

Chapter **3**

Historical Thinking Through Multiple Lenses

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Figure 1. *Floridae Americae provinciae recens & exactissima description (A Recent and Most Exact Description of the Province of Florida)*



Note. Le Moyne De Morgues, J. (1591). *Floridae Americae provinciae recens & exactissima description* [Map]. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2003623393/>

Historical Thinking through Multiple Lenses

C3 Disciplinary Focus History	C3 Inquiry Focus Evaluating sources and using evidence	Content Topic Historical Thinking Strategies
<p>C3 Focus Indicators</p> <p>D1: Determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions, taking into consideration multiple points of view represented in the sources, the types of sources available, and the potential uses of the sources. (D1.5.9-12.)</p> <p>D2: Evaluate how historical events and developments were shaped by unique circumstances of time and place as well as broader historical contexts. (D2.His.1.9-12.)</p> <p>D3: Gather relevant information from multiple sources representing a wide range of views while using the origin, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection. (D3.1.9-12.)</p> <p>D4: Present adaptations of arguments and explanations that feature evocative ideas and perspectives on issues and topics to reach a range of audiences and venues outside the classroom using print and oral technologies (e.g., posters, essays, letters, debates, speeches, reports, and maps) and digital technologies (e.g., Internet, social media, and digital documentary). (D4.3.9-12.)</p>		
Grade Level 6-12	Resources Resources cited in this chapter.	Time Required Approx. 2-4 days for each activity.

Introduction

When one side only of a story is heard and often repeated, the human mind becomes impressed with it insensibly.

—George Washington in a letter to Edmund Pendleton, January 22, 1795

Today’s social and political climate is pushing history to the forefront in many classrooms across the nation: “The well-being of our body politic is best served by an informed, engaged citizenry that understands how and why our system of government works” (The Leonore Annenberg Institute for Civics, 2011, p. 6). It is important for students to learn the skills they need to comprehend and connect with the past. Teachers of social studies can have an impact on how their students reason with the past. Students can use historical thinking skills not only in history classes, but also throughout their lifetime and in all avenues of their lives (Gottlieb & Wineburg, 2012; Maggioni et al., 2009; Monte-Sano, 2011; Purdin, 2013; Reisman, 2012; VanSledright, 2004; Wineburg, 2012). The big question therefore becomes “How should one study history?” History is an account of the past that has many different perspectives. Teachers who use historical thinking with their students will encourage them to create their own evidence-based historical narrative so they feel confident about the lessons of history. In the past, history education was filled with memorization of names, dates, and events, and this strategy is still used today. Today’s students should use the skills historians use when analyzing history. Historians gather evidence to support interpretations of historical events and look through the lenses of that time period. “Even when historians are able to piece together the basic story of what happened, they rarely agree about what an event means or what caused it. Historians argue about the past’s meaning and what it has to tell us in the present” (Wineburg, 2010, n.p.). Teachers need to take this concept into the classroom, allowing the students to decide what the documents say. Just like a detective, students need to back up their conclusions with evidence. This type of investigation is what will help teachers engage their students in historical thinking.

Historical Thinking Through Multiple Lenses

In history class, students should have the opportunity to relate their experiences with the past. Each teacher must find which historical thinking strategies fit into the dynamics of their classroom, remembering that students bring their own life experiences when trying to understand history. It is important to make students aware of the historical baggage (i.e., what students have picked up or learned in their environment such as stereotypes, generalizations, and misunderstandings) they bring into the classroom (Safir, 2016). Learning

about the concept of historical thinking helps students understand how to view the past through the lenses of the witnesses. Historians and educators have come up with many different strategies students can use when evaluating sources; some will be mentioned in this chapter. It is not to say that one is better than the other. Teachers will need to find what works best for their students. Students in an AP U.S. History classroom may use different strategies than students who are at a beginning level or ELL students who are new to learning historical analysis skills. Here, we will look at historical thinking strategies that are beneficial for all types of students.

An Introduction to Historical Thinking: The Historical Thinking Project (C3 Dimension 3)

The Historical Thinking Project, from Canada’s *Centre for the Study of Historical Consciousness*, takes historical thinking to another level. This type of inquiry looks at using primary documents to develop historical literacy. “In this case, ‘historical literacy’ means gaining a deep understanding of historical events and processes through active engagement with historical texts” (The Historical Thinking Project, 2014, n.p.). Historical literacy prompts six interrelated historical thinking concepts:

1. Establish historical significance
 2. Use primary source evidence
 3. Identify continuity and change
 4. Analyze cause and consequence
 5. Take historical perspectives, and
 6. Understand the ethical dimension of historical interpretations
- (The Historical Thinking Project, 2014)

These concepts can be used all together or separately when analyzing historical events and/or people. *Establishing historical significance* supports the idea that everything in history is a cause or effect found in accounts of the past. The significance of an individual that society might consider insignificant reveals an important part of the story; therefore, that individual becomes significant to something greater in the story, encouraging historical analysis through multiple perspectives.

Continuing the historical literacy approach, *primary source evidence* gives “secrets of life in the past” (The Historical Thinking Project, 2014, n.p.). These pieces of evidence illustrate

clues that can lead students to historical interpretation and bring them closer to finding the secret. Studying a primary source by asking “what,” “who,” “when,” and “why,” brings them closer to the point of view of the creator. These strategies help students discover how this piece of evidence contributes to the bigger story.

Teachers of history should be aware of how to teach students to *identify continuity and change*. Continuity is an unbroken consistency over a period of time. Teachers need to understand how important it is that students enter the study of history from many different avenues, not just in a chronological timeline. Students should look at the past as a continuity to the present and yet at the same time understand that things change over time. This can be a hard concept for students to understand because history is usually taught in a sequential way. “One of the keys to continuity and change is looking for change where common sense suggests that there has been none and looking for continuities where we assumed that there was change” (The Historical Thinking Project, 2014, n.p.). For example, when students examine the reasons Rosa Parks gave up her seat on the bus, they may discover there were many factors that led to this event, including her physical tiredness and the NAACP’s plans for a bus boycott around this time period (Stanford History Education Group, n.d.). (This lesson can be found at <https://sheg.stanford.edu/history-lessons/montgomery-bus-boycott.>)

Another important aspect of historical literacy analysis is cause and consequence of events. When an event occurs, we look for the cause and effect, the why and the how. When students are exploring the history of an event, having them explore the many causes and effects is a good examination strategy. “Causes are... multiple and layered, involving both long-term ideologies, institutions, and conditions, and short-term motivations, actions, and events” (The Historical Thinking Project, 2014, n.p.). This reasoning will help guide students into a deeper analysis of the said event by looking at multiple perspectives and outcomes.

Perspective is an important skill of historians, looking through the lens of people living and experiencing the time period. Perspective can help one to understand the reasoning behind a thought or action. “Taking historical perspective means understanding the social, cultural, intellectual, and emotional settings that shaped people’s lives and actions in the past” (Seixas, 2006, p. 8). One way students can learn about perspective is by studying the historiography of a topic and/or the time period. Historiography is “the study of what historians have written and argued about a given topic” (UMW, 2021, n.p.). Historiography is a very important part of studying history. Students may read journals or books that historians have written about a topic or era, trying to understand history. This viewpoint can be a big part of an analysis and can change a reader’s perspective of an event. For example, students study works from historians found in textbooks, comparing and contrasting these with other documents the teacher may have provided. If they are not taught these historical thinking skills, their historical interpretation may not be at its best.

One of the biggest hurdles teachers of history face is the ethical dilemma. Which “history” is right? Which is ethical? History teachers should teach all sides of history using facts, backed

up by primary sources. However, society sometimes tries to dictate what the right side of history is. As we have seen in discussing historical literacy skills, we must look at history in the way it was made. The final step of The History Project's historical literacy skills addresses this dilemma. This step, *understand ethical dimensions of history*, "has to do with the ethical judgments we make about historical actions. This creates a difficult paradox" (The Historical Thinking Project, 2014, n.p.). Teachers need to focus on the facts by bringing in primary sources to help students answer an essential question about a topic. The students will decide their own historical narrative of the topic.

Historical thinking skills can make any student a better historian. These skills teach the student that their conclusions matter. Teachers should convey the idea that history is not right or wrong; it is fact backed up by proof. Facts can be right or wrong, depending on where society is at the time. For example, there was a time when "separate but equal" was on the right side of history. No matter the level of the student, historical thinking can help them succeed when analyzing historical topics.

Because the work of historical thinking is complex and often difficult, some teachers—particularly at the elementary and middle school levels—make the presumption that their students are incapable of engaging in such thought. This presumption has proven inaccurate based on a host of studies conducted since about 1985. It turns out that children as young as age seven can begin to do source work. By high school, with careful guidance from ambitious history teachers, students can learn to do it much as historians. (VanSledright, 2004, p. 231)

Historical thinking is more important now than ever. Teachers must teach students how to think about the past. Students must be taught historical thinking skills so that they are prepared for their world ahead. Historical thinking skills will not only help students understand the past but also understand the present. This type of critical thinking is everyday thinking. Students need to think critically when making most decisions. Historical thinking will help students make difficult ethical decisions in their own life, gathering evidence to support their decisions in life.

Historical Thinking in the Classroom Using Stanford History Education Group’s Reading Like a Historian

(C3 Dimensions 2 & 3)

In Mike Maxwell’s article, “Historical Thinking: A Second Opinion,” he states that thinking and knowledge occur in a feedback loop. Students need to be interested, in some way, about learning more. “Thinking requires knowledge to think about, and useful thinking requires useful knowledge to think about. In the absence of useful knowledge, half the feedback loop is missing, and useful thinking is unlikely to occur” (Maxwell, 2019, p. 291).

Historical thinking skills may improve students’ critical thinking if they are taught on a yearly basis in the history classroom. If students are taught the skills in elementary and continue to use them throughout secondary, it may help them understand the connection between history and becoming productive citizens in society. Primary sources bring life to history, showing students that they themselves can figure out what happened in the past. This gives students the opportunity to engage in critical thinking in the classroom and hopefully in life.

SHEG Example for Teachers

Teachers need to show their students how to think like historians when learning about history. “To historians, history is an argument about what facts should or shouldn’t mean” (Wineburg, 2010, n.p.). It can be hard for students to know why an event happened when looking through the lenses of today. Students need to step back in time to appreciate the past, looking through the lenses of people with different backgrounds and identities. In turn, this will guide them into understanding the present and possibly predicting the future. Using critical thinking skills, students will be able to form a hypothesis about historical events. In the classroom, this type of historical thinking will center around a compelling question that students need to answer with evidence. The Stanford History Education Group (SHEG) uses historical reading skills to guide students into historical inquiry. SHEG teaches students how to investigate and find evidence to support the facts of the past. This type of inquiry helps students become excited about solving the debates found in history (Stanford History Education Group, n.d.).

The Historical Thinking Chart from SHEG (Figure 2) presents four historical reading skills. *Sourcing* is where students timestamp the source. Then students work with the skill of *contextualizing*, looking at what else is going on at the time the sources were created. Next students would study other documents of the time period using the skill of *corroboration*. And

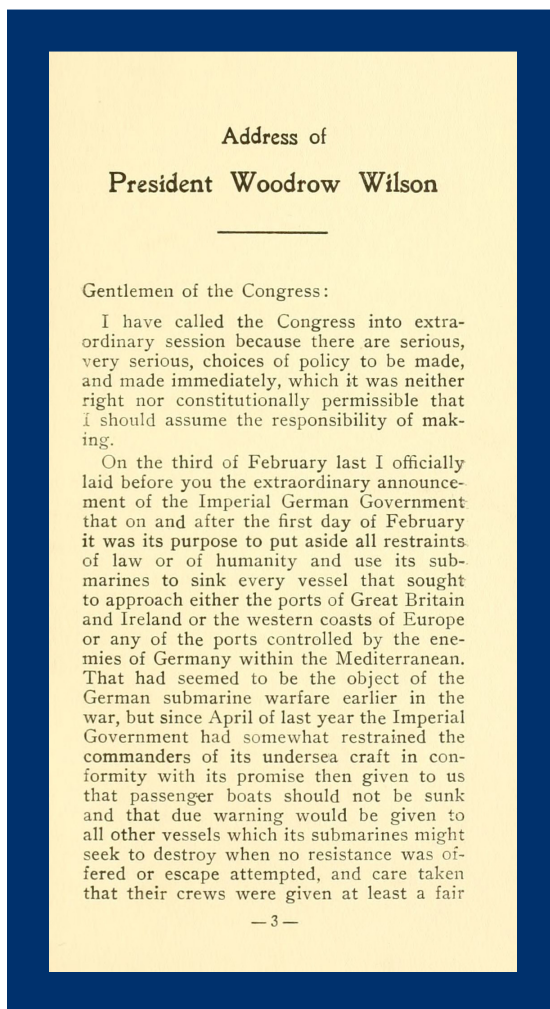
finally, students would do a *close reading* to discover if the claims of the author are true based on what students have learned in the previous steps of the historical thinking skills. The SHEG chart shows students how to analyze information from a variety of sources to create a hypothesis. By bringing in even more sources, students will be challenged to create an alternative hypothesis based upon available information, helping them understand that some information can be interpreted in multiple ways (Public Broadcasting Service, n.d.).

Figure 2. Stanford History Education Group’s Historical Thinking Chart

HISTORICAL THINKING CHART

Historical Reading Skills	Questions	Students should be able to . . .	Prompts
Sourcing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who wrote this? What is the author’s perspective? When was it written? Where was it written? Why was it written? Is it reliable? Why? Why not? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the author’s position on the historical event Identify and evaluate the author’s purpose in producing the document Hypothesize what the author will say before reading the document Evaluate the source’s trustworthiness by considering genre, audience, and purpose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The author probably believes . . . I think the audience is . . . Based on the source information, I think the author might . . . I do/don’t trust this document because . . .
Contextualization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When and where was the document created? What was different then? What was the same? How might the circumstances in which the document was created affect its content? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand how context/ background information influences the content of the document Recognize that documents are products of particular points in time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on the background information, I understand this document differently because . . . The author might have been influenced by _____ (historical context) . . . This document might not give me the whole picture because . . .
Corroboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What do other documents say? Do the documents agree? If not, why? What are other possible documents? What documents are most reliable? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish what is probable by comparing documents to each other Recognize disparities between accounts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The author agrees/disagrees with . . . These documents all agree/ disagree about . . . Another document to consider might be . . .
Close Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What claims does the author make? What evidence does the author use? What language (words, phrases, images, symbols) does the author use to persuade the document’s audience? How does the document’s language indicate the author’s perspective? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the author’s claims about an event Evaluate the evidence and reasoning the author uses to support claims Evaluate author’s word choice; understand that language is used deliberately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think the author chose these words in order to . . . The author is trying to convince me . . . The author claims . . . The evidence used to support the author’s claims is . . .

Figure 3. *President Wilson's Declaration of War Message to Congress, April 2, 1917*



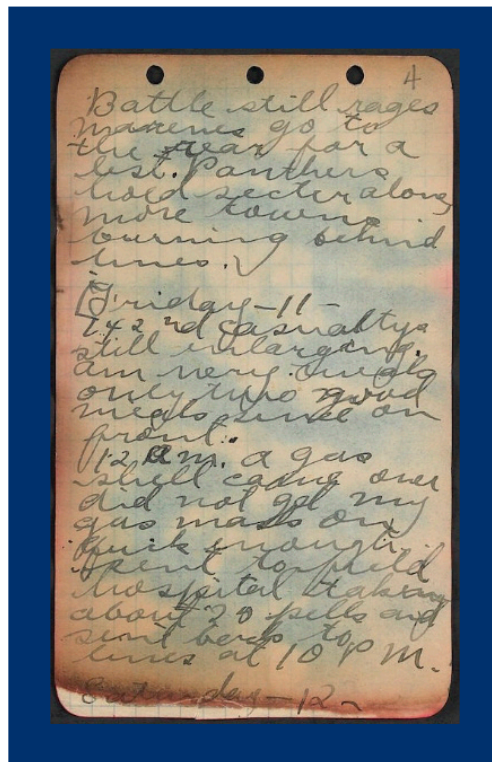
Note. Wilson, W. (1917, April 2). *President Woodrow Wilson's address to Congress*. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/18014239/>

Students can analyze any primary source, in this case President Wilson's Declaration of War Message to Congress (Figure 3), to examine the past. To understand this and other World War I documents, it is beneficial to add an essential question to the lesson, for example, "How did Americans react when the U.S. entered World War I?" Creating an essential question, also called a *compelling question*, is an important part of historical thinking. Writing down a few statements that reflect the outcome of the lesson will help teachers come up with the best question for the topic. "I want students to learn that..." Turning all or one of these statements into the essential question(s) will help guide both teacher and student to discover if the concept of the topic has been taught. If the essential question cannot be answered in depth, it may be time for the teacher to revisit the question and bring in more primary and secondary sources. "The study of history should be a mind-altering encounter that leaves one forever

unable to consider the social world without asking questions about where a claim comes from, who's making it, and how time and place shape human behavior" (Wineburg et al., 2018, p. 993).

This type of analysis requires students to research other documents from the time period. It is imperative that students use reputable databases and websites such as the Library of Congress (<https://loc.gov/>) and the National Archives (<https://www.archives.gov/>). When studying America's involvement in World War I, this type of research and corroboration will help students recognize the atmosphere of America in 1917. Teachers can verify students' recognition through class discussion and deep analysis. Using the Historical Thinking Chart from SHEG, students can learn how to use historical thinking skills with a primary source. The chart helps both teacher and student walk through ideas on how to think historically (Stanford History Education Group, n.d.).

Figure 4. WWI diary entry by Albert John Carpenter, October 12, 1918



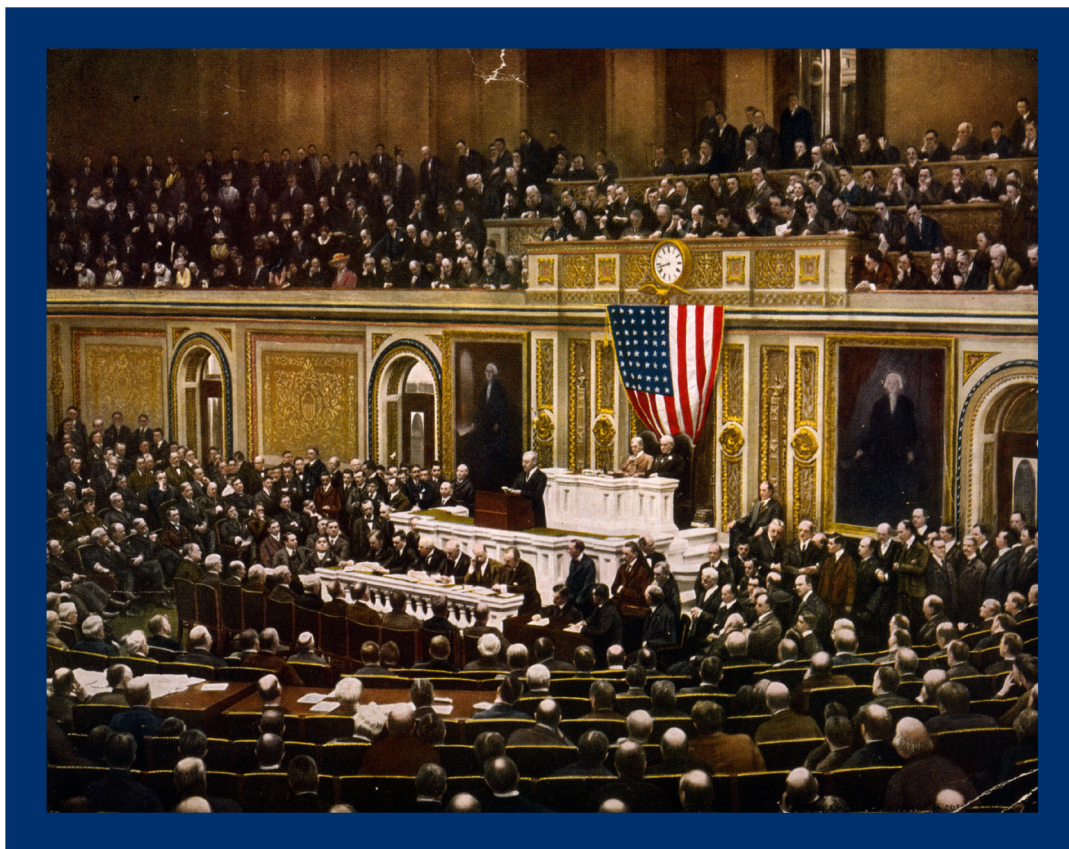
Note. Carpenter, A. J. (1918, October 12). *Diary of Albert John Carpenter*. Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress.

<https://memory.loc.gov/diglib/vhp/story/loc.natlib.afc2001001.00225/>

Sourcing (identifying the author and the date of the document) *President Wilson's Declaration of War Message to Congress* helps students understand the atmosphere on April 2, 1917. Examining the origin of the document guides students into some historical context about what was happening, helping them make sense of it. Students should then read Wilson's

speech, rewriting the document if needed. Wilson's perspective can be seen in the words he used in his speech. Students can also *contextualize* (study other events of the time period) documents created during the time period. Documents that can be found in the Library of Congress's [Echoes of the Great War exhibition](#), such as the Zimmerman Telegram and the Sinking of the Lusitania, can help them understand how these events affected the creation of President Wilson's speech addressing Congress on April 2, 1917. The latter documents will support Wilson's reasoning for entering into a World War, but the teacher needs to share that some Americans may have had different perspectives about this event depending on society's interpretations at the time. *Corroborating* (what other documents say) with other views about World War I, such as the [Women's International League for Peace and Freedom Manifesto on Disarmament](#) dated October 1921 or [Albert John Carpenter's Diary](#) (Figure 4), will show students different perspectives. Looking at different perspectives will guide students more into historical thinking and will support the teacher's goal in helping students realize this atmosphere of America in 1917. A historical event can only be understood when students look through the eyes of many different witnesses. We rely on evidence to construct accounts of the past, but we need to rely on more than one piece of evidence to comprehend the full account of the event (Wineburg, 2015). Finally, when students practice *close reading* of Wilson's address (evaluating the claims and evidence that he uses), they will focus on significant details or patterns in order to develop a deep, precise understanding, discovering words like "innocent," "commerce," "lives taken," "peace of the world," "safe for democracy," "sacrifices," "champions," and "mankind," which all tell the story of Wilson's thoughts in trying to convince Congress, and the American people, that staying away from the war is no longer an option. Students may determine Wilson's views by reading this speech, but this is only one perspective, Wilson's perspective. (During corroboration, which is shown later in this chapter, students will be able to visit different perspectives about this topic.)

Figure 5. *For the Freedom of the World*



Note. *For the Freedom of the World*. (1917, April 2). [Print]. Library of Congress.
<https://www.loc.gov/item/2002716887/>

There are many secondary sources that teachers can bring into the discussion relating to America's reaction to entering World War I. Secondary sources can include newspapers, journals, magazine articles, and textbooks. For example, an article from *Smithsonian Magazine* in 2017, "[How Woodrow Wilson's Speech to Congress Changed Him and the Nation](#)," can encourage students to discover evidence and to support their ideas for the compelling question by looking through the lens of a writer in modern times. They can also use a page or two from their own history textbook. Students need to be guided into comprehending the concept of secondary sources. One way to do this is to use the Historical Thinking Chart from SHEG with any secondary sources used to aid students into expanding on the time period of World War I. SHEG's chart has guiding questions to help students discover the importance of secondary documents, as demonstrated above. Using textbooks as a source, students can use the same SHEG strategies to determine their dependability (Stanford History Education Group, n.d.). Students' textbooks, if reliable, can further help students understand the historical premise of the conversation by teaching them the importance of corroborating. In order to understand continuity and change, for instance, one must know what changed and

what remained the same. Students need substantive content to have meaningful historical thinking (Seixas, 2006, p. 2).

SHEG Example for Students

The Library of Congress works closely in a partnership with SHEG, which has many resources teachers can use to help their students with primary source analysis. This group is made up of historians, college professors, and graduate students from Stanford University who are striving to show students the best way to investigate historical material through historical curriculum (Stanford History Education Group, n.d.). SHEG has many different resources for teachers that can be easily used with secondary students. Sam Wineburg’s Stanford History Education Group strives to bring history closer to students in the classroom.

“Students need to be taught to “think like historians” not because they will become professional historians but precisely because most won’t. The goals of school history are not vocational but to prepare students to tolerate complexity, to adapt to new situations, and to resist the first answer that comes to mind” (Wineburg, 2010, n.p.).

As mentioned earlier, the *Reading Like a Historian* curriculum focuses on teaching students to decipher the mystery of a document. This document-based curriculum teaches four skills: sourcing, contextualization, corroboration, and close reading.

When providing students with a historical source, SHEG suggests that you start with [sourcing](#). This is the beginning of the student’s historical study. “Who wrote this?” and “When was it written?” are questions that will set the tone for students, leading them to an understanding of the historical story. Students are then asked to *contextualize* the document to make them comfortable with the analysis process. Next, students answer more questions about their historical source. “What was different then?” and “How might the circumstances in which the document was created affect its content?” This helps the student visualize the birth of the source in the past. Students continue to study their source by pulling in other related documents to help *corroborate* the topic of history they are studying. Finally, students will evaluate all the sources using *close reading*. This allows students to examine how the author created the document, focusing on clues that can be found that show the author’s perspective. During close reading, students will examine the document, answering questions like: “What evidence does the author use?” and “What language (words, phrases, images, symbols) does the author use to persuade the document’s audience?” By interacting with all the sources, observing and interpreting the text, students can reflect and come up with new conclusions and understandings about their historical source. SHEG also includes discussion questions in their lessons so teachers can help students master each of the historical thinking skills. Below is a close reading activity from SHEG using a map from the Library of Congress.

Activity: Close Reading Using Library of Congress

Figure 6. *Floridae Americae provinciae recens & exactissima description (A Recent and Most Exact Description of the Province of Florida)*



Note. Le Moyne De Morgues, J. (1591). *Floridae Americae provinciae recens & exactissima descriptio* [Map]. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2003623393/>

Working with Jacques Le Moyne's broad triangle version of Florida map (Figure 6), students can discover Florida with close reading.

In 1562, a group of Huguenot settlers led by Jean Ribault and René Goulaine de Laudonnière were sent by King Charles IX in an attempt to establish a colony on the southeastern coast of America. An artist on Laudonnière's expedition, Jacques Le Moyne de Morgues, went on to produce a map of their French colony from 1562 to 1565. Le Moyne's map (not published until 1591) depicted Florida as a wide triangle with its southernmost tip removed, a peculiar shape that persisted for several decades, even as alternative representations emerged from other cartographers. (Osborn, 2015)

When working with different types of documents, teachers should modify questions found on the Historical Thinking Chart as they see fit. For example, "What claim does the author

make?” can be modified to “What claim does the cartographer make?” These types of modifications can help students understand the inquiry better. The chart also shows what students should be able to comprehend from studying the document, in this case, a map, as shown in the second column. The third column has prompts for students who need additional support with close reading and analysis of primary sources.

Please note for this activity that we are using one step in the historical thinking strategies.

Step 1

Give each student in the class a colored copy of the map *Floridae Americae provinciae recens & exactissima descriptio*. A color copy can be found on the Library of Congress’s website. If possible, supply a magnifying glass for each student to examine the map in detail. If not, use the zoom feature on the Library of Congress’s website.

Step 2

Using the SHEG Historical Thinking Chart on a whiteboard or smartboard, teachers will display close reading questions for students to answer. Depending on the level of students, the teacher should display the question(s) that they feel are suitable for their students. Of course, when the discussion starts, other questions may arise, and they should be added to the list. Please note that depending on the level of students and the discussion that they have, this one step could take one class period.

1. What claims does the *cartographer* make?
2. What evidence does the *cartographer* use?
3. What language (words, phrases, images, symbols) does the *cartographer* use to persuade the document’s audience?
4. How does the document’s language indicate the *cartographer’s* perspective?

Step 3

Have students examine the 1591 map of Florida while answering the close reading questions, either on paper or aloud for discussion.

Developing Learners. Developing learners could use writing prompts provided on the historical thinking chart to help answer questions. Also, the teacher may want the students to answer questions 3 and 4 only or answer questions 3 and 4 before answering questions 1 and 2, since this may be easier.

Question 3: “What language (words, phrases, images, symbols) does the *cartographer* use to persuade the document’s audience?” Possible answers: places labeled in Spanish, blue lake, sea creature, boats, trees, mountains, scale, etc.

Question 4: “How does the document’s language indicate the *cartographer’s* perspective?” Possible answers: cartographer was sailor, map maker, liked colors, thought fish were larger than they were, etc.

Proficient Students. For proficient students, the teacher might ask the following questions:

Question 1: “What claims does the *cartographer* make?” Possible answers: Florida is a triangular shape; fish are large; the Florida Keys are under the state (see zoomed copy); there is a small lake in the middle of Florida; etc.

Question 2: “What evidence does the *cartographer* use?” Possible answers: eye witness accounts, assuming cartographer was there; a map scale; a compass rose, etc.

Question 3: “What language (words, phrases, images, symbols) does the *cartographer* use to persuade the document’s audience?” Possible answers: places labeled in Spanish; blue lake; sea creature; boats; trees; mountains; scale, etc.

Question 4: “How does the document’s language indicate the *cartographer’s* perspective?” Possible answers: the cartographer was a sailor and map maker, which can be seen in the accurate depiction of the compass rose and map scale; cartographer used color to draw in the viewer; the cartographer saw large sea creatures such as whales or sharks, etc.

Looking at sources like this map and asking these types of close reading questions can start a discussion about history that allows students to dive into the perspective of others, such as how Europeans from the late 1500s saw Florida. This type of historical thinking in the classroom will hopefully encourage students to investigate different types of primary sources.

SHEG offers lesson plans on their website that will show students how to think historically, beginning with introductory materials that will teach students how to examine primary sources using sourcing, contextualization, corroboration, and close reading. These activities are part of a curriculum that focuses on U.S. and World History.

Once students understand the steps of historical thinking, teachers can continue to assert the skills by using SHEG’s *Reading Like a Historian* curriculum. These short and precise lessons will engage students in historical thinking skills. Each lesson starts with a compelling question with supporting primary sources for most reading levels. If these types of historical thinking skills are taught to students at the beginning of the year and throughout, students should become confident learners when evaluating sources (Wineburg, 2001).

Reading Like a Historian lessons are activities that are user friendly for history teachers. There are over one hundred activities, divided by both topic and time period. Using these lessons, teachers can promote historical thinking skills in the classroom. Teachers need to sign up for free to download any lessons or activities they would like to use.

Historical Thinking in the Classroom Using the SOURCES Framework

(C3 Dimensions 1, 2, & 3)

Created by Dr. Scott Waring, Professor and Program Coordinator of Social Science Education from the University of Central Florida, the [SOURCES Framework](#) is a great tool when working with primary sources in the classroom. This type of investigation brings students to a higher level of critical thinking when studying history: “The SOURCES Framework for teaching with primary sources can guide students to think more critically, gain historical perspective, and think historically, while utilizing historical sources to better understand a topic of study” (Waring et al., 2018, p. 271). Using this framework engages students to relate with the primary source using different stages of interaction. Starting with a compelling question, students move through each stage.

1. *Scrutinize the Fundamental Source*: Students engage with the fundamental source, carefully analyzing the source in regard to the essential question. This is the beginning of the historical thinking process.
2. *Organize Thoughts*: During this step, students explore what they already know about this source and come up with questions they may still have about the document. For example: “What additional content do [students] need to know?”
3. *Understand the Context*: Thinking about the essential question, students should increase their knowledge surrounding the source by looking for information that can provide them with a deeper understanding. Searching for the origin of the fundamental source and what was happening during that time will put the source in its proper context.
4. *Read Between the Lines*: Now that the students have a deeper understanding of the topic surrounding the fundamental source, they need to make inferences to help them find the answer to the essential question. “Why was the source created?” and “Who was the intended audience?” Finding correlations will help students better understand the story surrounding the fundamental source.
5. *Corroborate and Refute*: Students will examine other primary and secondary sources related to the fundamental source, helping them to corroborate and refute their

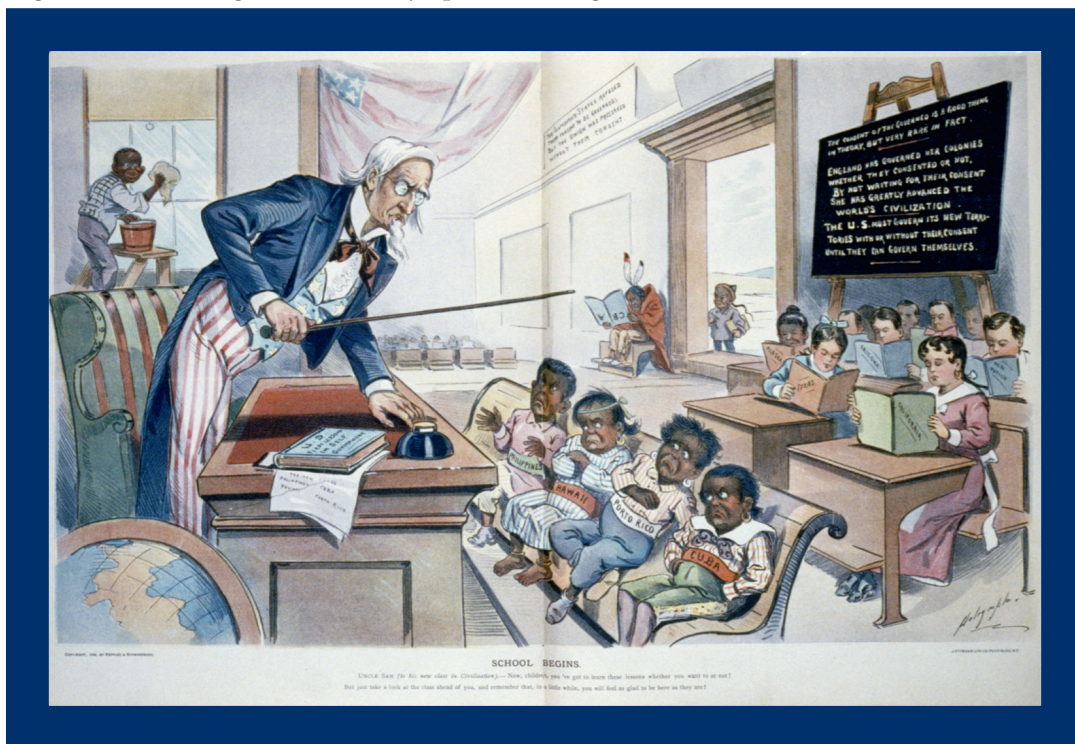
understanding of the topic and essential question. This step will help them develop a narrative defending their ideas on the fundamental source and topic.

6. *Establish a Plausible Narrative*: Based on the sources the students engaged with, students will use evidence to take a position and answer the essential question. “This narrative could be in the form of a written paper, documentary video, web site, a diorama, a skit or play, or whatever other form deemed most appropriate by the teacher to assess the knowledge conveyed and the quality of an argument in response to the essential question” (Waring et al., 2018, p. 272). The narrative discovered by the student needs to be plausible, telling the story of the fundamental source.
7. *Summarize Final Thoughts*: In this last step, students are asked to reflect on the knowledge they gained. What questions are left lingering? Can they be answered by acquiring other sources? Do students have enough information to answer the fundamental question?

Activity: Read Between the Lines Using the Library of Congress

Using the SOURCES framework with an essential question, based on a topic of study, will guide students to an effective way of analyzing primary sources. The SOURCES Framework chart will direct students through steps on how to bring sources together as evidence, helping them answer the essential question. While it is encouraged that the teacher complete the entire SOURCES framework using many documents, the example below will show teachers how to have students examine the questions shown in the “R” section of the framework *Read Between the Lines*. Reading between the lines is a technique that historians use to dive deeper into a primary source. In the example below, students will gather evidence to answer the essential question: “How was Native American culture affected by American culture in the late 1800s?” Focusing on education assimilation of children of Color in the late 1800s, this example will show students how to find items with deeper meaning in the document that may have been missed at first glance. Teachers need to illustrate an understanding of an artist’s interpretation of the time period.

Figure 7. *School Begins*, Louis Dalrymple, *Puck Magazine* (1899)



Note. “Uncle Sam (to his new class in Civilization)—Now, children, you’ve got to learn these lessons whether you want to or not! But just take a look at the class ahead of you, and remember that, in a little while, you will feel as glad to be here as they are!” Dalrymple, L. (1899). *School Begins* [Print]. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2012647459/>

Using the 1899 cartoon by Louis Dalrymple in *Puck Magazine*, students can try to *read between the lines* using the SOURCES framework. Please note that for this activity we are using one step in the historical thinking strategies.

Step 1

Give each student in the class a color copy of the cartoon *School Begins* (Figure 7) and have a class discussion, allowing students to express what they think the cartoon is trying to portray. If possible, supply a magnifying glass for each student to examine the cartoon in detail. This document can also be project using the [zoom in and out tool](#) so students can see all parts of the cartoon.

Step 2

Using the SOURCES Framework, have students focus on the questions from the “R” section:

1. What inferences about the source can you make that are not evident?
2. Was there a specific reason for why the source was created that was not explicitly stated?
3. Might the real audience have been someone other than the one stated?

Step 3

Have students examine the 1899 cartoon *School Begins* while answering “R” questions.

Developing Learners. Walk students through the discussion while answering the questions together. Modify the questions so they can be understood by a developing learner.

Question 1: “What do you think happened before the children arrived to school?”
“After they left school?” “What evidence do you see in the cartoon to support your answers?”

Question 2: “Was the artist of the cartoon supporting children of Color or not?”
“What evidence do you see in the cartoon to support your answers?”

Question 3: “Who would benefit most from seeing this cartoon?” “Who do you think would not agree with this cartoon?” “What evidence do you see in the cartoon to support your answer?”

Proficient Students. For proficient students, ask the following questions:

- “What inferences about the source can you make that are not evident?” Possible answers: The U.S. Government will treat the Native American in the same derogatory manner; White students are financially better off than others. “What evidence do you see in the cartoon to support your answers?”
- “Was there a specific reason for why the source was created that was not explicitly stated?” Possible Answers: To persuade the reader to think outside of the norm. The U.S. has a better education system than other cultures. “What evidence do you see in the cartoon to support your answers?”
- “Might the real audience have been someone other than the one stated?” Possible Answers: Other countries. “What evidence do you see in the cartoon to support your answers?”

Depending on the students, the teacher should choose the question(s) that they feel accommodates their students’ learning level. Of course, when the discussion starts, other questions may arise to add to the list. Please note that depending on the depth of the discussion the teacher would like the students to have, this one step could take one class period.

If desired, teachers can use all the steps of the framework or just a few. For example, teachers could continue the steps of the SOURCES Framework mentioned above by having students compare the cartoon with other documents from the same time period. They will “establish a plausible narrative” as seen in step six, discovering that native peoples from other countries were forced to conform through Americanization.

The SOURCES framework gives students the opportunity to interact directly with primary sources that tell a story. It is the student’s job to bring that story to life using historical thinking skills like scrutinizing, understanding, organizing, corroborating, and refuting. These are the skills that will help students discover a plausible narrative about the story of history.

Historical Thinking in the Classroom Using the Library of Congress

(C3 Dimensions 1-4)

The Library of Congress (LOC), located in Washington, DC, houses millions of primary sources that tell the story of the United States and the world. The sources include items such as photos, drawings, prints, film, newspapers, and music. Using their program, Teaching with Primary Sources, the LOC has supported learning institutions all around the country. Relying on the guidance of teachers, the LOC wants to bring young people into close contact with their unique primary sources, feeling that students will discover a “real sense” of what it was like to be alive during the period (Library of Congress, n.d.).

The Library of Congress is the most significant institution for reliable sources that teachers of history need. If a teacher wants to make a difference in the classroom using reliable, historical documents, the Library of Congress has a diverse collection of sources. To introduce the use of primary sources to students, the Library has a wonderful primary source lesson, “[Leaving Evidence of our Lives](#).” In this lesson, students are asked what evidence they may have left behind in their last 24 hours. Using trace evidence from the previous day, such as bookbags, agenda, or receipts, students are easily able to understand that evidence tells a story. The lesson continues by comparing these pieces of evidence to what historians use today. This lesson helps teachers and students understand why evidence is so important when teaching or learning about history.

Think for a moment about all the activities you were involved in during the past 24 hours. For each event, think further about what evidence, if any, your activities might have left behind.

- Which of your daily activities were most likely to leave trace evidence behind?
- What, if any, of that evidence might be preserved for the future? Why?
- What might be left out of a historical record of your activities? Why?
- What would a future historian be able to tell about your life and your society based on evidence of your daily activities that might be preserved for the future?

Now think about a more public event currently happening (a court case, election, public controversy, law being debated), and answer these questions:

- What kinds of evidence might this event leave behind?

- Who records information about this event?
- For what purpose are different records of this event made?

As can be seen by the latter questions, students will work to understand how evidence informs history. By inquiring about what evidence is left behind from court cases, elections, and controversies, students begin to understand that history is in the making.

Figure 8. *Primary Source Analysis Tool*

The form is titled "PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS TOOL" in large, bold, black letters. To the right of the title is a "NAME:" label followed by a rectangular input box. In the top right corner, there is a circular logo with the words "OBSERVE", "REFLECT", and "QUESTION" arranged around the perimeter. Below the title and name field, the form is divided into three vertical columns. The first column is headed "OBSERVE", the second "REFLECT", and the third "QUESTION". Each column contains several horizontal dotted lines for writing. Below these columns are two sections: "FURTHER INVESTIGATION:" and "ADDITIONAL NOTES:", each followed by a solid horizontal line. At the bottom left, there is a logo for "LIBRARY OF CONGRESS" and the text "LOC.gov/teachers".

Note. From Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/programs/teachers/getting-started-with-primary-sources/guides/>

The LOC encourages engaging students with primary sources to develop their critical thinking skills. “Primary sources are snippets of history...encouraging students to seek additional evidence...” (Library of Congress, 2013). The LOC has many resources to bring your students to a higher level of thinking. The Library of Congress Primary Source Analysis Tools help students observe, reflect, question, and investigate primary sources. Students first need to observe the primary source and answer questions such as “What do you notice first?” “What do you see that is small but interesting?” and “What do you notice that you can’t explain?” These observation questions help students examine the intricate parts of the source.

Next, students will *reflect* and generate a hypothesis about the source by presenting questions like “Where do you think the source came from?” “What was going on when this document was being made?” and “Why is this document so important?” Once students develop a hypothesis about the source, they are asked to wonder more by coming up with unanswered questions about the document. Teachers can encourage students to compare the main ideas of *observe*, *reflect*, and *question*.

This Primary Analysis Tool from the Library of Congress also encourages teachers to move even further with their students through additional investigations, helping students identify strategies to find answers to student-developed questions. The investigation at the beginner's level asks students to compare two related sources. The intermediate level of investigation asks students to use sources to connect information with other documents, such as a textbook. Advanced investigation strategies suggest having students bring in more primary sources to refine or revise their conclusions.

The staff at the Library of Congress understand how over a million sources can be overwhelming to a teacher. The LOC has an analysis tool for many different types of sources. Primary sources like motion pictures, books, newspapers, manuscripts, photographs, and even maps can be examined using their resources. Additionally, the Library offers classroom materials such as primary source sets, lesson plans, activities, and literacy connections. Still need help? Using their "Ask a Librarian" resource, teachers can email or chat with librarians that will help them find an answer to any questions they might still have.

Figure 9. *Father reading newspaper, two children viewing television*



Note. Gottscho-Schieisner. (1950, July 12). Hilda Kassell, E. 53rd St., New York City. *Father reading newspaper, two children viewing television* [Photograph]. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2018723626/>

Activity: Library of Congress Primary Analysis Tool

Looking at a photograph. *Father reading newspaper, two children viewing television*, taken on July 12, 1950 by Gottscho-Schieisner, Inc. (Figure 9) and using the Library of Congress Teacher's Guide and Analysis Tools, teachers can easily engage historical thinking with students at any level. The LOC *Teacher's Guide for Analyzing Photographs & Prints* (Figure 10) has four main sections that include questions to ask students about the source: observe, reflect, question, and further investigation. Below is a step-by-step lesson that can be used in the classroom when studying the mid-1900s. Notice that the teacher can control how the activity moves forward, making it adaptable to all learners. Depending on the student experience and if the teacher pauses for discussion, this activity could take one to three class periods.

Figure 10. *Teacher's Guide, Analyzing Photographs & Prints*

TEACHER'S GUIDE
ANALYZING PHOTOGRAPHS
& PRINTS

OBSERVE REFLECT QUESTION

Guide students with the sample questions as they respond to the primary source. Encourage them to go back and forth between the columns; there is no correct order.

OBSERVE
Have students identify and note details.
Sample Questions:
Describe what you see. · What do you notice first?
· What people and objects are shown? · How are they arranged? · What is the physical setting?
· What, if any, words do you see? · What other details can you see?

REFLECT
Encourage students to generate and test hypotheses about the image.
Why do you think this image was made? · What's happening in the image? · When do you think it was made? · Who do you think was the audience for this image? · What tools were used to create this? · What can you learn from examining this image? · What's missing from this image? · If someone made this today, what would be different? · What would be the same?

QUESTION
Have students ask questions to lead to more observations and reflections.
What do you wonder about...
who? · what? · when? · where? · why? · how?

FURTHER INVESTIGATION
Help students to identify questions appropriate for further investigation, and to develop a research strategy for finding answers.
Sample Question: What more do you want to know, and how can you find out?

A few follow-up activity ideas:
Beginning
Write a caption for the image.
Intermediate
Select an image. Predict what will happen one minute after the scene shown in the image. One hour after. Explain the reasoning behind your predictions.
Advanced
Have students expand or alter textbook or other printed explanations of history based on images they study.
For more tips on using primary sources, go to <http://www.loc.gov/teachers>

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS | [loc.gov/teachers](http://www.loc.gov/teachers)

Note. From Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/programs/teachers/getting-started-with-primary-sources/guides/>

Step 1

Give each student in the class a copy of the photograph *Father reading newspaper, two children viewing television* and a blank copy of the Primary Source Analysis Tool for Students. Provide each student with a magnifying glass, if possible. The student analysis tool can be printed out for students to write on or students can type on the form online, and then download and print or email it to their teacher.

Step 2: Observe

Write the questions you want to use from the “Observe” column of the *Teacher’s Guide for Analyzing Photographs & Prints*. Of course, when the discussion starts other questions may arise that you might want to add. Notice that many of the questions are similar. The teacher should choose the question(s) that they feel fit their students. All questions can be used with both types of learners if the teacher sees fit.

For Developing Learners:

- “Describe what you see. What do you notice first? What people and objects are shown?” Possible answers: box, divider, father, lamp, two kids, ship, etc.
- “How are they arranged?” Possible answers: two rooms, divided down the middle, tv in back, father near window and lamp

For Proficient Students:

- “Describe what you see. What do you notice first? What people and objects are shown?” Possible answers: Box, divider, father, lamp, two kids, ship, etc.
- “How are they arranged?” Possible answers: two rooms, divided down the middle, tv in back, father near window and lamp
- “What is the physical setting?” Possible answers: room in house, front room
- “What, if any, words do you see?” Possible answers: letters on tv, words on newspaper, numbers on tv dials
- “What other details can you see?” Possible answers: boy’s pajamas, design on chair, plan on window, ship on tv, pattern on divider

Step 3: Reflect

Write the questions you want to use from the “Reflect” column of the *Teacher’s Guide for Analyzing Photographs & Prints*. Of course, when the discussion starts, other questions may arise that you might want to add. All questions can be used with both types of learners if the teacher sees fit.

Developing Learners:

- “Why do you think this image was made?” Possible answers: mom wanted photo of family
- “What’s happening in the image?” Possible answers: kids watching tv, father reading newspaper

Proficient Students:

- “Why do you think this image was made?” Possible answers: kids watching tv, father reading newspaper, news/magazine doing report on new tv

- “What’s happening in the image?” Possible answers: kids watching tv, father reading newspaper, advertisement
- “When do you think it was made?” Possible answers: black and white photo, so maybe 1900s–1960s
- “Who do you think was the audience for this image?” Possible answers: family member, readers of newspaper/magazine
- “What tools were used to create this?” Possible answers: camera, chemicals in dark room
- “What can you learn from examining this image?” Possible answers: kids like tv, dad did not like tv
- “If someone made this today, what would be different?” Possible answers: would be colored image, no divider, flat tv hanging on wall
- “What would be the same?” Possible answers: kids watching tv, dad reading newspaper, lamp

Step 4: Question

Select the questions you want to use from the “Question” column of the *Teacher’s Guide for Analyzing Photographs & Prints*. Of course, when the discussion starts, other questions may arise that you might want to add. All questions can be used with both types of learners if the teacher sees fit.

For developing learners, ask: “What do you wonder about...?” “Who?” (“Who is that man?”), “What?” (“What are the kids watching?”), “When?” (“When do they eat dinner?”), “Where?” (“Where is the mom?”), “Why?” (“Why is there a divider in the middle of the room?”), “How?” (“How do they change the channel?”).

For proficient learners, ask: “What questions do you still have?” “Who is the man reading the newspaper?” “What is the father thinking by putting up the divider?” “When do the kids go to school?” “Where is the mother?” “Why does the boy have pajamas on and the girl has a dress on?” “How do they occupy their time other than with a tv?”

Step 5: Further Investigation

At the bottom of the *Teacher’s Guide for Analyzing Photographs & Prints* teachers can “help students to identify questions appropriate for further investigation, and to develop a research strategy for finding answers.”

- LOC Sample Question: “What more do you want to know, and how can you find out?”
- Other Sample Questions: “What was it like in a 1950s family?” and “What was it like to be this family in the 1950s?”
- LOC follow-up activity for developing learners: Write a caption for the image.
- Other sample activity: Lay clear plastic on the image and, with a dry-erase marker,

have students add items to the photo that they feel are missing. Students with disabilities will be able to bring in their knowledge of this image today and identify what is different and the same.

- LOC follow-up activity for proficient learners: Select an image. Predict what will happen one minute after the scene shown in the image. One hour after? Explain the reasoning behind your predictions.
- Other sample activity: Have students make a list of everything they see in the photo and compare it to an item today.
- LOC follow-up activity for advanced learners: Have students expand or alter textbook or other printed explanations of history based on images they study. For example: Using what students have learned, have them expand on a 1950s home advertisement.
- Other sample activity: Have students find other sources from the 1950s and make a timeline or story about including the sources. This will help students put together what was happening during the time period, making it easier for them to understand history.

This is just one example of the Library of Congress’s Teacher’s Guides and Analysis Tools. They also have similar lessons on primary sources including books and printed text, manuscripts, maps, motion pictures, newspapers, oral histories, political cartoons, sheet music and song sheets, and sound recordings. As can be seen by the latter questions, students will be able to grasp the concept of evidence and history. By inquiring about what evidence is left behind from court cases, elections, and controversies, students begin to understand that history is in the making.

As one can see, the Library of Congress has wonderful primary source tools for teachers. These lessons can be as complex or as simple as a teacher wants to make them. For example, a teacher could pull up one primary source and the Primary Source Analysis Tool on a smart board and fill it out together with their students. The discussions the students have with their teacher and each other about the primary sources they learn about in class is a wonderful way to teach historical thinking skills using the Library of Congress.

Historical Thinking Using the C3 Framework (C3 Dimensions 1, 2, & 3)

As shown throughout this chapter, historical thinking skills can be taught through inquiry of primary and secondary sources. Putting all these ideas together can sometimes be overwhelming to teachers. The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) has published

the *College, Career and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards* to help teachers organize their historical thinking ideas.

Students need the intellectual power to recognize societal problems; ask good questions and develop robust investigations into them; consider possible solutions and consequences; separate evidence-based claims from parochial opinions; and communicate and act upon what they learn. And most importantly, they must possess the capability and commitment to repeat that process as long as is necessary. Young people need strong tools for, and methods of, clear and disciplined thinking in order to traverse successfully the worlds of college, career, and civic life. (NCSS, 2013, p. 6)

The NCSS C3 Framework outlines how teachers can direct students to work through historical thinking with primary sources and to go further. The Framework encourages some type of civic action based on what students have learned about history through the primary sources in the inquiry (Figure 11).

Figure 11. Dimension 4: Taking Informed Action

BY THE END OF GRADE 2	BY THE END OF GRADE 5	BY THE END OF GRADE 8	BY THE END OF GRADE 12
INDIVIDUALLY AND WITH OTHERS, STUDENTS USE WRITING, VISUALIZING, AND SPEAKING TO...			
D4.1.K-2. Construct an argument with reasons.	D4.1.3-5. Construct arguments using claims and evidence from multiple sources.	D4.1.6-8. Construct arguments using claims and evidence from multiple sources, while acknowledging the strengths and limitations of the arguments.	D4.1.9-12. Construct arguments using precise and knowledgeable claims, with evidence from multiple sources, while acknowledging counterclaims and evidentiary weaknesses.
D4.2.K-2. Construct explanations using correct sequence and relevant information.	D4.2.3-5. Construct explanations using reasoning, correct sequence, examples, and details with relevant information and data.	D4.2.6-8. Construct explanations using reasoning, correct sequence, examples, and details with relevant information and data, while acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of the explanations.	D4.2.9-12. Construct explanations using sound reasoning, correct sequence (linear or non-linear), examples, and details with significant and pertinent information and data, while acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of the explanation given its purpose (e.g., cause and effect, chronological, procedural, technical).
D4.3.K-2. Present a summary of an argument using print, oral, and digital technologies.	D4.3.3-5. Present a summary of arguments and explanations to others outside the classroom using print and oral technologies (e.g., posters, essays, letters, debates, speeches, and reports) and digital technologies (e.g., Internet, social media, and digital documentary).	D4.3.6-8. Present adaptations of arguments and explanations on topics of interest to others to reach audiences and venues outside the classroom using print and oral technologies (e.g., posters, essays, letters, debates, speeches, reports, and maps) and digital technologies (e.g., Internet, social media, and digital documentary).	D4.3.9-12. Present adaptations of arguments and explanations that feature evocative ideas and perspectives on issues and topics to reach a range of audiences and venues outside the classroom using print and oral technologies (e.g., posters, essays, letters, debates, speeches, reports, and maps) and digital technologies (e.g., Internet, social media, and digital documentary).

Note. National Council for the Social Studies. (2013). *College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards: Guidance for Enhancing the Rigor of K-12 Civics, Economics, Geography, and History*.

The Library of Congress has many classroom resources for teachers, including lesson plans that show teachers how to guide their students to think historically. These lessons have

relevant primary and secondary sources that teachers can use in their classrooms. They also provide *Teacher Guides and Analysis Tools* that can be used to help students examine primary sources.

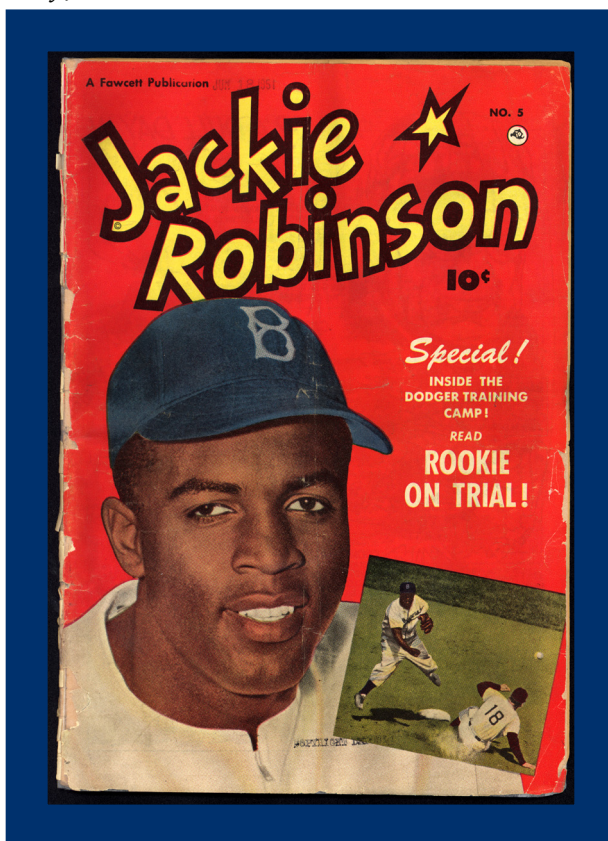
The primary source set *Baseball Across a Changing Nation*, like others, brings in many different aspects about its historical topic. Ask students to answer compelling questions like: “Why are sports important to a society?” or “Why does baseball play such a huge part in American culture?” Starting with the photographs *The Ball Team* (Figure 12) and *Front Cover of Jackie Robinson Comic Book* (Figure 13), teachers can guide inquiry by answering questions like: “What do you notice first?” and “Who do you think was the audience for this image?”

Figure 12. *The Ball Team*



Note. Hine, L. W. (1908). *The Ball Team*. Composed mainly of glass workers. Indiana. Aug. L.W.H. Lewis Wickes Hine [Photograph]. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2018673726/>

Figure 13. *Front Cover of Jackie Robinson Comic Book*



Note. *Front Cover of Jackie Robinson Comic Book.* (ca. 1951). [Comic Book Cover]. Library of Congress.
<https://www.loc.gov/item/97519504/>

Using the Library of Congress teacher's guide, *Analyzing Photographs & Prints*, teachers show students how to dive deeper into a photograph through observation, reflection, and questioning. This tool also provides strategies for further investigation, encouraging teachers to guide students into different strategies. For example, beginners can write a caption for the image or advanced students could expand on a printed text about the subject.

Here, teachers can continue the inquiry by asking questions such as "What in the photo speaks to you?" and "Can you connect anything in the photo to your life?" Next, teachers can bring in more sources found in the primary sources set. Adding a different type of source to the analysis of the photograph will enhance students' understanding of baseball in America. Using sources like the article "Science Explains 'Babe' Ruth's Home Runs" in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, July 18, 1920 (Figure 14), teachers can revisit the compelling questions, even bringing history and math together.

Figure 15

C3 Framework Organization			
Dimension 1: Developing Questions and Planning Inquiries	Dimension 2: Applying Disciplinary Tools and Concepts	Dimension 3: Evaluating Sources and Using Evidence	Dimension 4: Communicating Conclusions and Taking Informed Action
Developing Questions and Planning Inquiries	Civics	Gathering and Evaluating Sources	Communicating and Critiquing Conclusions
	Economics		
	Geography	Developing Claims and Using Evidence	Taking Informed Action
	History		
Framework Ideas			
Dimension 1	Dimension 2	Dimension 3	Dimension 4
Are sports important to a society? How has baseball influenced American culture?	<p>Civics: compare the treatment of minorities in the early 1900s</p> <p>Economics: describe how baseball changed the GDP of America</p> <p>Geography: list places in the world that baseball has affected</p> <p>History: describe the history of baseball in the United States.</p>	<p>First African American World Series</p> <p>Baseball Game, Manzanar Relocation Center</p> <p>Three Indian Stars of Baseball</p> <p>New York Female "Giants"</p> <p>Front Cover of Jackie Robinson Comic Book</p> <p>Science Explains "Babe" Ruth's Home Runs</p> <p>Chinese baseball team, Honolulu</p> <p>American Soldiers in India Have Taught These Burmese Nurses to Play Softball</p> <p>A Little Pretty Pocket-Book</p> <p>Union Prisoners at Salisbury, N.C.</p> <p>Playground Baseball League Takes Boys Off Streets</p>	<p>Group discussion</p> <p>Research paper</p> <p>Museum exhibit</p> <p>Write about the history of minorities in today's baseball/sports</p> <p>Write about the history of local baseball/sport</p> <p>Start local baseball/softball team</p> <p>Personal blog or educate others</p> <p>Careers in sports/give back to community</p> <p>Write about the history of local baseball</p>

As one can see, this type of inquiry starts with a question and ends with an action. As was shown, teaching students historical thinking helps them interpret the past, but once they understand the history, what is next? The C3 Framework has the historical thinking skills embedded in its lesson, but it goes a step further, finally leading students to an action they will carry out using what they have learned. What will students take with them when they leave the classroom? As present days seem to show us, we need to learn from our past.

How can we fight this threat to democracy? We can study history. If we can excavate the forces that threaten and invigorate democratic institutions, then history can do much to help us weather the present crisis, both in the United States and abroad. Over the past 500 years, historical thinking has advanced, expanded and reinvigorated democracy. Why? In part because it identifies the institutions that protect democratic systems. But it also emboldens people to stand up for their values. (Martin, 2019, n.p.)

Lesson Plan: Historical Thinking Leads to Civic Engagement (C3 Dimensions 1-4)

The Inquiry Design Model (IDM) is a strong template for any of the ideas mentioned in this chapter. It expands research skills, provides assessment guidelines, and concludes with civic action. Starting with a few sources about voting, students can inquire, learn, research, and take action, all by thinking historically. Their analysis can help start a discussion of voting rights in the United States. To dig deeper into this subject of voting, the IDM template allows teachers to show students how to compare primary sources and come up with a logical supported conclusion, answering the compelling question “Am I going to vote?”

In this [C3 Framework lesson plan](#), secondary students are introduced to a compelling question that can draw them in when the teacher reminds them that, as high school students, they are close to the voting age in the United States. This lesson leads students to answer three supporting questions:

1. How has the youth voter changed over time?
2. What are the reasons some citizens choose to vote?
3. What are the reasons some citizens choose not to vote?

Each question is accompanied by primary or secondary sources that help students find evidence to support an answer to each question. This C3 lesson will help students “read between the lines” (Waring et al., 2018, p. 271) when looking at the ideas presented in this lesson, leading them to be able to answer the compelling question “Am I going to vote?” When students are taught to think historically, a lesson like this helps them create a narrative of voting rights in America, bringing in evidence to help them understand and support their outcome to the compelling question.

Bringing in the C3 Framework adds to the organization of the compelling question, but it brings in the elements of primary sources and supporting questions that will guide students into historical thinking. “Research indicates that adolescents stand to benefit when teachers frame history learning around investigating open-ended questions, constructing persuasive

arguments, and interpreting and discussing multiple sources of evidence along the way” (Post, 2017). As mentioned earlier, the NCSS C3 Framework outlines how teachers can direct students to work through the skills found in historical thinking, going further than most inquiries, by encouraging some type of civic action based on what students have learned. In the *Dimension 4, Taking Informed Action* table presented earlier (Figure 11), examples show how students can continue a lesson by taking action.

NCSS suggests that teachers using Dimension 4 in the classroom should ask themselves the following questions to help them clarify how lessons can move toward students practicing informed action:

- Identify how you currently get your students to communicate conclusions. How might you improve how they communicate conclusions?
- How could you incorporate peer critique as a part of your students’ communication of conclusions? What tools would you need to create?
- After you identify a project or lesson where students are communicating conclusions, create a rubric for students to participate in a peer critique.

OR

- Explore the links below to review resources that build student skills to support informed action. Create a written plan to incorporate one of the programs or resources into your existing curriculum.
 - *Center for Civic Education*: <http://www.civiced.org/>
 - *Facing History and Ourselves*: <https://www.facinghistory.org/>
 - *Generation Citizen*: <http://www.generationcitizen.org/>
 - *National History Day*: <http://www.nhd.org/>
 - *National Geographic Network of Alliances for Geographic Education*: <https://www.nationalgeographic.org/education/professional-development/geography-alliances/> (NCSS, 2015)
 - *Become a Poll Worker*: <https://www.eac.gov/voters/become-poll-worker>

For example, using the previously mentioned C3 Framework lesson about voting, teachers can examine Dimension 4 to determine how students can act to make a difference in their communities. Section D4.8.9-12 encourages students to make a difference by “apply[ing] a range of deliberative and democratic strategies and procedures to make decisions and take action in their classrooms, schools, and out-of-school civic contexts” (NCSS, 2013, p. 62). Students could create a plan in the community to improve the number of people who vote in elections. They can do this by making posters, pamphlets, etc. to educate people about how and when to vote. Websites like [Rock the Vote](#) show students how to find resources to help support voting in their community.

Rock the Vote is a nonpartisan nonprofit dedicated to building the political power of young people. For 30 years, Rock the Vote has revolutionized the way

we use pop culture, music, art, and technology to engage young people in politics and build our collective power. (Rock the Vote, 2020, n.p.)

Teachers should once again study Dimension 4 of the C3 Framework. Section D4.6.9-12 suggests “Us[ing] disciplinary and interdisciplinary lenses to understand the characteristics and causes of local, regional, and global problems; instances of such problems in multiple contexts; and challenges and opportunities faced by those trying to address these problems over time and place” (NCSS, 2013, p. 62). Teachers may want to encourage students to educate the members of the public by researching what voting looked like in the year 1900. By revisiting the ideas from the primary sources studied, one can find that minorities from the community were indeed treated differently.

Dimension 4 of the C3 Framework can be used with most historical topics after they are analyzed in depth. Students can create pieces of art, speak at their community’s town hall, and interview elders, comparing yesteryears with today. Teachers may also want to have students write about the history of their communities, reaching out to people of different ethnicities and interviewing descendants still in the local area today. This process is seen as informed action on the part of both the teacher and student.

In a *New York Times* article, “[Out of the Classroom and Into the World: 70-Plus Places to Publish Teenage Writing and Art](#),” author Katherine Schulten (2021) mentions that “when we ask teachers why they bring their classes to our site, we always hear one answer first: Posting in our public forums gives young people an ‘authentic audience’ for their voices and ideas” (para. 1). This type of civic action educates not only the students, but also the community in the practices of historical thinking. Looking at documents from the past helps people understand the present, hopefully encouraging a positive difference in the future.

Conclusion

This chapter provides multiple tools for conducting historical thinking through the analysis of primary sources. It also shows students that education happens all around us, not just in the classroom. In Mike Maxwell’s (2019) article “Historical Thinking: A Second Opinion,” he states that thinking and knowledge occur in a feedback loop. Students think about a topic, acquire new knowledge about the topic, then think about what they learned to acquire more knowledge, and so on. However, he points out that “the application of thinking skills to non-useful knowledge can’t be expected to somehow produce useful knowledge” (p. 291). The knowledge needs to be meaningful to the students. It needs to be interesting in some way, encouraging them to want to learn more.

When historical thinking skills are taught throughout the school year, it may ensure that students will learn the skills they need to solve problems when moving into their adult lives. Teaching historical thinking skills to students helps them understand that history can guide students down a path of confidence.

Consider what good historical thinkers can do. They are careful, critical readers and consumers of the mountains of evidentiary source data that exists in archives and that pours at us each day via the media. Good historical thinkers are tolerant of differing perspectives because these perspectives help them make sense of the past. At the same time, such thinkers are skilled at detecting spin, hype, snake-oil sales pitches, disguised agendas, veiled partisanship, and weak claims. They also know what it means to build and defend evidence-based arguments because of practice constructing interpretations rooted in source data. (VanSledright, 2004, p. 232)

In one examination of historical thinking in the classroom, the data showed what can happen when one elementary classroom used historical thinking strategies and when another classroom did not. In this study, students in the historical thinking elementary classroom saw higher standardized test scores (Purdin, 2014). However, in her dissertation, *A Case of Teaching and Learning the Holocaust in Secondary School History Class: An Exercise in Historical Thinking With Primary Sources*, Doran Katz (2018) discovered what may happen when introducing secondary students to historical thinking skills with deeper engagement:

Although references to the historical present were used successfully to provoke student engagement in this class, the discussion of relevant conditions often slipped into historical presentism, obscuring the events of the Holocaust and thus impeding students' ability to understand the Holocaust with nuance and sophistication. (p. 122)

Though this may not happen in every classroom, the learning gap between these examples shows that historical thinking skills may improve students' critical thinking if they are continually taught on a yearly basis in the history classroom. Primary sources bring life to history, showing students that they themselves can figure out what happened in the past. This gives students the opportunity to engage in critical thinking in the classroom and in the outside world.

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