias), I wrote questions onto the observation notes taken during the Social Studies classes. I shared my thoughts with the participant teachers in our post-observation meetings. Memos were also added to the transcriptions from the participant teachers' audio files when they reflected on the day and explained their upcoming lessons. These memos were often initiated in the form of statements from me such as, "Tell me more about..." or, "I noticed that you...; explain why you chose to..." My prompts addressed the room arrangement, sequence of lesson topics, selection of standards, crafting of the lesson hook or introduction, choice of resources, and examples shared with students, as well as the alignment of assessments to lesson objectives and standards. Writing and sharing such observations and thoughts in our post-observation meetings allowed the participant teachers to offer me insight into their thinking, planning, to reflect on current classroom and/or school practices and to clarify any misconceptions I might have expressed. The use of participants to review the data proved to be an excellent way to minimize or eliminate my researcher bias.

Selection (external) bias was managed with the selection of teacher participants. As noted later in this chapter, teachers volunteered to participate in my study, as opposed to my selecting certain teachers or certain grade levels. Procedural bias was controlled

with the use of a question protocol which guided the interviews and post-observation meetings.

My interaction in the classroom and with the participants was secondary to the role of gathering data. In this manner I offered insight and collaboration as requested by the participant teachers in post-observation meetings as the two teachers discussed plans for the next lesson and how it might be taught, or as they reflected later in their evening audio recordings on upcoming lessons.

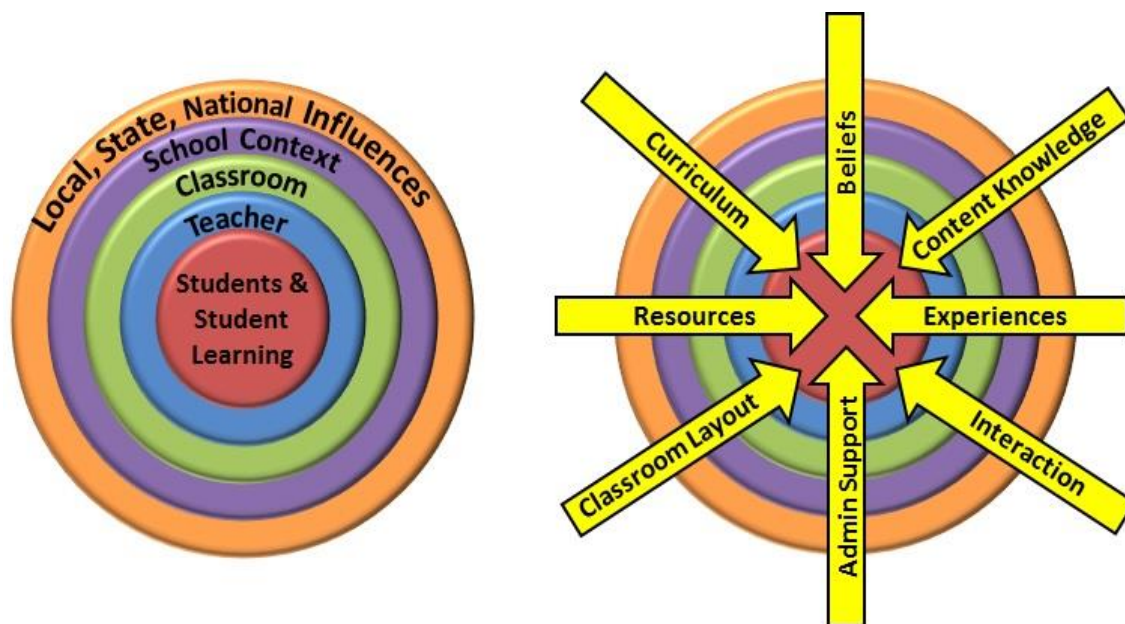
### **Theoretical Context**

To visualize the *participants and influences* in this study, I request that readers of this study picture a series of five concentric circles (see Figure 3.1, left). While each teacher (second ring) and their planning was the focus of this study, the inner-most circle, students and student learning, was the teachers' focus. Impacting each teacher's work was the context of the classroom (third ring) with each classroom as part of the larger school context (fourth). Encircling all of these rings were local, state, and national influences (fifth, outer ring). The layout of this figure was influenced by the graphic representation of the Ecological Systems Theory of Urie Bronfenbrenner (1977). These five circles are on one plane. Crossing this plane are the various data sources, including teacher content knowledge, teacher beliefs, teacher experiences, teacher-student and student-student interaction, curriculum and resources, standards, classroom layout, and administrative support (see Figure 3.1, right). Through discussions with the two teachers, it became evident that their work is additionally impacted by other classes, colleagues, home, community, state, and even national influences. These sources impacted a number

of the concentric circles in various ways and to varying degrees. Data collection and analysis herein reflect such impacts.

**Figure 3.1**

*Theoretical Context*



**Setting**

Two single-grade classrooms (grade 4 and grade 5) in a large parochial school set in a rural Midwestern town (population 13,265 in 2012) were the setting for my study. The school is one of seven elementary schools (2 public, 3 parochial, 2 alternative) in the city. The chart in Table 3.1, compiled in 2013, offers a more detailed look into the make-up of this school.

**Table 3.1***Context of Study*

Grade Level	Grade Level Enrollment	Notes
Pre-K	38	• 16 full-time teachers
K	33	• 3 part-time teachers
1 <sup>st</sup> Grade+	38	• 5 para-professionals
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade+	23	• (*) both single-grade and
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade*	36	multi-grade classrooms
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade*	38	• (+) multi-grade classrooms
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade*	35	
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade*	25	
7 <sup>th</sup> Grade (+)	29	
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade (+)	25	
TOTAL	320	• 19% of the students qualify for free/reduced lunch • 318 Caucasian; 2 African American students

While the public school system has embraced the CCSS and implemented professional learning communities (PLC) to study and construct a CCSS-aligned curriculum, the parochial school teachers selected for my study were just beginning to investigate the CCSS and how they might align these standards with their curriculum and instruction. According to the parochial school principal, this lack of alignment has not been an issue for enrollment, but he foresees it as a possible point in the future as parents become more aware of the CCSS themselves and use the standards as a point of comparison when selecting a school for their children.

An initial meeting with the school principal took place on March 12th, 2013, to see if this school might be interested in participating in this study. A follow-up meeting took place on March 14th, 2013, with the school principal and the school's Curriculum

Committee. The committee agreed that the study would be beneficial to their school. The invitation to participate was extended to all single-grade, self-contained-classroom teachers by the principal and the Curriculum Committee on my behalf. A meeting on June 14, 2013 verbally confirmed two participants (a grade 4 and a grade 5 teacher) for the study that would commence Spring 2014.

## **Data Collection**

### **Data Sources**

#### *Overview*

Researchers studying teacher thinking and teacher reflection have used a variety of methods for data collection, including journal keeping, think alouds (verbal protocol), open- and semi-structured interviews, and stimulated recall. I made use of open and semi-structured interviews, stimulated recall, and audio journals for reflection to trace and analyze the participants teachers' planning process as they worked to align their social studies curriculum and instruction with the recent CCSS (National Governors' Assoc. Cntr. for Best Practice & Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010). Data were collected for one unit in social studies in each classroom. The southeast United States unit in the 4th-grade classroom spanned fifteen class periods, and the Minnesota history unit in the 5th-grade classroom occurred over eleven class periods. I followed an outline of procedures as I gathered data in each classroom and with each participant teacher; my process is outlined in the following sections.

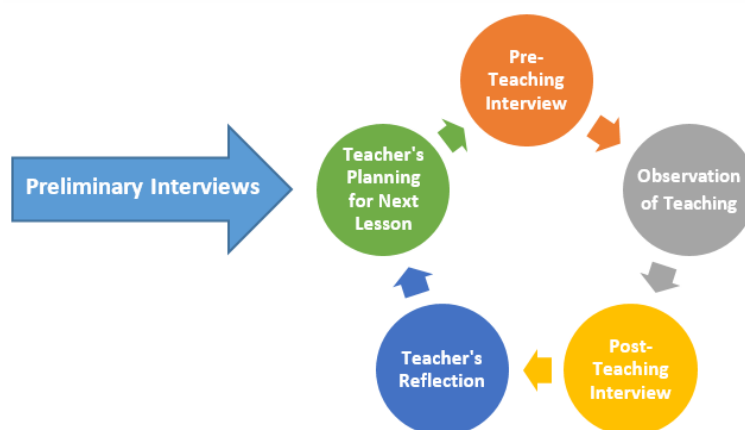
The diagram in Figure 3.2 shows the procedures I used for gathering data for this study. Specifically, I first interviewed each participant teacher separately to better understand their teaching and educational background. This helped to situate each

teacher's teaching philosophy and attitude toward Social Studies, and offered a basis for their familiarity with the Minnesota K–12 Academic Standards in Social Studies (2011) as well as the *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects* (2010).

Also included in these preliminary interviews was time for the participant teachers to set forth their plans for the units I would be observing in Social Studies. This included time for them to introduce me to their school curriculum, resources, planning tools, school polices, and individual classroom routines and practices.

### Figure 3.2

#### *Data Collection Cycle*



Each participant teacher sent an audio recording (pre-teaching interview) nightly which outlined the lesson for the following day. Included in their recordings were their lesson objective(s), a verbal outline for the lesson, and a rationale for selected standards. These audio files were transcribed in preparation for observing each lesson and used as a check-and-balance tool when analyzing the lesson observation notes. Included in this



recording were each teacher's reflections based on the day's lesson and our post-teaching meeting.

This cycle continued throughout the course of the study and concluded with an interview at the completion of the units of study with the individual participant teachers. A final interview was held with each participant teacher as the individual reflected on the study and further application of the study findings for their faculty and school curriculum.

### ***Analysis***

As a multiple case study, the data were analyzed through inductive analysis (Patton, 2002, p. 55). Through observation, reading, and re-reading of the data, I analyzed the data to generate general patterns. Open coding, often referred to as "*in vivo* coding" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), allowed me to pull together examples from the data to create patterns, themes and categories (Ryan & Bernard, 2000, p. 783). Glazer and Strauss's constant comparison method (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, pp. 84-95; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Cohen et al., 2007, pp. 473, 493-494) helped me to compare these patterns, the conditions under which these themes occurred, and the frequency of the patterns. Categories emerged as patterns became more apparent and frequent. During my analysis I sought to understand the various dynamics of each case. Last, I used a cross-case analysis (Patton, 2002) after each single case was transcribed and analyzed and a search for patterns and themes that cut across the individual cases.

### ***Physical Plant Context***

Physical attributes of a school can impact the classroom and teacher. General demographic information about the administration, the school faculty and staff, and the student body was collected to help situate the context for learning and instruction. This

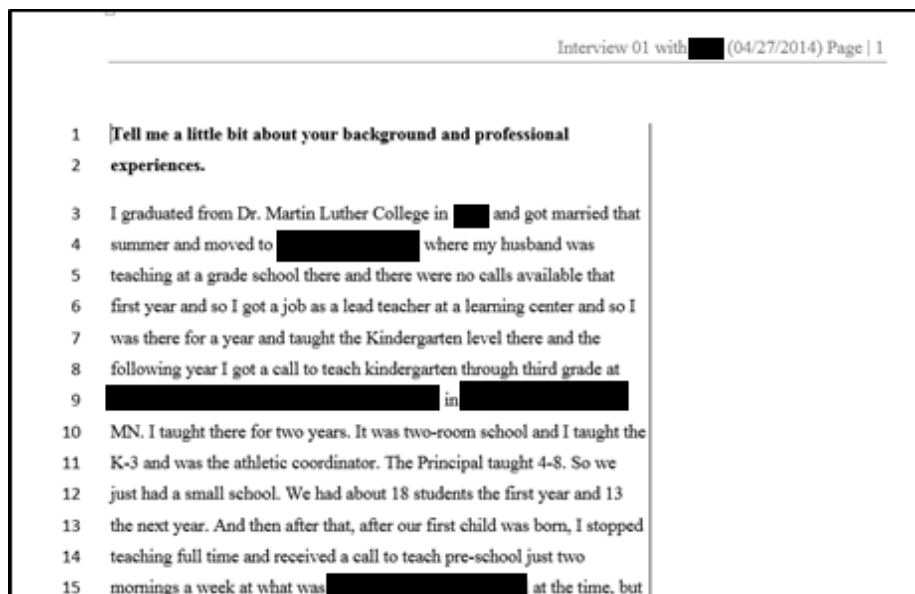
information is listed above in the section on *Participants*. Information regarding the layout (classrooms, library, etc.) of the school as well as the school's budget (money allocated to curriculum support) were collected but did not affect the teachers' planning or instruction. This information was gathered from the school principal and participating teachers through interviews.

### *Interviews*

A number of interviews took place during this study to better understand the general educational beliefs and philosophy of the participant teachers (Cohen et al., 2007, p. C16). Three preliminary interviews were held prior to the start of the units of instruction taught by each teacher. My goal for these sessions was to investigate the teachers' beliefs, content knowledge, and pedagogical practices, which needed to be established before moving into areas such as planning and instruction. While each question listed in the verbal protocol was important, some questions were addressed within one another and often led to further inquiry. A sample transcript from an interview is shown in Figure 3.3; the total interview protocols are presented in *Appendix A—Interview Questions*.

### Figure 3.3

#### *Sample Interview Transcript*

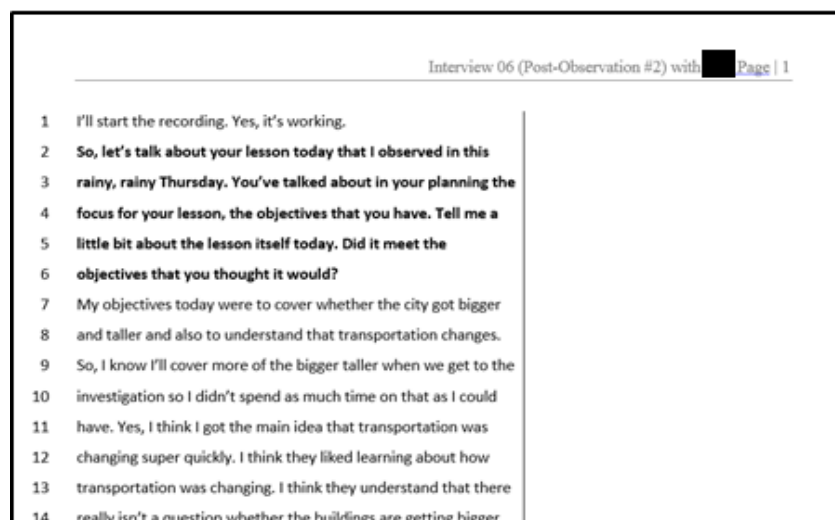


The initial reading of the interview transcripts yielded a wealth of background data. As I read through the transcripts, I composed theoretical memos to outline topics of discussion. While an interview protocol was utilized, the two teachers offered information in their responses which helped me to better understand their background, teaching philosophy, and stance on teaching Social Studies.

My analysis included posing questions as I examined the content area of social studies and literacy, to seek to understand the decisions teachers make (the “how” and “why”). Another set of questions was used to investigate beliefs and practices regarding how a published textbook, curriculum, or set of standards is aligned and implemented (Berg & Clough, 2006; Clark & Peterson, 1984; Eley, 2006; Zeichner & Liston, 1996). My inquiry-analysis questions are presented in *Appendix B—Planning Questions*.

I collected class period data from a pre-teaching interview, observation of the lesson, and a post-teaching interview. I transcribed audio recordings of each teacher's planning and discussed them with each teacher. I collected copies of lesson materials at the teacher's discretion (prior to teaching or after teaching). During the teaching of the lessons, I took field notes that outlined the procedures and flow of the observed lesson. These materials were used as part of the reflection process for me and the participant teacher.

In the reflection portion of this study, I utilized interviews (*Appendix B-Planning Questions* and *Appendix C-Lesson Related Questions*) in addition to teacher self-recordings during their lesson reflection and planning. I recorded and transcribed these interviews for analysis as this reflection process often flowed into the planning stage of the next lesson. Analysis of interviews and discussion were aided by speech recognition software (*Dragon Naturally Speaking*). A sample of a typical interview transcript in Figure 3.4.

**Figure 3.4***Sample Reflection Interview Transcript**Field Note Observations*

I composed theoretical memos in the margins of transcripts throughout the study to document thoughts, observations, and reflections (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Charmaz, 2000, pp. 517, 525, 783; Emerson et al., 1995). In addition to observations, I posed questions. The most common memos I wrote were comments such as “Why?” and “more information needed here,” and personal thoughts such as “I wonder if...” These were written up and shared with the participant teachers periodically throughout the study for their review and elaboration. A sample of the field note observation is shown in Figure 3.5. Colors were used to indicate teacher-talk, student responses, and resources used.

### Figure 3.5

#### Sample Field Note Observation

New Classroom arrangement of desks						
	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Student names extracted					1
2						2
3						3
4						4

- 10:40am [redacted] is finish music class "This Land is Your Land..."
- Handout of quiz that the students took earlier this morning (States/Capitals)
- Handout of the play "Trouble in Jamestown"

10:48am	OK students, I need you to get 2 things out: your <b>Social Studies books and your journals</b>
	[redacted] turns on projector and <b>SMART Board</b> . A picture of an Indian village is up on the screen]
	I'd like you to open your books up to page 184 [Student asks a question...]
	This morning you took your quiz. We're going to switch gears here a bit and start to talk about the history of the
	Where's [redacted]? Is there a Bill Nye Social Studies Guy? [redacted] is in Wisconsin. And no, there isn't anyone like Bill Nye for Social Studies.
	I'd like you to look at page 184 at the "You Are There." Pencils down please. I'd like you to follow along with me as we read that. [redacted] reads aloud to the class]
	So the 1 <sup>st</sup> people who were in America were who? <b>Indians</b> . Yes, the Native Americans.
	If you look at the next page there – at the 1 <sup>st</sup> paragraph, "Early Peoples" there's a type of Native Americans and the way you pronounce them is Pow-a-tan. Can you find it? Point to it. If

#### Audio Recording

Participants recorded their thoughts while planning and reflecting upon lessons using the free recording software *Audacity* (<http://web.audacityteam.org/>). One participant used her own laptop for this purpose while I supplied a laptop for the other teacher to use throughout the study. I transcribed these recordings and analyzed them for insights into each teacher's thinking (*Thinking-in-action*, Schön, 1983). All audio recordings of interviews, verbal protocols (think alouds), discussions, and teacher planning were transcribed using speech recognition software, *Dragon NaturallySpeaking*, and cross-checked for accuracy.

### *Artifacts*

In addition to interviews and observations, I collected artifacts, including examples of teacher planning such as textbook pages for the lessons taught, block plans, lesson plans, copies of student activities (worksheets, projects, assignments). Samples of students' final work were offered to me by each teacher. A record of interviews, observations, audio files, and transcripts is included in the appendices.

### **Summary**

The data sources and analysis strategies described above outline the processes I undertook to analyze and interpret data collected during this study. The next level of my work was to create two distinct case studies of each teacher. To create each case study, I started with each guiding research question and reviewed my memos for information shared by each participant. From this list of information, I created assertions—statements of fact and belief—demonstrating the thoughts and actions of each participant to develop my response to each guiding question. Each assertion contains facts and details to support the assertion and ends with a conclusion.

Case number one, KG (Kennedy Grier), is reported in chapter four; case number two, CS (Connie Schultz), is reported in chapter 5. After each case was constructed, I did a cross-case analysis. To accomplish this I once again examined each guiding question and the assertions for each participant teacher, looking for commonalities as well as differences, to answer the guiding questions. The cross-case analysis is reported in the discussion portion of chapter six. Finally, I drew upon the cross-case analysis to develop my conclusions and implications,

Table 3.2, Alignment of Data, Analysis and Guiding Questions, outlines the various data collected and the analysis strategy used for each in relation to the questions guiding this study.

**Table 3.2**

*Alignment of Data, Analysis and Guiding Questions*

Research Question	Data Source	Analysis Strategy
What knowledge and beliefs do each of the teachers draw upon as they come to understand the <i>Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies</i> (2011) as well as the recent <i>Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts &amp; Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects</i> (2010)?	Semi-structured and Open Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transcription of interviews (Patton, Qualitative research and evaluation methods, 2002)</li> <li>• Theoretical Memos (Miles &amp; Huberman, 1994)</li> <li>• Open coding (Strauss &amp; Corbin, 1990)</li> </ul>
	Teacher's planning notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theoretical Memos (Miles &amp; Huberman, 1994; Charmaz, 2000)</li> <li>• Open coding (Strauss &amp; Corbin, 1990)</li> </ul>
	Annotations (textbook, CCSS, lesson materials, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theoretical Memos (Miles &amp; Huberman, 1994; Charmaz, 2000)</li> <li>• Open coding (Strauss &amp; Corbin, 1990)</li> </ul>
Which standards do the teachers select? What rationale do they give for their selections?	Semi-structured and Open Interviews as teachers prepare their unit and individual lessons <hr/> Semi-structured and Open Interviews after lessons have been taught <hr/> Audio recordings from the teachers as they are planning (transcribed)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See above</li> </ul>



Research Question	Data Source	Analysis Strategy
How do the selected standards shape lesson planning and enactment?	Semi-structured and open interviews after lessons have been taught Observation in classroom as lesson is taught	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See above</li> </ul>
As teachers reflect on their selection and use of particular standards to teach social studies content, what do they see as being effective in their lesson design? Teaching practices? Student learning? What changes do they suggest for future lesson planning and enactment?	Semi-structured and open interviews after lessons have been taught Audio recordings from the teachers as they reflect on their lesson in preparation for the upcoming lesson (transcribed) Possible artifacts and lesson materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See above</li> <li>• Theoretical Memos (Miles &amp; Huberman, 1994; Charmaz, 2000)</li> <li>• Open coding (Strauss &amp; Corbin, 1990)</li> </ul>

## Chapter Four

### Findings: Assertions and Data

This chapter reports the analysis of data from the first of two upper elementary teachers who teach grades 5 and 4 as they explored aligning their social studies instruction with standards within the state of Minnesota, particularly the *Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies* (2011) and the MN-ELA Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects (CCSS, 2010).

Each case study, based on the individual participant teacher, follows a parallel structure broken into three parts: an introduction to the participant and her setting; findings asserted with rationale derived from data analysis; and guiding questions with my analytical synthesis and interpretive commentary, based on field notes from interviews (Appendix D), observations (Appendix M), and teacher-supplied planning artifacts (Appendices G, H, I, J, K, and L). The use of field notes throughout both chapters 4 and 5 is indicated by the notation (FN-xx-xx-xxxx; xxxx) which includes the calendar date (MM-DD-YEAR) followed by the line within the typed transcription of data. When no number line is present, the notation refers to observation or artifact memos.

The following research questions guide my analysis and reporting of findings:

1. What knowledge and beliefs do each of the teachers draw upon as they come to understand the *Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies* (2011) as well as the MN-ELA *Common Core State Standards for English*

*Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects (2010)?*

2. Which standards do the teachers select? What rationale do they give for their selections?
3. How do the selected standards shape lesson planning and enactment?
4. As teachers reflect on their selection and use of particular standards to teach social studies content, what do they see as being effective in their lesson design, teaching practices, and student learning? What changes do they suggest for future lesson planning and enactment?

As outlined in Chapter 3, I conducted pre-teaching and post-teaching interviews and in-class observations, along with participant-supplied audio reflections and classroom artifacts. These sources provided data for the case. In the analysis and interpretation section below, I share information about the first participant teacher, Joyce. She describes her educational background, prior teaching roles, and familiarity with standards as well as her experiences teaching social studies. The interviews and subsequent analyses offered insights into the goals and priorities Joyce had for teaching social studies and how she viewed the current school curriculum. Probing questions during the interviews encouraged Joyce to discuss connections between literacy instruction and social studies.

### **Introduction to Joyce and her Classroom**

This case study of Joyce illustrates a reflective professional educator with nineteen years of teaching experience, spanning third through eighth grades. Joyce taught in various grade configurations (single- and multi-grade combinations) through full-time, part-time, departmentalized, and self-contained situations. These settings, both in rural

and suburban areas of three states, provided her with many experiences and ideas. She credits a mentor during her first year of teaching fifth grade in Lake Mills, WI, with helping her develop her approach to teaching—bringing personal connections into the classroom—and becoming aware of her environment and expectations. Joyce’s mentor during her first years of teaching explained the importance of seeing the bigger picture and how everything fits. Joyce expanded on this, saying, “Not only is it important that the teacher understands the big picture, but the students seem to understand more when they know the big picture and then learn about all of the pieces that fit together to make it” (FN: 03-18;2014; 063). My analysis of Joyce’s teaching indicated that she employs this same whole-to-part approach to teaching practices in her classroom.

Joyce brings her lived experiences into her self-contained fifth-grade classroom along with her understanding of content and the background of her students. My study focused on her social studies, class which was held each afternoon following the students’ lunch and recess. Eighteen students (10 female/8 male) were grouped in various configurations throughout the unit of study I observed; these included pairs, triads, and a horseshoe or U-shaped whole-class configuration, depending on the lesson activity for the day. In addition to the students, one full-time para-professional (para) attended to one special-needs student each day throughout the class, helping him locate materials, focus, and stay on-task. After each class, the para met privately with the student and reviewed the lesson using additional pictures and other resources to help clarify content, review main ideas, and complete associated assignments. Joyce and the para worked seamlessly to differentiate assignments and instruction to allow this student to remain part of the community of learners.

In the remainder of this chapter, I document what I learned from my study of Joyce and her classroom. This first section of my analysis stemmed from my Guiding Question #1: What knowledge and beliefs do each of the teachers draw upon as they come to understand the *Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies* (2011) as well as the recent *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects* (2010)? Key assertions are stated below. Data, analysis and interpretive commentary are then presented to substantiate my claims.

### **Key Assertions from Guiding Question #1**

1. To be an effective educator, Joyce believed in the importance of planning, understanding content knowledge, and pedagogy.
2. Joyce's knowledge and beliefs about the subject matter of Social Studies manifested in how she worked to connect student lives to the complementary discipline areas of social studies, history, and geography.
3. Joyce demonstrated the crucial connections between the content knowledge of Social Studies and literacy.

### ***Assertion #1***

Joyce is an organized teacher who takes great strides to meet the content set out by her school. Having taught Minnesota history for a number of years, she is confident in her subject matter knowledge as well as the correlated MN social studies standards. She makes use of these standards to outline her major units of study during the summers preceding each academic year.

Following the whole-to-part approach Joyce mentioned in the introduction section above, she began her unit lessons with a discussion around a big picture or main objective. To drive this home in her lessons, she presented various experiences from the area where her students live. For example, when reviewing a previous lesson on Native American Indians while teaching Minnesota history, Joyce not only mentioned Ojibwa Indians, but showed pictures of where they lived, told stories of how they lived, and even connected the group of American Indians to locations and celebrations of today (FN: 03-18-2014; 087). Joyce encouraged her students to explore ideas and places and to ask questions throughout all of the units I observed.

Joyce draws upon what she believes is good teaching (pedagogical practices), professional educator dispositions, the knowledge of content being taught, and the ability to connect content to the lives of students in a memorable manner. When asked to describe a professional educator, Joyce referenced the “Standards of Effective Practice for Teachers” the state of Minnesota has set forth for the preparation for teacher candidates (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/rules/8710.2000/>). As a mentor for beginning teachers, and as she maintains her Minnesota teaching license, she is quite familiar with these standards. She noted,

I believe that continuously reflecting on these standards sets an individual apart as a professional. Wouldn't you want your doctor to reflect on what he or she is doing—to be up on current practices? A teacher should be no different. (FN: 03-18-2014; 074)

Joyce's comments indicate that she believes that a professional educator knows the subject matter to be taught, connects this knowledge to the students across subject areas

and their everyday lives, and works with students to understand and recognize biases, discrimination, and prejudices. An effective teacher does all this while also considering how a student's learning is influenced by individual experiences, talents, and prior learning, as well as language, culture, family, and community values. As Joyce stated,

If a teacher only knows content, but doesn't understand how to teach the content, the students may not learn as well. If I know the content, how to teach, and know something about my students, then I can make connections and build bridges to help students learn and understand that content even better. (FN: 03-28-2014; 086)

This comment by Joyce demonstrates her belief that a solid foundation in content, pedagogy, and child-development knowledge is necessary to teach well and to make connections between the subject being studied and the lives of the students who are learning this content (Ball, et al, 2008; Elbaz, 1981; Shulman, 1987). The mere knowing of information is not enough; educators must be able to put theory and facts into practice. Their ability to do this is affected by their professional skill set and personal belief systems (Zhang, 2008; Marzano et al, 2012) and the importance they place on the content being taught.

Joyce continued to elaborate on the importance of understanding racial tensions and being open to discussing this topic with students: "It is critical in raising informed citizens, even if the tension isn't happening in their back yard, or maybe it did happen here many years ago" (FN: 03-18-2014; 095). Joyce's statement shows that she believes that a professional educator understands the contributions and lifestyles of the various racial, cultural, and economic groups in our society. This belief was very important to

her, especially in light of recent racial tensions both in Minnesota and across the United States.

When discussing pedagogy, Joyce stressed the importance of creating a safe and flexible learning environment. Joyce's classroom is a welcoming, organized, and safe environment with openness, mutual respect, and support demonstrated in her interactions with students as well as in the interactions of the students with one another. Varied perspectives and questions were often solicited, and students were encouraged to further their learning and application of the class material (FN: 03-20-2014; 185). The classroom arrangement and atmosphere were very student centered, allowing for movement, discussion, and access to materials, resources, and the classroom SMART Board. Bulletin boards showcased student work, announcements, and information on topics being studied. Motivational posters, pictures, and scripture passages provided a welcoming aesthetic to what may otherwise be considered a non-descript classroom. Bookshelves and resources, such as pictures and maps, were readily available to and accessed by students.

As a reflective practitioner, Joyce articulated her intentionality in her pre- and post-teaching reflections. She consistently evaluated the quality of her teaching efforts, always striving to make connections between content and the lives of the students. Joyce shared, "I really like having them [students] connect to the history in memorable ways, [making] something that they can look back at and say, 'Hey, I remember doing that!'" (FN: 03-18-2014, 102). To help make their learning more memorable, Joyce often incorporates a year-long project, such as passports, diaries, travel journals, postcards, or mock *parfleche* (Appendix E) which allows students to collect facts they learned



throughout their study of Minnesota history and create a tangible artifact that commemorates their learning: “I want these kids to feel comfortable talking about it, asking one another, ‘Did you know this happened?’ And I want them to be so excited that they actually take it [the information] home” (FN: 03-18-2014; 108, 195).

My interpretation of the data that supports my first assertion shows Joyce to be a planner and a professional educator who understands pedagogy and assessment, content and standards, student development, and the curriculum at hand. Joyce demonstrated a good understanding of the MN Social Studies standards (see Appendices G & I), but revealed that she taught the MN-ELA standards without intentionally planning or initially (at the beginning of this study) realizing that she was meeting these standards. For example, classroom arrangement, as mentioned above, allowed for much student discussion, the sharing of ideas and opinions, and the referencing of multiple sources of information. My analysis of these activities and classroom arrangements showed that Joyce was, in fact, making use of particular state standards [see Appendix F] but was not articulating intentionality in planning for these MN-ELA standards that she talked about during early interviews or initially mapped to instruction within lesson plans at the beginning of the study.

Overall, my analysis indicated that Joyce was an organized teacher who confidently taught the content required by her school. She was confident in her subject knowledge and MN Social Studies standards as indicated in her ability to easily reference topics previously taught as well as upcoming. She was well-versed in the ten themes from NCSS and frequently referred to social studies standards as she spoke about the content being studied. My review of her summer planning notes corroborates this as well. While

she planned her lesson and instruction, she also encouraged comments and questions from her students, yet demonstrated the ability to bring the discussion back to the main points of the lesson and continue with her plan.

***Assertion #2***

Joyce's knowledge and beliefs about the subject matter of Social Studies manifested in how she worked to connect student lives to the complimentary discipline areas of social studies, history, and geography.

When discussing her knowledge and beliefs surrounding the teaching of social studies, Joyce began by clarifying terminology: "Social studies is not totally the same as history and geography. It is important for students to understand how people interacted with one another, their society, the land, and the world-at-large" (FN: 03-18-2014; 127). From this excerpt we see that, in her opinion, all three—social studies, history, and geography—complement one another.

**Social Studies.** The National Council for Social Studies (NCSS) states that social studies provides coordinated, systematic study drawing upon such disciplines as anthropology, archaeology, economics, geography, history, law, philosophy, political science, psychology, religion, and sociology, as well as appropriate content from the humanities, mathematics, and natural sciences. The primary purpose of social studies is to help young people develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world. (NCSS Task Force on Standards for Teaching and Learning in the Social Studies, 1993, p. 213)

My analysis and interpretation of Joyce's pre- and post-teaching interviews and in-class observations indicated that Joyce demonstrated this definition as she referred to social studies as "a broad term that connects school subjects with their lives and society" (FN: 03-18-2014; 140). "Students need to connect with people far away—not just in location or distance, but in time as well" (FN: 03-18-2014; 242, FN: 03-20-2014; 025). An example of this would be her references to Charles Pillsbury, the flour milling industry, the Pillsbury Doughboy, farming, and the jobs created through this industry—the history, the employment opportunities today (farming, corporate business, and retail), and the food (cereals, baking mixes, etc.) used by everyone today (FN: 03-18-2014; 368).

Further analysis of Joyce's lesson plans, her audio reflections, and my observation of her teaching showed her emphasis upon this connection of people to society, especially in her lesson on why people moved to Minnesota (FN: 03-31-2014; 25). References to and discussion of academic terminology, such as *working class*, *cultural diversity*, *prejudice*, *discrimination*, *poverty*, *disease*, and *anonymity* in her lessons, were eye-opening to some students because the community and family in which they live is very heterogeneous (FN: 03-27-2014; 138; FN:04-04-2014; 109; audio file 03-26-2014). Students were asked to research their ancestral roots to find out how long their family had been in Minnesota and to figure out, as best as possible, their ancestral country. Students reported back stories of how their families came to Minnesota, what jobs they had, and where they lived. Because the majority of students reported ancestral heritage from either Germany or Poland, Joyce compared the size and population of towns, geographic features, and major industries from the early 1900s when people immigrated here to present-day statistics via census information. Discussions continued around various

languages, religious beliefs, and other cultural practices (FN: 03-26-2014; 104). My analysis indicates that this activity built a personal connection between the students, their families, and the content being studied.

A common thread I found running through Joyce's teaching was the incorporation of many English Language Arts Skills in her social studies lessons. When students relayed their family history, Joyce indicated that they "summarized...information presented...orally" (FN: 03-26-2014; 100). Here again my analysis shows the opportunity to make use of additional MN-ELA standards in her instruction (see Appendix F).

**History.** Joyce said, "History is important, too, because students need to learn about the past, and work to understand how it impacts them today and, in their future" (FN: 03-26-2014; 104). In Joyce's lesson reflections, she noted that students often consider some facts and information to be trivial and therefore may not commit those things to memory (FN: 03-26-2014; 106). Joyce stressed the importance of helping students make

connections back to things that were in the past so they can't just think everything has been the way it is now. They need to understand what happened in a particular setting and why it was important at that time. Their [the students'] "now" is way too short.

In Joyce's preliminary interview with me, she recalled how she strove to connect the Minnesota history lessons to the lives of her students by asking, "Of this list of jobs in the 1880s, which ones are around today and which ones aren't and why?" (FN: 03-26-2014; 104). During her Chapter 12 lesson, Joyce made use of the activity "Mapping

Minnesota.” This activity addressed areas of German immigrant settlements, major river locations, languages spoken, and the recognition that there may be no single dominant nationality in certain areas of Minnesota as compared to other areas. In reviewing this activity, Joyce asked students why certain towns were located in particular areas (FN: 03-25-2014;125). In discussing the use of this activity, she shared her intention for students to make connections between natural resources and the potential for industry, and to review that some areas were settled by groups of people from other countries. My analysis of this lesson indicates that the students made these connections easily, often referring to maps and pictures from their book as well as images Joyce had previously displayed on the SMART Board.

In her Chapter 13 lesson on “The Common Good,” Joyce brought in the connection between World War I abroad and how the students’ town changed many of its street names to show a patriotic allegiance to the United States, versus the use of street names which referenced cities in Germany or showed a Germanic connection (FN: 04-08-2014). While I was observing Joyce teach, she often asked students to offer explanations about why things happened.

Throughout the lessons I observed, I found that Joyce continued to get her students to see the interplay between the environment, industries, and individuals:

It’s not hard to say that social studies and understanding the interaction of people is important if you branch out a little further and understand why did they make roads or stuff next to the rivers and why did they have railroads that went from here to there and then start connecting it to even other communities and other people and other cultural groups...everything is so connected to social studies—

why and where people are, what they're doing—so I don't think it's hard to make a connection. It's important to study social studies and to connect it to their future. (FN: 03-20-2014; 378)

**Geography.** Joyce's explanation of *geography* focused on how people interact with one another and their environment. As she noted, students need to really understand how this globe works and all the people that live in it. If you don't even care about the people around you enough to be curious why people interact as they did, you're not going to share your history with much interest. (FN: 03-26-2014; 214)

The best way to learn geography, according to Joyce, is to live it and travel it as much as possible:

When you're going to places where history is or has happened, or when you go to museums and visit places, you are putting this information together, and then you can start talking about it and making those connections in history, or social studies becomes easier. (FN: 03-26-2014; 218)

She explained that students need geography, “the physical features and places, how people interact with one another, and make a living, etc.” (FN: 03-18-2014; 129). This interaction among people, the environment, and the economy showcased itself in Joyce's teaching as she referred to names of people, their industries, and the impact on the environment and economy.

Overall, Joyce's knowledge and beliefs about the subject matter of social studies could be seen in how she worked to connect student lives to the complementary discipline areas of social studies, history, and geography. She did this by making many

relevant connections to the children's lives—often specific families if she knew them well—and to local history, landmarks, and events. Joyce used maps not only of Minnesota, but also of the United States and Europe to help students visualize locations such as landforms, towns, and cities. Map skills, such as directionality and distance, were commonly discussed—both the traditional use of map scale as well as looking locations up on the classroom computer and using features such as Google Earth or Google Maps. Woven through many of Joyce's lessons were the questions, "So what? Why should this matter to us today?" Joyce modeled her intent and concern that the students would not only know information, but be able to explain why it was important to them in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

***Assertion #3***

Joyce demonstrated the crucial connections between the content knowledge of social studies and literacy.

My analysis of Joyce's planning, instruction, and assessment indicates that she believes in linking the teaching of social studies with literacy learning in her classroom. Her classroom operates around a balanced language arts approach indicated by the integration of reading, and writing with grammar, spelling, handwriting, listening, speaking, viewing, and visual representation. The general routine of Joyce's teaching included a class review of previous lessons as well as closure to a lesson, which involved students listing people and their importance to history and the economy. Joyce facilitated these review and closure episodes by typically questioning the whole class, or giving turn-and-talk opportunities with partners, or requiring short written response on notecards or Post-Its and then having sharing sessions among members of the entire class. Joyce

repeatedly referenced good writing and spelling skills as students composed and shared their written work with one another. When students discussed thoughts and opinions with one another, Joyce reminded them of protocols for being both good listeners and speakers. I found that Joyce's practices highlighted her unintentional but standard pedagogical practice and meeting ELA standards (see Appendix F). By *standard*, I mean that Joyce initially planned her lessons to include ELA related skills, although she did not realize that they were in the MN-ELA standards, such as students viewing pictures and charts and explaining their meaning, determining the meaning of vocabulary words from the context in their textbook reading, summarizing text, etc. (See Appendix E). For example, she helped students hone their viewing and visual representation skills through teacher-directed lectures where they viewed illustrations, cartoons, photographs, and maps as well as their textbooks. Students were quick to point to images and charts while discussing topics in small groups.

It should also be noted that her daily language arts practices did not reveal a deep application of how to teach writing as a tool for learning within social studies. Instead, she tended to use writing as a way to have students show their learning. For example, asking students to write was a hallmark of every lesson that I observed Joyce teach: "We've been able to do a lot of writing activities in social studies with what they're reading, such as passports, travel journals, or the post cards in a *parfleche* like we're doing this year." The only intentional demonstration of writing to learn came in the lessons I observed related to Chapter 13 when Joyce included specific lessons on research skills and writing connected with social reforms, medicine, and common diseases of the time. After our discussion about the MN-ELA standards, Joyce updated her planning



notes for Chapter 13 for both detailed content from the textbook as well as possible MN-ELA Standards (see Appendix H). At the close of my observations, Joyce organized her students into groups, giving each group a chapter to summarize and turn into an interactive review activity that the entire class could participate in: “The students like it when they get to create SMART Board presentations and activities (matching, Jeopardy, etc.) to summarize a chapter, too, but this takes quite a bit of research and time to put together” (FN: 03-18-2014; 104).

The skill of reading was crucial to students’ reviewing information and completing assignments. Joyce spoke about the varied level of independent readers in her classroom and how self-selected texts at a variety of levels for their sustained silent/independent reading time helped motivate students to read, but quickly clarified that

unfortunately everyone reads from the same Minnesota history book, which makes it difficult to differentiate the reading of the text, unless you count on finding things on-line for students to read about the topics we’re studying and watching the various news clips. (FN: 03-18-2014; 178)

To accommodate the various reading levels of her students, Joyce allowed students to often read aloud with partners, or to read silently and then turn-and-talk with partners, in addition to independent silent reading of the text. These practices allowed children to read the text and complete an occasional graphic organizer or worksheet, but did not provide students with content reading and discipline-specific tools to navigate the text (i.e., SQ3R, KWL, Semantic Mapping). Likewise, I did not observe instances where she taught students how to develop careful listening and speaking skills within the discipline.

In our interviews as well as in her recorded reflections, Joyce frequently brought up the importance of vocabulary and comprehension along with other reading-related skills, such as sequencing and comparison. Student-demonstrated comprehension of information came in both written and oral forms. Joyce focused on students' learning industry- and location-specific vocabulary (academic language) as well and learning about influential individuals to help students understand the social interaction of people and connect the history and places. For example, as Joyce noted,

The ability to understand all of the meanings of words is important. I often ask students to define terms, such as *sod*, and have them make up questions about the facts from the text they have read. They could make up true/false questions; they could make up fill-in-the-blank questions, any type of questions the students could answer with those facts. (FN: 03-20-2014; 037)

She added, "This really shows if students understand what they have read. . . . Students need to not only hear it, and read it. They need to also discuss it and be able to write about it" (FN: 03-20-2014; 027).

My analysis of Joyce's practices related to identifying key vocabulary revealed her use of terminology from the teachers' manual at the beginning of each chapter. When she was introducing new vocabulary, my classroom observations showed her asking for ideas of what the students felt the word might mean (pulling on background knowledge of the students), but would then offer a definition for the students. When students worked with vocabulary words as part of their assignment, Joyce encouraged students to look up the words in the side-margins of their textbook (as the words and definitions were given there), but if students were unfamiliar with a term not listed there, she pointed them to a

print dictionary or to the classroom computer to locate a definition. She also encouraged students to use the context of the term from their textbooks to come up with definitions. In each subsequent lesson, Joyce would ask students to define or explain select vocabulary terms from the preceding lesson. She also made use of vocabulary words from previous chapters and topics: “I want them to know and use these words—not just write a definition to complete a worksheet” (FN 03-20-2014; 29). Overall, I observed the importance she placed on vocabulary, but more discipline-specific strategies for vocabulary instruction could be implemented to aid in student understanding and subsequent recall and usage.

Many of the pedagogical techniques used by Joyce employed skills articulated in the ELA standards, such as summarizing in written form, making visual displays, gathering relevant information from print and digital resources, etc. (see Appendix F). Joyce said, “Some things in social studies connect so easily to literacy, especially the use of a variety of graphic organizers for students to take notes” (FN: 03-20-2014: 333). This comment echoes Joyce’s rationale as she later explained how some of the MN-ELA standards would fit with her chapters (see Appendix J). As students copied notes from Joyce’s SMART Board presentations, Joyce often incorporated a graphic organizer template on the screen for students to copy. Joyce modeled how to fill out the information as she taught the material, but did not pair the accompanying or subsequent assignments that I observed with the similar types of graphic organizers. Additionally, to gauge student interest, background knowledge, and abilities, Joyce made use of pre-tests and discussion webs on the classroom SMART Board (viewing, listening, speaking). For formative assessments such as class surveys, students raised their hands as a response

(listening), pointed to things on a map or to visuals and text in a textbook, pointed in various cardinal directions (viewing), or recorded personal answers on individual white boards (writing, visual representation, spelling, handwriting).

Overall, my analysis suggests that the lessons Joyce designed and her pedagogy showed an understanding of various literacy pedagogical strategies that, given time, could be aligned with MN-ELA Standards. However, outside of the strategies used on particular worksheets from the textbook publisher, data from her lesson plans, observations, and reflections do not show a deep understanding of how particular strategies are aligned to promote reading comprehension of the social studies text. See Appendix E for a sample listing of standards I think could easily be aligned with ideas from Joyce's discussions. Appendix J shows Joyce's thoughts about which standards could be used with chapter 12 after she taught the chapter. Her selection of standards for Chapters 13 and 14 happened during this study but prior to her teaching the chapters.

This second section of my analysis stemmed from the remainder of my Guiding Questions:

2. Which standards do the teachers select? What rationale do they give for their selections?
3. How do the selected standards shape lesson planning and enactment?
4. As teachers reflect on their selection and use of particular standards to teach social studies content, what do they see as being effective in their lesson design, teaching practices, and student learning? What changes do they suggest for future lesson planning and enactment?

Key assertions are stated below. Data, analysis and interpretive commentary are then presented to substantiate my claims.

***Key Assertions from Guiding Question #2-4 (assertions #4 and 5)***

1. Joyce's preliminary planning was guided by topic and content, followed by student activities and projects.
2. It was important for Joyce to realize and understand the function and wording of standards, because they can represent both content and skills.

**Assertion #4.** Joyce's preliminary planning for social studies was guided by topic and content, followed by student activities and projects.

My analysis of our interview notes, as well as teacher-supplied documents, allowed me to formulate a planning protocol reflective of Joyce's practice in planning for her social studies lessons. At the close of each academic year and throughout the summer months, Joyce looked ahead to the next school year. In doing so, she reflected on the past year of lessons, noting both positive and negative experiences students had with important topics and activities (if any). These thoughts were added in hand-written notations to Joyce's red 3-ring binder of notes about Minnesota state history. Her notes for units 12-13-14 are included in Appendix G.

Joyce's school recently made a conscious decision in their curriculum guide to teach Minnesota State History to their fourth and fifth graders, compared to Minnesota History being taught to the fourth graders in our local public schools. In light of this and other curriculum changes at her school, Joyce was concerned that the MN social studies standards for all of these grades not be overlooked. Therefore, in her planning notes,

Joyce often referenced the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade Minnesota Social Studies standards in her planning rather than the 4<sup>th</sup> grade standards. (FN 03-21-2014: 293)

Joyce's initial planning began with reading through each chapter of the Minnesota history book *Northern Lights* and jotting down key concepts. As she noted,

My notes . . . they're sloppy! I read it and I kind of think, "What if I were to have them write something down? What would be important enough for me to take time to let them write it?" In reality they're just a sloppy list of notes that I take to help myself understand what information I'm sharing. I highlight things sometimes and I keep it in my binder with whatever I'm teaching and it really helps me because as we can guess we don't always have as much time to prep some things and so at least you have some notes to start with. (FN: 03-20-2014; 140)

This step in her planning process aligns with the focus of planning around subject matter content found in the seminal work of Peters et al. (1978). My analysis of this data shows that Joyce is concerned with the social studies content more than the disciplinary literacy skills which are part of the MN-ELA Standards. Since she has taught this material for a number of years, her notes offered her a way to refresh her memory without reading through all of the textbook pages for each lesson. While she listed standards, key concepts, and questions, information on ways students can demonstrate their competencies of the aligned standards, be they social studies or ELA, is absent.

As Joyce read the textbook, she left space at the top or side of her notes to insert her thoughts about corresponding Minnesota State Social Studies standards. She first noted important concepts, terms, names, and locations she wished to share with her

students (FN: 03-21-2014: 085). This practice demonstrated Joyce's philosophy that standards do not drive her teaching but rather support and enhance the topics taught (FN 03-18-2014; 275. FN 3-21-14: 340). Joyce later used these notes to create SMART Board presentations and to establish a purpose for her students' reading of the text:

And so, through my notes I kind of determine what's going to be the method of how I'm going to share it. We do read from the textbook a lot, but only when I've given them a reason for reading. They need to pull out information. It's never just to read. They usually have activities that are connected to the reading. (FN 03-20-2014:055)

Further probing of this comment revealed that Joyce's reference to reading was not attached to any comprehension strategy but merely the reading of the text. The activities Joyce referred to revolved around the completion of a graphic organizer or worksheet from the publisher. The determination of how Joyce would carry out her instruction mentioned above was something she did not always articulate in her planning notes. Rather she often noted a focus idea (skyscrapers, streetcars, traffic jams [Chapter 12]), memory scrapbook page (Chapter 14), or a direction for students to use when designing their chapter postcards (e.g., "State your cause—explain how it would help the common good." Chapter 13).

I can understand Joyce's approach of content guiding instruction versus standards, but standards can be an important vehicle to enable students to learn content. If a teacher understands both content and skill-based standards, then intentionally selecting and aligning standards can help teachers develop assessments which link both the skill and content.

Joyce's words about activities connected to reading led me to anticipate the use of content area reading strategies and the inclusion and alignment of many MN-ELA standards. But this was not the case at the onset of my time with her. While she never said to her students, "Now read pages x through z for your assignment tonight," she did have them read for a purpose. This purpose was often related to a guided question or prompt for the lesson, such as for Chapter 14: "As you read this evening, read to find out how people meet their basic needs in a variety of contexts." This sample demonstrates her consistent practice with the rewording of key question(s) or prompt(s) from her planning notes (Appendix F). My continued analysis of data from my time in her classroom showed strategies related to content area reading were not employed by Joyce.

Joyce then planned activities and assessments based on the content she noted. In doing so, she first thought about generally creative year-long projects that students could complete, such as passports, diaries, travel journals, postcards, or mock *parfleche*. This school year her students created postcards that summarized each chapter. An explanation and examples are shown in Appendix D. While these activities have the potential to meet many of the MN Social Studies standards as well as the MN-ELA standards, the intentional selection and alignment of such standards is absent. Joyce's description in Appendix E of this year's mock *parfleche* project emphasizes her goal to have students write something memorable from the chapter but does not display a complete understanding of the standards she selected for each chapter, nor does it reflect how students have met the MN Social Studies standards which she had aligned to her lessons and chapters.



Joyce also reviewed other assessment ideas such as worksheets from the textbook publisher or from the Minnesota Historical Society (online), and noted which ones she might use or from which ones she might derive alternative assessment ideas. She often referred to assessments as activities (FN 03-21-2014; 136). When discussing the use of online reading materials for her students, Joyce shared her struggle to locate texts at various levels that would cover or augment content in Minnesota history. At this point she shared two more of her planning documents (Appendices J and K). To me, Joyce's thoughts and Appendix J reveal that she was interested in short stories, readers' theater scripts, and even short novels that were aligned with the current chapter the students were studying in social studies. She wanted to bring the students into the world of Minnesota history outside of their social studies time, but the novel choices in their current reading curriculum did not lend themselves to Minnesota history topics. Rather than seeking specific titles and resources to align with each topic or chapter, it may be beneficial to group topics and chapters together to allow a teacher to find reading material that would align with a broader section of information. My analysis of Appendix K shows her ability to plan from the textbook, but offers only potential for future alignment of MN-ELA Skills if the information in the Student Product and Map Activity columns were to be broken down into more detail, such as specific student objectives which could be mapped to standards.

After reviewing Joyce's data, my overall analysis shows that her planning on content, projects, and activities outweighed the use of standards. Her planning seemed more teacher-directed, as in what to cover. While daily assignments matched content that was taught, the culminating project of the *parfleche* showcased some facts and points of

interest. But this project was not set-up to measure or demonstrate how students had met the MN Social Studies standards associated with each chapter. Joyce's concern with content also overshadowed her use of varied vocabulary and reading strategies to grow students' abilities related to content area texts. Joyce's concern that some texts are difficult for certain readers shows the need for a strong understanding of reading strategies, which need to be intentionally selected, aligned, taught, modeled, and practiced with students to facilitate reading comprehension at all levels.

**Assertion #5.** It was important for Joyce to realize and understand the function and wording of standards, because they can represent both content and skills.

Once topics and content were established, Joyce reviewed the ten themes of social studies instruction suggested by the National Council of Teachers of Social Studies and matched the themes up with the content from the textbook. These ten themes are shown in the list below.

1. Culture
2. Time, Continuity, and Change
3. People, Places, and Environments
4. Individual Development and Identity
5. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
6. Power, Authority, & Governance
7. Production, Distribution, and Consumption
8. Science, Technology, and Society
9. Global Connections
10. Civic Ideals and Practices

Joyce developed overarching connections and “thought questions” for each chapter. She used these questions to set a purpose for each lesson. Sometimes she posted these questions in her SMART Board presentations, and other times she used the questions as she verbally introduced the lesson. My classroom observations and analyses show that these questions were often reworded to set a purpose for reading assignments that were given at the close of the class period. Shown below are the questions she developed for the units I observed. The column on the right shows how Joyce adjusted the wording when she used the questions to set a purpose for a reading assignment.

**Table 4.1**

*NCTSS-based Questions*

Chapter	Connections and Thought Questions	Purpose Questions
12	8. How can we cope with the ever increasing pace of change? What were the effects of “new inventions” and this a change of pace of life?	As you read, list ways people can cope with things that seem to be changing quickly, like technology. If you were living back in the late 1800s and late 1900s, how would all of these changes have impacted your life?
13	10. What is civic participation and how can I be involved? 10. What is the balance between rights and responsibilities?	Consider what we talked about today. As you read, look for the ways people became involved their society back then. Then think about yourself right now - how can you become a more involved citizen?
14	4. How do people meet their basic needs in a variety of contexts? 4. How do individuals develop from youth to adulthood?	As you read this evening, read to find out how people meet their basic needs in a variety of contexts?

Next, Joyce read and matched the MN Social Studies Standards to each chapter and topic she planned to teach. Joyce's rationale for selecting standards began by knowing the context of her textbook and then examining key words in the standards, "such as the nouns because those are often key vocabulary terms or concepts" (FN 03-21-2014: 359); "Once I had standards for each chapter, I went back and noted specifics from the standards that the students could include on their project postcards" (FN: 03-21-2014: 085). She wrote further,

I like how they don't tell you how you must meet the standard, but sometimes the standards will say suggestions of how you can meet the standard like with the fur trade so that might give me an idea that the standard could be met if I really talk about trade back and forth. (FN 03-21-2014: 330)

Appendix I shares the rationale Joyce offered for aligning standards to her instruction for the units I observed.

Three interesting findings came up in my analysis of her actions, described above. First, it was interesting to learn that Joyce did not rely on a publisher or other resource to align her instruction with these ten themes or to the MN Social Studies standards. Instead, she did her own matching work. We searched the internet together and located a publisher's copy of the themes and standards as they aligned to *Northern Lights*, and while there were similarities with Joyce's notes, she did scratch her head at some alignments and wondered aloud, "I'm not sure how they thought that would be a good theme for this chapter!" (FN: 03-25-2014: 126). Joyce's reaction may also indicate that at times she becomes strongly wedded to ideas she generates and thus is less open to other ways of approaching a topic or alternative ways to demonstrate understanding of the

topic. This could translate into the interpretation of standards, how a teacher would address the standard and how students could meet the standards as well.

Second, Joyce mentioned the Common Core State Standards only in passing as she initially talked about her planning. For example, she stated,

And then, the Common Core Standards must have had something about “Is new technology better than old or how do we cope with ever-increasing change of pace or pace of change and even what is the role of the citizen in the community and nation.” (FN 03-21-14:112)

The verbiage she used was close to a social studies standard rather than a CCSS one. Up to this point in time, her school had mapped English Language Arts objectives and assessment but not any related standards (FN 03-21-2014: 349). Subsequent discussion revealed a misunderstanding of what the Common Core Standards entailed when Joyce stated that she had not read them through in detail and assumed they were more content related (FN 04-11-2014: 844). Part of her actions and reactions can be explained by her comments in our post-observation interviews. She shared a frustration of having more content to cover with these standards and later mentioned all of the time it would take to align teaching with more standards (FN 03-21-2014: 954), so we examined the CCSS together. In the process of my reading the standards aloud, she started checking off a number of the standards and saying, “But I do that all of the time in class” (FN 04-11-2014: 870). Further into the standards she said, “Such a simple thing—tell us the page or the column of the paragraph . . . because they are citing evidence and not just ‘oh, I read it and this is what I think I remember’” (FN 04-11-2014: 871). Here we see that Joyce views the CCSS standards as things teachers commonly have their students do in class,

such as showing where in the text an answer can be found (See Appendix J—5.2.1.1); and determining the meaning of a word (See Appendix J—5.2.4.4). As she gradually worked into the ELA standards, she became more adept at matching the MN-ELA standards with how she would present information but still struggled to align the standards with student actions (See Appendix J). My assessment is that Joyce’s unfamiliarity with the MN-ELA standards overwhelmed her. That, coupled with her initial perception that teachers naturally did these things with their students, tested her comfort level, and therefore she undervalued the MN-ELA CCSS standards in comparison to the MN Social Studies content standards. She devalued the need to review the MN-ELA CCSS on top of other standards she attends to.

Third, after the realization that the CCSS were skill based and could be applied across the curriculum, Joyce started to realize that meeting the CCSS involved more than her just teaching a skill, “These are skills we want the kids to be using over and over and demonstrating for us!” (FN: 04-11-2021: 1277). Joyce started reading the CCSS and matching these standards to her lessons and found it rather easy to do:

This is all well and good and definitely makes me think about what I have my kids do as far as assessments, but it’s a lot of work. It would be nice if there was a checklist and once the students did it you could mark it off.

She continued her thought process by adding, “but that probably isn’t good to just have them demonstrate the skill once. I supposed there should be a way to track how often, maybe even a way to track how well students did. Kinda like standards-based grading” (FN 4-11-2014: 1088).

My concerns about teachers teaching a standard versus preparing students to meet a standard—as well as Joyce’s comments about a checklist where teachers could mark that students have accomplished a standard—will be addressed further in Chapter 6. Appendix J includes the rationale Joyce offered for the CCSS standards that she aligned with her instruction after the aforementioned discussion. Analyzing her rationale showed a move from her mention of using nouns to align the social studies content with standards, toward examining the verbs within the CCSS and turning them into possible assessment activities for her students. Overall, what Joyce’s comments and actions indicate is a gradual movement from a teacher concerned with demonstrating that she has met a standard with the content she has delivered, to a teacher starting to focus on ways students can demonstrate their understanding of content through the skills listed in the MN-ELA standards.

My overall analysis of data regarding Guiding Question #3, How do the selected standards shape lesson planning and enactment? is closely linked with the thoughts above. I noticed a gradual change in Joyce’s approach to student assignments as she prepared for lessons associated with chapters 13 and 14. As she read through the MN-ELA standards, she started to match the standards with assessments from the textbook worksheets and accompanying activities (“Get It Guide” sheets). While her lesson delivery routine remained consistent during these chapters, the amount of teacher talk was condensed, allowing students more time to read and confer with partners as they worked on their assignments. When I asked if she noticed any changes in her planning, she replied, “Well, now that I know that students have to do all of these things I guess

I'm trying to see how many of the standards I'm having the kids actually meet" (FN 4-10-2014:14).

Guiding Question #4: As teachers reflect on their selection and use of particular standards to teach social studies content, what do they see as being effective in their lesson design, teaching practices, and student learning? What changes do they suggest for future lesson planning and enactment?

My analysis of the data collected from Joyce's reflections and lesson planning showed no change in content and assessments at the beginning of my time with her, but after discussing the MN-ELA standards with her (as noted above), her selection of standards as they aligned with assessment activities developed. Her selection and use of standards were still secondary to content in her planning efforts. Joyce shared that

going forward I'll have to spend a lot of time becoming familiar with the ELA standards, but since they can be used anywhere in the curriculum, I'm not sure how many of the standards I'll put into each social studies lesson. (FN 04-03-2014: 059)

I think I have a good handle on the Social Studies standards until they change them, but I'm going to start to look more closely at the ELA skills and see just how many are associated with assignments and activities I already used with students in the past and then try to make use of more of the standards in the daily interactions I have with these students in class and throughout possible new assessments and projects. (FN 04-29-2014: 18+)

She added, "A lot of these standards would fit really well with work we do in our English classes" (FN 0-29-2014: 54). Joyce's comments demonstrate three things for me:



1. She has a growing awareness of the skills included in the MN-ELA standards.
2. Professional development is needed to help her understand that standards can be used multiple times in multiple lessons across content areas and not just in an English or grammar class.
3. While standards can provide ideas for content and skills to be taught by a teacher, they can assist teachers in developing assessments to allow students to demonstrate their learning and application of content and skills.

Joyce's desire to have a checklist for standards made me wonder what tools are available or could be developed to assist teachers in documenting standards addressed by a teacher and how students have met the standards. Would such a tool be valuable?

Would the use of such a tool not be dependent on expectations of a school's administration and the culture of lesson planning and assessment within a school? These thoughts will be addressed further in Chapter 6.

In conclusion, my observations of Joyce's teaching, along with my analysis of data from interviews, lesson plans, and teacher-supplied reflections and artifacts, illustrate that Joyce has a desire to help her students enjoy the world in which they live and make connections to its history, places, and people. To accomplish these goals, she prioritized content and the MNS Social Studies Standards above the use of the MN-ELA standards as she prepared her lessons. Student assessment activities reflected this same priority. As she grew to understand the skills associated with the MN-ELA standards, Joyce started to associate these standards with activities during her instruction as well as lesson assignments.

## Chapter Five

### Findings: Assertions and Data

This chapter reports the analysis of data from the second case, a fourth-grade teacher, as she explored aligning standards to her social studies instruction, particularly the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies (2011) and the MN-ELA Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects (CCSS, 2010).

Since both teachers in this study taught at the same school, I begin this chapter with a parallel construction to chapter 4, broken into three parts: an introduction to the participant and her setting; findings asserted with rationale derived from data analysis; and guiding questions with my analytical synthesis and interpretive commentary, based on field notes from interviews (Appendix K), observations (Appendix L), and teacher supplied planning artifacts (Appendices D, E, F, I, and J). The use of field notes throughout this chapter is similarly indicated by the notation (FN-xx-xx-xxxx; xxxx) which includes the calendar date followed by the line within the typed transcription of data. When no number line is present, the notation refers to observation or artifact memos.

The following research questions guide my analysis and reporting of findings:

- 1) What knowledge and beliefs do each of the teachers draw upon as they come to understand the *Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies* (2011) as well as the *MN-ELA Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects* (2010)?

- 2) Which standards do the teachers select? What rationale do they give for their selections?
- 3) How do the selected standards shape lesson planning and enactment?
- 4) As teachers reflect on their selection and use of particular standards to teach social studies content, what do they see as being effective in their lesson design, teaching practices, and student learning? What changes do they suggest for future lesson planning and enactment?

As outlined in Chapter 3, I conducted pre-teaching and post-teaching interviews and in-class observations, and my second participant teacher supplied audio reflections and classroom artifacts. These sources provided data for the case. In the analysis and interpretation section below, I share information about the second participant teacher, Laura. She describes her educational background, prior teaching roles, and familiarity with standards, as well as her experiences teaching social studies. The interviews and subsequent analyses offered insights into the goals and priorities Laura had for teaching social studies and how she viewed the current school curriculum. Probing questions during the interviews encouraged Laura to discuss connections between literacy instruction and social studies. I must say that Laura's responses were much briefer and that she offered fewer details than Joyce (in chapter 4).

### **Introduction to Laura and her Classroom**

This case study of Laura illustrates a reflective professional educator with eleven years of teaching experience in various capacities spanning PreK through eighth grades. Laura taught in a number of suburban and rural settings in the Midwest with numerous responsibilities, including directing a 2-day-a-week early-childhood program, serving as

an athletic director, substitute teacher while raising her children, and part-time teacher. At the time of this study, she was starting her third year of full-time teaching in a self-contained classroom of twenty-four 4<sup>th</sup> grade students (12 female/12 male).

My initial interview with Laura revealed a professional who sees herself as a bridge builder (FN 03-27-2014; 103):

Since I have substituted at this school in a number of capacities, I have seen the curriculum across many grade levels. I know what the students will be studying in the following grades so I feel my job is to prepare them for that.” (FN 3-27-2014; 106)

She added, “When they come into my classroom I work to set a foundation and help build their background knowledge” (FN 3-27-2014; 115).

My study focused on Laura’s social studies class, which was held mid-morning, five days a week. The classroom was arranged with students at individual desks yet close enough to have an “elbow partner” or to turn around and easily talk with peers as a group of four students. The arrangement of the classroom did not change during my observations, but the groups of students did change according to a schedule prepared by the teacher (every two weeks, or as needed). A large whiteboard flanked the front of the classroom and was separated by a SMART Board in the middle. A classroom computer was situated against the left-hand wall next to encyclopedias, dictionaries, and other reference and writing materials. There was a large open floor space in this area as well, which was utilized by groups of students working together on research and projects. Student-generated charts and drawings displaying previous and on-going projects were posted in various areas of the classroom. Bookcases throughout the classroom provided

reference materials (encyclopedias, travel guides, dictionaries, and almanacs) along with picture books and chapter books representing various genres and reading levels. Students had access to all of these materials to complete research as well as for reading during their independent DEAR reading time. For each social studies unit, Laura brought in a bin of topic-related books that rotated among the three 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms at their school.

In the remainder of this chapter, I document what I learned from my study of Laura and her classroom. This first section of my analysis stemmed from my Guiding Question #1: What knowledge and beliefs do each of the teachers draw upon as they come to understand the *Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies* (2011) as well as the recent *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects* (2010)? Key assertions are stated below. Data, analysis and interpretive commentary are then presented to substantiate my claims.

### **Assertion #1**

Laura believes that content knowledge is important, but teachers cannot know everything - they must be willing to admit this and to use and demonstrate tools for their students on how to acquire information independently.

As an educator, Laura follows a whole-to-part approach to her planning and instruction as she reviews material from classroom textbooks as well as outside resources (artifacts, literature, online resources, etc.) to break units into smaller portions (geography, natural resources, history, famous people, and industries—historical and current). As Laura stated, “This is the first year I have taught using this textbook. Unlike

other teachers at this school, I do not have years of experience with this topic, so I often feel like I'm learning right along with the students" (FN-04-27-2014: 019). She readily admitted,

If you don't know it—look it up! Be ready for all sorts of questions the students might ask. The students I teach are inquisitive and very comfortable asking question that they want answers to. Many of them bring up topics they hear on the radio at home or from newspaper headlines – we have a number of students whose families have newspaper carrier routes. (FN 04-27-2014: 146; FN 04-30-2014: 164+; FN 05-05-2014: 137)

Acknowledging that one cannot know everything, she shared,

If the students ask a question and I don't know the answer, I look at it as a chance to show them how to find the answer. So, we do a little research together or I do research after school and share the information on the following day. It's always fun when a student says, 'Hey, I know where we could look' or when a student comes to school the next day and says, 'So I was thinking about so-and-so's question yesterday and my dad helped me look it up on the computer. (FN 04-27-2014: 148)

She also said that "students will share facts that they looked up in books with me. They'll often say, 'Well, I was reading in that book back there and it said that . . .'" (FN-04-28:2014; 30). During my classroom observation on 5-01, one of the students raised his hand and, in reference to the class discussion about the Confederacy and the Confederate States of America, said, "I have a history book at home that I got as a present, and it has pictures of the Confederate flag and other things from this area. I should bring it in for

everyone to look at” (FN-05-01-2014: 218). My analysis of the importance Laura places on knowing content reveals a teacher willing to admit when she does not know something but also willing to research and locate information to inform her instruction and to answer questions students may pose. My analysis also reveals a reflective educator who demonstrates the use of tools and resources to locate information but also models those same skills for her students to use to locate information on their own. The engagement of her students is also evidenced not only by this young man’s comment above, but also by the willingness demonstrated by many of the students to ask questions and add information throughout the lessons. This background on Laura is important to understand because it relates directly to her planning and use of standards.

### **Assertion #2**

Laura places a high priority on aligning pedagogy with student engagement. While content is important to Laura, my analysis of her planning documents, interviews, and reflections reveals her driving purpose was to help students connect ideas and information. As Laura noted: “I need to present information in a way that the students will understand it—not over their heads or you’ve lost them and you need to find ways to help them remember it” (FN 04-27-2014; 150). Laura knew a lot about her students (not only academic ability, but also interests and learning preferences) and their families.

Laura shared:

The students I have in the classroom this year are a great group—very highly motivated and academically gifted. While there are two or three that struggle with reading fluency, they are encouraging of one another and like to discuss things together.” (FN-05-01-2014: 006)

Laura commented that the students are full of questions and like to point out information and pictures from books and online materials to one another: “When students ask questions, if I’m not able to answer it directly, we discuss how or where they could go to look up that information and then they do that outside of class.” Laura’s willingness to interact with students in this way fosters an inquisitive nature and engagement in the lessons she teaches. She shared how important that was in making connections to what was being studied. Laura made use of visuals throughout her lessons: “Not only am I a visual learner, but my student really like to look at things and create their own diagrams of things we’re studying” (FN-04-27-2014: 127). PowerPoint presentations and YouTube videos were projected on the classroom SMART Board, and a pull-down map of the United States attached to the top rung of the whiteboard in the front of the classroom was often utilized to point out states and geographic features in the Southeast region, which was being studied. Laura’s knowledge of her students supports Assertion #2 as she plans how to present information to her students. A common practice in her lesson instruction was to bring in pictures and artifacts from each state being studied. Since many of her classroom families had been to the Southeast, she shared that families would often send in pictures or souvenirs of their travels for the students to examine. This practice of Laura’s was evident during their study of North Lauraina. In preparing to study North Lauraina, Laura contacted a friend who lived there, and the friend put together a PowerPoint slide presentation of area landmarks and geographic features (FN-05-02-2014: 254). The friend also sent postcards from their area and other places in the state. The culminating surprise from her friend was a number of containers of Dewey’s Sugar



Cookies and Ginger Spice cookies. These activities demonstrate Laura's resourcefulness in selecting resources to support the pedagogy in the classroom.

Laura shared that teaching is not just telling:

If I'm to be a good teacher for my students, I have to examine my teaching and see how well I'm communicating the information and how I am enabling the students to work with that information and demonstrate their learning to others and to me. (FN-04-27-2014: 234)

I asked Laura to explain how she knew that her students were engaged with and understanding the topic being taught. She shared,

Well, I guess there are four big things I've noticed: 1) When I'm presenting a PowerPoint or sharing information in the lesson, they sit almost at the edge of their seats [she chuckled] and they're sometimes pointing at pictures on the SMART Board, 2) I see them engaged in reading, finding information, and sharing that information with one another, 3) their taking notes, making charts, or drawing pictures of things we're studying, and I guess, 4) that many come back the next day and share things from the lessons that they discussed at home with their family. (FN-04-23-2014:017, 24)

My observations of Laura's lessons showed students to be highly engaged and inquisitive—raising hands and asking questions about facts or pictures being presented, offering answers to questions asked by Laura, and being willing to offer ideas and suggestions to help other students locate information. This assertion that Laura aligns pedagogy with student engagement is also evident in the major assignments Laura selected for her students. Research and writing of a state report (See Appendix J) and a

biography report were the two major assignments (assessments) in her unit on the Southeast. Laura began the process of the biography report in her English lessons after the completion of her social studies unit on the Southeast. Student choice along with the opportunity to discuss ideas learned from reading and research with a partner led to high engagement by the students. Laura incorporated check-in time with students to see how they were progressing on their research and to answer any individual questions. These scaffolding practices worked to support students and assure them that they were on the right track; encouragement is a key to motivating students to keep moving forward with tasks. The act of enabling students to locate and demonstrate their knowledge is also a key in this assertion as it demonstrates Laura's priority for her students to demonstrate their learning, even before she addressed standards for her lessons (as I will discuss in a later section).

### **Assertion #3**

The interconnectedness (her "bridging" work) of social studies, history, and geography comes through in Laura's planning, use of the textbook, and pedagogy, and is directly related to the content knowledge that she believes a teacher should possess. Engagement in learning clearly led to the interconnectedness of social studies, history, and geography in Laura's classroom. Laura took their inquisitiveness and presented information in her social studies class as a fact-finding mission: "As we go through our lesson today, I want you to write down three facts about . . .," or "As we watch this video, look for . . . and write down . . ." were typical statements incorporated into Laura's instruction. Before moving on to the next portion of her lesson, Laura would stop and check in with students to see what they had written down for their notes. While she

walked around the classroom talking with students and looking at their notes, she would ask students to discuss findings with elbow partners. These fact-finding missions served as a bridge for Laura to explain the importance of knowing all of this information and how it can impact our lives. Laura explained to her students, “Social studies isn’t just a class, it’s the story of our lives—of you and me—and of the world around us” (FN-04-27-2014: 138). At this point a student raised his hand and said, “You mean like what happens over there [pointing to a map of Europe on the floor] might impact us too?” (04-23-2014 Class observation) Laura used this as a teaching moment and expanded by stating,

The actions of every country impact not only their own people, but the lives of others too. Some of you have family members that live in other countries and some parents that travel for work. What happens in those areas can have an impact on their lives and on our lives here too. (FN-04-24-2014: 208)

### ***Social Studies***

Laura’s role as a bridge builder is also evident as she shared,

Culture is a large part of social studies and it’s one that these students really latch onto. They often ask questions about what life is like in other parts of the United States and in other countries that they hear of in the news. It’s interesting to see them try to make connections with their life here and now.” (FN-04-23-2014: 062)

When I asked Laura what makes good social studies teaching, she shared, “It’s getting the students to see the culture, people, industries, and everything that makes up a society” (FN-04-27-2014: 152). Analyzing Laura’s planning and lesson materials, I found that she

helps her students see these things. Her plans show how she introduced famous people from the Southeast region, such as Harriet Tubman, Ruby Bridges, George Washington Carver, and Orville and Wilbur Wright (see her listing in Appendix D). Laura's use of a PowerPoint presentation introduced students to facts about the climate and people in each state within the region, about major industries and manufacturers, about how people make a living, about what the area is famous for, about how it is different from where we live, and about what they do for recreation. Current facts about the area often lead into how life in that region was in its past. This next section shows Laura's beliefs about history and its connection to social studies.

### ***History***

While observing Laura's lessons on the Southeast region of the United States, I found it interesting to see how the history of the region caught the attention of her students. Laura commented, "They really like to find out when things happened. I think that's a good definition of history" (FN-04-30-2014: 037) Discussions of what happened and when it happened often led to students' asking why it happened. Laura's audio reflections built on this observation, and in so doing, expanded her "good definition of history" to include the who, when, what, where, and why of events:

It's important for students to understand events and people from the past, because it can make us more informed citizens today. Understanding that some things in the history of our country like slavery, Jim Crow laws, and segregation were wrong is important because underlying feelings and thoughts can unfortunately still show up in our society today. (FN-04-24-2014: 259; FN-04-27-2014: 210)

To bring students into the realm of history, Laura made use of readers' theater plays such as "Riding to Freedom—Underground Railroad" and "The Country Torn Apart—The Civil War" (see Appendix D) and allowed her students to learn about history by becoming these characters and performing the plays to demonstrate their understanding not only of the words but also of the emotions involved. Her students enjoyed the dramatics. Laura utilized literature based on the Southeast region for read alouds (*Through My Eyes: Ruby Bridges* by Bridges & Lundell). For a portion of their reading class time, Laura used the book *Meet Addy* by Connie Porter as her read aloud during this unit. She shared that this text would make a good literature study with her students someday. When I inquired about possible MN-ELA standards for this potential literature study, she shared that she had not aligned any standards with her reading instruction yet but was more focused on social studies because she had recently completed a class at a local college that talked about curriculum and development, and that class gave her a lot of ideas on structuring units. Students also selected items from the bin of shared reading materials (mentioned earlier) for their self-selected, DEAR independent reading time (FN-04-30-2014: 066, 172; FN-05-02-2014:033, 177; see Appendix D).

### ***Geography***

The study of a region in the United States easily lends itself to learning about its geography, but Laura's planning and instruction show that it is more than just terminology—it is connecting people to a place, to industry, and to resources. As Laura noted,

"It's probably fairly easy for the students to memorize their states and capitals, but my goal when teaching geography related information in social studies is for

them to see a larger picture. I want them to understand more about what makes up a community, a region. I want them to be able to explain landforms and map-related terminology.” (FN-04-29-2014: 092)

The study of natural resources and industries in this region helped the students make personal connections. My classroom observation on the day Laura introduced natural resources and then on a later day when they were looking at slides about businesses such as FedEx and Coca-Cola was that these topics were of great interest to the students. Discussions around the topics of coal, mining, rice, cotton, and farming allowed students to connect with resources they use on a daily basis—energy, clothing, and food. Many of the members of the families in Laura’s classroom travel for work and for vacations. Each state in this region had been visited by at least one or more of her families, so it was easy for her to help students make connections to what they were learning.

What I noticed in Laura’s teaching and in my analysis of her post-observation interviews and reflections was that Laura incorporated vocabulary instruction into her lessons to help students better understand geographic terms, but as she did so, there was always a practical side attached to her questions: “Now, why should we remember this term?” “How can we use it with our lesson?” and even, “In what other subjects might we use this term?” (FN-05-01-2014: 030) Laura noted a number of vocabulary terms (for example, *justice*, *civil rights*, *fall line*, *Smoky Mountains*, and *double bar graph*) as she laid out her daily plans for this unit (see Appendix E). She also shared that she highlights terminology in the teacher’s manual but is careful not to spend much time going over the vocabulary words the publisher has highlighted unless she feels that they would be unfamiliar to the students: “If the students know a term from another unit we’ve studied, I

don't feel I need to reteach it. I'd rather find words new to the students and introduce those to the students" (FN-05-05-2014: 18).

Throughout Laura's planning, teaching, and reflection, the data show how Laura connects her beliefs of social studies, history, and geography and the practices she employs to teach her students. As Laura stated:

I am not a fortune teller, so I don't know what experiences the students will have further down in their lives, but if I can excite them about learning about places, people, and things, get them to talk about this information and see how it impacts their lives, then I think I've accomplished a great deal. (FN-04-31-2014: 191)

Laura shared that there has been a large push within her school to get students to be more comfortable with geography and map-related skills at a younger grade, with the goal that learners will then be more articulate with these terms in the upper grades. My analysis of Laura's planning and teaching show that she has embraced this idea throughout her instruction and in the activities she had her students complete.

In addressing the first research question, my analysis of Laura's data demonstrates that her beliefs about good teaching, understanding content, and understanding social studies, history, and geography guide her planning and instruction. Connections to the use of standards is addressed below.

### **Use of Standards**

#### **Assertion #4**

Laura believes that standards can serve as a guide for planning instruction and assessment but are to be demonstrated ultimately by the students to show their understanding and level of mastery.

The use of MN Social Studies standards and the MN-ELA standards was new to Laura. This was quite clear as she spoke about her beliefs about social studies, history, and geography as she did not reference any standards related to the concepts and skills she was teaching. She has worked with curriculum mapping software in years past, but this was done to get a sequence of instruction and to help the school study assessments used with the students. The analysis of Laura's reflections showed her reading through the text of the standards and thinking about how students could demonstrate those standards. As she noted,

I guess I first look at the content and think about how students can show me what they've learned. Now that I've been asked to work with the MN-Social Studies Standards and with the MN-ELA standards, I've been reading through the standards and trying to match up where we've addressed them in class. (FN-04-23-2014:047)

Later Laura shared that she first reads the benchmark "because that's what the students are supposed to be able to do once we've taught something. I then read the standards" (FN 05-02-2014: 29)

There is a difference with these two standards. I think I found it easier to work with the Common Core Standards [chuckle] than the Social Studies ones. The Common Core ones seemed to be natural things the students would do, like 4.8.1.1 says 'engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led), and then it says building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.' I have the students do this almost daily. In fact, we even made a chart of what good discussion looks like and review that whenever



they need the reminder. (FN-04-23-2014: 141) (See Appendix H for the section and rationale for the MN- ELA standards Laura selected.)

The MN-Social Studies standards and ten themes from NCSS were also new to Laura. She located a PDF from the Houghton Mifflin Harcourt textbook company that correlated the Minnesota Academic Standards in Social Studies, Grade 4. Laura shared this with me in our post-observation meeting and commented,

They're OK. All this document gave me was the numbering, text of the standard, and page references in the student edition of the textbook. I guess that's alright, but I was hoping they might include ideas for how the standards could be assessed – not that I'd follow it religiously, but I'm always interested in ideas and activities to try out with my students. (FN-04-29-2014: 09)

As Laura compared this packet to the actual MN Social Studies standards, she commented:

I guess since they are trying to apply the standards to the entire textbook it's OK, but some of the standards [4.1.4.7.1] are touched on only once like when they talk about tribal government. I'll have to look into that more when we talk about the Indians in Minnesota. Wouldn't that standard be applied to other regions of the United States where Indians did and do now live? (FN-04-23-2014: 143)

As the study progressed and Laura reflected more on the MN Social Studies standards, she added three more to her list beyond what the textbook publisher had suggested. These three are noted below.

**Table 5.1***Laura's Additional Standards*

Standard	Text of Standard	Laura's Rationale
44121	Understand that historical inquiry is a process in which multiple sources and different kinds of historical evidence are analyzed to draw conclusions about how and why things happened in the past.	We've been trying to study history in different ways using different types of literature – the textbook, children's books, plays – and incorporating different activities to get them to think from different perspectives and draw conclusions from that.
44241	Understand that the differences and similarities of cultures around the world are attributed to their diverse origins and histories, and interactions with other cultures throughout time.	We have been talking about this just throughout the whole Social Studies time. This would even include what we just talked about with the African Americans, the southerners, the Northerners and even the settlers when we talked about their similarities and differences and just how they interacted with one another and with different groups through this whole time period. And even just the North versus South how they had similarities in their own ways but interacted with each other differently during the Civil War.
4.1.1.1.1	Understand that democratic government depends on informed and engaged citizens who exhibit civic skills and values, practice civic discourse, vote and participate in elections, apply inquiry and analysis	For this one, I really liked the benchmark wording – it was simpler. When we discussed the Civil Rights of African Americans, how they wanted equal rights, we talked about how things used to be segregated and

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skills and take action to solve problems and shape public policy.

the need for things to be fair and what actions happened to work to make things more fair – how they acted to influence a decision. I think the three individuals we learned about (Rosa Parks, Ruby Bridges, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr) were good examples for the students.

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This comment by Laura, along with my analysis of her planning and reflections, demonstrates her belief that standards could be more beneficial if the text gave teachers ideas on what needs to be taught; but mastery of the standards should be demonstrated by the students more than once. My analysis of Laura’s planning and reflection shows numerous times when she referred back to standard 4.8.1.1 about collaborative discussions and the related subpoints:

These are great skills for the students to learn and use well, but I can’t imagine the amount of time it would take a teacher to note every instance in which students are demonstrating their mastery of these standards and their subpoints. That’s a crazy amount of record keeping! (FN-04-23-2014: 077)

When we discussed this statement, Laura wondered how often a standard should be addressed and how should it be documented. She mentioned the idea of standards-based education and said, “I wonder if any teachers or school that use this approach have any templates or ideas for record keeping” (FN-4-23:2014: 102). Laura contacted a friend who teaches first grade in the local public-school system and inquired what she does in her classroom to keep track of standards taught. The friend shared a 1<sup>st</sup> grade document

prepared by Rachelle Smith at <http://www.whattheteacherwantsblog.com/> which places all of the Language Arts and Mathematics standards in a checklist (see Appendix F). As I reviewed this document, I saw that the example page allowed for multiple dates taught for each standard but the mastery area showed a percentage of the class as a whole. As I thought about this, I wondered what documentation might look like if a teacher was to track individual student performance. I also wondered about the possibility of digital record keeping such as curriculum mapping and questioned what resources might be available for teachers to document standards taught, but more importantly, to record how students demonstrate their understanding and mastery of the standards.

Laura shared that she and Joyce have been talking about what they could do to help promote the use of standards in planning and assessment of student work across their faculty: “The organization of information and record keeping is going to need to be easy so the teachers don’t feel overwhelmed or overburdened in record keeping” (FN-04-20-2014: 76-82). When I asked her if she had a design or format in mind, Laura replied, “The idea of a checklist with areas to note numerous dates, subjects, and types of assessments would be great—I just don’t quite have a design in my mind yet!” (FN-04-23-2014: 074). My analysis of this comment is that it shows a desire for professional development for their faculty which would also include support and guidance for individual teachers as they come to understand the MN-ELA and MN Social Studies Standards.

This second section of my analysis stemmed from the remainder of my Guiding Questions:

5. Which standards do the teachers select? What rationale do they give for their selections?
6. How do the selected standards shape lesson planning and enactment?
7. As teachers reflect on their selection and use of particular standards to teach social studies content, what do they see as being effective in their lesson design, teaching practices, and student learning? What changes do they suggest for future lesson planning and enactment?

### **Planning Process**

My analysis of Laura’s planning reflections, my classroom observations, and her teacher-supplied artifacts show how she planned instruction by first reviewing information and resources associated with her textbook and adding activities and other resources to engage and also provide tools for independent learning for her students (see Appendix D). The assignments (assessments) planned by Laura required students to demonstrate their understanding: “I know the content, but I want the students to work with it and feel like they are finding things out” (FN-04-27-2014: 165).

When I inquired about what connections Laura saw between reading and her social studies instruction, she shared that “reading is involved in everything the students seem to do in class” (FN-04-30-2014: 024). She started to list skills students use as they read through the textbook sections and research the students conducted: “The students are viewing and interpreting pictures, charts, and diagrams. They read to find details and examples, and when we talk about events in they are sequencing too” (FN-05-01-2014:22).

In the summer, Laura reads through her textbook and takes notes, usually on notepaper, but “because of a Curriculum and Instruction class I took, I am working hard to type all of my notes out on the computer so I have them for reference in years to come” (FN-04-31-2014: 083). This is the first time Laura has taught the Southeast unit as her school’s curriculum committee has developed a two-year cycle joining the third and fourth grade classrooms (odd years: the United States overview and adjoining countries, Northeast and Southeast regions; even years: Midwest, Southwest, and West regions). The complexity of the act of planning was evident in Laura’s comments:

Everything is new to me and I’m still trying to figure out the best way to organize and assess the content. There’s so much I’d like to discuss with the students. I need to be careful that I don’t overwhelm them but at the same time, I need to make sure I’m not just assigning them pages to read and worksheets to answer from their textbook. (FN-04-27-2014:183)

Laura’s typed summer notes for this unit can be found in Appendix D. Her notes follow the similar topical arrangement as found in the textbook (e.g., Geography → History → Geography). Her preliminary plans indicated fourteen days for teaching, but she later expanded her unit into seventeen days to allow for days during which students completed research and their state reports (see Appendix J). It is interesting to note that Laura’s planning incorporated the use of literature titles and activities (plays) not mentioned in her textbook. This expansion demonstrated her ability to locate other resources that are available to her and the students. When she reads only a portion of a book aloud to her students, she places the book (at times, multiple copies if she is able to obtain them from the public library) on a special counter area where she has other

resources about the current region under study so that the students can use them during their study and free time.

In reexamining my second guiding question (Which standards do the teacher select? What rationale do they give for their selection?), my field notes revealed that Laura surprised at the ease of understanding the MN-ELA standards: “The Common Core ones seemed to be natural things the students would do” (FN-04-23-2014: 141). My analysis of Laura’s audio reflections revealed that her selection of MN-ELA standards was based on the actions (verbs) students would perform as they read the informational text of their social studies book and other research material. Additional language standards related to writing were linked to the research projects the students completed. While the skill of viewing was evident in Laura’s instruction, she did not link many of the Speaking, Viewing, Listening and Media Literacy Benchmarks, K-5 to her lessons. Appendix H shows Laura’s selection of MN-ELA standards and her rationale.

In our discussion about how she might move forward with her use of the social studies standards, Laura shared:

Since this is the first time I’m taught from this textbook and I’ll be using it again next year, the first thing I’ll do is read through the standards. Since I’m more familiar with the vocabulary and content in the textbook that will probably help me as I pick out standards for each unit and lesson. It seems those Social Studies ones are more content driven. (FN-05-01-2014: 9)

Laura demonstrated and taught her students how to turn headings into questions and then to read sections to answer their questions (FN-05-06-2014: 93) This activity is commonly referred to as SQ3R (attributed to Francis Robinson in 1946) where students

survey text, turn headings into questions, and then read to answer that question, recite the answer they construct, and finally review all of the information as a way to summarize everything that has been read (survey, question, read, recite, and review). Laura continued to share: “it’s not just reading the information, but it’s important that students can determine what they are looking for and then organize that information in a way that they can retain it and talk about it.” (FN-04-27-2014: 120) While observing Laura’s teaching, I also saw her modeling note-taking skills and question/memo writing for and with her students. When we discussed this during our post-observation time, Laura shared that she has the students practice and apply these skills multiple times a day (not just in social studies class, but in other classes as well). She shared a student’s math notebook and pointed out the notes and examples the student recorded and the writing done by the student to explain his thought process:

When they are reading I sometimes have them make questions that can use to quiz each other. We’ve worked as a class to write questions that are easy to answer by looking back at a text, questions that let them talk about personal connections to what they’ve read, and even though it’s sometimes harder, we’ve worked to write questions to get them to connect different things they’ve read. (FN-05-01-2014:30)

Laura mentioned the use of Post-It notes for students to mark interesting pieces of information and facts. She also shared that

using Post-it notes makes it easy for students to exchange ideas and questions too. As they read different sections of text I always encourage them to write a question that would help them review what is important in that section. We spend a lot of



time at the beginning of the school year learning about and practicing writing notes and different types of questions. (FN-04-28-2014: 116)

My analysis of Laura's classroom instructional practices (pedagogy) revealed the use of literacy strategies to instruct, model, and empower the students to better comprehend the texts they read. The practice of writing questions where answers are located directly in the text (Right There), where students need to combine separate sections or piece of text to answer a question (Think and Search), where students apply their background knowledge about what the author wrote (Author and You), and finally application of prior knowledge (On Your Own) is commonly referred to as the Question-Answer-Relationship (QAR) Strategy, championed by Raphael (1982, 1986).

After transcribing Laura's audio files, my analysis showed that Laura has a growing understanding of how the MN-ELA standards could be aligned with her social studies instruction. Appendix H shows the suggestions and rationale she offered throughout the study. With further reading and increased familiarity with the MN-ELA standards, she should find alignment even easier.

Discussion with Laura revealed that the planning for each unit for each region of the United States, followed a similar construction. Laura located an introductory video and constructed or located a PowerPoint presentation to guide student viewing or information (FN-04-31-2014: 106, 142; FN-04-22-2014-017) This practice demonstrated her belief that her students were visual learners. As a bridge builder, she often stated the importance of connecting learning to prior knowledge and previous experiences as well as the importance in scaffolding students' reading and processing of ideas prior to students working on their reading and assignments for the class period:

Videos and other visuals throughout the lessons offer students get the students excited about what we're studying. They'll often make connections from the video clips, PowerPoints when we're studying those topics later in the unit. It's wonderful to hear them making those connections! (FN-04-28-2014: 110)

Laura's planning process also included the use of a bin of picture books that covered information on the current region they were studying. This bin circulated through various classrooms and grades that were studying the regions of the United States. As she noted, this practice was followed "so there are topics and titles that appeal to different interests as well as reading levels – there are picture books, short novels, even newspaper clippings and travel brochures" (FN-04-28-2014: 022) The incorporation of these texts demonstrated Laura's belief that the students "need to read a verity of texts like they see in real-life, like when they're traveling. The picture books and novels offer nice historical fiction as well as informational text" (FN-04-28-2014: 24). As Laura reflected on this, she connected this practice to the Reading Benchmarks: Literature, grade 4 as well as the Reading Benchmarks: Informational Text, grade 4 (see Appendix H).

Laura's desire for students to be researchers is clearly evident in the class activities and assignments she plans. Outside of quizzes on states and capitals, Laura's assessments are open-ended, requiring students to research and write about what they find and feel is important to meet the prompts they are given (FN-04-27-2014: 182; FN-04-28-2014: 033; FN-04-31-2014: 096). She makes frequent use of online resources, especially from *Teachers Pay Teachers*, to allow students to do research on their own to complete a research packet for each region (FN-04-31-2014: 108). Laura purchased the downloadable PDF packet for this region but noted a few spelling errors as she read

through it. Not certain if the creator of this PDF would respond to her, she e-mailed the author and received an apology along with a corrected version of the packet. She stated,

I like to see what other people have come up with to assess students' knowledge and have been pretty happy with this creator and her packets on the other regions. I've had some purchases on TPT that turned out to be unusable with my students, so I'm pretty picky when I make my purchases." (FN-04-27-2014: 167)

When I inquired about what she looks for when selecting activities for her students, Laura shared that any activity she selects has to have a purpose to help the students grow in their learning and development of skills: "I don't want them doing a worksheet or some sort of activity just to be busy, I want them to be productive and have a purpose for what they do that relates to their learning" (FN-04-27-2014: 170) My analysis of Laura's interviews, audio reflections, and teacher-supplied assignments (assessments) showed purposeful selection that allowed her students to connect content when reading, researching, and writing. The rationale shared by Laura in Appendix H demonstrates her ability to connect the use of MN-ELA standards for reading of informational text; it also shows how the work demonstrated both in class and in assignments by her students connect to the language benchmarks for the fourth grade.

In regard to Guiding Questions #3 (How do the selected standards shape lesson planning and enactment?) and #4 (As teachers reflect on their selection and use of particular standards to teach social studies content, what do they see as being effective in their lesson design, teaching practices, and student learning? What changes do they suggest for future lesson planning and enactment?) my analysis of Laura's planning and instruction and my classroom observations showed me that there was no change to the

structure or enactment of Laura's lessons based on the selection and use of standards.

Priority was placed on content as well as how students could demonstrate their understanding. My review of Laura's audio files and her rationale for selection of MN-ELA standards affirmed her current planning, instructional, and assessment practices. As I consider how the selection and use of standards impacted student learning, my analysis of Laura's data showed that student engagement remained the same in the social studies class.

With the examination of the MN-ELA standards throughout this study, Laura shared:

Now that I'm aware of the skills listed in the standards, as I reflect on the activities and assignments I've used in the past with other subjects, I can match standards to them but when I reread the standards, maybe I'll come up with new assignments I can use. I like that the standards are like a framework and that I can choose what I do with my students in the classroom to meet the standards. (FN-05-02-2014: 384)

As Laura talked in our post-observation time, she mentioned that she'll need to revisit the MN Social Studies standards even more to see what other standards could be aligned with the study of the regions in the United States:

Before this, I had never heard of those ten Social Studies themes. They make a lot of sense and I could probably use those themes to organize my Social Studies units in the future, but the MN Social Studies standards will definitely take more time for me to read through and understand them before I can start to align them with my lessons. (FN-04-24-2014: 34)

In conclusion, the analysis of my observations of Laura's classroom teaching, planning, selection of assessments, and reflections revealed five things for me:

1. Her current level of understanding of the MN-ELA standards, while new to her, is higher than her understanding of the MN Social Studies standards.
2. Her planning with standards is student-driven. She focused on how the students could demonstrate what they were learning and did not just focus on content she felt she needed to teach.
3. Laura demonstrated her willingness to embrace and implement both ELA and Social Studies standards in her planning, acknowledging that publisher-selected standards may not always fit the way content is taught and assessed in every classroom.
4. Laura's understanding that the MN-Social Studies standards are content driven and the MN-ELA standards, while they mention content, are more skill-based was evident in her selection and application of standards in her planning and assessment.
5. Professional development is needed to assist the school faculty in understanding the standards and embracing the use of the standards for planning instruction and student assessments, and for documentation of student performance of the standards.

Laura's comments throughout this study revealed a thoughtful educator whose instruction engaged students as she delivered content and empowered her students to read, research, and write about what they were learning. The use of standards affirmed

her practices but also opened her eyes to how she could align the MN-ELA standards with other subjects.

## Chapter 6

### Synthesis, Implications, and Direction for Future Research

While the idea of standards is not a new topic in the field of education, few research studies have examined how teachers come to understand, select, and implement standards into their planning and practice (Halvorsen et al, 2012; Lee, 2004). The number of studies regarding the implementation of the CCSS-ELA standards into the content areas of mathematics (Opfer et al, 2016; Swars & Chestnutt, 2016; Wilson & Downs, 2014), science (Lee, 2017; Wright & Gotwals, 2017), and social studies (Huck, 2019; Kenna & Russell, 2015) is limited but often focused on pre-service teachers (Deeney, 2016; Howard & Guidry, 2017) and high school (Drew & Thomas, 2017; Ruchti et al., 2013) contexts. Because of the limited number of studies examining the integration of ELA standards into content area courses, outside of offering lessons with pre-aligned standards, there is a need for this research. This study works to fill that gap. In this study I examined how two upper elementary teachers who teach grades 5 and 4 explored aligning their social studies instruction with standards within the state of Minnesota, particularly the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies (2011) and the MN-ELA Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects (CCSS, 2010). My goal was to describe their planning and thought process as they selected and aligned both sets of standards within their social studies lessons and their reflections on this planning. To achieve these objectives I considered the following research questions:

1. What knowledge and beliefs do each of the teachers draw upon as they come to understand the Minnesota K–12 Academic Standards in Social Studies

(2011) as well as the recent *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects* (2010)?

2. Which standards do the teachers select? What rationale do they give for their selections?
3. How do the selected standards shape lesson planning and enactment?
4. As the teachers reflect on their selection and use of particular standards to teach social studies content, what do they see as being effective in their lesson design? teaching practices? student learning? What changes do they suggest for future lesson planning and enactment?

This study made use of qualitative methodologies and the case study method to explore teachers' thinking and reflection during planning as these educators worked to align standards within their social studies curriculum. I collected data for one unit in social studies in each classroom. The Minnesota history unit in the 5th-grade classroom occurred over eleven class periods, and the Southeast United States unit in the 4th-grade classroom spanned fifteen class periods. Following a similar research process for each case study, I gathered observational data and collected artifacts in each classroom and interviewed each participant teacher multiple times across the span of the unit. I conducted participant interviews (post teaching) to investigate each teacher's beliefs, content knowledge, and pedagogical practices, which needed to be established before moving into areas such as planning and instruction. Data from daily class observations allowed me to understand how they each teacher put their plans into action. Each teacher participant supplied audio reflections on the lessons after they were taught, reflecting on



their choices during instruction. The teachers also shared their thoughts about planning for the upcoming lesson. Last, the teachers supplied artifacts (planning materials, PowerPoint/SMART Board presentations, worksheet pages, and other student activities) associated with the lessons they taught and the comments made within interviews. My analysis of these items helped me understand their teaching and planning routine, their use of standards (or not), and their reflective processes during these activities (before, during, and after the lessons).

### **Summary of the Major Findings**

The following sections summarize the major findings related to the selection, planning, and implementation of standards into social studies instruction, and the reflections associated with these activities. Following the findings is a section where I offer implications based on similarities and differences noted from the two case studies.

#### **Findings from Case 1**

I began my research in Joyce's 5<sup>th</sup> grade classroom. My analysis of data from this case study revealed an organized educator focused on meeting the content set out by her school but also striving to connect the content to the lives of her students. Having taught Minnesota history for a number of years, she was confident in her subject matter knowledge. Her planning routine began with reading the history book and noting important people, places, events, and vocabulary to share with her students. As she noted this information, she also thought about projects and activities the students could complete related to this information throughout the school year, such as diaries, journals, or mock parfleches (a Native American kind of wallet made, traditionally, from rawhide), and accompanying student-created postcards for each chapter in their Minnesota history

book. Her notes demonstrated knowledge of both the MN Social Studies standards and the ten themes of social studies instruction from the National Council for the Social Studies. Joyce selected content related to the standards and themes that she felt aligned with the textbook chapters and units she taught. Her initial planning did not include the use of standards at the individual lesson level; instead, she used broad brushstrokes, planning across the unit when addressing standards. My analysis of Joyce's interviews and audio reflections revealed that she viewed the standards as more of a checklist for her to use as she planned and taught lessons versus a careful mapping of specific standards to key concepts or teaching moments. Her lesson assessments were typically publisher-supplied activities and worksheets which matched the content she taught, but the documents were not aligned to any specific standards. In general, Joyce was more wedded to particular activities or materials that she had used for many years to teach social studies concepts than to drawing on the standards—coupled with the key content—to guide the selection of teaching resources.

While Joyce expressed the importance of students' reading comprehension as they encounter social studies content, she did not plan for or explicitly teach any reading strategies to promote better comprehension of the texts (online and within their Minnesota history book). However, my analysis of her audio reflections and classroom observations showed Joyce using many of the skills in the MN-ELA standards, but unintentionally. Through interviews, I found that initially Joyce did not include any MN-ELA standards in her planning because she thought that they should be reserved for the ELA time slot in the school day and that would not apply to the social studies lessons she was teaching. As Joyce and I read through some of the MN-ELA standards together

during post planning and teaching sessions, she voiced a realization that these standards did include skills that she had the students use in lessons she had already taught. She viewed these ELA standards as natural, unspoken pedagogical moves to teach generic skills that any teacher would automatically use to engage students in a lesson.

Her realization about ELA standards and their integration with social studies standards did not change the sequence Joyce followed when planning her lessons. She continued to prioritize textbook content followed by activities she deemed key to match with social studies ideas. What did change was Joyce's addition of a final planning step: she read through the MN-ELA standards and selected ones she felt aligned with pre-selected social studies activities that she wanted her students to complete as she taught the lesson. She also worked to incorporate the teaching of research skills and writing into her last few unit lessons to promote more of an integrated approach for her students so that they could practice using more of the MN-ELA standards. Throughout the unit of study, I observed Joyce's growing in her understanding, selection, and use of the MN-ELA standards to guide student learning; however, she still tended to view most ELA standards as skills most teachers would naturally fold into their social studies instruction.

### **Findings from Case 2**

The second teacher I studied was Laura; she was a 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher and just beginning to teach a unit focused on the Southeast region of the United States. The analysis of the data from this case study revealed an organized educator who referred to herself as a 'bridge builder' as she connected social studies content not only to her students' lives but also to concepts from the previous grades of school and prepared her students for future grades ahead. The year I conducted my research study was the first

year Laura taught the Southeast region of the United States unit in Social Studies. Her planning routine began with reading through the text to familiarize herself with the content. While she did take notes as she read, her notes were not as detailed or as formal as Joyce's (Case 1). Laura had recently taken a Curriculum and Instruction course at a local college and was working to format her handwritten notes into computer-generated documents (see Appendix D) that she could save and easily update throughout the teaching of the unit, and then use as a springboard for planning in subsequent years. Laura also worked to create a unit plan (Appendix E) that included specific topics and lesson details broken down into a lesson-by-lesson sequence. Here she included skills like writing, listing, and labeling that she associated with these activities. Her plan also induced the placement of additional resources for each unit—often the title of a resource book, a YouTube video, a PowerPoint, or a readers theater play connected with the region. For example, the school had bins of books for each region of the United States. Students in Laura's classroom were encouraged to use many of these books for independent reading time as well as for references when writing their state reports. While Laura did not include a list of the contents in her planning, she would reference the tub or bin of books as a reminder to bring these resources into the classroom for use during social studies lessons. Laura also incorporated the practice of reading picture books to her students that offered more information about the Southeast region of the U.S.

As Laura reviewed the content of her lessons, she also worked to locate or create assessments or activities that would allow her students to demonstrate what they were learning. Most of her assessments were open-ended, allowing the children to demonstrate their individuality and understanding. Her willingness to utilize such open-ended

assignments allowed her students to make personal connections as they chose a state or famous person from the Southeast region to research. Personal connections were encouraged by Laura throughout her instruction with her students. The inquisitive nature of her students lent itself to their asking questions, researching, and sharing information with one another. When asked a question by a student, Laura would often discuss and model where and how to find answers. Analysis of her audio reflections indicated that she herself would do research at night to find answers to questions the students had asked her on the previous day if she could not readily find an answer before the school day had ended.

It should be noted that Laura's initial planning did not involve any standards, but in anticipation of being in this study, she started to read through the MN-ELA and MN-Social Studies standards. When asked how she would align the standards to her instruction, she shared that as she read through the standards, she kept thinking of ways students could demonstrate the standard. She pointed out that the verbs in the MN-ELA made it easy to picture the students demonstrating the standard. My analysis of her audio reflections and my field notes from observing in her classroom confirm that she did implement ELA standards within the southeast unit particularly as she designed ways for students to show their learning. Like Joyce in Case Study 1, Laura agreed that the MN-ELA standards seemed easy to work into the social studies standards because they felt like natural instructional practices.

As Laura worked to select and align MN Social Studies standards to her lessons, a publisher's document was found that contained information about aligning the social studies textbook she used to the MN Social Studies Standards. After reading through this

document, Laura agreed with the standards they had selected. Also new to Laura were the ten themes from NCSS. She planned to spend time reading through those during the school year and was determined to align the themes with units in the following year. Overall, as Laura planned, taught, and reflected on her individual lessons throughout the Southeast unit, she indicated no changes being made based on the incorporation of the standards she had initially selected. What did change was her planning ahead for future units of study: “I’m fine with how everything is aligning with this unit, but having read through the standards and reflected on them, I have all sorts of ideas running around in my head of things I could do in other classes as well as in other units for social studies” (FN-05-15-2014:252).

Throughout this case study, I observed Laura’s growing and affirming her classroom practices as she became more familiar with the MN-ELA standards. Her knowledge of the MN Social Studies standards grew as she read through them and worked to align them to individual lessons and not just to an entire chapter or unit from the textbook. Overall, Laura’s planning began with the core ideas in the social studies textbook, but the way she designed specific lessons was influenced by her desire to draw upon multiple resources that she located or created to match the goals of her lessons. Her planning was also influenced by the interests of her students and her desire to develop their questioning skills and their desire to seek answers—which she modeled herself. Her planning was flexible, less driven by specific activities and resources she liked, and guided by the needs of her particular students, and her desire to instill curiosity and understanding within them about the content.

### **Implications and Discussion**

An analysis of the commonalities and differences between the two teacher case studies was a key step in synthesizing the practices of the participants and drawing out key ideas for discussion. In the next section, I arrange my implications according to the research questions that guided this study.

### **Research Question #1**

What knowledge and beliefs do each of the teachers draw upon as they come to understand the *Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies* (2011) as well as the MN-ELA *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects* (MN-ELA, 2010)?

From the beginning of this study, there was a difference between the teachers' knowledge and beliefs about both types of standards. Joyce (Case Study 1) had considerable knowledge about Minnesota history because she had taught this subject many times before. She also had deep background knowledge from having worked with the *Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies* (2011), and she had studied the ten themes from the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS, 1992). The more often Joyce read through these standards and talked about them, the more familiar she became with them. In contrast, Laura (Case Study 2) was experiencing these standards and themes for the first time. Her knowledge of the standards grew throughout this study. Laura shared that she felt overwhelmed with all of the information in the Social Studies standards because she was just getting back into fulltime teaching.

When examining both teachers' beliefs about the Social Studies standards, I found that they believed the standards were content-based and helpful in planning lessons. Joyce viewed them as a reminder or checklist of what content she was to teach to her students

in general, whereas Laura viewed them as content, useful for teacher planning for individual lessons, but moreover content that students needed to be able to explain in order to demonstrate understanding.

From my analysis of the interview data, both Joyce and Laura were unfamiliar with the MN-ELA standards. Joyce talked about them in a general way and had, in fact, cast them aside, referring to them as “more that teachers have to cover” (FN 03-21-2014: 954). It is clear here that Joyce did not have the correct knowledge or belief about the MN-ELA standards. Joyce’s knowledge of these standards grew throughout the study as she read through them and selected standards for subsequent lessons. In contrast, Laura admitted from the beginning of the study that the MN-ELA standards were new to her, but she also shared that she had been reading through them to get a sense of what they were about. This demonstrates that her knowledge about the MN-ELA was actually greater than Joyce’s. As Laura talked about these standards, she articulated her belief that these were skill-based and would be helpful to pick or make assignments so that students could easily demonstrate their understanding of the standards. In this analysis, she and Joyce were alike, seeing ELA standards as generic skills that most teachers would weave into lessons on a daily basis.

The implications that I drew from this analysis are that all teachers (and administrators) would benefit from, and should be encouraged to do the following:

- 1) read through both content standards (e.g., social studies) and other relevant standards (e.g., MN-ELA and national standards in discipline areas) and become familiar with the wording and content;



- 2) realize the language and content of the standard can help teachers plan both lessons and the related assessment(s);
- 3) create assessments whereby students can demonstrate their understanding and level of mastery for each of the standards at their grade level.

A second implication from this study is that schools need to change. As standards evolve, it is important for school leaders to have a curriculum of outcomes and goals for each grade level, organized by discipline area and cross referenced between relevant disciplines (e.g., social studies and ELA). Standards can then be aligned to these goals. Professional development (PD) would be appropriate for not only learning about standards but discussing how to use them within lesson planning and assessment. Opportunities for trying out standards-based teaching and then sharing lesson plans and reflections on lessons after implementation, are key to productive and meaningful ongoing PD for teachers.

### **Research Question #2**

Which standards do the teachers select? What rationale do they give for their selections?

It is important to understand that the two teachers in this study taught in a parochial setting where no framework or PD sessions were in place for working with standards, allowing freedom but also lack of clarity and coherence for standards implementation. This is in comparison to a more controlled curriculum environment found in public schools where the usage of standards, specific curricula and resources may be stipulated. As you will read below, the latitude offered by leadership in the

parochial school that governed the two teachers I studied, led to different processes of interpretation, selection, and application of standards in the planning by the two teachers.

As Joyce talked about the Social Studies standards she mentioned specific terms such as “events” or “geographic features.” Joyce shared that when reading through these standards, she always underlined the nouns because that made her more aware of certain concepts or terminology she could match up with topics in the textbook. My analysis of her planning documents, as well as the audio transcript of when she compared her choices to those of the publisher, revealed a definite preference for her choice as she said, “I’m not sure how they thought that would be a good theme for this chapter!” (FN: 03-25-2014: 126). While Joyce’s comment may sound judgmental, it also demonstrates the importance of teachers’ knowing both the content and the standards so that they can justify their selection and alignment. Yet it also reveals that teachers’ stances on how they want to teach a unit—due to previous planning and being wed to particular activities—can also limit their willingness to consider new ideas. Likewise, teachers who blindly follow a district mandated or purchased pre-made curriculum are at a disadvantage, and their ability to explain why certain standards were selected over other standards is suspect.

Since Laura did not have experience with the MN Social Studies standards, she started to read them but, as I mentioned above, felt overwhelmed. When a publisher’s document aligning the MN Social Studies standards to her textbook was found, she used it as a beginning point to think about the how the standards were aligned to the textbook. Throughout the study as she became more familiar with these standards, she felt confident suggesting additional standards for specific lessons (see Appendix I-Joyce;

Appendix G-Laura). Similar to Joyce, the rationale offered by Laura when selecting a Social Studies standard always went back to the nouns and the content. As Laura offered her rationale, she often included a focus on students' interests and the idea of how students could demonstrate their understanding of the standard. Both teachers began with reading through the MN-ELA standards and noting the skills documented (e.g., compare and contrast information) and the verbs associated with the standard (e.g., show an understanding of complex ideas). Both teachers' rationale for selecting certain ELA standards for use within a unit, lesson, or assignment included what the students would do to demonstrate the specific skill (see Appendix J-Joyce; Appendix H-Laura).

Implications I drew from this analysis include that there needs to be stronger connections made by teachers and administrators between a school's curriculum and learning goals and lesson planning, actual classroom practice, and assessments. If a teacher is part of a larger school where there are multiple grade-level or content-area teachers, grade-level team planning meetings would be helpful to read and unpack standards and come to a consensus on where and how the standards would best be aligned. If a practitioner is the sole teacher for a grade or content area, it is still important to consider both where the standards can be aligned and how the standards can be assessed. Cross-grade level or cross-content area teams can be useful when there is only one teacher per grade level. In both instances, teachers should consider multiple ways that they could assess a standard as this can help them meet the various ability levels of students. It is also clear that teachers should teach standards more than once and in more than one area or way. To that end, it is important for teachers to ensure that assessments not only match the standards but also align with the content being taught and the

resources students have at their disposal to learn and demonstrate their understanding of the standards.

### **Research Question #3**

How do the selected standards shape lesson planning and enactment?

Joyce selected standards after reading the textbook as a precursor to planning individual lessons. Because the MN-Social Studies standards were new to Laura, she selected those directly before planning the individual lessons and as part of her summer planning, just as Joyce did. The two teachers selected the MN-ELA standards after they had planned their lessons. Therefore, the shape and enactment of the social studies lessons were essentially unchanged. There was one exception to this as Joyce included a research writing lesson in Chapter 13 connected to the lesson “Why Is Miss R. Sick?” After reading the MN-ELA standards, Joyce planned this new lesson to practice incorporating the research and writing standards. This was a challenge because she taught the research and writing skills in a separate part of the day, not connected to the social studies class time due to computer lab availability. Further, it was unclear to Joyce what other research lessons the students had prior to this experience. On the other hand, Laura found it easy to match MN-ELA standards to her students’ research and writing skills within social studies because these skills were a regular part of the students’ learning experience in her classroom.

Implications that I drew from this analysis indicate that teachers need to understand how selected standards shape lesson planning and enactment to help them develop appropriate instruction. Teachers need to see the broader contextual forces that affect their daily work and develop flexibility in their thinking and practices. The practice

of planning and enactment connects well with teacher thinking (Elbaz, 1981) because teachers must have knowledge of the content they are teaching, the curriculum in which the lessons are situated, the best pedagogical practice for instruction, and a good understanding of themselves as teachers—how they can best instruct their students. Last but not least, teachers' lessons are affected by a variety of influences such as other teachers, students, administrators, society, and even the environment (e.g., classroom layout, the schedule for the day, the weather). Teachers often make decisions in an instant while immersed in the act of teaching, based on a remark or action of a student, or as a result of a thought that comes into their heads. These changes can add a detour to the lesson or take the lesson in a different direction than was originally planned. When this happens, we are reminded of Schön's reflection-in-action (1983). It is important for teachers to have a clear understanding of their lesson goals and objectives (structure) to provide guidance for the lesson, yet they also need to make necessary adjustments along the way (being flexible).

#### **Research Question #4**

As teachers reflect on their selection and use of particular standards to teach social studies content, what do they see as being effective in their lesson design, teaching practices, and student learning? What changes do they suggest for future lesson planning and enactment?

Both teachers were excited to share the content of their lessons. The content of the social studies standards came through as both taught. Both teachers considered themselves and their students to be visual learners; thus they looked for ways to engage students with social studies concepts by using visual elements when teaching. For

example, Joyce designed lessons incorporating technology such as SMART Board presentations with embedded videos or hyperlinks. Field notes from my classroom observations show that Joyce and her students were excited when discussing images on the board and when students asked questions about what was on the screen (whether in a video or when looking at an image). Laura also used technology when she taught, making use of a digital copy of the textbook and projecting it on her SMART Board to point out text features. She also made use of YouTube videos to introduce concepts and develop background with her students. Both Joyce and Laura judged a lesson's effectiveness by the engagement level of their students throughout the lesson, including whether the students asked and answered questions and whether they could connect information from previous lessons. Both teachers provided opportunities within their lessons for students to turn to partners to explain concepts and clarify terminology. In Laura's reflections, she pointed to demonstrations of student learning as being quite telling as to whether a lesson was taught well. As Joyce worked to have students demonstrate their knowledge of the standards, she, too, gradually used informal assessments of learning as a basis for evaluating a lesson's effectiveness.

The implications that I drew from this analysis indicate that the two teachers in this study knew their student populations well. As they spoke about plans for their lessons, and when they reflected on the lessons afterwards, both teachers made connections with student actions and participation throughout the class instructional time. Professional development that supports teachers learning how to value knowing students' interests and abilities allows educators to plan lessons that foster growth (see O'Brien et al., 2022). In addition, the use of multimodalities—as evidenced by the two teachers in

this study—is the key to student engagement and learning (see Beach & O’Brien, 2015 and Hinchman & O’Brien, 2019 for research and practical information on this topic). In addition, as standards are selected, it is important to align assessments to those standards. Offering multiple means of assessing students’ learning demonstrates teachers’ understanding of their students’ interests and strengths. Professional development in the areas of differentiation and the development of meaningful and interesting assessments of student learning is key.

Another implication I drew from this research is related to the quality of the delivery of a lesson. If the lesson is designed and enacted with more teacher talk and delivery of information—without much interaction from students—it may be difficult to judge lesson effectiveness through the observation of students’ learning. Yet there are times when there might be more teacher talk than student talk. But if we are asking students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of standards, teachers need to create opportunities within lessons for students to express their ideas, questions, and understanding.

Another implication from this study is that teachers to intentionally use ELA standards to guide their social studies teaching. One example is the use of reading comprehension strategies to design lessons, guide teaching practices, and foster student learning. However, it was apparent in Joyce’s classroom that no modeling or instruction of specific reading comprehension strategies related to informational text was evident. This practice is true for many elementary teachers as they teach discipline-area lessons. Instead, ELA standards are typically relegated to their own time slot during the day with little integration across subjects. This omission is not new; many elementary and

secondary content area teachers do not see it as their role to teach ELA related standards as they focus on content knowledge (see O'Brien & Stewart, 1990; O'Brien et al., 1995). However, there are studies in which teachers have partnered with researchers to focus on understanding the learning goals of specific disciplines, including the ways of thinking and learning within an area, and the unique textual features and vocabulary challenges of various resources used to teach disciplines such as social studies (see Lee et al., 2020a; Lee et al., 2020b; Lemanski et al., 2020).

For teachers to effectively learn from professional development sessions or collaborations between researchers and teachers, teachers should have the opportunity to practice these skills with peers and plan lessons utilizing these strategies so that they can independently implement the strategies into their teaching. School-led efforts to examine standards and align reading comprehension strategies to particular discipline area lessons that teachers feel are important to develop should be prioritized. This work could be followed by creating a matrix showing when and where each strategy would be introduced. If teachers know what strategies were used in previous grades and specific discipline areas, they can review and reinforce those strategies while building the repertoire of reading strategies in the succeeding grades. Creating a shared understanding of comprehension strategies and common terminology can reinforce learning throughout the entire school. Professional development on the genres in literature and the modes used in reading each genre would be a useful complement to the learning ideas presented above.

A final implication from this study is based on Schön's reflection-on-action (1983) ideas, which take place post-teaching. Research findings indicate that teacher



reflection takes time to develop and implement, but it is valuable for teachers to assess what went well and what changes need to be made for the following day. It is key for educators to identify problems of practice, address or change something from a lesson, or completely redesign a lesson for the next time it is taught. Many of these thoughts and decisions are contingent on the group of students in front of the teacher, but noting where parts of readings or activities were easy or challenging helps a teacher to make changes down the road. To this end, teachers should be encouraged to write reflection notes about lessons and student learning and then jot notes about lesson redesign in plan books (digital plan books). Some teachers have even written ideas and reminders directly into teachers' manuals. Recording a lesson and then watching it and reflecting would be an excellent precursor to the reflection journal redesign of lessons activity. Partnering up with a colleague to watch and discuss a lesson could offer insight as well. To make this happen, professional development on the topic of reflection or reflective teaching and peer-to-peer coaching would be required. Implications for future planning seem almost endless as school curricula and objectives change over time. Just as the abilities of our students change over time, a teacher's knowledge of content, child development, pedagogy, strategies, and standards can change over time. Just as standards will change over time, so, too, teachers should be adaptable to meet the needs of their students. In this last section of this chapter I address ideas for future research.

### **Directions for Future Research**

In the findings from the analysis and interpretation of the two case studies, I addressed key ideas about how teachers use or fail to use standards when thinking about, planning, and reflecting on their instruction. Yet additional research is needed regarding

how teachers can better understand standards and how they can use them to plan meaningful instruction. Below I present six areas for future scholarship.

### **Continuation of this Study**

The two cases in my study covered a unit with two separate elementary grade level teachers. Continued study of individual teachers or small groups of grade-level teachers across a longer period of time would allow for greater understanding of teachers' thinking and reflection processes, and the role of peers in supporting changes in practices.

### **Unpacking Content**

Other areas ripe for research include exploring teachers' thinking as they read and unpack skills and content from the MN-ELA standards (or other state's versions) and content standards (social studies or another content area) before considering a school's curriculum or grade-level learning objectives and studying how skill-based standards and content standards are woven together into content area planning and instruction.

Understanding teachers' thinking about the selection of particular standards juxtaposed with teachers' processes as they examine pre-made curricular materials (with the standards removed), would add to our knowledge about teacher planning and decision making. A comparison could then be made with the standards originally included with the materials. While the author(s) of those materials may not be available, one could examine similarities and differences between the resources and teachers' efforts and discuss the possible rationale for the differences.

### **Development of Assessments**

Further study could examine teachers' creation of student-centered assessments to demonstrate the standards. Teachers who focus on engaging students in the assessment

process would be particularly useful. Other assessment questions that are open for research include these: How often should each standard be addressed within instruction and assessment? What type of document will facilitate easy but helpful record keeping for teachers? How will student performance be measured and documented for each standard? What happens if a student does not master a standard?

### **Development of Research in the Area of Teacher Education**

The focus of my study was on two practicing elementary school teachers. However, research within the field of elementary teacher education is also needed to understand how program professionals introduce standards in coursework across the program, and how discipline area professionals collaborate (or do not) with literacy instructors to examine the teaching of ELA standards within specific discipline areas.

### **Professional Development**

The findings of this study set the path for research in the area of professional development (PD). As schools work to successfully align their planning, instruction, and assessments with the MN-ELA standards and content-related standards, research is needed on how this work is undertaken and what successful efforts look like. The literature on teacher reflection stresses the use of PD to inform and engage teachers on topics relevant to their teaching. The field also needs research studies designed to investigate the planning, implementation, and ongoing use of PD to inform teachers about standards and associated practices.

In conclusion, as shown in my research, teachers need to understand that the standards are for the students. While standards can guide and affect instruction, careful thinking about the role of standards, planning to enact them effectively, maintaining

flexibility within and reflecting upon one's teaching, and revising plans are key pedagogical practices teachers need to develop. Further, students must be given opportunities to demonstrate their understanding of the standards. Many teachers are asked to take up the work of implementing standards on their own. Yet for this work to be helpful for the students, consistent and quality efforts in teaching are needed. Carefully designed professional development for teachers on how they can effectively take up standards in each discipline area—and across areas—is needed. Teacher teams and strong school leadership are two keys to making this work meaningful and effective. Teachers, as evidenced from the two individuals in my study, are open and ready for this important work.

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## Appendix A

## Orientations and Categories of Teacher Knowledge

<b>Orientations of Teacher Knowledge</b>	<b>Practical Knowledge</b>	<b>Content Knowledge</b>	<b>Content Knowledge</b>
Situational	Knowledge of Subject Matter	Subject Matter Knowledge	Subject Matter Knowledge
Social	Knowledge of Curriculum	Pedagogical Knowledge	Pedagogical Knowledge
Personal	Knowledge of Instruction	Curricular Knowledge	Curricular Knowledge
Experiential	Knowledge of Self		Personal Practical Knowledge
Theoretical	Knowledge of Milieu of Schooling		



## Appendix B

### Interview Questions

#### Initial Interview Questions

1. Tell me about your background and professional experiences, etc.
2. Tell me about your decision to become a teacher.
3. Describe particular Social Studies activities in your classroom that you are proud of.

#### Questions Pertaining to Views of Social Studies

1. Describe what you think good social studies teaching looks like.
2. What are your goals/priorities for teaching social studies (history/geography)?
  - Describe what a teacher of social studies (history/geography) should know in order to help students learn.
3. How do your views on social studies compare with other teachers in your school?
4. Some people think that the social studies curriculum involves controversial issues, others don't think so. What are your thoughts on this topic?
  - Have you ever discussed controversial issues in your class (y/n)? If so, describe a few of these to me.
5. How do you gauge student interest and abilities in social studies topics?

#### Questions Pertaining to Literacy and Social Studies (skills, strategies, etc.)

1. What connections do you see between social studies and literacy in how you teach social studies?
2. As you teach social studies, what literacy skills are involved in your social studies curriculum? (implicit/explicit)
3. What strategies have you used with your students to address these skills?
4. How do you decide what strategy(ies) to use when teaching social studies content?
5. Describe how you acquaint the students with the strategy?

#### Questions Pertaining to Social Studies (instruction)

1. What are your priorities in teaching social studies?
2. Suppose a student/parent told you s/he didn't see the value of social studies in the elementary school. What would you tell them?

## Appendix C

### Planning Questions

1. Consider me new to the teaching profession and walk me through how you plan your overall social studies curriculum. (year/semester/quarter/unit-theme/daily, etc.)
  - a. Talk to me about how you make decisions about what you teach in your classroom and how you might go about implementing these decisions as you teach.
  - b. Describe what influences your planning decisions.
  - c. Given your specific grade level focus and textbook/texts, how do you select the content to be taught?
  - d. Laura - How do you decide the sequencing of your teaching (units, lessons, and within lessons)?
  - e. Do you draw upon standards in your teaching (y/n)? If so, which ones and how do you learn about these standards?
    - i. How do your views on educational standards compare with others with whom you teach?
2. Describe how you document your lesson plans.
  - a. What form does your lesson plan take?
  - b. As you look at standards, how might the form of your lesson plans change to reflect the use of standards?

## Appendix D

### Lesson Related Questions

#### Questions Prior to Lesson (in reference to lesson planning materials)

1. After blocking out your unit, what is your specific planning process for each particular lesson?
  - a. In looking at x-lesson, tell me more about the sequence you have chosen.
2. When looking at a lesson, what thoughts go through your mind as you determine what you want students to get out of the lesson?

#### Questions After Lesson (in reference to lesson planning materials)

1. How did you determine the focus/objectives for this lesson? Walk me through your thinking process.
2. Did standards impact your lesson planning (y/n)? If yes, tell me how the idea of standards impact your planning? instruction? student involvement?
3. (As we examine a lesson plan together): How does this lesson reflect your original objectives?
  - a. Were any modifications made? If so, when? why? How did this impact the rest of your lesson?
  - b. What moment(s) from the lesson made you think students understood a particular concept?
4. As you look to teach this lesson again, how will it look similar/different? What data from this lesson influences your thinking and planning?

#### Post Unit Questions

1. In what ways does what happened in this unit reflect your priorities for teaching social studies?
2. How do you decide which resources to use?
3. What resources do you find the most beneficial to your teaching of social studies?
4. After teaching these units/lessons, how has your opinion and knowledge of the standards been affected?
5. What has your participation in this study done for you?
6. How has your knowledge and work with standards changed?

## Appendix E

### Transcribed Interviews and Field Notes

Audio file from [REDACTED] (Planning for #04) Page | 1

---

1 Okay, the date is April 2<sup>nd</sup>. This is [REDACTED] and I'm going to explain  
2 why I put together my presentation for my lesson in history  
3 tomorrow as I did. And what I thought as I did it. Our lesson  
4 tomorrow is an investigation. We will spend a little time at the  
5 very beginning of class just going through a few of the pages  
6 that they had to do for tomorrow. One is just one of the "Get It |  
7 Guide" pages that will be done very quickly because I really  
8 want to focus on the investigation. I've been telling them that  
9 the buildings have been getting bigger. I've been saying that  
10 people's style of life has changed and now we're going to show  
11 them and let the buildings do the talking. It's called "Blueprints  
12 of our Past" and "What Do Buildings Tell Us about the People?"  
13 As I put it together, I put it together for two reasons: one is they  
14 already had a lesson like this prepared as an investigation in our  
15 book, but I do have a love of architecture and I wanted to make  
16 sure the students understand that just by looking at the  
17 buildings they see, they can learn things about the past. And so  
18 the first slide I have is a picture of a Victorian home with all of  
19 the gingerbread and the fancy little gables and the towers and  
20 all those different things. And then, the other one is more of a

## Appendix F

## Observation Template in Joyce's Classroom

Observation in Joyce's Classroom (03/25/2014)

**Key:****Black bold**(what Joyce spoke)**Red bold** (indicates slides, visuals)**Green bold** (responses of the students)

12:18	Students back at desks from band/recess; Joyce getting projector ready for history lesson; [Paraprofessional] with [student name]
12:19	“everything “top-left”
12:20	Devotion: “Watching You”
12:24	Talked briefly about the test that was passed back earlier in the day ( <b>various student responses</b> )
12:25	Today's we're going to start a new chapter
	What are some things you think about when you think about bigger?
	<b>buildings</b>
	What kinds of buildings were new in the late 1880s as we've studied in MN?
	<b>Sod houses, brick - industries</b>
	<b>Buildings might be getting bigger</b>
	What do you think “faster” refers to? <b>Speed of light, cars</b>
	What have we been getting around with in the past? <b>Walking...wagons with horses...(harness maker)...riding horses, trains, steamboats</b>
	Now we're going even faster
	Taller...what do you think will get taller?
	<b>Buildings themselves</b>
	What was discovered in the Mesabi Range? <b>Iron Ore</b>
	Iron ore led to steel and steel was fashioned into beams
	<b>Slide 1</b>
	Picture 1: of NY city...lots of people, how tall are those buildings? 3-6 stories taller...couldn't be built taller than 6-10 stories for a while...hadn't figured out elevators yet.
	<b>Picture 2:</b> tallest building west of the Mississippi...10+2 stories high
	<b>Picture 3:</b> streetcars with a horse
	<b>Picture 4:</b> car: <b>Henry Ford, Model T</b>
	Pictures give an overview of concepts of the chapter
	We're going to see one more thing....modern things go in and go out so quickly
	<b>Slide 2: Key Questions</b>
	If they weren't living in the cities, what would that be called? <b>Rural</b> (wrote rural vs. city on screen)
	What countries did all of these people come from? <b>Germany, Norway, Ireland, Sweden</b>

---

What problems did they face....we'll talk about this and then the last question

---

**Slide 3:** Map showing city of Hawley

---

“We are going to learn about the bigger, taller, faster because of Knud.”

---

Story about Knud...going to Twin Cities to become part of the House of Representatives

---

Where is the capital? **St. Paul**

---

Who knows when the capital was built? Centennial was 9 years ago...1905

---

**Picture of the Capital Building**

---

Knud found stuff he didn't like: packed with people, noisy, didn't like all of the activity around him. We're going to find out differences between where Knud was from and the city.

---

Let's put this into our notes...**Slide 4: Rural/Urban**

---

**See notes on slide page**

---

How/why did the farmers use the railroad?

---

Where did they take the grain? **Minneapolis (St. Anthony Falls)**

---

St. Paul was known for its government and as a higher class of people (richer)...Summit Avenue...home of the empire builder (James J. Hill), House of the 1<sup>st</sup> governor (Ramsey)

---

Minneapolis...waterfall, **Pillsbury mills...industry**

---

At this time most buildings are short...as time goes on they'll grow

---

What one word tells us why those cities will grow? **Industries**

---

What was a big industry in the cities? **The flour industry**...notes on Urban column

---

Noisy in factories

---

Some of the workers don't even talk to one another

---

Who were the people coming to this urban area? Did any people from the rural area come to the urban area? What about today? Why do you think they do that? They need to work; they need jobs

---

What else is neat about the big city? More people

---

12:41 pm What else is in the city that may make them want to tog there? What if you're not into farming? What if you want to do something else? Many people came for an opportunity to start their own business

---

What industry was in the NE part of the state? Mining and lumber

---

Furniture businesses in the town as well now

---

Knud had something else he was concerned about...he was concerned about the farmers (and the railroad). He felt that those big railroad people were swindlers

---

How did they test the grain in the big railroad cars? Stick a long stick in it

---

These farmers felt the railroads were cheating them

---

Besides industries, people everywhere...what do you think it smelled like in the cities? Well, let's just think about this...it's 1913 ....my grandmother remembered when they got indoor plumbing. There were some sewers but not a lot in the cities. It wasn't as clean as we'd like it today. It was crowded, didn't smell very good, loud, dirty,

---

Then balance it with Hawley...about 800people

---

Knud remembers pretty white snowfalls, knowing the people he'd see every day, caring about the neighbor and helping his neighbor.

---

**Slide 5 of the Capital**

---

Both cities are turning into a metropolitan area...what are some other metropolitan areas? **Twin Cities, Los Angeles, New York City, Las Vegas, Orlando, FL, San Diego, Chicago, Milwaukee**

Cities with subdivisions

**Slide 6:** Let's look at this picture of NY City and the people that are here are from different nationalities. We're going to see that there are a bunch of new immigrants coming in to MN.

What else do you see? [Joyce shows the market area in the picture, balconies]. Any air conditioners?

**Slide 7:** Please open your books to pg 178

What is this chart showing? **population**

These are still huge cities for MN

We're starting in the year 1880. What is the maximum size of those cities in the year 1880? **50,000**; a bit bigger than Mankato

Look at the population by 1920. Which city grew the most? **Minneapolis**

Duluth doesn't look like it's gotten very big. By the end of the chapter, come back to this chart and tell me why this is so.

Why do you think Minneapolis is the biggest city? What happened? The industries.

The industries are booming.

A Lot of the urban dwellers and coming from the farm.

They also made cartoons to convince people that city life was bad. I'll show you that another day.

Take a look at the picture on the top of 179. What problems might this neighborhood have? **A flood**

What else could happen? **Mud.** Mud a lot of times, I'm guessing if you are closer to the river there would be a lot of sewage...people would be crowded in buildings.

**Bohemian.** In German Park there is a Bohemian monument.

Who are the Bohemians? Do you know? How do you connect to this time in history? The Bohemians were the Germans.

Pg 179 at the bottom. Tell me...Let's look at Germany. Let's look at the year, 1900. Roughly how many people came to MN from Germany in 1900?

**Elijah...about 120,000.** They are leaving Europe as quickly as they can!

Coming through Ellis Island. By the end of 1910 most of those people aren't coming as much anymore. By 1920 there is a decline. What country starts getting more people in 1920? Which country is green? **Poland**

Let's go back to our map of MN (see slide)[Joyce circles the western and southwestern area]

Western and Southern MN = What did they grow? **Wheat.** By 1900/1918 they were done with their homesteading. Not many jobs or places to live so they move to the iron range or crowd into the Twin Cities

12:59pm YouTube video Clip "The Swedish (only watched about 1-2 minutes of the video)

**Slide 8:** adding a list of countries to the slide

How are they going to get along?

**Slide 9:** Working class: Have any of you known someone who gets hired just for a job? Working class is a poor group of people. They get paid just for

doing work...usually it's hard work. It's work no one else wants to do. The type of jobs they get to go...sweeps the floors, lays the bricks

Cultural diversity: do all of these groups speak English? Many languages....many beliefs...many different religions.

Do they all eat the same thing? **No**. Many foods!

Might you ever think you are better than someone else?

The next two terms have something to do with this...prejudice – thinking of one's self as better than someone else

Discrimination – skin color, etc. might not get the same opportunities. Could be where to live, a chance at a job,

Does this make for a good bunch of people living in the same place? No

What is poverty?

**Slide 10:**

Poverty = poor. Joyce tells a story about getting off of the train...poor...looking for people who speak the same language as you do (relatives, etc.) Their house is full, but they let you sleep there = more crowding. Disease spreads

Anonymity = when my sister comes to visit me and we go shopping here in new Ulm, usually there is 1 to 5 people that recognize me and say “Hey, that’s my teacher” or “Hey, that’s my brother’s teacher.”

Nobody knows you – that’s anonymity. In New Ulm there is little anonymity.

If I just moved to an area, who would I call for help? If I was in Manitowoc, who would I call if I had car troubles?

**Slide 11:** Let’s review why we had those things on our list today

Why did people move to MN cities? **jobs**, make money there, opportunities

Who moved? Immigrants from Poland, **farmers**, more likely some of the farmers kids!

What problems did the immigrants face when they got to the city? Loud, smelly, dirty, anonymity, crowded

What was another problem they face? **Disease**.

How do MN’s immigrants connect to you?

**1:11pm** Ask Mom and Dad and figure out who first came to MN from your family? Find out your nationality.

Joyce now hands out the sheet for today and goes through the directions:

I want you to think about new businesses and how they’re growing

Who came to MN?

What the city scape would look like...taller buildings, transportation changes, new technology?

List 2 reasons why rural MN moved to the cities.

Make questions about the charts.

The sheet is due on Thursday. (Joyce answers questions about the assignment form students)

**1:14pm** Music next in about 5 minutes...oh, let’s hand out the passes

Joyce is writing notes down in a notebook while up at the podium area and looking at the assignment board...filling out someone’s assignment book. The student must be sick/absent because Joyce is getting papers, etc. ready at that desk.

Many of the students are reading in novels at their desk during this time.



---

**Joyce exits the SMART Board presentation [doesn't save the writing she did on the screen]**

---

## Appendix G

### Unintentional Connections to the ELA Standards

There were many instances where Joyce mentioned having students complete certain activities and tasks while reading and interacting with their Social Studies text. Unknowingly these activities and tasks could align with CCSS. Listed below is a partial list I created as I listened in our post-observations and listened to her audio reflections. This list is important to the study as a springboard for future planning, especially in the area of Language Arts integration across the curriculum.

Standard 5.1.1.1 Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text;

Standard 5.1.7.7 Analyze how visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text;

Standard 5.2.1.1 Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text;

Standard 5.2.2.2 ...summarize the text;

Standard 5.2.3.3 Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text;

Standard 5.2.4.4 Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 5 topic or subject area.

Standard 5.2.7.7 Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently;

Standard 5.2.9.9 Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably;

Standard 5.3.0.4 Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension;

Standard 5.6.1.1 Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information;

Standard 5.6.2.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly;

Standard 5.6.3.3 Write narratives and other creative texts to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences;

Standard 5.6.6.6 With some guidance and support from adults, use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others...;

Standard 5.6.7.7 Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigations of different aspects of a topic;

Standard 5.6.8.8 Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital resources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished work, and provide a list of sources;

Standard 5.8.1.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 5 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

Standard 5.8.2.2 Summarize a written text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally;

Standard 5.8.4.4 Report on a topic or text or present an opinion, sequencing ideas logically and using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes, avoid plagiarism by identifying sources; speak clearly at an understandable pace.

Standard 5.8.5.5 Include multimedia components (e.g., graphics, sound) and visual displays in presentations when appropriate to enhance the development of main ideas or themes;

Standard 5.8.8.8 Create and individual or shared multimedia work or digital text for a specific purpose (e.g., to create or integrate knowledge, to share experiences or information, to persuade, to entertain, or as artistic expression).

Appendix H

Joyce's Initial Social Studies Notes

Chapter title

Ch. 12 Bigger, Faster, Fuller

Key concepts – easy for Joyce to look at and then talk about regarding the

- City vs Rural

- who moved and why

- Urban problems - crowding, poverty, disease, crime, anonymity

- Effects of "new inventions" & thus a change of pace of life -

Ideas used for charts and SMART Board activities; used at times for in-class work as well as for assignments.

ACTIVITIES

p. 79 Mapping MN - Immigrant Settlement Pattern

per WS p. 11 Venn Diagram or List Group - City Life vs. Country Life

Faster Pace of Life - p. 78 - chart

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
 PROJECT NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

NOTES:

ACTIONS:

12 Bigger, Taller, Faster

Joyce's choice of standards aligning to the chapter.

6.4.4.20.1 How the rise of big businesses, use of resources, technology change - influenced MN economy 1840-1920

6.4.4.20.2 Causes & impact of migration + immigration on MN society

(ethnic communities) language barriers

Postcard

skyscrapers! - streetcars, traffic jams, bikes, big houses -

VIII Science, technology, and Society

How can we cope with the ever increasing pace of change?



Joyce's preliminary postcard topics. She often used this information when students struggled to list topics or artifacts for their postcard designs and information.

Joyce's choice of theme and overarching/guiding question for the chapter.

DATE:

PROJECT NUMBER:

TITLE:

NOTES:

ACTIONS:

13

The Common Good

Chapter title.

6.3.9.10.1 How Land use

Joyce's choice of standards aligning to the chapter.

6.1.1.1.1 Government depends on formed + engaged citizens who exhibit civic skills + values

Joyce's preliminary postcard topics. She often used this information when students struggled to list topics or artifacts for their postcard designs and information.

6.1.1.2 Use graphic data to analyze a public issue

State your cause

explain how it would help the common good

Joyce's choice of theme and overarching/guiding question for the chapter.

X. What is civic participation and how can I be involved?

What is the balance between rights and responsibilities?



DATE:	TITLE:
PROJECT NUMBER:	

<p>NOTES:</p>	<p>ACTIONS:</p>
---------------	-----------------

Chapter title.

14 *The Good Life*

Joyce's choice of Social Studies standards aligning to the chapter.

6.2.3.5.1 - Describe the interactions + movement of goods

Joyce's preliminary postcard topics. She often used this information when students struggled to list topics or artifacts for their postcard designs and information. In class Joyce talked about family photo albums and people

6.2.1.1.1. ~~✗~~ Make informed economic choices -

6.3.4.10.1 Describe how land use changes over time -

Memory Scrapbook page -

Joyce's choice of theme and overarching/guiding question for the chapter.

IV. Individual development and identity -

How do people meet their basic needs in a variety of contexts?  
 How do individuals develop from youth to adulthood?

Appendix H

Joyce's Notes on Chapter 13 during My Period of Classroom Observation

These pages demonstrate a more-in-depth content planning and selection of fifth grade Common Core (ELA) standards by Joyce after our discussion about the Common Core State Standards.

①

Progressive reform 6.4.4.20.4

Good for whom? \* (6.13)

p. 199

some changes hurt people -

Minority - were pressured to assimilate - or act like the majority

Who did this hurt?

- Ojibwe
- German Americans

Becoming American

Ojibwe - lived on reservations separated

- own government
- own customs
- own religions
- own languages

2 New programs

Allotment - late 1800's

1887 - Dawes Act reservation land divided up by members of the tribe

- each family receive 160 acres

MN - Ojibwe cheated out of their land

C.C. - MN act chg 5.1.5.5

Explain how series of chapters fit together -

ELA Standard

MN Social Studies Standard

6.4.4.20.4 Federal Indian Policy

MN Social Studies Standard



②

Soon Non-Indians  
owned most of the  
land -

### POVERTY

only Red Lake Reservation  
kept their land intact

### BOARDING SCHOOLS

1893 - Federal government  
required Indian  
children to go to boarding  
schools

- Children had to leave families
- taught to reject the Indian way of life

Boarding  
Schools  
didn't  
work  
too  
strong

- ① Learn English
- ② School subjects
- ③ Useful jobs

Later opened  
day schools

Wekwaa-Gii zhiig -  
a boarding  
school student

### ③ Proving Patriotism

April 1917 -  
"Great War"

Allied vs. Central  
 GB, France, Russia, Italy, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Turkey

6.4.4.20.5

Political +  
Social

Culture  
during  
WWI

MN  
Social  
Studies  
Standard

Persuasion

MN + US wanted  
to stay out of the war  
(had started in 1914)

- German victory would  
switch the balance  
of power in Europe

- spread stories of  
torture of Belgian  
women + children

1917 Woodrow Wilson  
asked to Congress to  
wage war  
(our ships had been  
attacked by German  
subs)

When Americans were  
in the war, those who  
were not for the  
war were considered  
dis-loyal

④

Fear of disloyalty—  
Spread like a disease

CPS—Commission  
on Public Safety—

- Could spy on organizations
- ordered all non-American citizens to register

German Americans &  
German immigrants  
were targets

SUPER PATRIOTISM  
MEANT  
anything German  
was bad—

(Sauerkraut—  
liberty cabbage)

HUN Hunters

Laurel Fritzsche  
N.Y. mayor  
surgeon

— he asked the gov't.  
to stop sending  
German Americans  
to fight WWII

— people said he  
was disloyal  
letter — TRAITOR

5

1917 - Mayor Fritsche  
removed from office

Nov. 1918 - War ended -  
MN - 3500 killed / 5000 injured

German Americans - felt  
bitter about how they  
had been treated

POSITIVE / NEGATIVE  
THINGS

- Government  
& business -  
more  
accountable

- Water - safer  
to drink

Forest protected

Women - vote -

Who should  
decide common  
good?

Should people  
be forced to  
think as the  
majority?

## MN-CC-RL

## Benchmarks

overall —

5.1.7.7

Analyze how  
visual & multi-  
media elements  
contribute5.2.1.1 — Quote  
from text when  
drawing inferences

(use with persuasive essay?)

5.2.4.4 Determine  
meaning of  
domain-specific  
words5.2.2.2 Determine 2 or  
more main ideas (Most  
graphic  
organizers)5.2.3.3 — Explain  
relationships — between  
individuals & concepts —  
Mayor Fritsche — Hun Hunters  
Super Patriotism

5.2.9.9 Integrate info — several texts —

— Use history book & on-line  
resources — Persuasive essay

5.2.10.10 Read & Comprehend  
material

Writing BM.

5.6.1.1  
Write opinion pieces &  
persuasive essay

5.6.4.4 Clear & Coherent Writing

5.6.5.5 - Writing Process

5.6.6.6 Use technology support

5.6.6.7 Short research

## Appendix I

### Joyce's Alignment of MN Social Studies Standards with Rationale

This chart shows Joyce's selection of Minnesota State Social Studies Standards which she completed in the summer prior to this study. In the first column is the "Code." The "Code 6.2.2.20.1" is understood as grade 6, strand 4, substrand 4, standard 20, and benchmark 1. In the right-most column is her rationale which was often just a simplification of the language of the benchmark. The information is from her handwritten notes along with her audio reflections.

Chapter 12: Bigger, Taller, Faster	MN Social Studies Standard	Benchmark	Joyce's Rationale
6.4.4.20.1	As the United States shifted from its agrarian roots into an industrial and global power, the rise of big business, urbanization and immigration led to institutionalized racism, ethnic and class conflict and new efforts at reform. (Development of an Industrial United States: 1870-1920)	Analyze how the rise of big business, the growth of industry, the use of natural resources, and technological innovation influenced Minnesota's economy 1860 to 1920. (Development of an Industrial United States: 1870-1920)	How the rise of big businesses, use of resources, technology change – influenced MN economy (1860-1920)
6.4.4.20.2	As the United States shifted from its agrarian roots into an industrial and global power, the rise of big business, urbanization and immigration led to institutionalized racism, ethnic and class conflict and new efforts at reform. (Development	Analyze the causes and impact of migration and immigration on Minnesota society during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. (Development of an Industrial United States: 1870-1920)	Causes and impact of migration and immigration on MN society

---

of an Industrial United  
States: 1870-1920)

---

Chapter 13: The Common Good	MN Social Studies Standard	Benchmark	Joyce's Rationale
MN Social Studies 6.4.4.20.2	As the United States shifted from the agrarian roots into an industrial and global power, the rise of big business, urbanization and immigration led to institutionalized racism, ethnic and class conflict and new efforts at reform (Development of an Industrial United States: 1870-1920)	Analyze the causes and impact of migration on Minnesota society during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. (Development of an Industrial United States: 1870-1920)	MN – is the home of many different racial and ethnic backgrounds Diverse-yet needing to be dependent on each other Ex-farmers – need better machinery to produce crops for the market, and not just for themselves Moving from rural → towns President Theodore Roosevelt (1901-1908) called for the “common good” Common good-work toward social and political changes that benefit everyone
MN Social Studies 6.1.1.1.1	Democratic government depends on informed and engaged citizens who exhibit civic skills and values, practice civic discourse, vote and participate in elections, apply	Evaluate arguments about selected issues from diverse perspectives and frames of reference, noting strengths, weaknesses and consequences associated with the	Yes, this is a term we talk about: Democratic government – engage citizens who shape public policy



Chapter 13: The Common Good	MN Social Studies Standard	Benchmark	Joyce's Rationale
	inquiry and analysis skills and take action to solve problems and shape public policy.	decision make on each issue.	
MN Social Studies 6.1.1.1.2	Democratic government depends on informed and engaged citizens who exhibit civic skills and values, practice vici discourse, vote and participate in elections, apply inquiry and analysis skills and take action to solve problems and shape public policy.	Use graphic data to analyze information about a public issue in state or local government.	Political cartoons are fun to look at but only if you understand the background.
MN Social Studies 6.1.1.1.3	Democratic government depends on informed and engaged citizens who exhibit civic skills and values, practice vici discourse, vote and participate in elections, apply inquiry and analysis skills and take action to solve problems and shape public policy.	Address a state or local policy issue by identifying key opposing positions, determining conflicting values and beliefs, defending and justifying a position with evidence, and developing strategies to persuade others to adopt this position.	Analysis – action to solve a problem and face public policy – I'd really have to explain this process to the students.
Chapter 14: The Good Life	MN Social Studies Standard	Benchmark	Joyce's Rationale
MN Social Studies 6.2.3.5.1	Individuals, businesses and governments interact and exchange goods, services and	Describe the movement of goods and services, resources and money through markets in a	This would eb easy for the student to talk about. They could describe the interaction and movement of

Chapter 13: The Common Good	MN Social Studies Standard	Benchmark	Joyce's Rationale
	resources in different ways and for different reasons; interactions between buyers and sellers in a market determines the price and quantity exchanged of a good, service or resource.	market-based economy	goods through the rivers and communities.
MN Social Studies 6.2.1.1.1	People make informed economic choices by identifying their goals, interpreting and applying data, considering the short- and long-run costs and benefits of alternative choices and revising their goals based on their analysis.	Create a budget based on a given monthly income, real-world expenses, and personal preferences, including enough savings to meet an identified future savings goal.	I think this might have to be simplified and then talked about with a lot of examples to get them to see the importance of making informed economic choices
MN Social Studies 6.3.4.10.1	The meaning, use, distribution and importance of resources changes over time	Describe how land was used during different time periods in Minnesota history; explain how and why land use has changed over time.	Describe how land use changes over time – the maps in this book are great to help with this.

## Appendix J

### Joyce's Choice of Common Core State Standards

This appendix lists the chapter of study along with the MN-ELA Common Core State Standards that Joyce associated with each chapter *after* our discussion about the MN-ELA Common Core State Standards. Her rationale is given in the third column. I combined information from Joyce's handwritten notes along with information from her audio files to complete the following charts.

Chapter 12	"Bigger, Taller, Faster"	
CCSS (MN Numbering)	CCSS text	Joyce's Rationale
5.2.1.1 (Reading-Informational Text)	Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.	When we studied "A Mass of People" I had the students complete a worksheet with 4 questions on it. To complete this correctly they had to read in the textbook and copy out their answers correctly. (See handout "Chapter 12 Bigger, Taller, Faster")  I like this standard because it fits so many of the skills from the worksheets – like making inference when reading maps (See worksheet p79 "Mapping Minnesota")
5.8.2.2 (SVLM)	Summarize a written text aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.	I guess that this standard would fit really well when I had the students talk with their parents and other relatives to determine when they came to MN, if their family had lived anywhere else, and what their main nationality is. I had the students watch two video clips about transportation. One was from 1900 and the next from 1910. They had to fill out a graphic organizer with things that they saw from both videos. (See handout "3-27-14 KG")
5.8.5.5 (SVLM)	Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations when appropriate to enhance the development of main ideas or themes.	I chose this standard because the students are drawing images (making visual displays) from the chapter as they design their postcards. (See handout "Chapter 12-Postcard Activity-Draft")
5.8.1.1 (SVLM)	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussion (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 5 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.	The students had to read in their textbook about the two types of homes – The Elsingers' Victorian Home and the Beedes' Prairie School Home. Once they read about these homes, they needed to complete a worksheet that contrasted them. Then the students had to discuss in pairs what they found and why they wrote down what they did on the worksheet.

Chapter 13	“The Common Good”	
CCSS (MN Numbering)	CCSS text	Joyce’s Rationale
5.1.5.5	Explain how a series of chapters, scenes, or stanzas fits together to provide the overall structure of a particular story, drama, or poem.	I think that even though this one is under the “literature” heading, I think this would be information for students to be able to explain how all of the chapters or units that we’re studying fit together and build on one another.
5.1.7.7	Analyze how visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text (e.g., graphic novel, multimedia presentation of fiction, folktale, myth, poem).	Again, even though the MN History book is informational text, I think all of the charts, diagrams, and pictures still are good for student to be able to analyze even though the pictures aren’t like those in a picture book.
5.2.1.1	Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.	I think this one fits well here when I have the students write their persuasive essays. I’ll need to teach them how to quote and cite information though. I think the whole idea of inferences would have to be a separate lesson or two because I don’t think everyone’s research will lend itself to working with inferences, but maybe I could model that with a paragraph about a certain sickness.
5.2.2.2	Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.	I think this works well any time the students create a Venn Diagram or fill in a graphic organizer like those charts on the workbook pages. I’ll have to think more about how I’d have the students explain their information – maybe they can do this as a review the next day and share an idea with a partner.
5.2.3.3	Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.	Well, it says ‘historical’ and this is MN History, so they could easily compare Mayor Fritsche and Hun Hunters. There are a lot of actions they could list.
5.2.4.4	Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a <i>grade 5 topic or subject area</i> .	This would all be about vocabulary. I’ll have to revisit the words I’ve selected and see how we’ll work with them.

Chapter 13	“The Common Good”	
CCSS (MN Numbering)	CCSS text	Joyce’s Rationale
5.2.9.9	Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.	Yeah – they’ll do this when they research about a sickness common at that time. They can use their textbooks plus things we find online together
5.2.10.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, at the high end of the grades 4–5 text complexity band independently and proficiently. <b>a. Self-select texts for personal enjoyment, interest, and academic tasks.</b>	This one is pretty basic – read and comprehend material from their MN History books.
5.6.1.1	Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information. a. Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which ideas are logically grouped to support the writer’s purpose. b. Provide logically ordered reasons that are supported by facts and details. c. Link opinion and reasons using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., <i>consequently</i> , <i>specifically</i> ). d. Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented.	I think this writing one fits well with their persuasive essays. They’ll definitely have to share their opinion and back it up with facts. All of those subpoints will be a lot, but I think they’ll be able to do it.
5.6.4.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience	I always remind the students of this as they set out to complete their notes and other activities so this one (and a few others seem to go with so many lessons). I chose this one too because one of the activities the students will complete is a persuasive piece of

Chapter 13	“The Common Good”	
CCSS (MN Numbering)	CCSS text	Joyce’s Rationale
		writing about an issue from this chapter (saving trees, diseases, controlling a lot of related companies/industries)
5.6.5.5	With guidance and support from peers and adults, use a writing process to develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, drafting, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach	I think this is a good one to use because I will be working with them throughout the process of their persuasive essays and we will follow the process writing model that the standard spells out.
5.6.6.6	With some guidance and support from adults, use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of two pages in a single sitting.	We’ll be doing a lot of our research in the computer lab so some will have more experience than others typing in search terms and figuring out what is a good resource to use or not. And I’ll be the adult walking around and helping them, so I guess this pretty much sums up the activity.
5.6.7.7	Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.	I chose this standard because the students will be conducting research on a topic of their choice for their short persuasive piece of writing.
5.6.9.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.	I think this standard is good because students need to conduct research but also take good notes.
5.8.4.4	Report on a topic or text or present an opinion, sequencing ideas logically and using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; avoid plagiarism by identifying sources; speak clearly at an understandable pace.	As students write their persuasive pieces, they need to do so in a convincing manner. When we read their persuasive essay, it should be organized in a logical manner and be supported with facts and details. Getting the students to write down their sources is a huge deal to me! I want them to take notes, but not copy every word. So, this standard is really a good one to even use with a lesson on notetaking.
5.8.8.8	Create an individual or shared multimedia work or digital text for a specific purpose (e.g., to create or integrate knowledge, to	Students will be completing their own persuasive essays based on a topic from Chapter 13.

Chapter 13	“The Common Good”	
CCSS (MN Numbering)	CCSS text	Joyce’s Rationale
	share experiences or information, to persuade, to entertain, or as artistic expression.	
5.10.1.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.	As I said before, this is another good standard that could apply to all of their assignments! I want them to use proper grammar and spelling when they write.
5.10.2.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.	Yep, here’s another one very similar to the one above – what teacher wouldn’t want their students writing with proper capitalization, punctuation, and spelling?!
5.10.6.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal contrast, addition, and other logical relationships (e.g., however although, nevertheless, similarly, moreover, in addition)	I selected this one because there are a lot of vocabulary terms in this chapter and I feel they will run into a lot of terminology they need to learn and to explain to their audience as they research and write their persuasive essays.

Chapter 14	“The Good Life”	
CCSS (MN Numbering)	CCSS text	Joyce’s Rationale
5.1.6.6	Describe how a narrator’s or speaker’s point of view influences how events are described.	There are so many points of view in this chapter. I think this one would be a good one to use when having the students give a rationale why a person did something.
5.1.1.1	Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.	Yes, this standard definitely is one that they will use with their “Get It Guide” sheets.
5.2.3.3	Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.	This one fits so well with the people in chapter 14! Knude Wheatfelt is a good example of how he fit into all of this, even the other people. Oh, yeah, the women suffragists too!
5.2.1.1	Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text	Since we’ll be talking about advertising, this would be a

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	says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.	good standard to use for the students to see the different types of propaganda and study persuasive language too.
5.2.8.8	Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text, identifying which reasons and evidence support which point(s).	While not necessarily critiquing the author, this would be a good standard to use with advertising because students should be able to recognize the underlying claims being made.
5.6.8.8	Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished work, and provide a list of sources.	This standard would apply to the students as they make review games for the chapter. It would also apply to the students who are playing the games.

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## Appendix K

## Joyce's Planning across Three Classrooms

The first column indicates the tentative dates for each week of the school year. This chart represents her plans for weeks 30-33. The three numbered columns indicate three classrooms that share rotating literature (basal reader or novel) resources. Information which directly affects Joyce's classroom is indicated by the downward arrows (↓). The importance in examining this chart, while not immediately related to the use of standards, is in learning where Joyce's overarching planning begins. It also demonstrates a lack of literature that is specifically aligned to the topics in Minnesota History.

	↓		↓		↓		↓		↓
<b>Block Plan for 2013-2014</b>	<b>217</b>		<b>218</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>MN History</b>	<b>English</b>		<b>Art</b>	
29) March 24-28	Poetry				12-Bigger, Taller, Faster			Reflections in water p. 104 & 105 <i>Art Ideas</i>	
30) April 1- 4	Poetry	<i>Brian's Winter</i>	<i>Where the Red Fern Grows</i>		12 continued/13- Common Good	Poetry		Woven Animal Art – connect with a poem p. 242-243	
31) April 7- 11	Sports/hobbies	<i>Brian's Winter</i>	<i>Where the Red Fern Grows</i>		13-Common Good	Poetry		Sky p. 133 <i>Art Ideas</i>	
32) April 14-18	Sports/hobbies	<i>Brian's Winter</i>	<i>Where the Red Fern Grows</i>		14-The Good Life	Creative Writing		Texture/Pattern Booklet p.7 <i>Art Ideas</i> p.250-251	
33) April 23-25	<i>Where the Red Fern Grows</i>				14-The Good Life, continued	Creative Writing		Kaleidoscope p. 342	

## Appendix L

### Joyce's Layout of Ideas from *Northern Lights*

This was completed utilizing information from the textbook in conjunction with her handwritten notes (Appendix F & G)

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Investigation</b>	<b>Historical Evidence</b>	<b>Student Project</b>	<b>Map Activity</b>
Ch. 12 Bigger, Taller, Faster	Blueprints of our Past	Blueprints, art, photos	Floor plan design	Immigration patterns
Ch. 13 The Common Good (Progressive Era)	Why is Miss R. Sick?	Cartoons, notices, death records, laws	Public health campaign	Hinkley Fire and Cutover area
Ch. 14 The Good Life	Capturing Leisure	Scrapbook and diary	Personal Scrap book	Telephone lines and population distribution

## Appendix M

### Parfleche Project

For each chapter of Minnesota history studied, students created a postcard with an image on one side and written facts and pieces of interest on the opposite side. In her notes, Joyce included ideas (titles, terms, lists, lists of facts, etc.) of what she thought was important to include on a postcard for that chapter. None of her postcard notations included actual drawings or sketches because she didn't want students to copy her idea of artwork, but to think of images and ideas on their own.

The example she showed me in our meeting was from chapter twenty: "New Minnesotans." Her postcard front was divided into 2 side-by-side sections labeled: "Map of a country" and then "Art design from that region." She explained that this not only helped her since she is also a visual learner, but gave her ideas she could share with students if they were having difficulty coming up with ideas to include on their postcard. Joyce planned to give her students time at the end of the school year to look through their postcards as a way to review the content they studied throughout their year together. She shared, "It's always nice to hear students say, 'Hey! I remember that! Wasn't that about...?' They always remember the activities that we did. In fact, many save them for years and sometimes mention them when I see them years down the road." Joyce's comments once again demonstrate one of the major foci of her planning, the activities.

For some of the chapters (Chapters 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 15, 17, 18, 19, and 20), students worked with the teacher to create a static image for everyone to use whereas students created their own images for the other chapters. The teacher incorporated skills and techniques taught and practiced in their art classes as well (chapter 1 – watercolor,

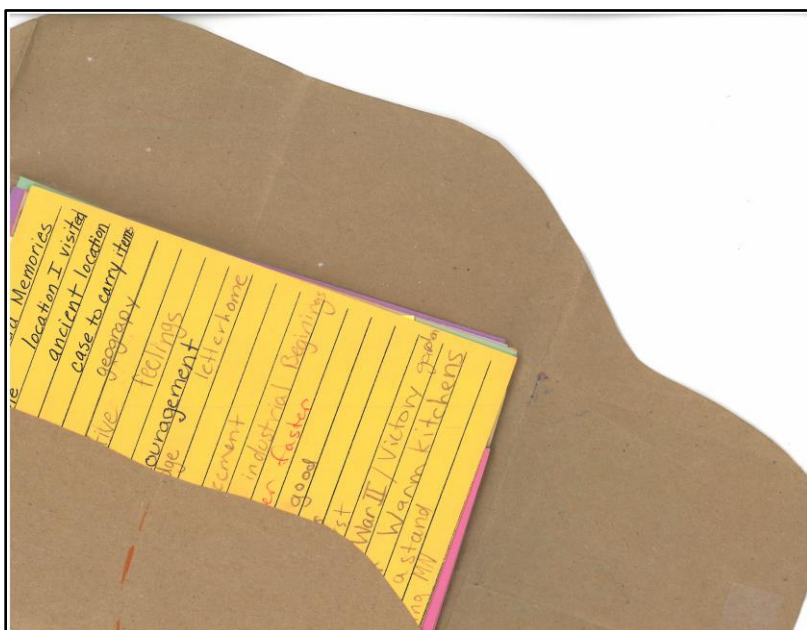
chapter 2 – splatter painting, Chapter 5 – enlarging images using a grid technique, and Chapter 10 – map drawing).

Oral directions were given by the teacher at the beginning of the school year as students created their mock parfleche (the envelope into which the postcards were placed and stored). As each unit was taught, the teacher and students brainstormed lists of key ideas that could be represented and talked about on each postcard.

The first three pictures show the front, back, and inside of a student’s mock parfleche. The fourth picture shows the index which each student included in their project. Students recorded the title of the chapter as they completed the corresponding postcard and/or activity.

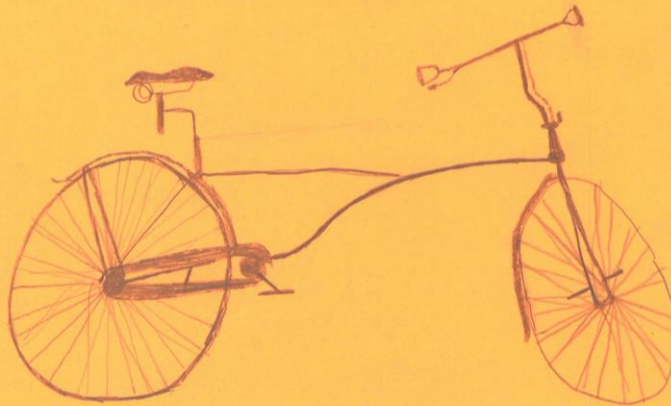
The teacher evaluated each postcard on a pass/no pass basis. The artifacts shown here are representative of each student’s work.



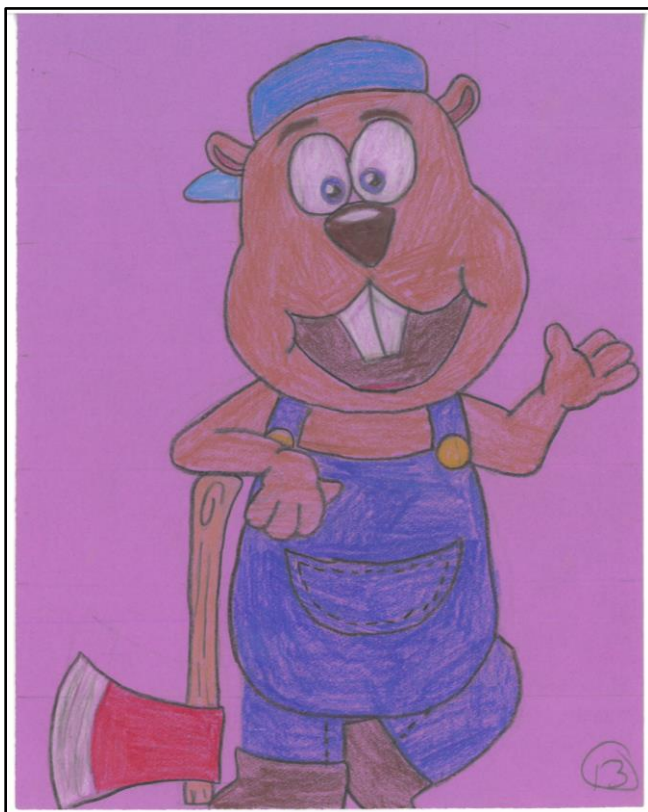


Chapter	MN Postcard Memories	
1	Minnesota + Me	location I visited
2	Petroglyphs	ancient location
3	Parfleche	case to carry items
4	Map of Ojibwe	geography
5	Native perspective	
6	1859 MN seal	feelings
7	letter of encouragement	
8	Missionary Ridge	letterhome
9	Civil War	
10	Town Advertisement	
11	Minnesota's industrial Beginnings	
12	Bigger, Taller faster	
13	The common good	
14	The good times	
15	Boom + Bust	
16	<del>World War I</del> World War II / Victory garden	
17	Cold War	Warm kitchens
18	Taking a stand	
19-20	19-Saving MN	

1885 bicycle

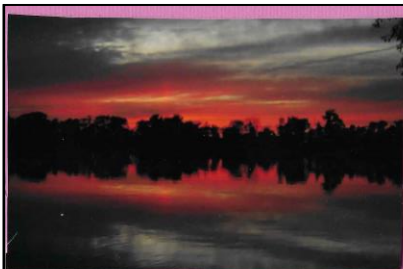


Transportation improved rapidly in the 1880s. In 1889, electric street cars became available for people to use. They were able to make their usual round trip in 16 min. less than normal. In the early 1890s the first bicycles came out. They allowed bicyclists to travel farther distances from their family's watchful eyes. And in 1895 "horseless carriages" came out. Drivers would challenge each other to races and go up to 20 mph. (12)



I believe we need to stop the lumber companies from being negligent the are ruining all of our forests. In many places in the state there have been wild fires. Most of them are because of lumber companies being irresponsible. After they are done cutting the branches off trees they should not just leave the leftover brush on the ground. This is why most wild fires start. The Great Hinckley fire in 1894 Killed 413 people and burned 160 000 acres of forest and farm. These wild fires are also ruining animals habitats. It causes many animals to have to leave or even die. Some people might argue that it would be okay to leave the brush because it will decay, but remember that it is the brush that fuels the fires. The government needs to set laws to control the lumber companies. Act now to save our forests. And respect the world God gave us.





beautiful sunset

Lila,  
Aaron,  
and I  
playing  
in the  
Lake



At our house we have a small family campground called Woodtick campground. Every year we get together with my family members. We go swimming, roast marshmallows at the camp fire, and have a ton of fun! We also live right next to Clear Lake in Gibbon. We do catch fish, but mostly all we catch are bullheads!



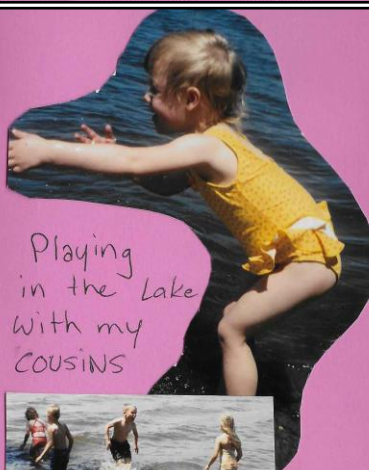
Tubing on Clear Lake  
**CAMPING**



Paddle boarding w/ cousin



paddle boating w/ madison



Playing in the Lake with my COUSINS



sand castle



Camping in Lanesboro



13



CANDY

## Appendix N

## Sample of Laura's Interviews

Interview 01 with ■ Page | 2

33 up." And I loved playing teacher and all that kind of stuff. But then later  
 34 on in high school I was really into sports and stuff and I really liked and I  
 35 really wanted to just maybe try Physical Education as a possibility or  
 36 even a physical therapist was something I had considered, I was actually  
 37 all signed up and ready to go to UW-LaCrosse, had a roommate, the  
 38 whole works and I was going to do Physical Therapy and then I even  
 39 switched and said, "No, I want to do Physical Education." But then way  
 40 at the end of my senior year I was talking with my mom and said, "You  
 41 know... I just want to get married and have kids!" [she laughs] And she  
 42 goes, "Well, if you can't decide what to do, maybe going to (D) Martin  
 43 Luther College is the best way for you to find a husband [laughter]. And  
 44 so I said, "Yeah, you're right, because I can't decide for sure what I want  
 45 to do anyway. [4:28] So I came up here and went to college, you know  
 46 still uncertain but kind of thinking that I want to teach at that point and  
 47 time and then met my now-husband a month later and we dated the  
 48 whole time through college and through being at college and all of the  
 49 experiences I had, especially EFE – we were the first, my junior year we  
 50 were the first to do EFE and that was just a great opportunity as to really  
 51 get out there and know that yep, this is what I want to do! So I knew for  
 52 sure I wanted to be a teacher then.

53 **Describe for me some of the things that happen in your social studies**  
 54 **class that you are proud of.**

55 More specifically, I know that one time we were learning about some  
 56 history and we were talking about Lewis and Clark and we just, you  
 57 know, touched lightly on the history you know in the third and fourth  
 58 grade level. We learned about it and then we got to write a... pretend that  
 59 we were one of the people from that time and they got to pick the  
 60 character that they wanted to be... you know, the person... it could have  
 61 been just one was going along for the ride or just Lewis or Clark or  
 62 something like that and they got to write it from their own point of view  
 63 [6:38] and they absolutely loved that. That was probably a really neat  
 64 thing that they liked. Another experience that just, and we do this every

March 27, 2014

## Appendix O

## Sample of My Observation Notes from the Grade 3 Classroom

■ Observation 05 (04/29-2014) Page 1

New Classroom arrangement of desks

	A	B	C	D	E	F	
1	Student names extracted						1
2							2
3							3
4							4

- 10:40am Carol is finish music class “*This Land is Your Land...*”
- Handout of quiz that the students took earlier this morning (States/Capitals)
- Handout of the play “Trouble in Jamestown”

10:48am	OK students, I need you to get 2 things out: your <b>Social Studies books and your journals</b>
	[Carol turns on projector and <b>SMART Board</b> . A picture of an Indian village is up on the screen]
	I'd like you to open your books up to page 184 [Student asks a question...]
	This morning you took your quiz. We're going to switch gears here a bit and start to talk about the history of the
	Where's ■■■? Is there a Bill Nye Social Studies Guy? ■■■ is in Wisconsin. And no, there isn't anyone like Bill Nye for Social Studies.
	I'd like you to look at <b>page 184</b> at the “You Are There.” Pencils down please. I'd like you to follow along with me as we read that. [■■■ reads aloud to the class]
	So the 1 <sup>st</sup> people who were in America were who? <b>Indians</b> . Yes, the Native Americans.
	If you look at the next page there – at the 1 <sup>st</sup> paragraph, “Early Peoples” there's a type of Native Americans and the way you pronounce them is Pow-a-tan. Can you find it? Point to it. If you can't find it, ask you base group quietly. How do we know that we put the most stress in a word? ■■■-they are all <b>capitalized</b> . Remember, how we talked about that and sometimes there's even a mark above it. We've heard of Pocahontas. And who knows...first of all raise your hand if you've seen the Disney movie? Now some of that movie is correct and some isn't correct. Who knows a part that is/isn't correct? <b>The tree comes alive. Pocahontas and John Smith never fall in love like the movie shows</b> . Right. Pocahontas helps John Smith and the settlers and the Native Americans get along better and helps JS from not being killed. She actually later married a man that came and was a tobacco planter, John Rolfe. <b>I was just going to say that history movies in Disney usually fall in love. Are we going to watch the Disney movie?</b> No. <b>There's one magazine which shows Indians and their faces and they were getting___</b> . Once I was like on Netflix with my Dad and Mom and we were going to watch a movie and there was a 2 <sup>nd</sup> Pocahontas and it was really weird. ■■■ talks about the paint on a person he saw in a movie and about a ton of deer in the area. <b>The kids in the background look like they are playing hockey</b> . Actually since you brought that up we're going to see some of the things the Native American did.
	Let's look at the picture on the screen. [■■■ brings up the

## Appendix P

### Laura's Planning Notes on The Southeast - Unit 3

Harcourt Social Studies Sates and Regions © 2010

#### Geography

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- 1) Unit Opener Video (1-2 minutes)
  - Pages 176-178
  - +Geography Challenge Cards
- 2) pages 164-165
  - States & Capitals w/base groups (fill in chart)
  - # Cut out & glue capitals to states (flashcards)
- 3) Interactive SMART Board
  - Map
  - Base-group practice with flashcards
  - Make map
  - Quiz for the next class period (?)
- 4) Practice flashcards in the morning before class
  - Quiz tomorrow

#### Other

---

- % *SE Now* Scrapbook
- Locate state brochures
- Locate template for biography reports
- Create a Landmark PowerPoint (maybe more than 1)
- What are the primary and natural resources in this area? (ports, imports, exports – see p 180 + maps)
- Check TPT for a Climate PowerPoint

+ *Geography Challenge Task Cards – Southeast Region of the U.S.* (Stephanie S.

[www.fourthgradeschenanigans.blogspot.com](http://www.fourthgradeschenanigans.blogspot.com))

# Southeast Region of the United States flashcards (online)

% *State Research Report: An Integrated Report for Grades 3-5 for Common Core Standards* ([www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Amber-Socaciu](http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Amber-Socaciu))

\*Glasscock, Sarah. (2001). *10 East-to-Read American History plays*. Scholastic.

#### History

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- 1) Native Americans / Jamestown (read play)
  - Pages 184-185
  - Use the Interactive ebook (textbook page 185)
  - Page 191: Sequoyah
  - Watch YouTube video “Pocahontas” (2:10 for a biography connection)
  - Show students how to take notes
- 2) Slavery / Moving West
  - Pages 186-187
  - \*Read the play “Riding to Freedom - Underground Railroad”
  - Read the book *Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt* by Deborah Hopkinson
  - Have students write three facts about the story after reading it to them
  - Talk about *Meet Addy* by Connie Porter
  - Have students write a narrative about a settler moving west or a slave (English connection)
- 3) and 4) Civil War
  - page 189 – look over recommended vocabulary
  - Read *Honest Abe's Words* by Doreen Rappaport (in the school library)
  - Read a play (?) “The Country Torn Apart – The Civil War”
  - Have students write three facts about the play
- 5) Civil Rights
  - Pages 192-193
  - Read *Rosa Parks* by Nikki Giovanni
  - Have students write three facts about Rosa Parks
  - Read *Ruby Bridges – Through My Eyes* by Ruby Bridges & Margo Lundell
  - Have students write three facts about Ruby Bridges
  - Watch the Scholastic video “Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.”
  - Have the students write three facts about MLK, Jr.

**Biography Report Suggestions**

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- Harriet Tubman
- Ruby Bridges
- George Washington Carver
- Orville or Wilbur Wright
- Rosa Parks
- Pocahontas
- John Smith
- John Rolfe
- Abraham Lincoln
- Daniel Boone
- Sequoyah
- Robert E. Lee
- Ulysses S. Grant
- Clara Barton
- Thurgood Marshall
- Bill Monroe
- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

## Appendix Q

### Laura's Unit Plan for the Southeast

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
4/21/14	4/22/14	4/23/14	4/24/14	4/25/14
Easter Break	Easter Break	Southeast – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topic: Geography</li> <li>• Unit Opener video</li> <li>• Textbook               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pages 176-178</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Geography Challenge Cards</li> </ul>	Southeast – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topic: Review yesterday + introduce States and Capitals</li> <li>• Textbook               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pages 164-165</li> </ul> </li> <li>• States and Capitals with base groups (fill out chart)</li> <li>• Cut out and glue flashcards</li> </ul>	Southeast – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topic: Review States and Capitals with Interactive SMART Board map (states and capitals)</li> <li>• Base group practice flashcards</li> <li>• Map regional map</li> </ul>
4/28/14	4/29/14	4/30/14	5/01/14	5/02/14
Southeast – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review States &amp; Capitals with flashcards <u>in morning</u></li> <li>• Topic: Geography</li> <li>• Video: (bookmark videopedia, 2:41) on US Geography [write down: What you Know and what you Learned]</li> <li>• Color region map with directions to review states &amp; capitals               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Label geography map</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Southeast – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quiz on States &amp; Capitals</li> <li>• Video: YouTube video on Pocahontas (Biography.com, 2:14)</li> <li>• Topic: History section               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Native Americans and Jamestown</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Textbook: Pages 184-185, 186</li> <li>• Literature: Read Jamestown play               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ [write summary and use pictures]</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Southeast – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topic: History, Slavery &amp; Moving West</li> <li>• Textbook: Pages 186-187-188               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Use p188 SMART Board activity</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Literature               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Read <i>Sweet Clara &amp; the Freedom Quilt</i></li> <li>○ Introduce <i>Dear Addy</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Southeast – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review previous plays [their 3 facts]</li> <li>• Topic: History               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Civil War</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Literature: Read <i>Abe's Honest Words</i></li> <li>• Textbook               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ p. 189 Vocabulary and read</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Southeast – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topic: History</li> <li>• Civil Rights</li> <li>• Textbook               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pages 190, 192-193</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Literature: Read Harriet Tubman play               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ [write 3 facts]</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Video: Dr. MLK Jr. (Scholastic) [write at least 3 sentences to summarize]</li> </ul>

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Follow directions on pages 164-165</li> <li>• Quiz on Tuesday →</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Video: YouTube video on Pocahontas (Biography.com, 2:14)</li> </ul>			
5/05/14	5/06/14	5/07/14	5/08/14	5/09/14
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review 3 facts</li> <li>• Topic: Civil Rights</li> <li>• Textbook:</li> <li>• Pages 190, 192-193</li> <li>• Vocabulary: justice, civil rights)</li> <li>• Literature: read <i>Henry's Freedom Box</i> [write 3 events]</li> <li>• Literature: read <i>Ruby Bridges</i></li> <li>• Read play - Rosa Parks [write 3 facts]</li> <li>• Video: Scholastic News (2-3 minutes)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review 3 events and facts from yesterday</li> <li>• Topic: Land &amp; Water</li> <li>• Literature: Read <i>George Washington Carver</i></li> <li>• Scrapbook pages</li> <li>• Textbook: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pages 165-165</li> <li>○ Page 178: fall line, etc.</li> <li>○ Page 223: Smoky Mountains</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Show PowerPoint – Everglades from TPT [make list of geographic terms/places]</li> <li>• Music Class tie-in: “This Land Is your Land”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review yesterday</li> <li>• Topic: Climate</li> <li>• Scrapbook pages</li> <li>• Show PowerPoint from Kelly Landries</li> <li>• Early lunch (c/ library time)</li> </ul>	<p>No class – Field Trip to Farm America</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review Scrapbook pages</li> <li>• Topic: Products &amp; Natural Resources</li> <li>• Textbook</li> <li>• Pages 195-197 – ports (import, export)</li> <li>• Pages 200-201 – double bar graph</li> <li>• Page 180 – Natural Resource map</li> <li>• Scrapbook pages: add products and natural resources</li> </ul>
5/12/14	5/13/14	5/14/14	5/15/14	5/16/14
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review Scrapbooks (Products &amp; Natural Resources)</li> <li>• Textbook <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Page 180</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Topic: Landmarks – PowerPoint (TPT) &amp; Culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review Scrapbooks - Landmarks &amp; Culture</li> <li>• North Lauraina Smile Box! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Show pictures of NC &amp; FL</li> <li>○ Textbook</li> <li>○ Pages 218-219 map scale</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State Research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State Research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State Research</li> </ul>

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Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Youtube video: Southeast Region (Kyle Brooten)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Last page of Scrapbooks</li></ul>			

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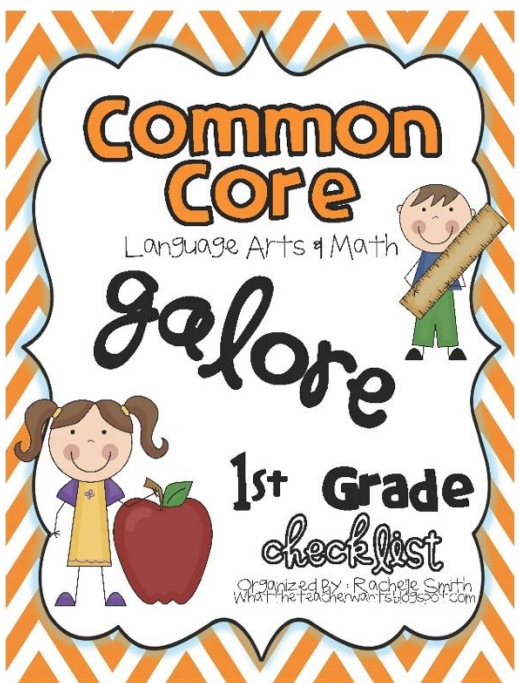
### Appendix R

## Common Core Language Arts & Math Galore 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Checklist (TPT, Rachelle Smith)

As stated within the study, these images are from a document Laura received from a friend who teaches first grade in the local public school. I purchased this checklist from TPT for my reference as I look into how the used and mastery of standards could be assessed and tracked.

### Reading Literature **{EXAMPLE}**

STANDARD	DATES TAUGHT						MASTERY
Key ideas and details							
RL.1.1 Ask and answer questions about key details in text.	8/12	8/13	9/23	10/1	11/21	12/19	93% Of the class
Craft and Structure							
	9/8						
	2/15	3/29	4/16				99% Of the class
ation of knowledge and ideas							
RL.1.9 Compare and Contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in stories.	3/29						
Range of Reading and level of Text Complexity							
RL.1.10 With prompting and support, read prose and poetry of appropriate complexity for grade 1.	1/29	1/30	2/2				



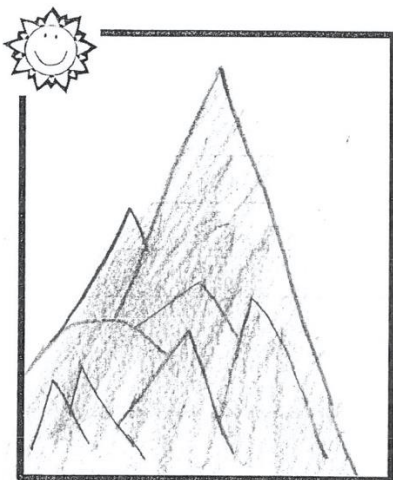
## Appendix S

Scrapbook – Student Example – Referred to as a Scrapbook in Laura’s Daily

### Planning Notes (Appendix E)

(TPT, created by Jill S. Russ)

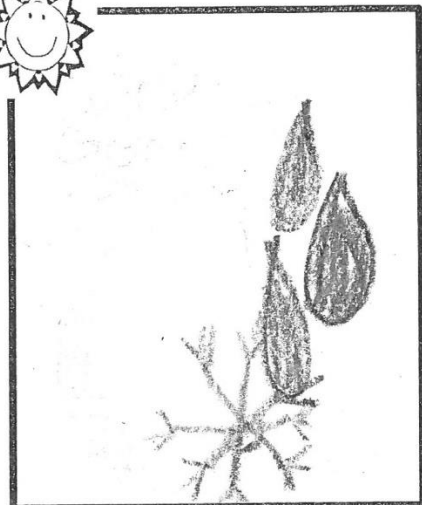
## All About The SOUTHEAST REGION



Physical Features  
of the Upper Southeast  
The Appalachian  
Mts cover most of  
the upper  
southeast. Some of  
the peaks in the  
Appalachian Mount-  
ians are more  
than 6,000 FEET  
HIGH!

Physical Features  
of the Lower Southeast  
The lower southeast  
is known for its  
sandy beaches.  
Along the coast  
it is mostly  
flat. It is along  
the Gulf Coastal  
Plain.



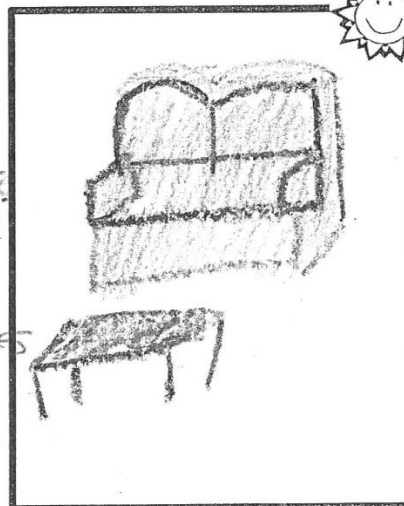


### Climate

The climate in the southeast is usually warmer because it is one of the closest spot in our country to the equator. Sometimes it can be cold there.

### Products

In North Carolina they use trees for furniture. More than half of the furniture sold in the United States is made in High Point, North Carolina.

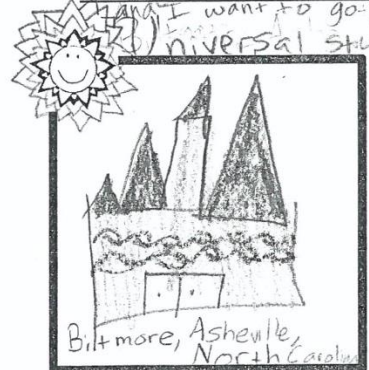
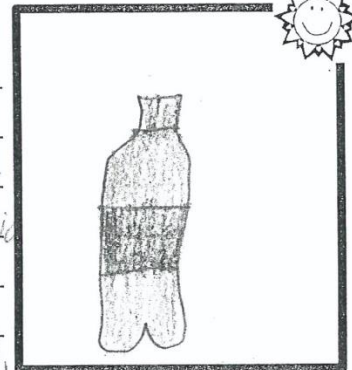


Place I'd Like to Visit

Florida and Atlanta,  
Georgia. Florida,  
because of Disney  
World. Atlanta, Georgia  
because of the  
Coca-Cola museum,

I want to go Disney world and  
Universal studios

A Coca-Cola Bottle



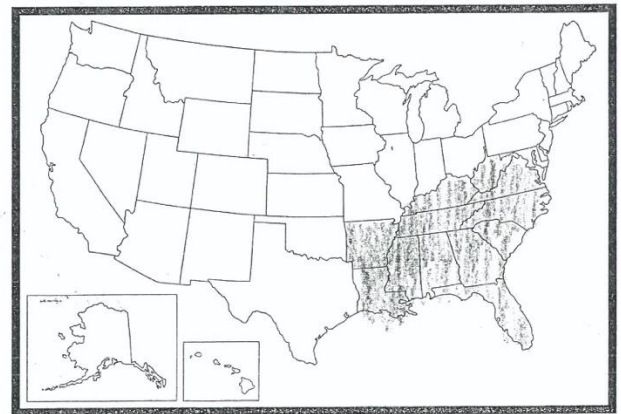
Interesting Fact about the  
Southeast

In Asheville, North  
Carolina there is the  
largest home in America.  
It is called Biltmore, and  
has 250 rooms.

Map of the Region

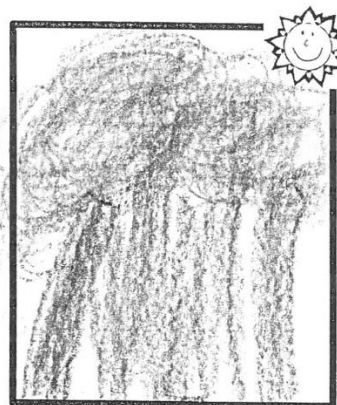
There are  
12 states in  
the Southeast  
region.

Name \_\_\_\_\_



## Natural Resources

The Southeast is plentiful in natural resources. They (natural resources) include oceans, forests, minerals and fuels.



## Landmarks

Disney world is located in Orlando, Florida. In Atlanta, Georgia there is a Coca-Cola world. Do not try the Japanese Coca-Cola. It is gross.

## Culture of the Southeast

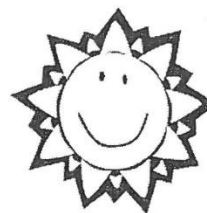
The culture of the Southeast includes food, fun, and of course music. Louis Armstrong was a famous trumpet player in the Southeast.



Date

5-14

## Southeast Region Scrapbook Rubric



Task:	Points:
Use a <b>correct, complete sentence</b> and a <b>colorful picture</b> to describe the:	
1. physical features of the Upper Southeast region.	10 /10
2. physical features of the Lower Southeast region.	10 /10
3. climate of the region.	10 /10
4. products of the region.	10 /10
5. natural resources of the region.	10 /10
6. landmarks of the region.	10 /10
7. culture of the region.	10 /10
8. place you'd like to visit.	10 /10
9. interesting fact about the region.	10 /10
10. Color the region correctly on the map.	2 /2
11. Complete each section neatly.	6 /6
13. Complete scrapbook on time.	2 /2
<b>Total Score</b>	100 /100

## Appendix T

### State Research Report

(TPT, created by Amber Socaciu)

Laura located and purchased this packet online from Teachers Pay Teachers. She utilized on the report writing portion as shown in the images below.



## State Research Report

This research report aligns with 21 of the 4th Grade ELA  
Common Core State Standards!

Reading—Informational Text

RI.4.1—Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says  
 RI.4.3—Explain concepts in historical, scientific, or technical texts  
 RI.4.4—Determine meanings of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases  
 RI.4.5—Describe the structure of events, ideas, concepts, or information in a text  
 RI.4.8—Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points  
 RI.4.9—Integrate two texts on same topic to write or speak about the topic

Reading—Foundational Skills

RF.4.4—Read with accuracy and fluency to support comprehension

Writing

W.4.2—Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic  
 W.4.4—Develop and organize writing appropriate to task, purpose and audience  
 W.4.5—Develop and strengthen writing by planning, revising, and editing  
 W.4.6—Use technology to produce and publish writing and collaborate with others  
 W.4.7—Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation  
 W.4.8—Gather information; take notes and categorize information and list sources  
 W.4.9—Draw evidence texts to support analysis, reflection, and research

Speaking and Listening

SL.4.1—Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions  
 SL.4.4—Tell a story, or an experience while speaking clearly at a good pace

Language

L.4.1—Demonstrate command of English grammar when writing or speaking  
 L.4.2—Demonstrate capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing  
 L.4.3—Use language and conventions when writing, speaking, reading or listening  
 L.4.4—Determine meanings of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases  
 L.4.6—Use grade-appropriate, general academic and domain-specific words and phrases

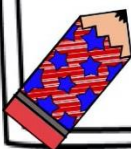


## State Research Report

### Research Report Planning Form

State Name \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Abbreviation \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is the capital of this state? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is the state's population? \_\_\_\_\_
3. When did this state become a state (birth)? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What is the state nickname? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What is the state slogan? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What is the largest city? \_\_\_\_\_
7. In what region of the U.S. is this state located? \_\_\_\_\_
8. What is the state motto? \_\_\_\_\_
9. What is the state tree? \_\_\_\_\_
10. What is the state flower? \_\_\_\_\_
11. What is the state bird? \_\_\_\_\_
12. What are some popular foods eaten in this state? \_\_\_\_\_
13. What is the geographical high point? \_\_\_\_\_
14. What is the geographical low point? \_\_\_\_\_
15. What is the geographical central point? \_\_\_\_\_



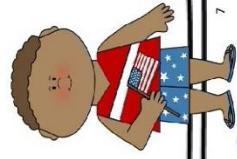
## State Research Report

### Student Directions

State \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

Complete the following tasks. Be sure to check in with your teacher!

1. Choose a state you are interested in learning about.
2. Read books, internet documents, and encyclopedias, about the state you are researching.
3. Collect and record research on your Research Report Planning Form.
4. Transfer your research findings into complete sentences in the appropriate boxes on your Final Research Report Forms.
5. Draw and color illustrations in the blank boxes on the Final Research Report Forms.
6. Cut out the boxes in the Final Research Report Form packet and assemble your State Research Book.
7. Prepare for your final presentation to share what you learned!
8. Present your State Research Book!





19. Where did you get your information?

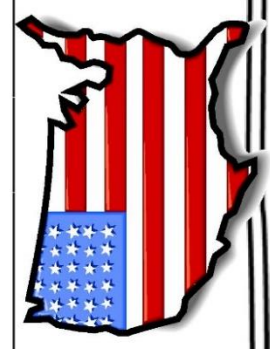
Book: Title \_\_\_\_\_  
Author/Illustrator \_\_\_\_\_  
Copyright \_\_\_\_\_  
Book: Title \_\_\_\_\_  
Author/Illustrator \_\_\_\_\_  
Copyright \_\_\_\_\_  
Encyclopedia: Title \_\_\_\_\_  
Article Title \_\_\_\_\_  
Year \_\_\_\_\_ Edition \_\_\_\_\_  
Encyclopedia: Title \_\_\_\_\_  
Article Title \_\_\_\_\_  
Year \_\_\_\_\_ Edition \_\_\_\_\_  
Internet Document: Title of Website \_\_\_\_\_  
URL \_\_\_\_\_ (ex <http://www.ducksters.com>)  
Internet Document: Title of Website \_\_\_\_\_  
URL \_\_\_\_\_ (ex <http://www.ducksters.com>)

10

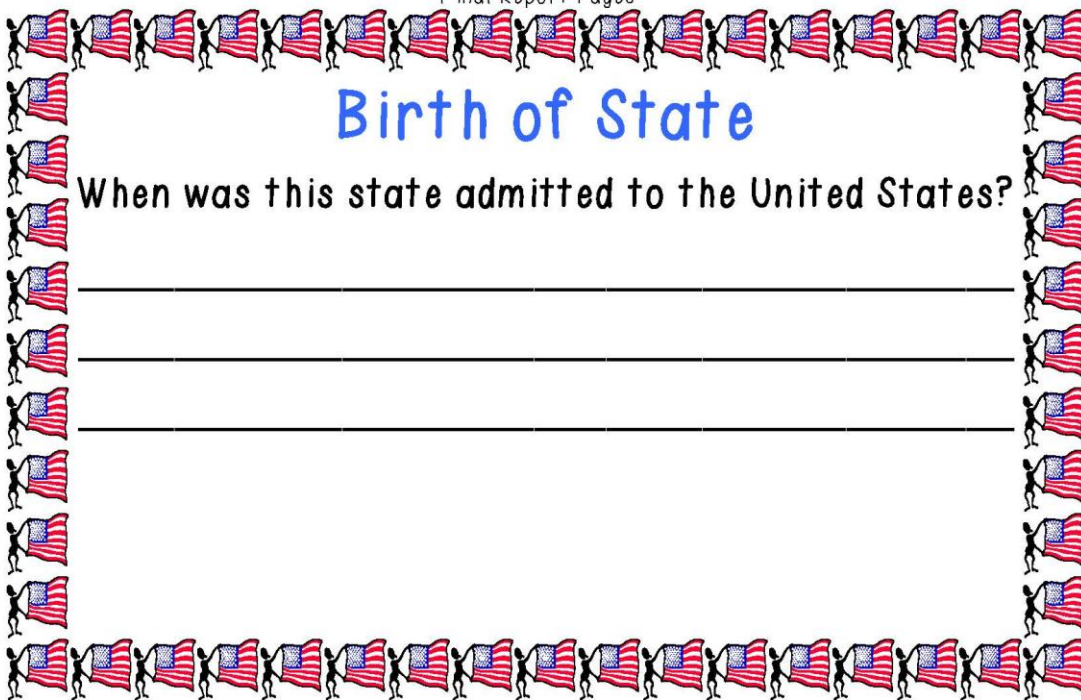
16. Name three funny laws in this state. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

17. Write three interesting facts about this state. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

18. What is your opinion of this state? Support your opinion with facts. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



9



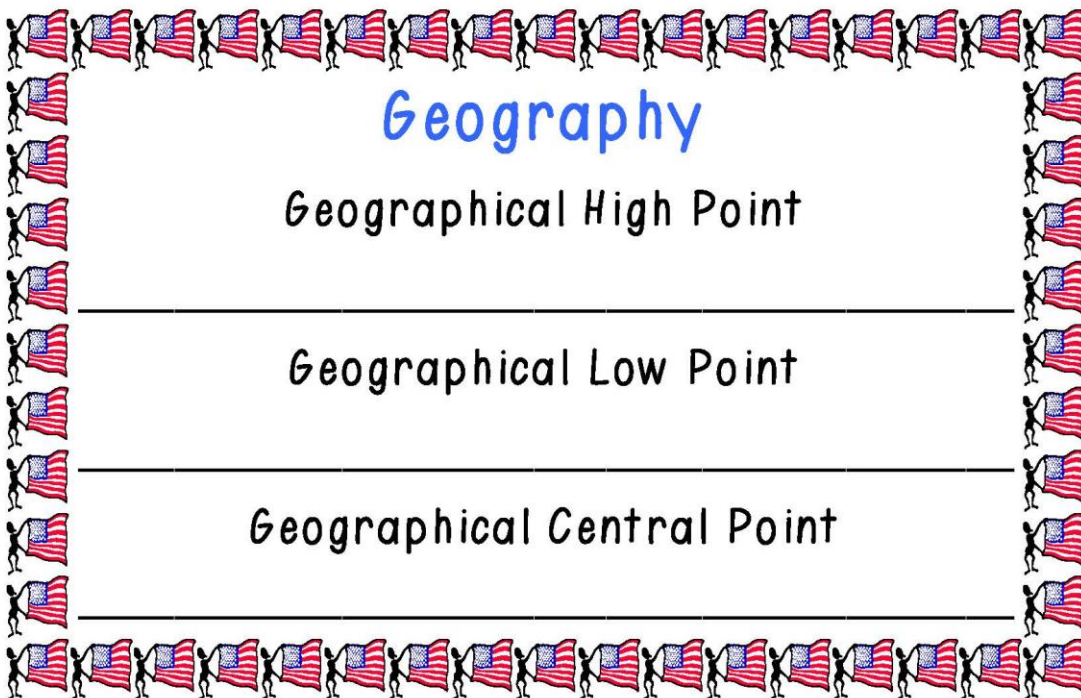
## Birth of State

When was this state admitted to the United States?

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## Geography

Geographical High Point

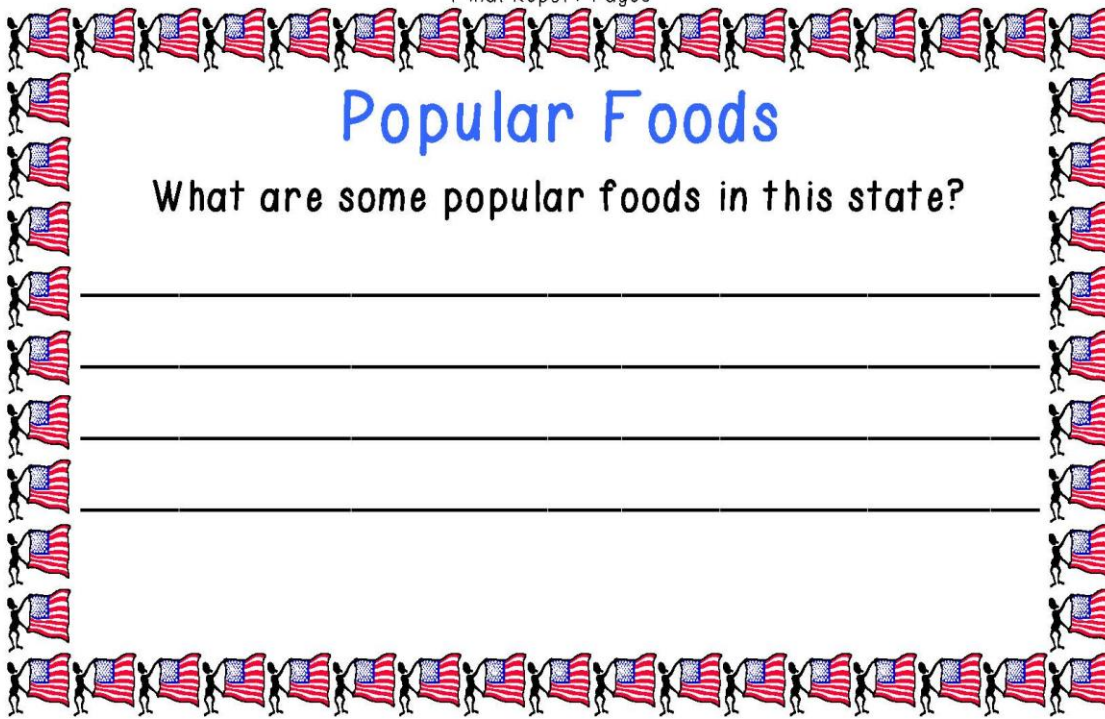
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Geographical Low Point

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Geographical Central Point

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## Popular Foods

What are some popular foods in this state?

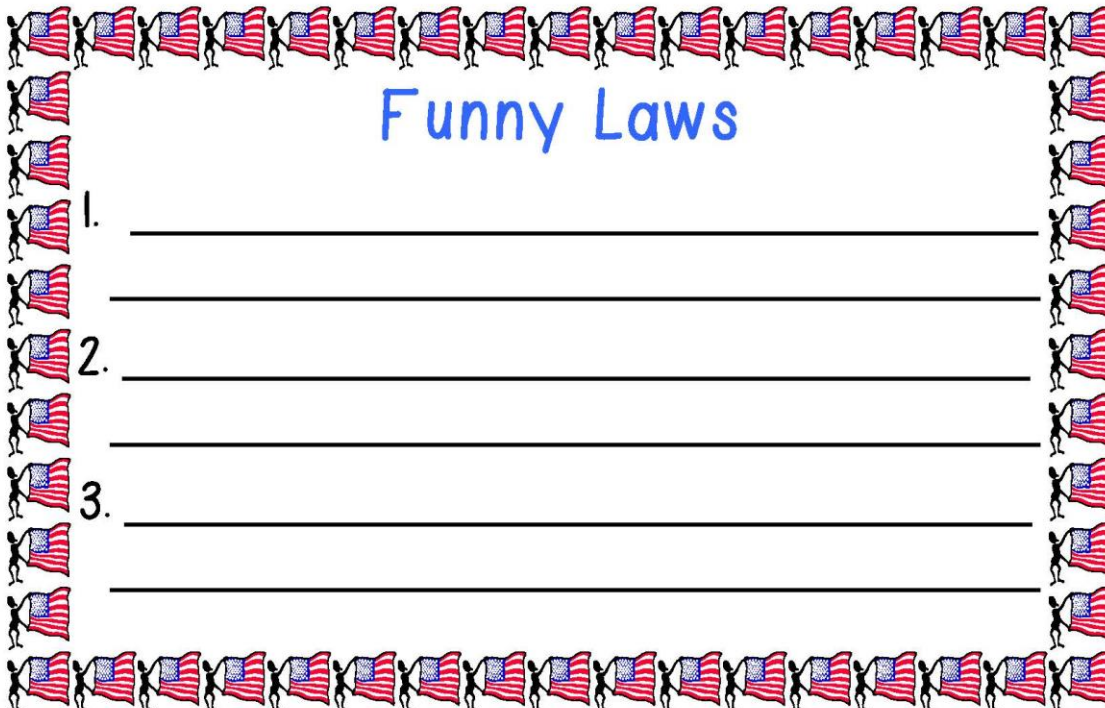
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## Funny Laws

1.

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2.

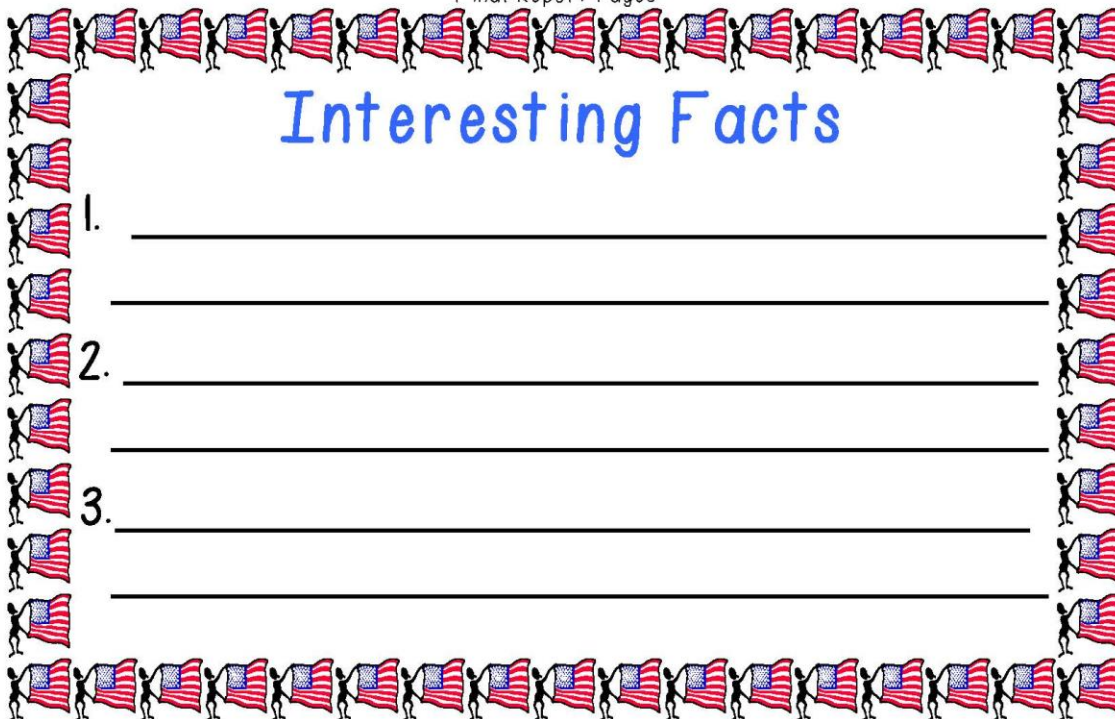
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3.

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## Interesting Facts

1. \_\_\_\_\_

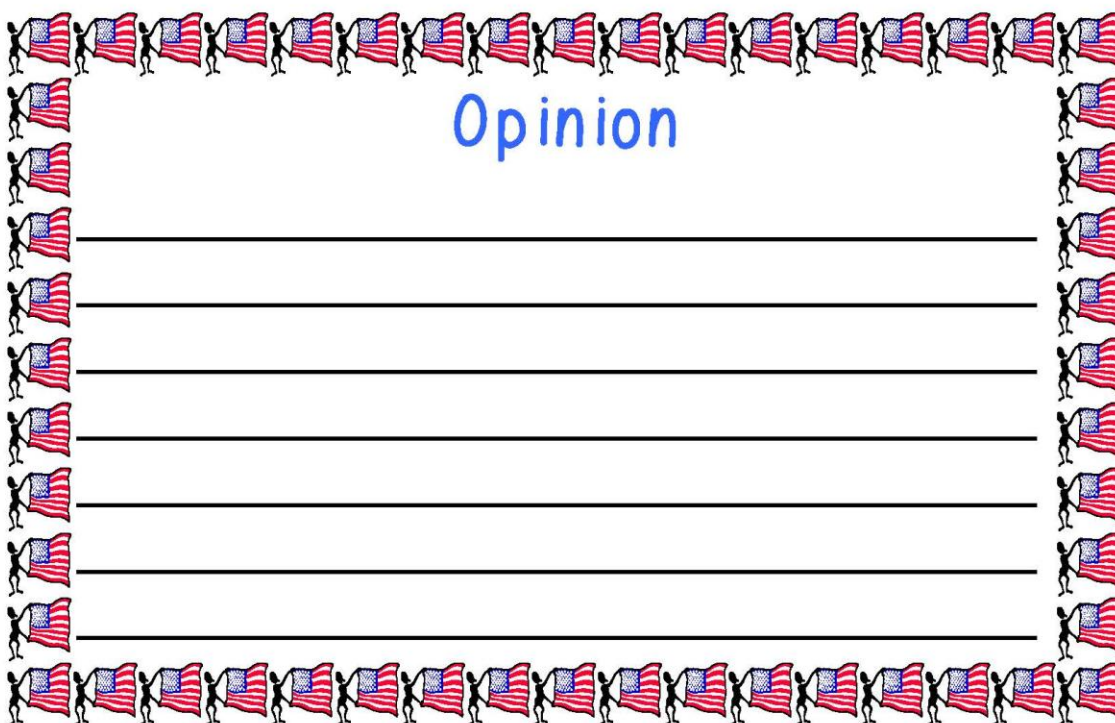
\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## Opinion

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

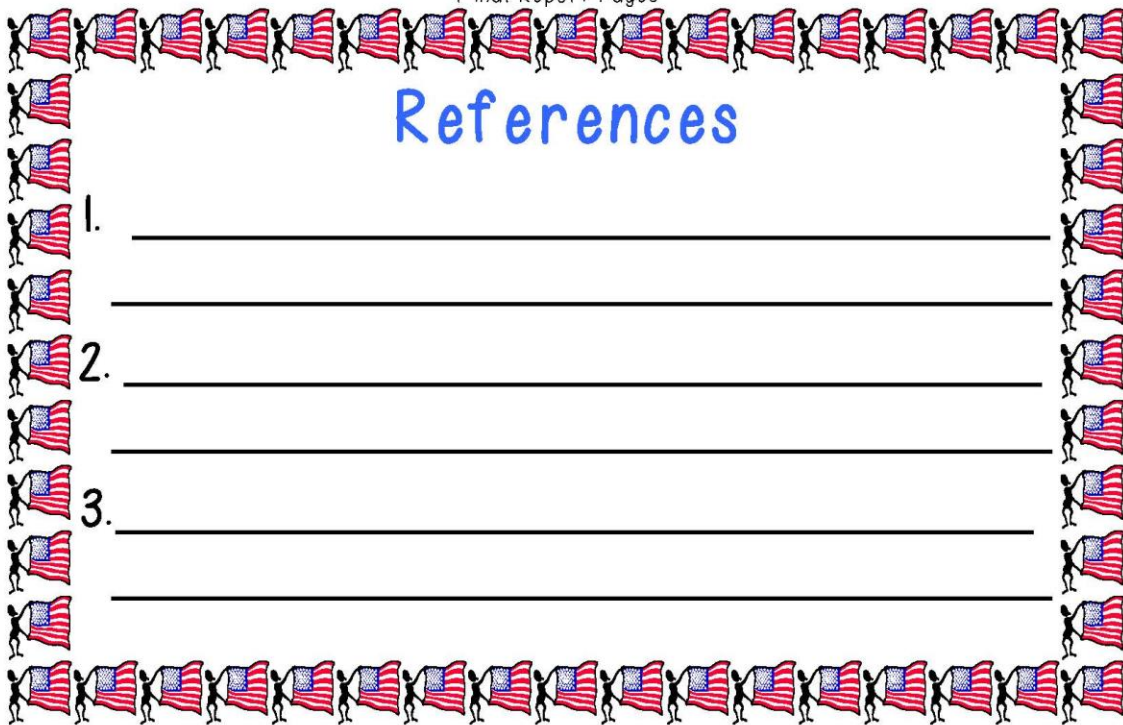
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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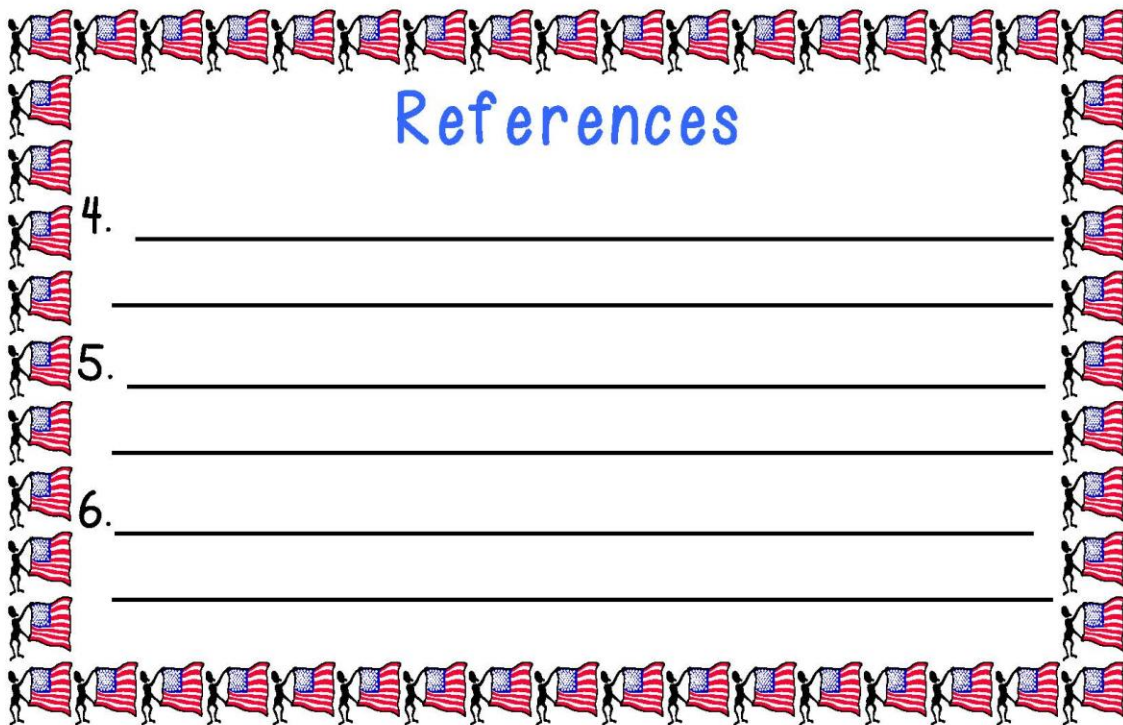
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\_\_\_\_\_



References

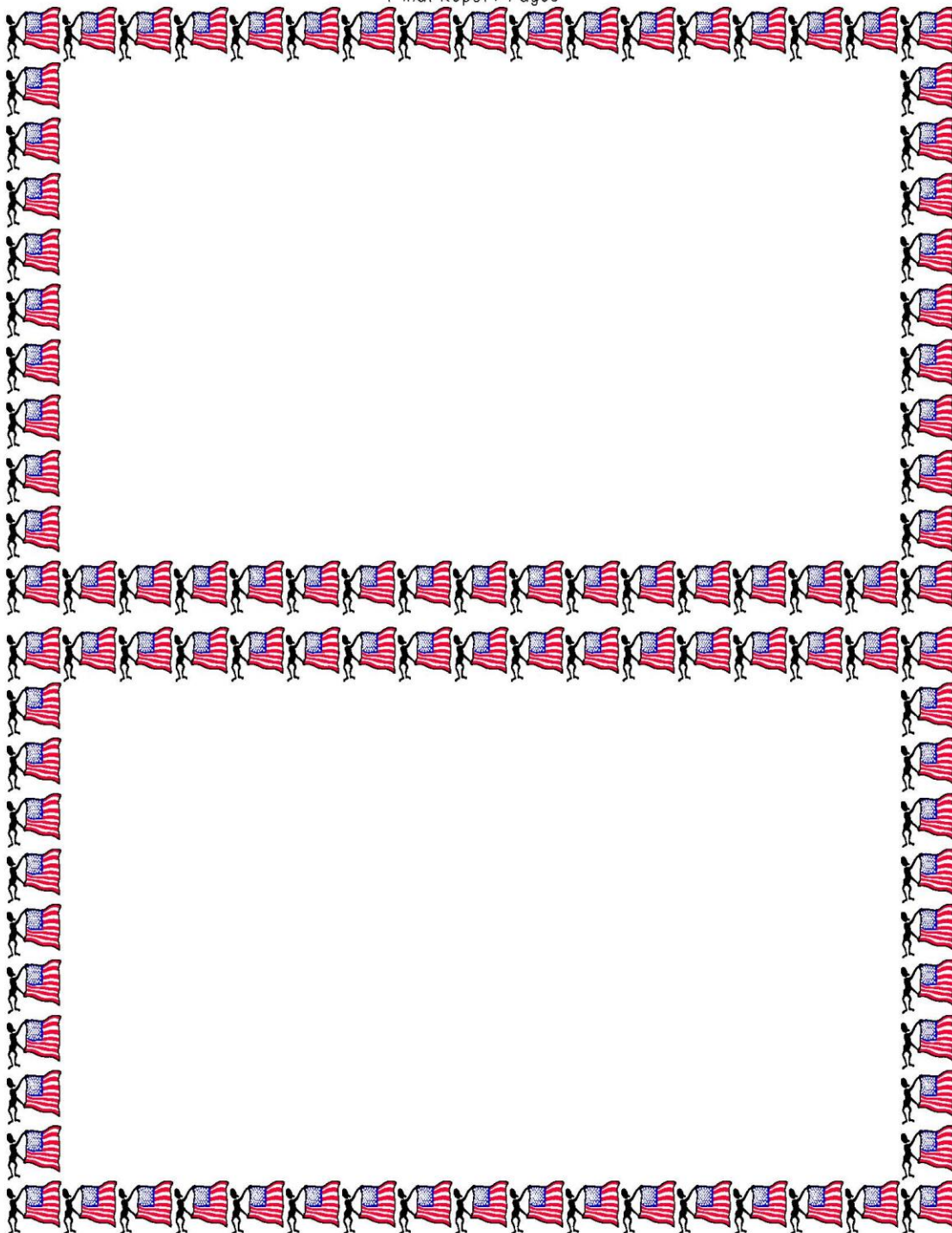
1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_



References

4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

Final Report Pages



Final Report Pages

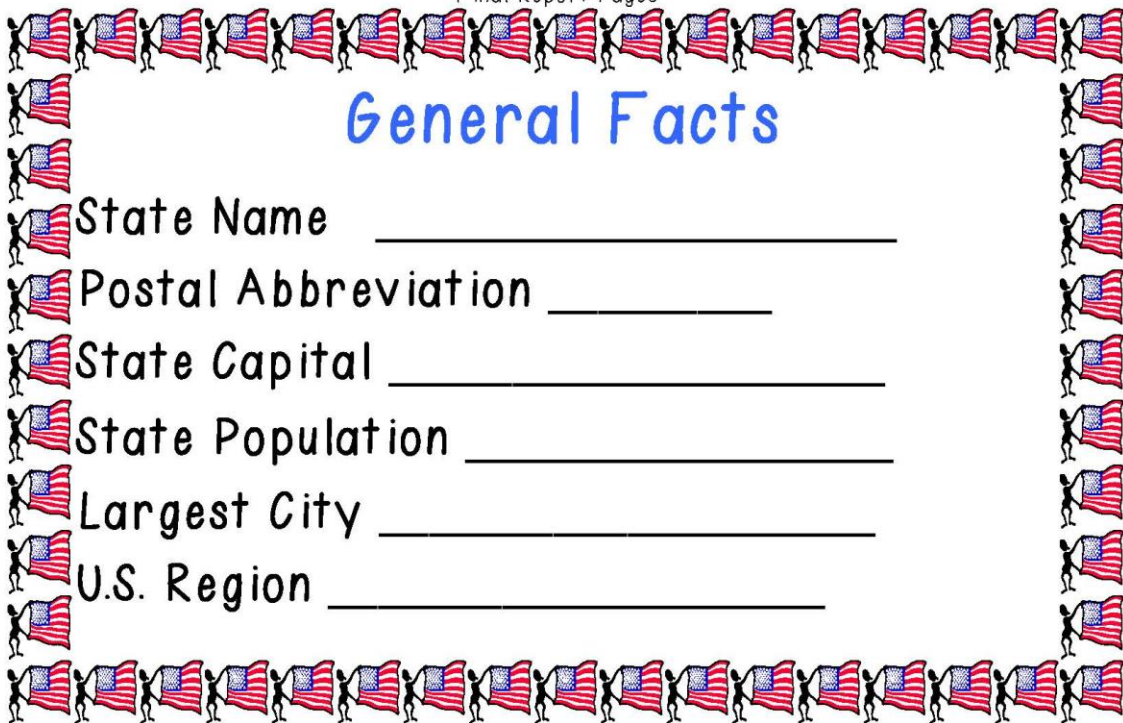


# State Research Report

Written By: \_\_\_\_\_

## Table of Contents

General Facts  
State Symbols  
Birth of a State  
Geography  
Foods  
Funny Laws  
Interesting Facts  
Opinion  
References



## General Facts

State Name \_\_\_\_\_

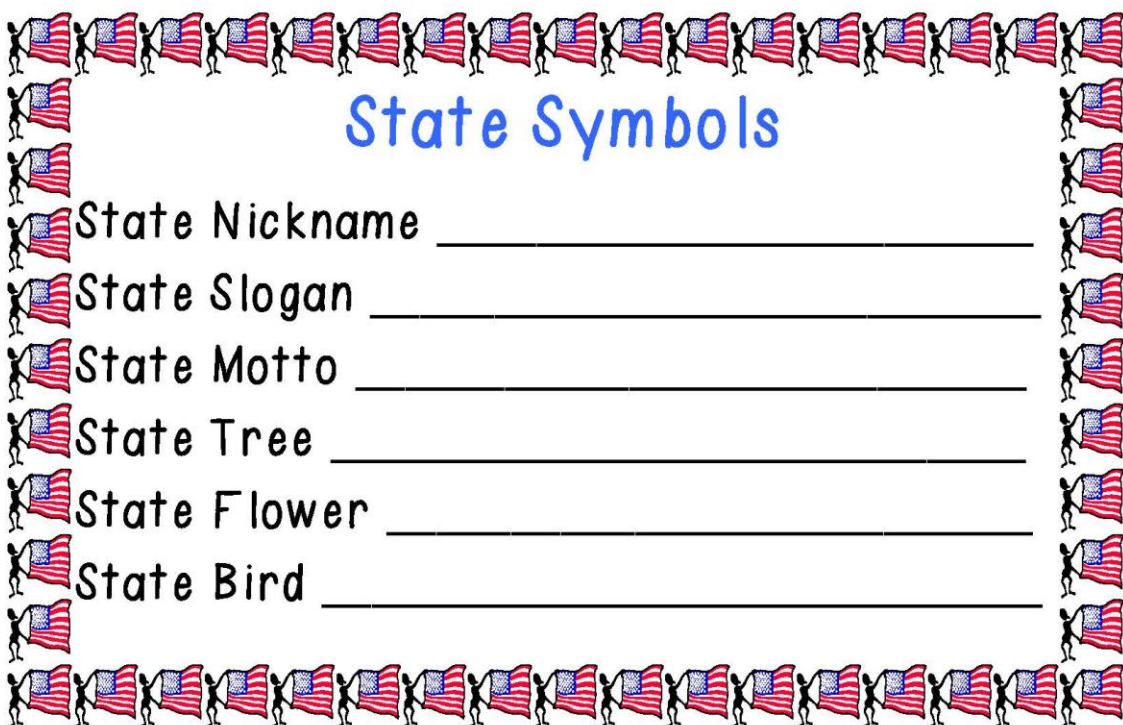
Postal Abbreviation \_\_\_\_\_

State Capital \_\_\_\_\_

State Population \_\_\_\_\_

Largest City \_\_\_\_\_

U.S. Region \_\_\_\_\_



## State Symbols

State Nickname \_\_\_\_\_

State Slogan \_\_\_\_\_

State Motto \_\_\_\_\_

State Tree \_\_\_\_\_

State Flower \_\_\_\_\_

State Bird \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix U

### Laura's Choice of Common Core State Standards

This appendix lists the chapter of study along with the Common Core State Standards that Joyce associated with each chapter. Her rationale is given in the third column. The information is from her handwritten notes along with her audio reflections.

Southeast Region		
Unit		
CCSS (MN Numbering)	CCSS text	Laura's Rationale
4.8.2.2 (Speaking, Viewing, Listening and Media Literacy Benchmarks K-5)	Paraphrase portions of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.	When I have them read in base groups and they had to read it to each other and then they had to tell me in a summary type of fashion what they just read. (4-30-14: 65+)
4.6.9.9 (Writing Benchmarks K-5)	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. a. Apply grade 4 Reading standards to literature (e.g., "Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text [e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions]."). b. Apply grade 4 Reading standards to informational texts (e.g., "Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text").	The students had to answer many questions throughout class using their textbooks and then also at the end they had to write three facts in complete sentences of what they had learned through the day – including from the textbook and the children's book that I read to them (4-30-14: 53+)
4.2.4.4 (Reading Benchmarks: Informational Text K-5)	Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a grade 4 topic or subject area.	(05-05-14: 08+) Yes, we did that when we were looking at vocabulary words in their textbooks. They had to find the word and then look for the meaning by reading the words around it and figure out the meaning through context.
4.2.9.9 (Reading Benchmarks: Informational Text K-5)	Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.	We learned about the Civil War by reading a children's literature book and I guess that was more of a listening for them and they had to listen to that book while I read that to them and they used the textbook to read and learn from that on their own. So between the two informational texts they needed to write three facts from what they had learned from those two sources. (05-01-2414: 13+)
4.3.0.4 (Reading Benchmarks:	Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support	The students did this when they were supposed to read that paragraph about the Civil War in their

Foundational Skills K-5)	comprehension. a. Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding. b. Read grade-level prose and poetry orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings. c. Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.	textbooks and then they were supposed to answer the question, "What was one effect of the Civil War?" and so by reading that they were supposed to comprehend what they read and answer that question,
4.10.2.2 (Language Benchmarks K-5)	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. a. Use correct capitalization. b. Use commas and quotation marks to mark direct speech and quotations from a text. c. Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence. d. Spell grade-appropriate words correctly, consulting references as needed.	This one could be applied numerous times because the students are asked to check the facts that they write down to make sure they were capitalizing the first letter in each of the sentences, the other day we talked about using commas and quotation marks when people are talking and they were supposed to write a discussion between the settlers and Pocahontas and the Native Americans.
4.2.1.1 (Reading Benchmarks: Informational Text K-5) (Reading Benchmarks: Literature K-5)	Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.	The students were supposed to read a page, just about a half of a page, actually a few paragraphs with their base group and then they were supposed to answer a question, It was having to do with how did things change for the African Americans once slavery was outlawed. And they were supposed to answer that question based on what they read in the text and many had to explain in their own words or use the words that were there in the text to give examples of what actually did happen to many of the African Americans once slavery was abolished.
4.1.7.7 (Reading Benchmarks: Literature K-5)	Make connections between the text of a story or drama and a visual or oral presentation of the text, identifying where each version reflects specific descriptions and directions in the text.	We have been reading plays her all along. Today we talked about Rosa Parks and the play was about her, which was our oral presentation. We looked at a picture of her so that was the visual. The students made the connection by reading the play, or the drama., and thereby learned more about Rosa Parks. (05-05-2014: 068)
4.8.1.1 (Speaking, Viewing, Listening and Media Literacy Benchmarks K-5)	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. a. Come to discussions	This one seems to happen regularly when the students go through their three (3) facts each day. They share in their base groups and then we go up and down the rows and share one (1) from each group with the whole class. Students get a chance to add thoughts and ask questions when we're in base groups, but I typically don't include a

	<p>prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion. b. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles. c. Pose and respond to specific questions to clarify or follow up on information, and make comments that contribute to the discussion and link to the remarks of others. d. Review the key ideas expressed and explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion. e. Cooperate and problem solve as appropriate for productive group discussion.</p>	<p>question-answer time around the three facts with the whole class.</p>
4.3.0.4 (Reading Benchmarks: Foundational Skills K-5)	<p>Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension. a. Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding. b. Read grade-level prose and poetry orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings. c. Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary</p>	<p>The students read their textbooks and discussed what they read and also when they had to read from their scrapbooks and research sheets about products and natural resources. They had to comprehend well so they could write their summary and draw appropriate pictures!</p>
1.6.5.5 (Writing Benchmarks K-5)	<p>With guidance and support from adults, focus on a topic, respond to questions and suggestions from adults and peers, and add details to strengthen writing as needed.</p>	<p>I feel like even though this one is listed in 1<sup>st</sup> grade, this is whenever there's a class period like when we talk about what they're writing about that's connected to what they're reading. The adult is guiding them in discussion, students are answering questions and you're just adding (prompting for) details as necessary, then they can go back to their writing and make revisions as necessary.</p>
4.6.9.9 (Writing Benchmarks K-5)	<p>Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. a. Apply grade 4 Reading standards to literature (e.g., "Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text [e.g.,</p>	<p>Students really reflected on their writing today. It was based on the informational texts they've been using to conduct research for their state reports. They even wrote a reflective part where they told what they would like to visit, an interesting fact or two. I guess that could also go with writing an opinion piece, but they didn't really have to back up their thoughts.</p>

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	a character’s thoughts, words, or actions].”). b. Apply grade 4 Reading standards to informational texts (e.g., “Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text”).	
4.8.1.1 (Speaking, Viewing, Listening and Media Literacy Benchmarks K-5	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly. a. Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion. b. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles. c. Pose and respond to specific questions to clarify or follow up on information, and make comments that contribute to the discussion and link to the remarks of others.	Whenever we talked about our facts summaries or our scrapbooks together and then they shared in their based groups about what they read and drew, I feel they were demonstrating collaborative discussions.

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## Appendix V

### Laura’s Alignment of MN Social Studies Standards with Rationale

This chart shows the alignment of the MN Social Studies Standards for Houghton Mifflin’s *States and Regions* (2012) for Unit 3. The standards Laura addressed were the ones included in the online document she accessed. It’s important to note that not all sections of the textbook lessons are shown in this chart since Laura only reflected on the standards suggested by the textbook publisher. The textbook information is shown in the first column. The second column displays the “Code” of the MN standard. The “Code 6.2.2.20.1” is understood as grade 6, strand 4, substrand 4, standard 20, and benchmark 1. The benchmark text is in the third column. In the fourth column is her interpretation which was often just a simplification of the language. Her interpretation is from her audio reflections.

Unit 3: The Southeast	MN Social Studies Standard	Text from textbook company	MN Text	Benchmark	The Teacher’s Rationale
<b>Introduction</b> (p161-174)	3.3.1.1.1	Create and use various kinds of maps, including overlaying thematic maps, of places in the United States, and also Canada or Mexico; incorporate the “TODALS” map basics, as well as points, lines and colored areas to display spatial information <i>For example: “TODALS” map basics – title, orientation, date, author, legend/key, and scale. Spatial</i>	Understand that people use geographic representations and geospatial technologies to acquire, process and report information	For example: Relative location words – close to, above, bordering. Description using relative location words – “Our school is across from the post office.” Description using cardinal directions – “Mexico is south of the United States.” Description using intermediate directions –	It’s interesting that this one is labelled for 3 <sup>rd</sup> grade since our school uses this book for both 3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> grades. I think this standard is a great choice for getting students to view and create maps, which we do a lot of in this class. I believe students could show their mastery for this standard when they point out information a map shows, figure out mileage with the distance scale, and even when they

Unit 3: The Southeast	MN Social Studies Standard	Text from textbook company	MN Text	Benchmark	The Teacher's Rationale
		<i>information – cities, roads, boundaries, bodies of water, regions.</i>		“Hawaii is southwest of the continental United States.”	identify which regions of the United States we've already studied. I could use this standard when students give directions from one place to another, when they point out or quiz one another on geographical features, and even when they color their regional maps and flashcards.

## Chapter 6 Exploring the Southeast

<b>Lesson 1:</b> Geography of the Southeast (p176)	3.3.1.1.1	Create and use various kinds of maps, including overlaying thematic maps, of places in the United States, and also Canada or Mexico; incorporate the “TODALS” map basics, as well as points, lines and colored areas to display spatial information <i>For example: “TODALS” map basics –</i>	Understand that people use geographic representations and geospatial technologies to acquire, process and report information	For example: Relative location words – close to, above, bordering. Description using relative location words – “Our school is across from the post office.” Description using cardinal directions – “Mexico is south of the	Same description as above
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Unit 3: The Southeast	MN Social Studies Standard	Text from textbook company	MN Text	Benchmark	The Teacher's Rationale
		<i>title, orientation, date, author, legend/key, and scale. Spatial information – cities, roads, boundaries, bodies of water, regions.</i>		United States.” Description using intermediate directions – “Hawaii is southwest of the continental United States.”	
	4.3.2.3.1	Locate and identify the physical and human characteristics of places in the United States, and also Canada or Mexico. <i>For example: Physical characteristics – landforms (Rocky Mountains), ecosystems (forest), bodies of water (Mississippi River, Hudson Bay), soil, vegetation, weather and climate. Human characteristics – structures (Statue of Liberty), bridges (Golden Gate Bridge), canals (Erie Canal), cities, political boundaries, population</i>	Understand that places have physical characteristics (such as climate, topography vegetation) and human characteristics (such as population, political and economic systems.	Same text used by publisher	When we're looking at the map, like on pages 164-165, I will ask students questions they need to see the map and map key to answer. This would be a great one to have them show and talk to their elbow partners about too! Later on, on page 178 that map talks about a <i>fall line</i> . It would be neat for the students to view this on the map in their books and then locate it on the larger foldout maps in their groups. Oh, yeah – natural resources in Chapter 7 – locating natural resources not only in their book maps but

Unit 3: The Southeast	MN Social Studies Standard	Text from textbook company	MN Text	Benchmark	The Teacher's Rationale
		<i>distribution, settlement patterns, language, ethnicity, nationality, religious beliefs</i>			in the other resource books will help them as they complete their state reports too. I think this also fits when we just pointed out that the Appalachian Mountains were hard to travel over because of their elevation and people weren't about to move West because of that.
	4.3.3.6.1	Explain how geographic factors affect population distribution and the growth of cities in the United States and Canada. <i>For example: Geographic factors – climate, landforms, availability of natural resources</i>	Understand that geographic features influence the distribution, functions, growth and patterns of cities and human settlements.	Same text used by publisher	I think this fits well with what we're studying. We just talked about how a lot of people had settled in the east and the Appalachian Mountains were a barrier there and they weren't able to get west to settle more land over there and have more land, but then once Daniel



Unit 3: The Southeast	MN Social Studies Standard	Text from textbook company	MN Text	Benchmark	The Teacher's Rationale
					Boone was able to find the Cumberland Gap that allowed for the distribution of more human settlements and how the United States kept growing and expanding. Now I understand how this fits, but the trick will be getting the students to make all of these connections”
	4.3.4.10.2	Analyze the impact of geographic factors on the development of modern agricultural regions in Minnesota and the United States. <i>For example: Agricultural regions – “Corn Belt,” “Dairy Belt,” crop regions.</i>	Understand that the meaning, use, distribution and importance of resources changes over time.	Same text used by publisher	Location, climate, and natural resources are all talked about in his section. The students could address this standard as they complete their state reports.

Unit 3: The Southeast	MN Social Studies Standard	Text from textbook company	MN Text	Benchmark	The Teacher's Rationale
<b>Lesson 2:</b> Early History of the Southeast (p184)	3.3.1.1.1	Create and use various kinds of maps, including overlaying thematic maps, of places in the United States, and also Canada or Mexico; incorporate the "TODALS" map basics, as well as points, lines and colored areas to display spatial information <i>For example: "TODALS" map basics – title, orientation, date, author, legend/key, and scale. Spatial information – cities, roads, boundaries, bodies of water, regions.</i>	Understand that people use geographic representations and geospatial technologies to acquire, process and report information	For example: Relative location words – close to, above, bordering. Description using relative location words – "Our school is across from the post office." Description using cardinal directions – "Mexico is south of the United States." Description using intermediate directions – "Hawaii is southwest of the continental United States."	I think the publisher's intention with placing this standard here is to have the students read and examine the map about where slavery existed in the United States in 1861. The map is an easy one to read because of the colors used, but the border states might confuse some of the students – we'll have to see how that goes. I'll probably have the students start by identifying certain states and then giving the location of others nearby – this would be a good tie in with using prepositions from our English class.

Unit 3: The Southeast	MN Social Studies Standard	Text from textbook company	MN Text	Benchmark	Laura's Rationale
<b>Chapter 7 The</b>					

<b>Southeast Today</b>					
<b>Lesson 1:</b> Atlantic Coast States (p206)	4.3.2.4.1	Name and locate states and territories, major cities and state capitals in the United States.	Understand that people construct regions to identify, organize and interpret areas of the Earth's surface, which simplifies the earth's complexity.	Same text used by publisher	We've been studying this again for a while now so I think the best use of this standard would be to have the students list the states that make up this region and then connect it to the large port cities mentioned in the previous section of their textbook. A good review of their map skills would be to make a list of which states in this region are considered coastal and which ones aren't.
<b>Lesson 2:</b> Gulf Coast States (p212)	4.3.2.3.1	Locate and identify the physical and human characteristics of places in the United States, and also Canada or Mexico. <i>For example:</i> <i>Physical characteristics – landforms (Rocky Mountains), ecosystems (forest), bodies of water (Mississippi River, Hudson Bay), soil, vegetation, weather and climate.</i> <i>Human characteristics – structures</i>	Understand that places have physical characteristics (such as climate, topography vegetation) and human characteristics (such as population, political and economic systems).	Same text used by publisher	This section has a lot to do with industries so I could have students identify the physical/geographic features of the area that impact the major industries.

		<i>(Statue of Liberty), bridges (Golden Gate Bridge), canals (Erie Canal), cities, political boundaries, population distribution, settlement patterns, language, ethnicity, nationality, religious beliefs</i>			
	4.3.2.4.1	Name and locate states and territories, major cities and state capitals in the United States.	Understand that people construct regions to identify, organize and interpret areas of the Earth's surface, which simplifies the earth's complexity.	Same text used by publisher	Again this would be more practice of listing the states in the region and discussing which are on the Atlantic coast and which ones are on the Gulf of Mexico side. Their map flashcards and quizzes will help with this.
<b>Map and Globe Skills:</b> Read a Map Scale (p218)	3.3.1.1.1	Create and use various kinds of maps, including overlaying thematic maps, of places in the United States, and also Canada or Mexico; incorporate the "TODALS" map basics, as well as points, lines and colored areas to display spatial information	Understand that people use geographic representations and geospatial technologies to acquire, process and report information	For example: Relative location words – close to, above, bordering. Description using relative location words – "Our school is across from the post office." Description using cardinal directions – "Mexico is	These pages (218-219) deal with reading a map scale and answering a few questions about where things are located and how many miles apart things are. We've already practiced doing this with a ruler and also using Post-It Notes but we could use the computer the put in various locations and check how close our paper-using calculations were too.

		<i>For example: "TODALS" map basics – title, orientation, date, author, legend/key, and scale. Spatial information – cities, roads, boundaries, bodies of water, regions.</i>		south of the United States." Description using intermediate directions – "Hawaii is southwest of the continental United States."	
<b>Lesson 3:</b> Inland South States (p220)	4.3.2.4.1	Name and locate states and territories, major cities and state capitals in the United States.	Understand that people construct regions to identify, organize and interpret areas of the Earth's surface, which simplifies the earth's complexity.	Same text used by publisher	Identifying where states are is really important. So far the students have worked with both coasts and now the inland states. I think the students could sort their state-and-capitals flashcards to show where the states are located. It would be a good activity they could do independently and then check with a partner. I might even have the students lay out their flashcards to show where all of the states are located. They've already done a quiz filling in a blank map of the region with states and capitals but we could do that again too.