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**Flipping the Social Studies Classroom: Studying the Past Through
Technology**

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative action research study reports the effects of student ability in historical thinking and writing using a flipped classroom pedagogy. The study took place with approximately 12 ninth-grade students in a World History class. Over the course of twelve weeks, students were required to watch teacher-made videos that delivered content, and used class time to review the material discussed in the video and apply knowledge to activities utilizing historical thinking or writing. Historical thinking was measured using primary and secondary source analysis in the form of HATs (Historical Assessments of Thinking) and DBQs (Document Based Questions), Socratic Seminars, informal debates, assessments, and collaborative learning activities. Writing ability was assessed through open-ended tests, creative writing opportunities, and writing-based projects. Students also completed surveys to provide feedback on the flipped classroom pedagogy and writing opportunities given in the classroom.

Data for this study came in various formats: surveys, student work, assessments, and a field log which included teacher observations and reflections on daily activities. After the data was analyzed, several findings emerged. First, students display more engagement and enthusiasm towards curriculum content in the flipped classroom. More time is provided in class for students to work with curriculum content hands-on using application-based activities. Students may also display a positive attitude towards the flipped classroom, as they feel more independent and can move at a pace through content that is more comfortable for their learning ability. and Second, students were able to demonstrate major

historical thinking skills, including argumentation, contextualization, using substantive concepts, and using sources. Students will also demonstrate key writing skills, including organization and use of content. These skills improved over the course of the study as students progressed through different units. This is possible due to the student preparation with the video lectures and more time in class for the teacher to work with the students on learning activities. Third, students demonstrate comprehension of the material through in-class reviews and through more complex activities provided by the teacher.

Although there are many successes that come with the flipped classroom, there are some challenges that the teacher will need to consider when implementing the flipped classroom in their own course. First, there is the possibility that students will forget to watch the videos at home, making review at times more labor-intensive. Second, if the teacher chooses to make the video lectures on their own, it can be a time-consuming process for the teacher to prepare. With future study and experimentation, it is possible to find ways for these challenges to become obsolete.

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RESEARCHER STANCE

Teaching was something that I knew was always in my blood. My mother taught kindergarten before I was born, and every now and again she brings up stories about her teaching experience. I remember having a toy free-standing chalkboard that I would use to teach my stuffed animals how to write the letters of the alphabet and how to do basic math. In school, I was given the opportunity to lead the class in various grades, even though I was a fairly quiet student overall.

Looking at my family, most of them are in the family business: commercial refrigeration. In fact, I am the only one who isn't involved at all! While I have grown up learning all there is to know about refrigeration, I wanted nothing to do with the industry; it never interested me the way history did. My passion for the performing arts blossomed early, and throughout most of my schooling I wanted to be a teacher, an archaeologist, forensic anthropologist, or a performer. When I got to college I realized that education is the best of both worlds: I could perform and tell stories about content that interested me. I felt that I would be happiest doing something that utilizes many of my interests and hopefully makes kids more passionate about social studies. Because teaching was a combination of all my passions, I pursued social studies education at college.

While my college does not have an education major, it does have an incredibly rigorous education certification program. In the program, you worked like education was your major, even though I would never receive the degree for it. Because I went into Secondary Social Studies certification, I had to pursue my

degree in History. On top of the History requirements, the remaining courses that I would take in college were basically planned out for me thanks to the education program.

Once my second education course began, I was placed into fieldwork. My first fieldwork placement was at a middle school in Allentown. Later fieldwork placements included various middle schools and high schools throughout the Lehigh Valley. My student teaching experience began at a middle school. It was a rewarding experience, as he demonstrated collaborative learning and student-centered work with ease. He showed his classes how history can be fun and interesting; I wanted to carry that mindset into my own practice. As a result, I go out of my way to make history come alive by pulling in simulations when possible, using voices during more traditional lessons, and creating projects that have performance-based elements.

My second placement was more challenging, but still rewarding, as I learned a lot from the experience. Here, I was introduced for the first time to the flipped classroom in action. In his rendition of the flipped classroom, students did readings at home and then worked on discussion and activities in the classroom. Students told me that they liked the flipped classroom idea, but I did not agree with all parts of its implementation; if given an opportunity, how could I create a flipped classroom that would make myself and the students happy? I did not feel confident enough to try it at the time, but I knew I wanted to give it a go when an opportunity would present itself further along my career path.

After graduation, I went to my alma mater and was placed in my old Philosophy teacher's classroom (he went on medical leave), covering the same content that I learned in 12th grade while also teaching Economics and American History. It was interesting teaching a class that I was once a student for, which led to some entertaining conversations with the students comparing the class of 2013's philosophy course with the class of 2008's. It was also entertaining to have the teachers I learned under become my colleagues. What started off as a few days coverage turned into a few weeks, and gradually became the rest of the school year. I already felt like I was trying to fill the shoes of a teaching legend, but was under the impression that he would return, at least in the following school year, and so the need to live up to the same expectations that he would become even stronger. Unfortunately, in May of 2013, the teacher I had been subbing for passed away from his illness. As far as I know, while it was a hectic first year, I did the best I could do, and the students were understanding of that.

From there, I started the following school year near Philadelphia. I was at a suburban middle school for a year-long substitute position in their 8th grade project-based program. The program was based around Watershed, which provided students with more projects and collaborative learning in an exclusive learning environment. I co-taught ELA, art, and health with one other teacher. He was the science guru and I was the social studies expert. This was the first true team teaching opportunity I encountered. We talked all the time about daily schedules (we had a 4 hour block with the kids where we could organize the time

however we wanted), ways to combine subjects to show how content can be cross-curricular, and planned numerous field trips. It was the dream teaching job; the students were wonderful, the school day was so dynamic, and it was an environment where learning really was fun for everybody.

I applied for a 7th and 8th grade teaching position back in the Lehigh Valley that spring, as there were no openings in the school I was I currently serving. Unlike my previous locations, I was now at a Catholic private school that provided 1:1 technology for every student. I was also the only middle school social studies teacher, so I didn't really have anyone to bounce ideas with. Overall, I felt comfortable at the school and was happy my first year there. It was a bit of a learning curve on integrating more technology in the classroom, but I quickly adapted. I stayed at the school for two years before a need to move for my husband's career led me out of Lehigh Valley once again and into my current position in Philadelphia.

My current school feels vastly different from the previous school I worked in. They both were 1:1 iPad schools and both are considered Apple Distinguished Schools; however, the Lehigh Valley school was suburban, while my current school is in Center City. The Lehigh Valley school did not have much diversity, while my current location is incredibly diverse. I was a one-woman show during my experience in the Valley, and now I am on a 7-person teaching team for the history department. Classes were 40 minutes at my old school, and classes here

are 90 minutes long. I was wary about teaching 90 minute blocks in the first month or so. Now, I feel like 90 minutes is really easy to fill.

Prior to my action research study, a large portion of that time was devoted to standard notes and traditional teaching. As a result, there were times when we got too bogged down in content, too sidetracked with occasional off-topic discussions, and as a result, I had to rush the application activities and classwork. With the flipped classroom, the traditional teaching time is removed in favor of work time for activities and projects. I realized that my opportunity to experiment was on the horizon.

It is safe to say that my teaching experience is incredibly dynamic, and has, in turn, made me a dynamic teacher. I have pulled from all of these experiences in order to become the teacher that I am now. As I gain more knowledge and attend more professional development workshops, my teaching philosophy and techniques are sure to evolve.

Through my own experiences as a student, I have been taught by teachers I loved and teachers I despised. Some teachers I had were in the field for the summers off (it was pretty obvious), and there were others that really went out of their way to make sure that their students were achieving above and beyond what they normally could. At the school I currently work in, my teammates are very much the latter. They will drop everything for the students at this school, and that's what makes curriculum building and assessment creation so great with my team; they know exactly what they want for their kids and will do what they can

to make sure the goal is achieved. From my experiences in the classroom as a student, I learned what makes a great teacher, well, great, and what the lackluster teachers were missing in their own work and curriculum. I have since used some of the ideas that my teachers used in their own classrooms to engage and motivate students.

I do not think that there is one “right” way to learn. Everyone has different learning style that they feel they learn best with. To further prove this point, for a psychology class, one of the teachers at my current school directly asked students how they like to learn and told students to leave their responses on the tables. There were a wide variety of answers, including direct instruction, hands on activities, application of content, and practice problems (mathematics). Some students prefer to work independently, while others may depend on a partner or a small group to help through the process. While some students may prefer to listen to a teacher, others would rather have the chance to work with the material hands-on. There are also students that depend on graphic organizers and charts to visually compartmentalize items to make learning easier.

It is the teacher’s responsibility to present content and skills through different modalities so that students have opportunities to enhance their academic strengths while also getting chances to improve in areas of weakness. If students are only presented with one teaching technique, then only some students will excel as others fall behind in the classroom.

It's also important to consider that humans are very different than they were years ago. New technology and resources cause changes in people's behaviors and ways people collect and retain information. For example, for many years students were taught rote memorization, and today classrooms are encouraging application of material through 21st century skills. As the Director of Operations at my current school said during my interview, "Why teach a fact they can easily Google?". There are so many new platforms available for both students and teachers to reap the benefits.

Because society is fluid, education must be fluid, as well. In about 15 years or so, we will see a new wave of techniques and philosophies presented in the classroom that will affect the next generation of students and change the way we see learning once again. It is up to teachers to put these practices into action to determine if the trends in education work or need alteration for their students.

The biggest issue that I see that impacts my students and myself is something that I see as my school continues to maneuver its way through the growing pains of being a newer charter high school: the weak, on-the-fly courses that my students bear through during the semester. This, along with a fairly high teacher turn-around, leads to content not being presented in its strongest format. Because of this, I do not think the kids benefit from the work as much as they could. I learned that the Keynotes we allow students to use for guided notes were developed by a teacher that no longer works at the school. As the expectations of students evolved, the content and activities did not mold with the changes. I did

not create the curriculum, and many of the materials presented in in the course iTunes U were not mine. This was done to ensure continuity and consistency throughout all World History courses. While I agree that kids should get a similar learning experience, I don't want to feel like my creativity in the classroom is inhibited in any way. Because of this effort for consistency, the notes, activities, and curriculum were weakened and distorted. So far, I have been able to incorporate my own elements in the already-structured curriculum, and haven't seen too many issues thanks to my efforts. I am continuing this process today. I know that if I make the effort to revamp the curriculum to make more personal ownership of the course, I can reduce the number of issues that the classroom may encounter.

One thing that I have noticed in my new school is that the students are not as engaged in the classroom as I would hope for them to be and, as a result, impacts their ability to complete work. My classroom policies (especially those regarding late work) have helped somewhat with student focus and getting class materials in. However, the nature of the assignments may affect how and when they turn material in. Much of the work is completed on their iPads, and they will still distract themselves with the technology in front of them. Therefore, when they complete an assignment, they will reward themselves with a video or some game time, completely forgetting to submit the work they completed in the process.

The technology that is given to them for educational purposes becomes a point of distraction, as they are given more freedom on Safari through their iPad than other schools. I have seen them on Hulu, Netflix, Facebook, Instagram... the works! I am always on the move in my classroom redirecting the students to make sure they are on the right programs, and with the implementation of Apple Classroom, I can be more direct in guiding my students as they work. However, they end up wasting time in the classroom because they are choosing to use other programs or multitask between one app and another. In class, I give them ample time to complete work, but every time I say "ok, you have five minutes left!" I immediately hear "I'm nowhere near finished!" from multiple students because they didn't utilize their time well. I am not saying multiple as in two or three, I am saying multiple as in close to ten. How can I take this distraction and put it to my advantage? I wondered if, by flipping the classroom, students could redirect their focus on the activities (both digital and nondigital) and use their interest in technology to complete work created by their teacher for their academic growth.

While the students have 1:1 technology, I have observed that none of the teachers are taking advantage of the resources to "flip" the classroom and teach students accountability. Students are expected to pay full attention towards lectures and complete the assigned work in class. Perhaps by spreading the time and giving the lectures at home, students will perform better in the classroom. With more time to work on writing skills and historical thinking skills, students will improve on these practices, which will help them as they move through their

education and step into the real world. Currently, the school is going through a massive overhaul to make sure that teachers are using UbD and that the Danielson method is in full force among faculty members. Our teacher coaches are meeting with us more frequently to discuss how we can put more of the learning in their hands through “discovery”. I think, to an extent, I can provide students the opportunity to discover, but the background information is definitely helpful for some of the activities I have in mind. By flipping the classroom, I hope to increase content comprehension, engagement, student productivity, and skill building.

At the end of my action research study, I want to be able to take a new skill set from the experience and apply it to my future classes. I want to improve my abilities as a teacher and be able to bring out the best in my students. I want them to feel welcome in my classroom, feel comfortable expressing themselves in their classwork and in discussions, and I want them to develop appreciation for the subject.

The students play a huge role in my research; the entire study completely revolves around them, and their actions determine the outcomes of the study. Not only is my action research study done to better my practice, but it is also to make my students better and become stronger learners. They will be my data, my feedback... basically my ultimate resource throughout the entire process. What would a research study be without the students?

For the most part, data from the action research study will come from the students in the form of student work, assessments, student surveys, and student surveys. I want not only the numbers to show if something works, but I also want the students' voices heard, as the research study directly affects them. I will be storing data on multiple platforms and evaluate the data as it is presented to me. Also, I would like to document/journal observations to help keep track of any actions that take place during the school day that the basic data may not be able to cover. By collecting information from multiple platforms, I may be able to get a stronger outcome than I would with simpler means of data collection.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

In the world of education, teachers are always trying to find new ways to communicate with students and encourage progress in the classroom. I know that in my few years of teaching experience, I have completely evolved from where I started as a teacher to how I share content now. Many teachers gravitate towards a traditional classroom setting, where direct instruction is given by the teacher and then is followed up with student activities and assignments. In recent years, teachers have been moving towards student-centered learning, where the teacher creates lessons where students collaborate and “discover” content on their own, and apply the content to a larger concept or skill set. I have been progressing towards more student-centered learning activities, and using technology more frequently to engage students in my classroom. These pedagogies have shown student growth and success, but how can a teacher balance direct instruction with student-centered learning activities in a limited class period, or even a limited school year?

Time is always a teacher concern, especially for me. As a social studies teacher, I need to teach students historical content and guide students in developing stronger reading and writing skills to help not only in history, but in other courses like Language Arts. With my current students, I definitely need to make more time for writing, as many of the students are writing below the 9th grade level. People have been coming up with their own means to counteract the

constant worry of not having enough time in the classroom to do what they want. I have researched ways to navigate the perfect balance of content, time, and skill-building. My research has led me to flipping the classroom; this is a concept I am familiar with, but not one I have used for an entire unit, or even for a whole school year. Considering I am in a heavily technology-influenced high school with students having 1:1 iPad technology, I believe that I can use the flipped classroom pedagogy to benefit my students. My research question is: “What are the observed and reported effects of high school social studies students exposed to a flipped classroom pedagogy with the intention of improving historical thinking skills and writing ability?” I believe that, by flipping the classroom, not only will the worry of time go away, but students will progress in understanding content and mastering skills.

To help navigate my thought process and research, I compiled my findings into three categories: flipping the classroom, historical thinking, and writing ability. As I was conducting my research, I posed a series of questions, which I have decided to include within the review. I want you to see what thoughts and concerns as I step further into my research study, and what answers and assurances, if any, I was able to acquire throughout my research.

Flipping the Classroom

What does it mean to flip the classroom? Flipping the classroom is a pedagogy used by many teachers across all subjects. It is also referred to as an inverted pedagogy (Van Sickle, 2016). In a flipped classroom, teachers are

presenting lectures and delivering content to students at home so that time in class is directed towards student-centered activities (Gaughan, 2014). In a flipped classroom environment, students take on ownership of their learning, and are responsible for acquiring content knowledge on a given topic before arriving to class (Miles & Fogget, 2016). When in class, students are engaging in deeper-thinking activities that “explore the content” in place of a lecture and small activity (Miles & Fogget, 2016). There are multiple ways a classroom can be flipped in order to make sure content is delivered to the students appropriately, and may vary by teacher preference or curriculum.

Jonathan Bergmann and Aaron Sams are credited with being the first teachers to flip the classroom. According to one of their first articles regarding the new pedagogy (2009), they wanted to provide a more experiential-based learning experience for their students studying chemistry. In order for that to happen, the delivery of the content needed to be changed. To resolve this, they created podcasts and vodcasts (video podcasts) that addressed curriculum content directly. Then, during class time the class would participate in labs and other hands-on activities (p. 23). By flipping the classroom, Bergmann and Sams argued that they were more engaged with their students, the students were more likely to understand the content in the flipped classroom, and teachers could make even more efforts to help the students by using data from the flipped classroom experience to utilize small group instruction (p. 23, 27).

What do flipped classrooms and traditional classrooms have in common? In both the traditional and flipped classroom, the same curriculum content is covered; there is no need to change standards in order to accommodate a new pedagogy in the classroom.

In both the flipped classroom and the traditional classroom, the students are able to take the same final exam. This has been seen in action research studies, including Van Sickle's exploration of flipping the classroom in 2016. According to Van Sickle, students participated in flipped and traditional classes, and completed the same exam at the end of the semester to evaluate student growth and achievement. Bergmann and Sams (2008) used a traditional classroom method before implementing the new pedagogy. They compared the average assessment scores over two school years on a unit-by-unit basis, which shows that the students are being assessed on the same content and skills. This data from Van Sickle and Bergmann and Sams supports that teachers can use either pedagogy in order to meet the same outcomes.

Both flipped classrooms and traditional classrooms can utilize technology to deliver and apply curriculum content within the course. Technology in the classroom is becoming more of a standard, and students are expected to use technology throughout their learning experience. Some activities, especially for the social studies classroom, include digital libraries, forums and blogs, film-making, and webquests (Aidinopoulou & Sampson, 2017). However, the flipped classroom and the use of technology in the classroom are not limited to

Social Studies. All of the core subjects can easily incorporate technology into their classroom to give students a learning experience more relevant to the digitally-enhanced world that students live in today.

What makes the flipped classroom different from the traditional classroom? The most significant difference between the flipped classroom and the traditional classroom is based on how content is delivered. According to Miles & Fogget, more people are familiar with the traditional setting than the flipped classroom environment (2016). As previously mentioned, the flipped classroom requires students to do the learning at home while time is spent in class “engaging directly with the materials” (Gaughan, 2014). In a traditional classroom, the teacher is delivering content in the class through a lecture, which is then followed up with some kind of assessment (Miles & Fogget, 2016).

Another major difference between the two pedagogies is the class distribution of time. Bergmann and Sams, the founders of the flipped classroom, argue that the most important question to ask is “What is the best use of face-to-face time with students?” (2012). In a traditional classroom, much of the time is spent with direct instruction, usually in the form of a lecture, and the remaining class time is spent building skills. However, in a flipped classroom, the time used for direct instruction is removed so that more time is spent using hands-on activities for skill-building. For Bergmann and Sams, they were able to add 50-65 minutes per day towards hands-on activities by having students watch the video lectures at home (2009). Aidinopoulou & Sampson’s study showcase

best how time is distributed (2017). In their research, they have found that in a flipped classroom, students spent more time with assessments and engaged with activities utilizing historical thinking skills. The traditional classroom spent significant time on lectures (almost four hours to the non-existent lecture time in a flipped classroom), while using limited time for activities, sometimes as much as an hour less than the flipped classroom environment.

One of the biggest concerns that I have as a teacher is time. When I use the traditional method, I get bogged down in delivering the content. When it's finally time to work on an activity that has the students applying the content they just covered, the activity becomes rushed and the skill is measured, but not as successfully as I think it can be. Flipping the classroom will give time that I never had before; I can dive deep with historical thinking and writing assessments rather than diving deep into a lecture. The former would be more beneficial to the students than the latter.

Because traditional classrooms are typically dominated by teachers giving lectures, it is safe to say that the traditional classroom is teacher-centered with students following along with the teacher's delivery of content. In the flipped classroom, since the content is covered at home, class becomes student-centered (Van Sickle, 2016). As a result, the teacher's role in the classroom with a flipped learning environment differs to the often-called "guide on the side" versus the traditional lecturer. In the flipped classroom, teachers are on their feet, engaging

with students and acting as support systems for the students (Bergmann & Sams, 2008).

How can you flip a classroom?

Videos. One of the most common ways of flipping a classroom is to have the teacher make videos for the class. Many teachers share the videos with their students on a platform and ask the students to watch the lecture for homework in preparation for class the following day (Aidinopoulou & Sampson, 2017). This allows the teacher to address the most important content with the students in preparation for the following day's lesson (Gaughan, 2014). According to Gaughan, videos should not be too long so to keep the students' attention and increase student watchability (2014). It is up to the teacher to design the videos in the way that they feel is best for the classroom; some teachers will do live demonstrations and address the class on camera visually, other teachers will post PowerPoint-like visuals and the teacher will narrate the content. Either way, content is delivered in a lecture-based format that students can refer to at any point during the curriculum, but each video is of its own significance when it is specifically needed.

Teachers can also use premade videos to educate students with content curriculum. Khan Academy is one of the most well-known digital education tools; on this site, students and teachers have access to videos made by Khan Academy creators as well as other leading education video groups like "Crash Course" on YouTube. The videos provide narration with annotations and step-by-step

demonstrations on problem solving. Teachers should not be depending on solely these videos, as they may not fully line up with the school curriculum or state standards.

Blogs. If the students are not watching lectures, they can still participate in a flipped classroom through digital writing platforms. Many teachers like to have students interact with one another outside of the classroom, and blogging has helped bring these interactions to fruition. In a flipped classroom with blogs, students respond to teacher-constructed questions using their individual blog and leave comments on other student blogs (Haile, 2015). With blogging, students become engaged with content outside the classroom, interact with their peers, and acquire content knowledge (Thomas, 2017). Unlike videos, blogs help showcase student understanding of content before approaching a lesson. Blogs can be used as a means of assessment, whereas videos may need to be supplemented with questions to show student understanding.

Textbook Readings. There is a way for classrooms to be flipped without technology, but these methods are never addressed when talking about the idea of a flipped classroom. To the students, a non-technological classroom flip will read more like traditional homework, which may lead to demotivation and incompleteness as a result. For a tech-free flipped classroom, students can read textbook passages and answer questions on a worksheet based on the readings that they complete. While this is an option, I believe that flipping the classroom would be better with technology because the students are accessing the material through

more modalities than reading text would. Students are using audio, visual, and sometimes kinesthetic cues when using video or blog-based flipping over textbook reading. While this may have its benefits because students are practicing reading, it becomes a challenge for students that struggle with reading. Knowing the abilities of my students, and because they have such a firm grasp with technology, I will be utilizing technology-based flipping modes to communicate content with my students.

What are the “pros” of flipping a classroom? As previously mentioned, a flipped classroom environment provides more time for student centered learning activities that otherwise may not be fully completed or implemented in a traditional setting. This means that students will have more time to debate, hypothesize, synthesize, and utilize other historical thinking skills in the social studies classroom to apply content and find deeper meaning in what they are studying (Haile 2016). With a flipped classroom, more students are engaged in their learning, especially when they are thinking critically about the material they learned the night before.

According to some sources, students have responded positively towards the flipped classroom. In Van Sickle’s study, students had higher scores on assessments in the flipped classroom over the traditional classroom environment (2016). When answering surveys, students will indicate that they learned more than they thought they would in the course (Gaughan, 2014) and that they were motivated to complete the course well (Miles & Foggett, 2016).

Flipping the classroom helps resolve the issues associated with teachers and timing. By having the students do work at home, teachers are not spending as much time giving direct instruction, and are spending more time building skills, practicing writing, and giving meaning to the content covered in the curriculum (Bergmann & Sams, 2009). As previously mentioned, almost 4 hours of time is allocated towards learning activities over lecture when a flipped classroom pedagogy is implemented (Aidinopoulou & Sampson, 2017).

What are the “cons” of flipping a classroom? When researching this question, I made sure to look for materials that would negate my overall mission to improve students’ historical thinking skills and writing ability using a flipped classroom. I was surprised to find how many concerns there were when it comes to flipping a classroom, but at the same time, I felt that many of these concerns were understandable. Using videos to teach direct content to students at home instead of in the classroom is a relatively new concept, and so the problems associated with flipping the classroom need to be addressed. When the pedagogy is implemented in my own classroom, I will need to be wary of these issues and find my own means to alleviate these concerns well in advance to maximize student success.

Although students prove to retain more content knowledge in a flipped classroom environment, many students do have a negative perception of the flipped classroom. Many people have been exposed to the traditional learning environment, and the flipped classroom pedagogy is fairly new for education; for

some of these students, it is the first time they are ever encountering a flipped classroom and they may not have the skill set to fulfill all of the requirements that a flipped classroom needs (Miles & Fogget, 2016). As a result, students become frustrated in class with unfamiliar material than at home, which leads to a negative outlook of the course (Van Sickle, 2016). In some cases, the student frustration is taken out on the teacher; because students cannot identify that the classroom struggle is part of the learning process, the blame is placed on the teacher for not doing enough in the role of the student's learning (Van Sickle, 2016). They no longer see the teacher as the "guide on the side" but rather as the body in the room overseeing a group of students. This indicates that the flipped classroom environment is new to students, and new pedagogies take time to adjust to and feel comfortable working in.

If a teacher is planning to flip his/her classroom using technology, it is important that students have internet access at home so that students can watch the videos and participate in the forum discussions at home. If the student does not have internet, the process can become much more complicated in preparing the student for class when they do not have full access to participate from home. The teacher will need to problem-solve and provide the student with a flash drive to watch videos from a computer or complete the blogs in a handwritten journal or computer word processor. A flipped classroom is meant to benefit the students, not punish them.

However, if the student has internet access, the student may not take on the responsibility of preparing for the school day from home. If a video is too long or too boring, students may not engage themselves with the video lectures or class readings (Gaughan, 2014). If a student is not prepared for class in a flipped classroom environment, the students are more likely to struggle with the learning activities provided in class that day (Van Sickle, 2016). Teachers will be going into the classroom assuming that students did the work and that they have fully acquired the background knowledge needed to continue with the class (Miles & Foggett, 2016), but that is not always the case.

Historical Thinking

I am using the flipped classroom to assess if students will improve in historical thinking skills. To a teacher outside the realm of social studies, historical thinking may seem like a new concept; however, using history to build up skills has been around for some time. Thanks to the push for inquiry and student-centered learning, the process has become more popular in recent years. Historical thinking is a term used to describe a collection of skills needed to succeed in the social studies classroom, specifically with historical content. These skills connect to the 21st century skills, which include “collaboration and teamwork, creativity and imagination, critical thinking, and problem solving” (“13 Essential”, 2014).

What are examples of specific historical thinking skills teachers can assess? For historical thinking, Mendez and Tirado (2016) turn to Van Drie and Van Boxtel from 2008 for six specific skills:

Using Meta-Concepts. Meta-concepts are terms associated with how history is studied. Some examples include “evidence, cause, explanation, empathy, time, space, [...] source, fact, [...] and narration” (p. 101). Using these terms means that students are studying the evolution of history through questioning, argumentation (seen below), discussion, and analysis of sources. The use of meta-concepts shows application of terminology to studying history, whereas substantive concepts focus more on the content itself.

Using Substantive Concepts. Substantive concepts are terms that “refer to historical phenomena, structures, persons, and periods” (p. 100). Some terms may represent an individual or group, some represent social constructs, and some are used to name time periods. For example, when studying the Renaissance, substantive concepts can include Renaissance, Protestant, Galileo, and reformation. They can be comparable to a student’s vocabulary list in a history classroom. Much like contextualization (seen below), substantive concepts are affected by the time period that they are reflected in. Reformation in the Renaissance is different from reformation in other time periods. Therefore, using substantive concepts is a skill where students are required to not only be familiar with the terms, but be aware of their meaning in the time period they are studying, as it may differ from the common understanding of the word today. (p. 100-1)

Contextualization. Reminiscent of Wineburg’s studies, contextualization plays a large role in studying and thinking about history. I describe this term to my students frequently, as it is one I feel is important to keep in mind when analyzing primary and secondary sources. Contextualization emphasizes the need to consider the time period when the document was created; what were the social norms and values people held during this time? What was happening in the world during this time? With contextualization, it’s important to consider how the beliefs and events of the time period affect what is being said in the document. Van Drie and Van Boxtel pull from multiple sources when saying “the failure to grasp the nature of historical context is often described as an important source of student misunderstanding” (p. 96). This means that when studying historical documents, students often fail to put present-day attitudes aside, thereby misinterpreting the information. With contextualization, students have a better understanding of the author’s perspective, as they are aware that the document is addressing a different time period with different norms, political views, and social values.

Asking Historical Questions. Much like asking questions to conduct research, people can ask questions to learn more about history. Questions can range in style and structure. Students may use background knowledge or primary and secondary sources to support their ideas as they answer the questions given. To help bring historical questions to a higher order level of thinking, students may be asked to provide reasoning or to explain how some elements of

history have more value or importance than others. For example, “What was the most important cause of World War I? Provide reasons for your thinking” (p. 91).

Argumentation. Argumentation is a skill that requires the student to use evidence to support ideas. Because students are often working with multiple sources, it is also important to consider multiple interpretations of sources and rebuke counterarguments to further prove the initial belief as truth (p. 99).

Using Sources. Students often use historical content to defend ideas and understand concepts. Sources are presented as primary or secondary. Primary sources are first-hand accounts that come from the time period, and secondary sources are analyses of primary materials. Sources are not limited to written materials alone; images can also reflect past perspectives. Not all sources on the same subject matter have agreeing viewpoints, so it’s important for teachers and students to use works that may show contradicting views, and therefore classes must emphasize the role of trustworthiness of the materials used to study history. Formally speaking, Van Drie and Van Boxtel say that “we define the use of sources [...] as the evaluation of sources (e.g, their usefulness, trustworthiness) in relation to the question at hand and the selection, interpretation, and corroboration of information from sources in order to answer a historical question or to provide evidence for a claim about the past” (p. 92-4).

Out of the six addressed, some of the most significant skills include using sources, asking historical questions, argumentation, and contextualization. These

come together when looking at Monte-Sano's work (2014) and Wineburg's efforts in teaching historical thinking (2013). With historical thinking, it is important to corroborate, contextualize, and source documents properly so content is comparable to other documents and can measure other skills (Monte-Sano, Paz, Felton, & Wineburg, 2014). Note that historical thinking does not ask for the memorization of dates, names, and events (Miles & Fogget, 2016). While this information matters within the curriculum, the skill takes priority over the content covered in the classroom.

How can historical thinking be measured in the classroom?

Primary and Secondary Source Analysis (DBQs). Primary sources, or first-hand accounts, are essential when studying history. They provide information from eyewitnesses and reactions and experiences of people living in the time period being studied. Secondary sources compile and analyze information from a given time period, like a textbook or academic journal. Sources are the most telling pieces of information when understanding history, so it is important for students to be exposed to a variety of materials to see the breadth of what students can use and interpret to acquire historical information. In order to analyze these materials properly, they will need to use historical thinking skills to show how one document can connect to another, how the context of a document from the past relates to the present, and more. When primary and secondary sources are used collectively to answer an overarching question, or a series of smaller questions, it becomes a DBQ, or document based question. The following

two acronyms are examples of DBQs, and thus are processes for conducting source analysis. These are not the only options, but they are some of more widely-recognized means of measuring historical thinking skills in the classroom.

HATs. HATs is an abbreviation for Historical Assessments of Thinking. These activities are promoted to assess historical thinking skills by having students answer a couple questions related to a primary or secondary source (Breakstone, Smith, & Wineburg, 2013). The primary source does not need to be written text; it can be a photograph, poster, artwork, or artifact. With HATs, teachers can use a quick assessment to see if students are comprehending primary documents in a matter of sentences. Through their answers, they are also displaying various skills, including contextualization and argumentation.

SHEG. SHEG is the abbreviation for the online resource called Stanford History Education Group. This website promotes ideas similar to HATs, but will often incorporate at least more than one source addressing different perspectives. The activities are centered around one main question and students are required to use the documents to answer guiding questions to help draw a conclusion. The activities with SHEG encourage students to contextualize materials and corroborate documents in order to compare similarities and differences between one document and another. From there, students can develop an argument and defend their ideas using content from the resources given.

How does historical thinking connect to reading and writing?

Throughout historical thinking activities, students are utilizing reading and

writing skills in order to communicate comprehension of material, responses to subject matter, and defenses of arguments created. Reading and writing is a necessity in order to evaluate historical thinking skills in the classroom. In Mendez and Tirado's study, students showcased writing skills and reading/research comprehension by answering a series of questions for specific time periods (2016). Based on their communication via writing, the teacher was able to effectively evaluate the skill being assessed. With writing based on reading historical documents, students present more flexibility in showcasing skills and content that a multiple choice, true/false, or other basic question cannot provide (Breakstone, Smith, & Wineburg, 2013).

Writing Ability

As previously mentioned, I am working in a school where students are often performing below grade level in writing. Data walls created by the school shows that many students are underperforming on state assessments like the PSSAs and Keystones. Personally working with students from grades 9 through 12 at this school, I see the underperformance in their writing. Paragraphs and sentences lack structure and work is riddled with poor grammar (i.e. comma splicing, capitalization) and many spelling errors.

I am using the flipped classroom to assist students in two major skill-sets that they will need in high school and post-secondary education. Writing ability, which explains how well students can write, will be a measured skill in my research study. I will be working with 9th grade students in my action research

study; even though my students are in 9th grade, and while I want to assume that they all can write at the 9th grade level, there may be students that write at a lower grade level. With the writing that I have collected from 9th grade students last school year, I am confident that there will be multiple students with lower level writing skills. As a result, I need to find a way to measure student writing objectively and that can be applied to any level of writer. As students practice more writing, it is believed that their writing ability will improve. By maintaining a consistent means of measuring writing ability, the data will be more reliable.

How is writing ability measured? From the research, writing ability can be assessed in numerous ways. For many, teachers turn to rubrics to communicate expectations and goals set for the students. These rubrics can look at specific skills such as historical thinking strategies (Mendez and Tirado, 2016), analyzing primary sources (Monte-Sano, Paz, Felton, & Wineburg, 2014), or responding to blog responses (Thomas, 2017).

One of the most standard ways of measuring writing ability in Pennsylvania is through the PSSA writing rubric (“Assessment”). The domain writing rubric is divided into 5 categories, which focus on content, essay structure, and grammar. The categories are:

Focus. Can students develop a central focus statement (thesis statement) and consistently refer back to the thesis throughout the writing?

Content. Can students provide clear, specific examples relevant to the prompt at hand?

Organization. Is there clear order and flow to the writing? Does the student use transitional phrases to move from one idea to another?

Style. Does the student vary his/her sentence structure and vocabulary? Does the student have a clear, distinct writing voice?

Conventions. Does the student use proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation throughout the writing?

Based on the student score, the student is identified as below basic, basic, proficient, or advanced. Proficient and advanced are markings where students and teachers strive to be, as this indicates that the school population is on, or perhaps above, grade level. This rubric is effective in maintaining objectivity when looking at student work.

By the time students arrive in high school, standardized testing switches from the PSSAs to the Keystones, so the rubric is no longer used. However, the skills that students acquire from practicing with the PSSA rubric in earlier years should continue to apply when they step further into secondary education. This rubric is effective in maintain objectivity when looking at student work, which is why I want to continue using the writing domain rubric when assessing student writing; I believe it will assist in the students' transition from 8th to 9th grade. For many, the shift to high school is a bit of a surprise; the rubric can enforce key items needed in writing when moving up to high school.

What are teachers currently doing to improve writing ability in urban schools? With a push for more writing in secondary education, teachers are going

to great lengths in order to promote more writing in the classroom. One way that teachers are encouraging more writing in students is through the use of student-created blogs that answer specific prompts (Haile, 2015 and Thomas, 2017). Teachers may also implement more open-ended questions and writing based assessments that demonstrate comprehension with more depth than a standardized test question ever could (Breakstone, Smith, & Wineburg, 2013). Other teachers encourage continuous feedback through writing consultants, which may assist students with another perspective reading the work they create (Murphree, 2015). To help build student confidence in lower-level writers, teachers are encouraging more creative writing opportunities where students can express their ideas through different writing mediums and with lots of support (Varady, 2014). Because we are in a digital world, written communication rises to the forefront as a necessary skill to master, and so students are given many opportunities to be creative, but also build upon their writing ability to match and exceed standards.

Conclusion

Historical thinking and writing are necessary skills in the social studies classroom. These skills, which involve critical thinking, reading comprehension, and source analysis, are cross-curricular and they can challenge students into thinking more deeply about historical content rather than looking at history as a subject of memorization. The skills are applicable beyond the scope of the

classroom and can help students learn to build and defend arguments, read documents thoroughly and effectively, and evaluate the validity of sources given.

I have encouraged more inquiry and student-centered learning in my classroom since I first began teaching, but I know that I can do more to make sure that students are understanding content while also building skills. Time, a teacher's greatest weakness, currently limits what I can do in the classroom. Students need time in order to build upon these skills and become proficient writers; incorporating direct instruction via class lecture will hinder the process for students to work on these different skills. Flipping the classroom, which allows students to conduct the direct instruction at home, will allow more opportunity to practice skills, build student confidence, and encourage more critical thinking and creative work from the students. Using a flipped classroom pedagogy promises more student engagement through student-centered activities conducted in class, which is what I hope to establish as a regular occurrence in my classroom.

Despite some concerns towards the flipped classroom, I feel the pros outweigh the cons. With clear communication of the process and expectations, many of the cons can dissipate, bringing academic success within the social studies classroom.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Setting/Participants

I teach in a public charter school in Center City Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The school I teach in is one of three buildings owned by this charter school, and the building I teach in hosts students from grades 5-12. Grades 5-8 act as a middle school and grades 9-12 act as a high school. In total, approximately 1,650 students attend the school. Within the building, approximately 59% of the student population is white, 22% is black, 7% is Asian, 5% is Hispanic, and the remaining 7% composes of other backgrounds. At the school, 60% of the students are female and 40% are male. 53% of the students are identified as economically disadvantaged.

My school takes pride in being an Apple Distinguished School. Students participate in a 1:1 technology program where every student at the school gets an iPad. Students are given access to multiple apps and programs, including Notability, iTunes U, Gmail, YouTube, and Socrative. In lieu of textbooks, students conduct work through iTunes U, where they can receive readings, complete activities, and turn in assignments. Even though the students have constant access to materials with their iPad, the school is home to an “Innovation Lab” where students can access desktop and laptop computers to improve the quality of assignments. This area also doubles as a space for students to work on projects and other major assignments.

The eleven students involved in my study were enrolled in an honors World History class at the end of the school day (specifically 2:00-3:30 pm). The class consisted of all 9th graders, ranging from 14-15 years of age. There were 5 males and 6 females. Originally, at the start of the study, twelve students were enrolled in the course, but a student schedule change caused a female student to leave the course mid-study. Out of the classroom population, two are identified as gifted: one male and one female. In the class, two students are black, two students are Asian, and the remaining seven students are white.

The school building was formerly a pharmaceutical office. Therefore, the building looks like a nice office building from the outside, but has a more school-like appearance on the inside. The main outer wall of the school consists of floor-to-ceiling windows on floors 3-8. My classroom sits along the outer wall; this means that one of the walls in my classroom is entirely windows with indoor ledges I use to stand on or for storage purposes. At the front of the room is a large screen TV on a countertop space. An Apple TV is connected to the tv. There is a whiteboard next to the television, as well, which acts as the homework board. All notes, videos, activities, etc. are presented on the television. I have added additional whiteboards in the room to write student objectives and additional information.

In lieu of desks, students sit at long tables on rolling chairs. Students are required to carry all learning materials in a backpack. They are also provided with a locker to store other personal belongings. At the start of the study, the desks

were arranged so students would work in small groups (five groups of 3 tables each). Approximately halfway through the study, the desks were rearranged to consist of an outer “u” with an inner central table.

Procedure

My action research study was a 12-week study. At the start of the study, students completed a survey that addressed their thoughts on using technology in the classroom, their experience in the flipped classroom, and their ideas on effective teachers and lessons. From there, students began the process learning content. As a class, we explored four units in the time of the study: The Renaissance, the French Revolution, the Enlightenment, and the Industrial Revolution.

Each unit included a variety of activities and assessments. Students would begin units by watching the first video lecture for the unit and completed a set of video notes that went along with the video. In class the following day, the content of the video was reviewed as a class, and from there, we would move to an activity that would relate to the content covered in the video. Many of these activities included DBQs, HATs, and collaborative projects. Students were encouraged to write for most of the work that they did so historical thinking and writing skills could be evaluated. However, there were also many opportunities for students to discuss content, share ideas, and ask questions.

Each unit ended with a summative test to assess content knowledge and skills (both historical thinking and writing). The only outlier in the testing

segment is the Enlightenment unit; for this unit, students completed a collaborative project as their summative assessment.

Upon the conclusion of the Renaissance unit, students completed a mid-study survey that had students describe their experience after some time in the flipped classroom. The students also completed a survey at the end of the study following the Industrial Revolution test. The final survey asked about the students' experience in the flipped classroom and also asked questions about their writing during the course of the study.

Throughout the course of the study, data was collected, analyzed, and coded. This information was used to develop bins and overarching theme statements that emphasize key outcomes of my study.

Data Sources

Data collected in my action research study included surveys presented to students via Google Forms, classroom observations, informal and formal assessments, and student work. Data was analyzed outside of the classroom.

Before data could be collected and analyzed, I had to complete a series of steps first. I completed and submitted an HSIRB, or Human Subjects Internal Review Board, form for the college. Upon approval of the study from Moravian College (Appendix A), I sought permission to conduct study and collect data using multiple consent forms. Consent forms were signed by the Director of Education (completed prior to submitting the HSIRB form) (Appendix B), parents

of students in the classroom (Appendix C), and the students (Appendix D). With their permission, data collection could begin.

Surveys. Three surveys were given to students to complete during the study. All of the surveys were completed using Google Forms. Each survey consisted of multiple choice and short-answer questions. The first survey was a pre-study survey, asking students on their thoughts regarding technology use in the classroom (Appendix E). I wanted to see how open the students were to being a part of a flipped classroom; the more receptive they are to the idea, the more likely I felt that the study would succeed. The second survey took place after approximately one unit of study (Appendix F). Students responded to a Google Form that asked for their perspective on the flipped classroom now that they saw the practice in action. The final survey asked for their overall thoughts on the flipped classroom and how they felt their writing skills improved throughout the course (Appendix G). It was explained to them at the beginning of the semester that they would be doing more writing than the average class, and gathering their insight on writing was essential.

Along with the formal, traditional surveys, students also responded to informal “check-ins” where I would ask students for their thoughts on a given assignment or for their thoughts on how an activity went. Students were responsive to these informal surveys, as they were treated more like a conversation rather than a formal survey to be completed independently; they had

the opportunity to listen to each other and work off of one another to provide feedback.

The surveys, both formal and informal, were used to drive instruction in the classroom. The lecture videos were modified based on student feedback and activities re-shaped based on the responses students gave me in the surveys in conjunction with the work they completed. Data collected from the surveys also assisted me in gaining insight on the flipped classroom: Is this something to pursue in other history courses at my school? Is this something that can work with lower-level students?

Field Log. Throughout the course of the study, I documented observations and reflections using a double-journal entry format. I would write down significant phrases said by students, notable behaviors of students, and other observations made in class in one column of the double-journal. The other column shared my personal thoughts and reactions to the observations made. My reflections helped provide context to the observations that I made and provided further analysis of what happened in the classroom on that given day.

Student Work. Students completed various assignments throughout the course of the study. Students completed DBQs (document based questions), primary and secondary source analysis, creative writing opportunities, class discussion, projects, and more. Work was collected and graded to assess student comprehension of material and, for writing-based assignments, to determine if student writing improved over the course of the semester. Most assignments were

collected via iTunes U, which was then accessed by me for grading and for evaluating for the action research study. Their video notes were also collected as evidence that students viewed the teacher-made video.

Assessments. Students completed brief checks and tests throughout the course of the action research study. The quick check assessments were often provided through Kahoot and Quizizz, where students signed into a gaming program to participate in friendly competition while also assessing their understanding of material presented in the video notes assigned for homework. This information notified me what material from the video notes required immediate attention and review, and which material was mastered by the students. Multiple choice and true false questions were used in the Kahoot and Quizizz checks.

Over the course of the semester, formal end-of-unit exams evolved to match more closely with the study. The first unit assessment, the Renaissance test, was the most traditional test that students received in the study (Appendix H). It was a mix of multiple choice, matching, short answer, and application questions. In order to place more focus on writing ability, the remaining end-of-unit assessments became open-note tests with open-ended questions. The “new” assessment format still asked students to use content, but focused on historical/critical thinking and expressing ideas through writing (Appendix I).

Trustworthiness Statement

In order to conduct a study that managed to uphold validity and

trustworthiness, I ensured that the data collected was done so ethically and with the full consent of the student and parent. Verbal and written approval were collected from the school to pursue the action research study in the classroom. Both students and parents were briefed on the action research study and its intentions, and both were given informed consent letters that needed to be signed by the participants and their parents. The letter included a description of the action research study and the means in which student data will remain anonymous and protected documents and data will be kept in secure locations (both digitally and on paper), students will receive code names, and all data will be destroyed upon the conclusion of the semester when the course is completed. In the event a student failed to give back the form, or if the parents chose not to have their child participate in the study, the data under the student's name was disregarded and not factored into the statistics and final outcomes of the study. However, they will not be removed from classroom activities and still participate as active members of the classroom. The letter would also indicate that students and parents both have the option of withdrawal from the study at any point in time, as long as I was given notification.

Much of the data used in the action research study is gathered through online platforms including (but not limited to) iTunes U, Kahoot, Socrative, and Google Forms. These online resources are password-protected resources, which only I have access to. Although the assessments in these surveys and online games are conducted once, the programs keep the file on record on the website itself. In

the event that the content is printed for documentation and coding purposes, the files will be kept in a secure location.

For observations that I made, documentation took place in a notebook that traveled with me to and from school and remained in secure locations. Initials and code names were used within the entries to help maintain confidentiality in the study and, when not in use, the notebook was hidden from view. Observational data, whether as a diary or field log, can indicate changes or improvement in students, or it can showcase my personal evolution throughout the research study (McNiff, 2013). Observations were written at the earliest possible moment in order to provide as much accurate data as possible (McNiff, 2013).

Along with maintaining validity in my documents, I ensured to maintain proper ethics, uphold confidentiality, and interpret my data with appropriate action. Being that this is my personal action research study, participating in self-reflection and self-validation checks are a necessary part of the process (McNiff, 2013). This ensures that I am going through my work thoughtfully and with an analytic eye. However, as much as I want to say that I should be the only analyzer of my study, I think it is important to have conversations with fellow faculty members, including my own department and my teaching coach. These “critical friends” (McNiff, 2013) can assist in my data analysis and provide feedback in the event I see something amiss or if I want a second opinion of a piece of data that I collected during the course of my study. Currently, I have been working closely with my teaching coach, who has been influential and supportive of my work; together, we

hope that, if the study proves successful, we can encourage other teachers to pursue the flipped classroom format, especially since we are a 1:1 technology school.

RESEARCH NARRATIVE

Preparing the Study: Making the Right Video

“Hi, I’m John Green. This is Crash Course: World History, and today we’re going to talk about something that makes me profoundly uncomfortable: disease” (Green, 2014).

This must have been the 12th time that I have saw this video, but this time I wasn’t watching it for content purposes: I was watching it for presentation purposes. I had known from the beginning of my research that I would be using a video-based flipped classroom platform, and I wanted to make sure that my videos were just right. What better way to determine how to make the perfect video by watching YouTube videos?

I scoured the depths of YouTube searching for all kinds of videos. I looked at educational channels like Khan Academy, Crash Course, MrBettsClass, and the occasional teacher channel that popped up on my searches. I looked at popular YouTubers like SimplyNailogical, Jenna Marbles, and Shane Dawson. I also looked at channels acting as established “tv programs” like Good Mythical Morning and The Philip DeFranco Show. If I wanted to make videos that would be appealing to my students, I also had to consider what they would typically watch on YouTube and figure out what made these people and their channels so interesting.

Even though I have watched a number of these channels for months, some even years, I needed to take a closer look at the production to see how I could take

the qualities of these channels and apply it to my own videos going out to the students.

There were some things that I already knew I wanted going into the video-making process. For example, I didn't want to use videos that already existed. I wanted to make the videos from scratch in order to have more control over the content and to ensure that curriculum standards were met.

Also, I wanted to make sure that my face was not going to be in a single video. While many of the YouTubers that I watched and studied openly presented themselves on camera, I didn't want the focus to be on me. Many of those YouTubers were pushing entertainment, and I was pushing history. Facts, not my face, needed to be on the screen. Instead of a standard visual recording, I would need to record my voice (something I still don't like to do!) and have PowerPoint slides with text and images present the content I was describing.

My videos needed to be short and informative, but also have some sense of entertaining quality. I vowed to myself that no video would exceed 10 minutes in length. I am proud to say that I kept my word, with the longest video clocking in at 8 minutes and 43 seconds. Within the small span of time, I provided a LOT of content through the visual set of the notes and the script that I read from with each video I made. However, if I kept to just the facts, I know that I would lose student interest quickly. To compensate, I occasionally added a sound effect or an occasional joke to keep the material interesting.

To say that these videos were perfect is reaching. They were by no means anything that would make YouTube's trending page. For what I was attempting to accomplish in the classroom, however, the videos were really good. At least, I thought so... My students would be my toughest critics.

By the time that September 13th approached, I only had one or two videos completed. Making the videos as I went throughout the study would be a challenge, but at the same time, I felt that this was the most beneficial process for my students. I could use their reactions and feedback to improve the quality of the videos as we moved through the curriculum rather than re-record and restructure videos previously made.

Finally, the time had come. Not only was the study about to begin, but the first video I made for the class was about to be pushed out to them. Before the students walked in the room, I hoped for three things: that the students would be excited for the flipped classroom model, that they would like the first video, and most importantly, that the video would actually work on their iPads.

“So, we are helping you graduate?”

Two weeks into the school year, my Honors World History class walked into class, eager to know what we would be doing next. After spending some time reacquainting ourselves with the definition of history and working on the Black Death, I am happy to say that I had hooked them into the subject. I was excited because of their eagerness, but also because today would be the day that I would officially announce my action research study to the class.

Although I was thrilled to begin with the study, I was also nervous. I felt that a lot was riding on this study. After reviewing the study with the school's Director of Education, she posed a question that led me into a panic:

“What if they fail?”

I was confident that they wouldn't fail, but I couldn't shake the thought. Their GPA certainly shouldn't falter because of a teacher's opportunity to guinea pig a new idea. It wouldn't be fair to the student. I pushed the thought behind me, determined that the flipped classroom would work, and that the students would be successful with this new strategy.

After taking a few minutes to settle in and take attendance, I gathered their attention. “Today is the day!” I announced to them. “Remember how I said that I was going to a college for my Masters degree? Well, there is one more thing that I need to do before I can graduate, and I need your help.”

Their already eager faces lit up a little more.

“So, we get to help you graduate?” one of the girls said.

“Exactly,” I replied. They nodded along, indicating that they were interested in hearing more.

I proceeded to ask them what they knew about flipped classrooms. To my surprise, they had not heard of the term before. I would think that maybe one teacher in the middle school was also using the process, but I was wrong! I explained to the class what a flipped classroom is, how it affects their homework (because homework is always a student concern!) and how they would be

working in class. I addressed that their work will focus a lot on writing and source analysis. Although they expressed some negativity towards writing, they seemed interested in the idea that they would be using videos as their primary source of direct instruction in place of a lecture.

After the explanation of how the course would run for the remainder of the semester, they filled in their first survey (Appendix E) so I could gather their initial thoughts on the flipped classroom and their opinions on writing and other classroom procedures. The survey, delivered as a Google Form, included a brief demographics section, a multiple choice section, and a written response section. I was surprised (and grateful) to see how thorough the students were in responding to the survey questions. In fact, we were already behind on day one because they took longer than anticipated to complete the survey!

I looked through the results of the survey after school, and was overall intrigued by the results. When asked about their thoughts on a teacher giving lectures, there was an even split across the board: 4 students enjoyed lectures, 4 students disliked lectures, and 4 students had no preference either way. Working with a group this diverse on lectures was a great sign- I could get multiple perspectives and see if there was an overall change in attitude towards traditional lectures vs. flipping the classroom. What surprised me is that when asked to respond to the phrase “I don’t mind taking notes in class”, 9 out of 12 students marked “Strongly Agree”, 2 students marked “Somewhat Agree” and one student was indifferent. Although there was a widespread view of lectures, there was a

more unanimous view of note-taking. Again, I took another sigh of relief; they were fine with taking notes, which is what most of their homework assignments would be from now on.

Digging further through the survey, another question caught my eye. When asked “I like when a teacher gives me writing assignments,” 5 students indicated they “Somewhat Agree”, 5 were indifferent, and 2 responded with some level of disagreement. Based on this information, I could say that my students were not exactly the most enthusiastic about writing assignments. If they would not be interested in creative writing, how could I make them interested in historical analysis?

I continued reading through the results. All of the students liked using iPads and had no problem doing their school work on the iPad. When asked about their favorite app, the majority of the class went with Notability. Over 75% of the class felt that the iPad was not a distraction to them. Also, over 75% said that they find it easy to pay attention in school. I also learned from this class that a lot of them like to participate (and I would quickly learn about how much they enjoyed participating as the semester continued!). Overall, the remaining answers reflected what I would have expected for an honors class.

Looking further into the written response questions, the Director of Education’s lingering question began to dissipate. With the answers my students were providing (Table 1), they reassured me there was no way that they would fail. They would need to work on their writing, namely grammar and spelling, but

they would not fail. Many of their answers reflected what I felt was going to be the direction of the classroom.

If they could see their vision for an effective teacher in me, and they could see that their preferred learning style was met in the classroom activities and assessments, then they would certainly do well in Honors World History in a flipped classroom environment.

Table 1

Student Responses to the Pre-Study Survey

What is your favorite way to learn? Why?	
Tommy	To learn with people that actually care and want to get stuff done casually having fun at the same time. (°∩°) ˘ ∩ (. \)
Amber	Hands on because it makes me more active and it's a more fun way to learn
Carl	I like to be able do use the information I learned and apply it to an assignment. And example is a marh assignment. I learn something, then I solve problems. Thats the best way to learn. Plus if im able to teach/explain that subject to someone that would mean I know the material.
What qualities should an effective teacher have?	
Emma	They should be very outgoing. Them walking aroundf the classroom, making sure you're on task, and being patient is very important to being a teacher.
Jimmy	Understanding of our situation and their situation. Teachers should realize that students can't just stay home and do hours of homework and not leave the house. Teachers shouls also make sure that every student understands the topic being tought before moving on.

Shao	Some qualities that an effective teacher should have are explaining topics in a easy way to understand, showing examples about the topic that he/she is teaching to the class, and making class fun and enjoyable.
Would you prefer to spend class time working on projects and content-related activities, or would you prefer to spend class time reviewing notes and holding class discussions? Why?	
Amber	I would rather spend class working on projects and content related activities because I would be more engaged, and I would be bored and distracted if it was the second choice
Emma	Both projects and discussions are very important but I think it depends on what the week consist of. If we have a test I'd rather hold a discussion, but if we don't I rather spend time on other activities.
Shao	I'd prefer to spend class time working on projects and content-related activities because I get more of my work done when I'm in school than when I'm at home and when I have questions, I could just ask the teacher without texting or messaging them.

Video Notes: Round One

“MISS LOWERY, THAT VIDEO WAS SO GOOD!” Cecilia exclaimed as she walked in the classroom.

“Why, thank you!” I replied. *Thank goodness!* I couldn’t help but think to myself. This was the first time that I ever made a video and published it on YouTube. I have always been the kind of person to be overly sensitive about the work I put out to the public; I worry about everything from the sound of my voice to the timing of the slides. I wanted everything to be perfect. So far, to an audience of 12, I had a fan. As more students made their way into the classroom, I

heard more positive feedback from the class. They appreciated the fact that the video was short and to the point. They also mentioned that they liked the style of the videos. What a relief!

As students sat down, I presented the Quizizz game code for the start of class. Right away, Olena's and Estella's mouths dropped.

"Is this a real quiz?" they asked me. I told them not to worry, as I wanted to see what everyone remembered from the first set of video notes they completed.

"Okay, because I forgot to do them," Estella replied.

"Me, too," Olena added.

Great, the first assignment and they already forgot to do it! I thought to myself. I hope this isn't a habit. They will fall behind for sure if they keep forgetting to do the video notes!

After the Quizizz, we reviewed the questions. As a class, the overall score was a 61%. At first glance, it's not very assuring. However, it was only 6 questions, so the average score really came to a 4/6. Also, knowing that Estella and Olena did not watch the video notes in preparation for class, the results may have been skewed. In the Quizizz, Yugi had a perfect score, 3 students missed one question, 4 students missed two questions, 1 student missed three questions, 1 student missed 4 questions, and Olena and Estella missed five questions. During the Quizizz, some students did mention that they "clicked the wrong answer" on accident, thereby affecting some of the results. For others, upon review, they

realized their error and made the mental correction, as answers in the game could not be changed.

The results might not have been what I was hoping for at first, but I had to remind myself: this is the first time these kids are working with a flipped classroom model. There is going to be a learning curve for them. This will show them that they have to focus on the details so that the big picture can be addressed in class and in projects. Luckily, because the Renaissance unit is so long in comparison to the other units in the curriculum, the students could easily adjust to the new model before the first unit test.

Two days later, out of curiosity, I wanted to see how students completed their video notes. In order to collect this data, I decided to make the second set of assigned video notes an in-class task. The variations in completing the video notes caught me by surprise; like a fingerprint, it felt like no two students were doing the same thing! Students were using the split-screen setting on their iPads to view the video and update their notes at the same time. Other students were pausing the video periodically to add information. Given the opportunity to work in class, some students teamed up and used one iPad to play the video and a second iPad to complete the notes. Based on their grades and classwork, I do not believe there is any correlation between how they completed the video notes and how they did on in-class assignments. Throughout the course of the semester, many students would show their understanding of terms and concepts by applying the video notes into their discussions and writing assignments.

Skills are Showing!

The Renaissance worked out to be a great topic for the start of the action research study because the sub-topics covered in the unit ranged in style: students studied art, the scientific revolution, and the Protestant Reformation. Out of all the topics, none of them were as fascinating to the students as Renaissance Art.

The art segment of the Renaissance unit was an in-depth study of the different techniques and artists that flourished during the Renaissance. Students not only looked at different artworks, but analyzed the characteristics of the pieces to determine what makes Renaissance art... well, Renaissance.

Throughout the art activities and discussions, students were displaying early signs of historical thinking skills, namely argumentation, using substantive concepts, and using sources. The class loved working with art, making more observations on Michelangelo's *The Last Judgement* than any other group of students I worked with.

During our first HAT, students were given a copy of a Medieval picture depicting the Black Death. When asked what the painting was portraying, 11 out of 12 students correctly identified the event. They used information provided in the image to help support their idea that the image was a representation of the Black Death. Most of the class pointed out the obvious: the skeletons walking alongside the regular people, and that the skeletons looked like they were guiding the people somewhere. Olena also acknowledged that royalty was involved, as a man and a woman were both wearing crowns. They applied terms used in the

Renaissance video notes to help identify that the picture was a Medieval piece. They addressed that the image appeared two-dimensional and cartoonish, whereas common Renaissance pieces emphasize realism and depth.

The art analysis didn't stop there. During a Kahoot reviewing Renaissance art terms, Carl chimed in frequently with his observations to defend his responses to almost every question:

“That has to be sfumato because there's a blurry background.”

“That *has* to be done by Michelangelo. Do you see how buff that woman is over there?”

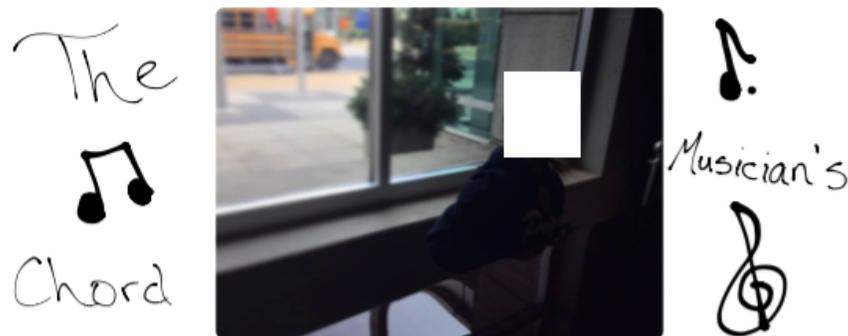
He wasn't wrong! He used prior knowledge collected from the video notes to properly apply the substantive concepts to the different artworks presented. I was pleased with Carl's efforts, and with the class overall.

To create a new challenge, the class was then given the challenge to create “Accidental Renaissance”. This assignment was another opportunity to apply substantive concepts, use sources as a source of inspiration, and also provide another chance to work with writing. Students traveled around the school to create a photograph and modify it to model characteristics of Renaissance art with a modern perspective. My class certainly rose to the challenge, using the hallways and lighting around the building to their advantage.

During the Accidental Renaissance activity, I was surprised to see how many students were “checking in” with me to see if their work was Renaissance-y. Usually I would not give a direct “yes” or “no”, but rather ask

them which characteristics of Renaissance art they saw in their own work.

Through argumentation and using substantive concepts, they were able to prove that their work was Accidental Renaissance. The paragraphs the groups wrote to describe their images also used these historical thinking skills. Also, from what I noticed, the writing was an improvement from their survey they completed weeks ago. Spelling was stronger within their Renaissance paragraphs.



This piece is called "The Musician's Chord." This depicts a woman practicing her passion, which is music. This can be constituted as a Renaissance piece due to its characteristics of individualism, sfumato, shadowing and highlighting, as well as the Golden Ratio. Individualism played a huge role during the Renaissance as artists started focusing less on painting groups and started doing more pieces of individuals or portraits. This can be seen in "The Musician's Chord" because the woman is the only person in the picture. Sfumato also became more popular during the era because as artists started creating three-dimensional paintings, they used a sfumato, or blurry/hazy background, to create depth. As you can see, there is sfumato present in the above picture because the background behind the woman gets blurry to make her appear closer. Shadowing and highlighting was also used in the time period of the Renaissance because it created depth as well. It was pleasing to the eye and played with the balance of lights and darks and promoted realism, which made paintings look as real as possible. In "The Musician's Chord," it starts off dark in the bottom right corner and it gradients to light in the top left corner to make a pleasing contrast of light and dark in the picture. The sun was shining towards the woman's back, making it darker the closer you are. Moving on, the final characteristic that makes this a Renaissance piece is the Golden Ratio. This special ratio makes the picture most pleasing to the eye. It is usually used in horizontal pieces and the person or object is off-center and creates a spiral. As you can see, "The Musician's Chord" is horizontal or landscape and the woman is off-centered as well. Also, her face, body, and arm create the eye-pleasing spiral as seen below. All of these characteristics prove that "The Musician's Chord" is constituted as a Renaissance piece.

Figure 1. Student sample of the Accidental Renaissance assignment. Student's

face was removed from the image for the submission of this study.

The ultimate test came when students went to the Philadelphia Museum of Art. I was a little nervous at first because I was working with students that loved to talk and talk, and art museums are known for being, well, quiet. However, I was quite surprised when the tour we went on, which showed the progression of art from the Medieval times to the Renaissance, encouraged conversation and questioning. *Yes!* I thought, *This is exactly the kind of trip my students need!*

During their trip to the art museum, students were asking questions, analyzing art, drawing conclusions based on observations, and applying terms that they learned with me in their discussion with the tour guide. Our guide was impressed with their use of the art terms, and with how inquisitive they were. They asked why baby Jesus had an “old man face”. They asked why certain people, like Mary, were so disproportionate in comparison to other people represented in the image. While they were able to answer some of their own questions (Mary is a religious figure and therefore she is bigger because she is important), some required guidance from the tour guide (Jesus looked old for a baby because many painters portrayed Jesus as a wise man instead of going full infant). I was beaming; they were displaying historical thinking skills left and right and still learning more along the way.

Before we left, Olena approached me while everyone else was using their iPads to take pictures of their favorite pieces in the gallery. “This was a really good trip, Miss Lowery,” she said to me.

And my beaming continued.

Progressing Through the Renaissance

The Renaissance unit continued along, and proved to be the largest unit covered during the study. This was partly because I really like the Renaissance, and it was partly because they were really into the topic, as well. As much as I needed to steer the ship on to the next unit, it was hard to let go of what they were showing so much interest in!

Within the Renaissance unit, the class was challenged to create a Renaissance-themed art gallery. Many students rose to the occasion and completed beautiful galleries with thorough analysis of the selected works that they included. They correctly used vocabulary from the unit and defended why their artwork deserved to be in a gallery. However, even though Tommy completed his own analysis with a twist of humor, the artwork he chose was from the wrong era. When I gave him back his grade and he read my feedback, he put his palm to his face and shook his head. “I can’t believe I did that!” he exclaimed.

“It happens,” I replied. “Next time, make sure that you’re working with the right time period before turning your work in!”

Stepping away from art, the Renaissance unit continued into two other subjects: the Scientific Revolution and the Protestant Reformation. For both of these sections, I decided to place more emphasis on reading-based activities to evaluate historical thinking skills. Rather than create primary source documents from scratch, I decided to use two of the SHEG lesson plans provided on the SHEG website.

The first of the document-based assignments questioned whether or not Galileo should have been convicted for heresy. The students used guiding questions to compare two documents that showed different takes on Galileo's guilt. From there, the class had to determine whether or not Galileo was guilty and use specific quotes from the documents to support their thinking. I felt that this was a great way to look at students' historical thinking skills, as it broke down the process of using evidence to support an argument: make a claim, defend the claim with a reason, support the reason with research.

Based on the nature of the assignment, many of the students used complete sentences to establish their thoughts and ideas. Whereas many of the students wrote a sentence, Cecilia and Shao went above and beyond writing longer statements that not only established their overall views, but incorporated extra detail to support their thinking BEFORE even looking at the quotes they selected. In an effort to defend Galileo's innocence, Cecilia wrote "God gave these gifts such as intellect and people's senses for a reason. Galileo was just using his talents for good and to help humans. It's not heresy to have an opinion and he's not discrediting the religion." In Cecilia's response, she uses vocabulary like "intellect" and "discrediting" that, to me, was surprising for a 9th grader to use; it was certainly different from the work I would receive from students last year. The only grammatical error in her writing was the use of a comma instead of an apostrophe for "It's". Overall, one grammar error isn't bad at all!

Other students that used complete sentences also had minimal errors: not capitalizing God or Bible, using “weather” instead of “whether”, and occasional comma splices. While they are errors, they did not impact the quality of writing to a point where I could not understand what the student was trying to say. If anything, I would argue that some students might have gone through an autocorrect snafu, or that the students were not aware to capitalize Bible or God due to their religious views.

As for historical thinking, the students continued to wow me with their work. In a class of 12, 10 felt that Galileo was guilty of heresy. Cecilia and Jimmy were the only ones that said Galileo was not guilty of the crime. As the class addressed their arguments, I wrote their thoughts on the only space I could: the cabinet below the tv (Figure 2). Both sides had valid arguments to prove their point. Because they were required to defend their views with quotes, they already demonstrated the use of sources and effectively modeled analysis and explanation (some of many meta-concepts reviewed in class). They were using substantive concepts in conversation without hesitation. It wasn't long before the class quickly got into “debate mode”, demonstrating argumentation. However, one thing that the 10 admitting Galileo's guilt that Cecilia and Jimmy considered was contextualization. Those saying that Galileo was guilty emphasized that, during the time of Galileo's trial, that the church was in charge. Going against the church was a crime back then. Technically, by law, if that's what Galileo did, then he should be guilty.

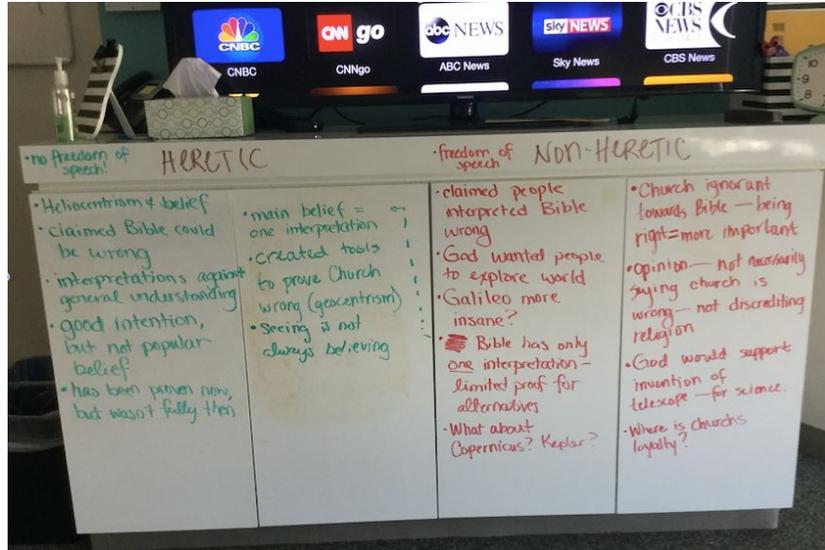


Figure 2: Student arguments for/against Galileo's conviction of heresy

Usually with this activity, I have seen students favor Galileo's innocence because they know that Galileo was correct in defending heliocentrism. It was really interesting to see that this class flipped the concept. I believe this may be because of contextualization. I am not saying that Cecilia and Jimmy are wrong; both students had perfectly valid claims to defend their idea. However, if I had to pick a "side", I would consider the context of the time period in my decision, causing me to favor that Galileo was a guilty man.

The Martin Luther quote analysis also gathered student interest, but different from Galileo. There wasn't any debate regarding Martin Luther: between the two given passages, the class agreed that Martin Luther's behavior toward the church changed. The question we asked ourselves was why.

For this activity, the students read two passages from Martin Luther: one a letter to an archbishop in 1517, and the other a documentation of Luther's conversation about why he split with the church. The students were asked to answer questions for each document and then transfer the content to a chart for comparison purposes. Then, once the comparison was complete, they had to explain why Luther's attitude toward the church changed and what source they felt was more reliable.

Due to the nature of the assignment, fewer students were writing down complete sentences. The most paragraph-based writing came with the final two questions. Because of this, I felt that it wasn't exactly appropriate to go heavy-handed with writing skill analysis. I will mention that the class was unfamiliar with "tone". Unfortunately, I didn't realize this was much of an issue until we were reviewing the assignment. After a brief explanation and example, the students were back on board and the work continued.

When it was time to start reviewing, I asked the students my go-to question: "So, what did you think?"

Yugi was the first to chime in. "Man, Martin Luther was SALTY!"

The class, including myself, laughed along in agreement.

"Yeah, Yugi, I guess you could say that he was salty. But why? What happened with Martin Luther?"

We began the review of our questions and acknowledged the change in Martin Luther's behavior. Why would a religious man go from being so polite to so "salty"? Jimmy was the first to make a suggestion, and a good one at that.

"I think he was just tired of it. The Church wasn't listening to him, and he was fed up."

When asked why he feels that way, Jimmy mentioned moments in both the letter from Luther and his documented conversation to support his thinking.

Argumentation by using sources! Yes, Jimmy!

But Jimmy wasn't the only one. Many of the students did well in explaining their perspective and defending their ideas. They were not as quote-specific as they were with Galileo, but they still were able to use big picture ideas from the sources, including the provided backgrounds. They demonstrated using substantive concepts, and needed some guidance to prove their use of meta-concepts.

It was finally time to put everything to the test. So far the video notes were working, and the students really seemed to be enjoying the class. Given the work they have completed so far, I was feeling hopeful that they would be okay for the first test.

Changing the Testing Game

When constructing the test, I stuck to my typical formatting (Appendix H): multiple choice, matching, short answer, and then a "creative question." Creative questions ask students to apply content to a given task, such as creating a playlist

for a political leader or suggesting a book for a historical figure to read. In this case, the students were creating a Renaissance report card, where they would have to grade the efforts of different people from the Renaissance and explain why with two or more reasons. The class prepared with a study guide, a Kahoot review, and a brief opportunity to study before the test. Being that it was a test, students would not have access to their notes. What made them more worried was that the test was on paper.

“You mean we will have to write everything?!”

“Yes, but it won’t be so bad,” I reassured the class. “You have done a lot of writing so far. You will be fine!”

On the test day, I couldn’t help but smirk at Sanaa and Jimmy, who developed hand cramps not long into test-taking time. How could they already be tired?!

Throughout the course of the test, I decided to document the kinds of questions that I received to see what students are thinking about during a test session on the following page (Table 2):

Table 2

Renaissance Test Questions Asked by Students

Renaissance Test Questions from Students
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Amber: I think #17 has more than one answer...● Yugi, Amber: Does spelling count?● Cecilia: What are indulgences?● Yugi: Do we need to explain terms in the short answer questions?● Estella: (for the report card question) Does the letter grade matter?● Carl, Cecilia: Is it ok to put this? Is it ok if I wrote it like this?● Yugi: Can I write 'divorced, beheaded, died...'?● Students asked about PSATs while test was in session

A couple of the questions focused on writing, which I thought was good for them and for my study. They wanted to make sure that they were meeting my expectations and that their answers were appropriate for the question, especially the short answer and report card question. While I appreciated the check-in questions ("Is it ok if I wrote it like this?") I felt like I couldn't answer the question directly for them. If I wanted to assess their argumentation skills and their writing, I had to make sure that the questions reflected these kind of skills.

However, when I looked at the test after its completion, how could multiple choice and matching even come close to the skill-building short answer and creative questions do? I knew that I had to make some changes to the next assessment.

During a PLC meeting with the history department and Director of Education, we discussed the items that make up for a good assessment. We

covered a lot of topics, but then the Director of Education tossed a question that solved my dilemma:

“Why not make the tests open note?”

Such an easy solution! If I wanted to assess historical thinking, I needed to have the kids work with resources, not just memorization of facts. Open note tests don't need multiple choice questions. I can ask higher order thinking questions. I can ask application questions. I can ask questions that require them to write.

After the Renaissance test, my students never took a multiple choice test again. All tests became open-ended, open note tests.

The first open-ended test was the French Revolution exam (Appendix J). It was an essay. The class groaned at the thought of an essay-based test, but they were interested in the questions. They were also relieved that they received the questions a day in advance so they had time to prepare.

However, when it came to test day, they panicked. I was not in school the day they took the test, so I couldn't answer all of their questions, but they gave it their best effort. Not everyone finished in time, so given my absence, I granted them an extra day to complete the test and submit for credit.

Despite the panic, I was impressed with their work, especially being the first true essay of the course. I graded their work based on a standard rubric that addressed not only content, but skills (Appendix J). Their work needed to be focused, organized, include examples, be expressive in ideas, and contain minimal grammar and spelling errors.

Overall, I was impressed with their formal writing; there was little to critique! For each student, I gave them feedback that I thought would not only acknowledge their strengths, but where they can place more focus in future assignments. An example is shown below in Figure 3:

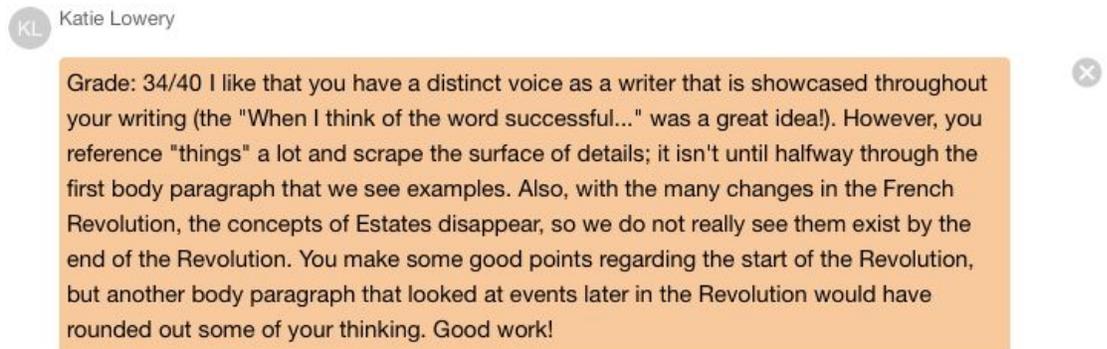


Figure 3. Feedback to a student for the French Revolution Test

Clearly this was a class that had writing under their belt! Now it was a matter of making sure students could grow as writers using historical thinking skills.

As the semester moved on, the students gradually embraced the idea of open-note tests and became more confident in their work (well, Olena never felt confident with her work, but she always did well!). They were able to develop clear, focused ideas that used their notes and other content to support their thinking, and all with little issues in their writing. Practically all of the historical thinking skills were met with each question thrown their way. Most of the feedback that I gave the students, if any, focused on wording; they would

demonstrate understanding of the material, but at times would use phrases like “stuff” and “things” when they should have been addressing more specific items. However, looking at their Industrial Revolution test and comparing it to the French Revolution test, there was improvement on many folds.

The Enlightenment Salon Skit - the Craziest Test of them All

Before students dipped into the French Revolution, the class studies the Enlightenment. This unit I always considered a tricky one for students because the focus of the unit is political philosophy (clearly a favorite among 9th graders everywhere). I remember back in college where my philosophy professor gave out a multiple choice test on political philosophy. I also remember thinking that a multiple choice philosophy test was insane; the questions were too subjective, the choices were too vague, and it seemed that philosophy was more of a writing-based subject, not an A-B-C-D one. So when creating the summative assessment for the Enlightenment, I knew I had to get creative.

In older versions of the World History course, students had to participate in an Enlightenment Salon. They researched an Enlightenment figure and held a discussion AS that person. I wanted to carry over the idea of the salon into my world history class. While I felt that my class had the potential to participate in a salon, I was unsure of their ability to “research and go”. Also, considering that I wanted to keep the focus on writing, I had to take the research-based improv salon and make it more scripted. The class was given an assignment description sheet (Appendix K), the class was divided into two groups, and they got to work!

Each group took a different approach to the assignment. Team “Frozen” (the group names were based on sticker cards that they received) were more vocal in their collaboration. Although each group member had a role, they all had a say in the lines that were being written. Also, this group placed an emphasis not only on content, but also on humor (“Welcome to the Salty Spitoon, how smart are ya?”). Meanwhile, team “Spongebob” was much quieter, but still collaborative. Using Google Docs, they color-coded their lines to make character identification easier. They would see a line that a classmate created, and then had their character “jump in” with a reply. Each student placed more focus on their individual role rather than contributing to another person’s line. One thing that both groups did, thanks to my encouraging, is to come up with a list of questions that these philosophers would talk about if they had the chance to interact with one another (Figure 4). Their questions covered the main points that they should address, along with some other out-of-the-box ideas.

Question

- 1 Does everyone have rights?
- 2 What government do you think is best?
- 3 Do you believe people are selfish or unselfish?
- 4 Do the ends justify the means?
- 5 Should bad rulers get kicked out of their spot and get replaced by a better ruler or king?
- 6 Are you born a ruler or voted in as one?
- 7 Should power be separated so not just one person decides and everybody disagrees?
- 8 Are men born to be nice or could they choose to be nice or evil?
- 9 Are facts more realistic than religion beliefs?
- 10 Should rich and poor people never be given the chance to change status?

Questions

- Our ruler should be a king
Agree: Thomas Hobbes, Voltaire
Disagree: Jean Jacques Rousseau
- We should be apart of a democracy
Agree: John Locke, Baron de Montesquieu, Jean Jacques Rousseau
Disagree: Voltaire.
Neutral: Thomas Hobbes, Machiavelli
- Advances in military are more important than advances in science
Agree: Machiavelli
Disagree: Voltaire
Neutral: Montesquieu (wanted to reduce military, but not for science), John Locke, Rousseau, Hobbes

Figure 4. Student-developed questions in preparation for the Enlightenment salon
skit assignment

Throughout the process, the students were incredibly inquisitive and sought feedback from both myself and their peers. By starting off with questions to be answered, the groups had a guideline for their scripts while also providing opportunity for discussion and higher order thinking. At one point, Olena asked “What political party would Thomas Hobbes be?”. Emma and Estella later asked “Would Rousseau support democracy?” We used the class time to discuss some of these thoughts as they were creating their scripts. Once again, the students were demonstrating argumentation and appropriate use of substantive concepts. Along the way, as they were creating the scripts, they were also demonstrating appropriate use of meta-concepts. To create the scripts and hold these discussions,

they were analyzing, evaluating, debating, using evidence, and more. By the end of the assignment, we concluded that Thomas Hobbes would probably be a Republican and Rousseau would be open to democracy.

I wasn't sure what to expect with this assignment, but I was incredibly impressed with their work when it was done and presented. While they weren't the greatest of actors, their content was thorough and their scripts were fantastic. The conversation among the philosophers wasn't choppy in either group. They created flow from start to finish. Every group member had a voice in the work, and collectively, they showed their understanding of the Enlightenment philosophers. They used research and examples from their video notes to develop sound arguments and counter-arguments for the philosophers. I was impressed with their thorough script and their attention to detail throughout the final process, as it certainly shined through in their final product (Figure 5):

Niccolo Machiavelli: You people are disgusting! How dare you think that peasants have rights. They are simple people. They care more if we grace them with our godly presence.

John Locke: What do you mean we are disgusting. Peasants have rights, not just the Royals. ALL MEN ARE TREATED EQUALLY!

Thomas Hobbes: I agree with Machiavelli! Peasants are greedy, self-absorbed people who only do things for the better of themselves. They do not deserve any respect or rights whatsoever.

Jean: I totally disagree with the both of you, how could you even say that about a group of people? We're all humans, and we should all be equal!

Voltaire: I agree, you guys are so inhuman how could you say such. Peasants are humans, kings are human. We all have to have equal rights. We are all equal.

Niccolo Machiavelli: See, Hobbes understands this life, like the peasants couldn't even govern their sad lives.

Baron de Montesquieu: All men are equal. For that reason alone, having the government or monarchy using despotism is sickening to think of.

John Locke: Jean knows what I'm talking about. People have the rights to be treated equally, not just Royals.

Thomas Hobbes: Not to mention the fact they couldn't know how a monarchy of absolute sovereignty could work. They're just manipulative minded pawns.

- **Machiavelli** - Gentlemen, gentlemen, if you don't mind me barging in, good sense consists in being able to assess the dangers and choose the lesser of various evils. Having a king or democracy, I believe as long as there is a strong leader then no one should worry.
- **John Locke** - Well I believe citizens have the right to overthrow the government when their "natural rights" are violated.
- **Machiavelli** - If a leader is taken out of power by their citizens, doesn't that prove that they're not a good leader in the first place?
- **Thomas Hobbes** - Machiavelli has a point. We need a strong authority. Without one there would be war and chaos.
- **Rousseau** - No! John Locke is right. We should have a say. It gives the people more power and in a democracy, we, the people, need more power.
- **Thomas Hobbes** - Wrong! We need a strong leader. When I wrote the *Leviathan*, England went through a civil war! With a strong leader we would have never had one!
- **Montesquieu** - If you're going to be so critical of our leader, that's okay. However, I believe in a balance of power.
- **Voltaire** - And what is this balance of power?
- **Montesquieu** - It's a system so one leader doesn't have too much power. Our government would be broken into three branches the legislative, executive, and judicial.

Figure 5. Samples of Enlightenment Salon Skit scripts

A teacher coach heard about my assignment and wanted to see the kid's performances. She stopped by the classroom to watch one of the salon skit

productions. As I was watching the group perform, I snuck a few looks to gauge her reaction. She was an outsider looking in; her opinion would completely re-shape my view of the assignment if she thought it wasn't going well. To my relief, she was enthralled with the work of these kids.

At the end of the performance she asked, "So, what grade are you all in again?"

"9th," a few replied.

"Yeah, with that project, you're doing the work of seniors. Or college kids. I would have had no idea that you were 9th graders."

Before she left the room, she continued to ask the class questions about the assignment and the work that they were doing in my class. She was impressed by their answers and couldn't help but say again, "I would have no idea that you were 9th graders." They were clear in explaining their ideas, they demonstrated higher order thinking and were even able to clarify content that the coach was curious about.

Did I also mention that they finished the project a day early...?

Successes Within the Study

Throughout the course of the study, as much as I want to say that every assignment was a success, there were some unsuccessful tasks, as well. Following the Enlightenment, two other topics were addressed in the time frame of the study: the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution. Although both are defined as revolutions, they are completely different in terms of how the

revolution occurs. Nonetheless, the students really showed interest in the topics through the activities and discussions we held.

One of the most “successful” days came from just one picture. As the class came in, I posted a picture on the TV of a boy working in a factory (Appendix L). For this day’s HAT, I asked students one simple question: based on the image, what can you tell me about the Industrial Revolution? The class jotted some ideas on their iPads. When we reviewed, the class acknowledged a few items that I would expect them to say. I knew they would say that children were workers, that people worked in factories, and (based on the kid’s clothing in the picture) not everyone was wealthy during this time or that people worked in poor conditions. The class was quick to pick up on some of those points.

And then we went off the deep end.

This wasn’t the kind of deep end where the class is misbehaving to the point where there is a loss of control of the classroom. This was more of a “the class really got into the conversation and somehow we ended up trying to solve the national debt” kind of deep end.

And they loved every minute of it.

During the review of the day’s question, I would take a moment to address additional facts about the Industrial Revolution. I brought up a little bit about unions and labor laws, but not much else. Much of the conversation fell into the hands of the students. They began asking questions: “Do we have unions today?” “What happens when a union goes on strike?” “What if the people can’t come to

an agreement?” Some students, especially Emma, piped up on the topic. In the fall of 2016, Philadelphia’s public transit company, SEPTA, went on strike for a week. Public transportation in the city was completely shut down, with many students unable to get to school. Emma’s father worked for SEPTA, and she gave us some insight into her family’s experience and his typical work day. Students responded with nods and commentary.

The conversation switched over from labor unions to rights. Within the topic of rights, we got into talking about North Korea. From North Korea we dived into the relationship between North Korea and the United States. From this we addressed the military and government spending. Then they found out about the national debt. And then they found out about the debt calculator.

“THIS ISN’T RIGHT!” Cecilia exclaimed. “WE HAVE TO DO SOMETHING!”

We ended up attempting to solve the national debt the day before Thanksgiving break, approximately one week after our massive discussion. They did not get far in their solution, but they still say to this day, that “the one photo” was their favorite class ever.

Before they left to go home that day, I took a few minutes to address the class. “Did you see what you did?” I posed the question to them. Some looked back at me blankly. Others were talking over each other in reply to me.

“We got WAY off topic.”

“How did one picture get us to discussing the national debt?”

“Ok, yeah,” I interrupted, “we may have gone way off topic. And we somehow took a photo from the Industrial Revolution and exploded into this massive discussion about the world around us. When do you ever get to talk about things like this?!”

And then they realized. “We don’t.”

“Exactly! Thanks to the Industrial Revolution, look at all the connections you made! You learned about labor unions, international relations, and economics. All within 90 minutes! Now imagine if I still had to give the lecture...”

The class chimed in with a chorus of “no”s. They knew that they would never have the time for their discussion if they still had notes to go through. The benefits of the flipped classroom were making their mark on the class. They could see that with more time, they could dive deeper into the content and explore beyond the boundaries of the material covered in the unit. They can find ways to make the work meaningful and relevant. They could be historical thinkers.

This wasn’t the only time that they proved themselves as critical thinkers. Less than two weeks before the infamous “Day of the Picture,” they were working together on a French Revolution review. Students were given a list of terms covered during the unit, and on the windows I drew a blank web where each term had exactly one location to fit in (a key of the web can be found in Figure 6). I was generous and left one term in the web, but everything else was in need of a location. The point was for the class to work together to describe connections

among the terms and communicate different perspectives (it's not like they knew where everything was supposed to go the first time around!). To add an extra challenge, I was not going to contribute; they were on their own for this one! The only time I would step in would be after everyone took a turn posting a term to remove incorrect items from the web.

They managed to get the job done, but it wasn't without its own challenges. At first, everyone was calling out their ideas; they were talking over each other and not really listening to one another. Twice I had to step in to remind them that this is a collaborative effort, and for everyone to take a turn, they would need to listen to each other. Eddie, who often lets others take the lead, spoke up with his own strategy of getting the class back in line. Eventually everyone was speaking up, one at a time, and saying where they were going to put a term and explained why the term belongs in that specific location in the web. This was the skill-building that I was looking for. They were defending arguments, they were listening to each other, and they were collaborating. It worked! About 30 minutes later, the web was solved, and the class celebrated.

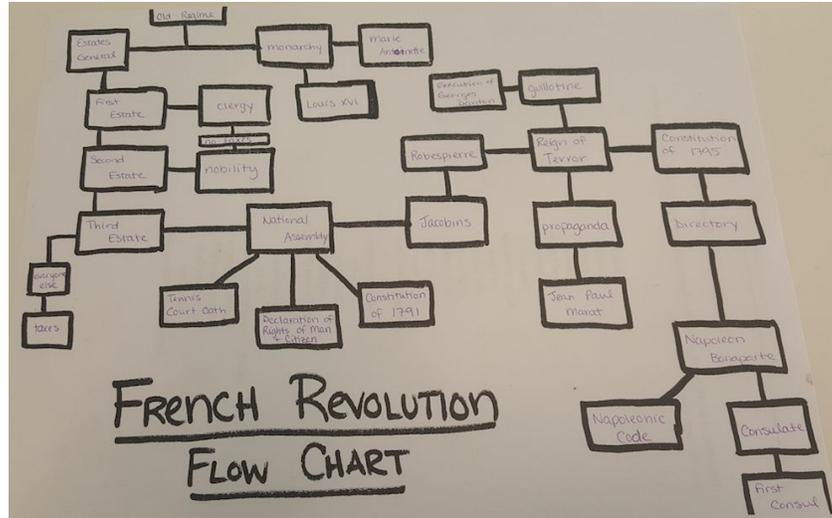


Figure 6. Key of French Revolution Web

When it came to writing, there was little for me to critique. With every assignment that they turned in, they continued to show strong writing skills and using historical thinking skills within their writing. They were able to defend arguments, refer to sources, and apply content to creative writing pieces. For example, during the Industrial Revolution unit, the class was given the task to create a series of diary entries as if they were a child laborer during the Industrial Revolution. They had to describe the process of the day in the life of a child laborer, but they had to incorporate emotion into the writing, as well. Rather than listing off facts, they had to weave in content with their creativity.

The class found a lot of interest in the assignment, especially when it came to the research. I provided some links for the class to use to expedite the process of the assignment; however, a couple of students were pretty engrossed with the content that the weblinks shared.

“You mean to tell me that they would HAMMER A NAIL into someone’s ear?!” Yugi exclaimed. “That’s gross!”

They were also interested in the activity itself. Everyone was clacking away at the computer keys as their drafts began to take shape. By the end of the assignment, the class created elaborate stories about fictional child laborers’ experiences in the Industrial Revolution (Figure 7). During the writing process, many of them would check in with me to make sure their ideas were historically accurate. Some hit the nail on the head, while others needed more coaching to get them into a more historically appropriate writing piece. Some even took the liberty of purposely misspelling words to add an extra layer to their writing. As Jimmy said, “They didn’t get an education, so they really wouldn’t know how to write!”

While working in the school’s computer lab, Olena made a comment about the assignment as I walked by. “You know,” she began, “I really like this assignment. It’s like we are writing an essay, but we’re not.”

Day One, November the 12th, 1836

Today, my parents said that I reached the age where I have to start bringing in money for the family. They said that I need to go get a job. My dad recommended that I go work at the local coal mine. I would rather be playing with my friends, but they are getting jobs too, so I guess I have no choice. When I got to the coal mine, I asked the supervisor for a job. He said I could have one, I would work 6 days per week, 14 hours per day, have one 30 minute break, and be paid 4 shillings per week. He led me down into the mine to a trap door, he said to open the door when I heard a car coming, and close it when it passed. It was dark and scary, and lasted a long time and I got bored. When work finally ended, I went home only to have to go to bed and wake up to go to work again.

Day Two, November the 13th, 1836

Today was Saturday, the day I was to be paid. I got up at 6 o'clock sharp and went straight to the mine, but I ran late 1 minute. At the mine, the supervisor strapped me with his belt for being late and said I would not be paid if I messed up again. In the mine, everything was normal until about 10 hours in, when I was starting to get tired. I dozed off a bit when a hurrier passed by with his car. He banged my door as loud as possible and said to open it. I did, but he ratted me out to the supervisor. He ordered me out of the mine and said that I had to be punished for my mistake. He brought me over to his table and took out a hammer and nail. He nailed my ear to the table and said that I was to serve the rest of my shift here as an example, unpaid. I cried out for the first half hour, but the others told me to shut up, so I did, writhing in my pain in silence. When I went home, I begged my parents to not work, but they said if I quit, I would be blacklisted from other mines, and they couldn't take that kind of hit to their income. In bed, I prayed things would get better, but come Monday, I knew that nothing would change, and my life would be miserable.

Figure 7. Eddie's Diary of a Child Laborer assignment

“That’s exactly right,” I said. “Not all writing pieces need to be formal essays. We can still show what we know with some creative flair.”

Hiccups Within the Revolutions

As much as I would like to say that every activity was perfect and the class showed consistent improvement, there were some instances where I had to re-assess and re-evaluate the work that I gave the class. For our few “hiccups”

that we had, they were mostly my doing. My attempts to challenge the class led to confusion and activities taking up more time.

One of the biggest flops came from the French Revolution unit. I wanted to do a DBQ much like the Black Death one that they started off with at the beginning of the semester. The class proved to be ready for a more challenging assignment, so I threw one their way. This DBQ consisted of 6-7 different stations with at least one document per station. Rather than using a product that already existed, I went ahead and built the DBQ from scratch. I scoured the internet for different primary sources. I chose pictures, reports, diary entries... I went for variety! I noticed right away that the text would probably be too challenging as-is, so I shortened some of the samples and changed a few words to help make the text easier to understand. I did a double check of the material and I felt that my 9th grade group could conquer the work.

And they did... just at a much slower pace than what I expected.

Even with the modifications, the text was still too challenging for the class. I frequently had to visit certain stations to explain specific phrases and provide guiding questions that would get the students thinking about the material and still come up with the answer on their own. Also, despite shortening the text, the samples were still too long, causing classmates to linger too long at stations. The activity had good intentions, but I could sense their frustrations with some of the documents. They could still present some historical thinking skills like argumentation, but not as well as I thought they would. This one was my doing.

Some activities get sabotaged thanks to the students. Some of the boys were really into internet memes and found many opportunities to weave memes into their work. In most cases, it was light and humorously appropriate to the assignment given, but there was one activity where they really ran away with the use of memes.

For this activity, the class had to come up with what they felt was the greatest invention of all time. It was a tiered process: first, the class worked independently to come up with the top 5 inventions from designated eras. Then, the individual results were shared with the rest of the class, documented, and reduced to the top 3 of each section. Then the voting began.

“MEMES!” Jimmy said. “Memes are the greatest invention of all time.”

“No way,” Cecilia chimed in.

“They’re stupid,” Yugi added. “I don’t even use them.”

Jimmy, Tommy, and Carl rallied together to convince the class that memes were the greatest invention of all time. They managed to recruit about half of the class in their “meme army”. Granted, they were using argumentation, they were applying meta-concepts, but I felt like they were missing the target of the lesson. Rather than have a more structured debate, the boys wanted to prove that they were right. It may be possible that I gave too much leniency with the activity, but I think this one was just the class missing the mark.

At the end of the day, the memes didn’t win. Language did!

Final Thoughts - Student Responses

By the time the students were approaching Thanksgiving break, I felt that I had collected enough data from them to say that my study was completed. Before drawing the work to a total close, however, I wanted to hear from them one last time. I sent the class a Google Form for them to complete which had them reflect on the semester thus far (Appendix G). Some of the questions were similar to what they answered back in September, but I also threw in more questions that talked about writing and other questions that asked for their opinions on the flipped classroom. The students moved through the survey fairly quickly, but I was happy to see that they were taking the survey seriously.

In all, ten students took the survey (one student was absent and another student left the course part-way through the semester). There were some items they were unanimous about, and there were others where opinions were mixed. The class agreed that the videos I created were entertaining and informative and that they were delivered in a style that was appealing to them (mission accomplished there!). I was happy because now I felt that I could use these videos in other classes, not just for this singular course. The most rewarding data to see is that when given the statement “I prefer the flipped classroom over the traditional classroom”, nine out of ten agreed at some level. When asked what they liked about the flipped classroom, the answers were varied. Many liked the fact that we had time to hold discussions and explore the content differently through questioning. One of the students said, that “the side conversations that occur from

all this extra time, for letting students to learn, socialize, and get their opinion on certain matters out” was the most beneficial aspect to the flipped classroom. If read out loud, I feel like much of the class would agree with that statement. When asked what they didn’t like, very little was shared. Most students said “nothing” was wrong with the system. The flipped classroom was a success video-wise, and knowing their grades, they definitely performed well in class, too!

Because they were already pretty strong writers, I didn’t have to create writing workshops like I initially thought I would. Instead, I ended up making the course writing-intensive. Many of the assignments became writing-based. Considering this, I still wanted to catch their opinion on the writing-driven activities.

When asked how they felt about writing, there were mixed opinions. Some of my students were creative writing majors, so of course they would enjoy writing! But not everyone felt that way. Even though not all of them enjoy writing, many felt that they do learn something from the experience. I followed up with the following statement: “I feel that my writing has improved over the course of the semester.” For this one, it was widespread: seven out of ten felt that there was some level of improvement, one didn’t agree nor disagree, and two disagreed. It was nice to see that, overall, they felt that their writing improved. I feel like I could see improvement, as well. Over time, they improved in explaining their thoughts and avoiding vague terms. They had made some grammar and spelling

improvements, as well, but they were already strong writers to begin with. I think that if I were working with another class then I could speak more to their grammar and spelling improvements. For those that said they didn't improve, I wonder if they felt that their work was stagnant... or if they un-improved? I would certainly hope for the former!

When I asked the class about essays, they had some great feedback for me.

Figure shows an example of some of their commentary:

What did you like about completing an essay-based exam? Why?

10 responses

I liked that it allowed me to just spill out my ideas and defend them rather than just do a normal test. I also liked that I was able to practice my essay writing skills for the future.

Don't need to memorize things is what I like about completing an essay-asked exam.

Making up a story.

We were allowed to go any route we wanted unlike actual test.

It was a little stressful because my ideas sometimes don't flow fast and then I always get scared because of grammar and punctuation but overall I don't mind it.

I didn't have to worry on whether I was correct or wrong or worrying about having to memorize everything. I could write an essay using my knowledge and not having to stress over what I got.

I didn't have a lot of questions that I needed to answer

That she gave use a couple of days to right our structure.

I liked that we could look back at our notes and form a good essay.

One question to answer.

Figure 8. Student responses regarding essay-based exams from the final survey

Many of them acknowledged that essay tests were different in that they had a lot of room for developing their answer. Multiple choice and true/false questions only have one answer. Essays don't. They appreciated this freedom within their testing experience, but they still felt the stresses and pressures that

come with any test given in school. A lot rides on the summative assessment, and they want to make sure that they do well!

Overall, their feedback reassured me that they really benefited from the flipped classroom. While they did not see the leaps and bounds that they demonstrated as historical thinkers over the course of the semester, I know that they made great progress during the three-month period of time. The semesters have changed, meaning that I do not get to see them for classes anymore, but I still get surprise visits before and after school. They still pop in to talk about “the day with the picture” and they remind me about some of their favorite activities. Not only will the class be memorable because they helped me immensely towards earning my Masters, but they were an amazing group of kids to work with.

DATA ANALYSIS

Bins

Upon the conclusion of the study, I coded all of the student work and my field log. From my observations across all documents, I came across numerous keywords that fell into categorized bins. From these bins, I was able to make an organizer summarizing my major observations (Appendix M). The bins modeled a summary of my findings and provided an overview of the data I would be analyzing.

One of the largest bins in my organizer is my “Historical Thinking” bin. Here, several meta-concepts are emphasized, including compare, defend, and explain. This alone shows that the students are using and mastering historical thinking skills in the classroom; if I can see in their work that they are using meta-concepts to work with historical content and communicate ideas clearly, then I know that they are going beyond the basics of content knowledge and are using historical thinking skills to dive deeper into history.

Within these verbs, I can say that other historical skills are being met, too. For example, to “defend” was a skill that my students faced frequently. They had to defend their arguments on tests, they had to argue why their favorite invention was the greatest invention on all time, and they had to give reasons why Galileo was (or was not) guilty of heresy. Through these activities, a lot of other historical thinking skills were fulfilled. In the case of the Galileo assignment (p. 57), students were using sources, they were using argumentation, and they were using

contextualization in order to develop and defend their standpoint on the issue. While Cecilia and Jimmy made valid points that Galileo was not a heretic, their classmates used contextualization as a means of expressing Galileo's guilt because speaking out against the church was crime when Galileo was alive... and that's exactly what Galileo did. Even so, Cecilia and Jimmy demonstrated contextualization in other assignments, like the diary of a child laborer.

For many of the activities conducted in class, students were required to use substantive concepts. Much like during the Enlightenment Salon Skit (p. 66) and the Renaissance Art Gallery (p. 56), every student needed to show confidence in using vocabulary relevant to each unit. Through the field log and the assignments that my students completed, I saw that historical thinking became second nature to my students. They showed understanding early, and were able to grow upon their experiences.

Through the bins, I was also able to see how engaged my students were throughout the course of the study. The class had a lot of opportunities to work with historic content via DBQs and critical thinking assignments. For many of these days, the classes were productive, and the students enjoyed the activities they were working on. We ended the semester at least two weeks further than any other time I taught the World History course. This was surprising, as I felt that we did more "deep dives" than any other course I have ever taught. This shows that the flipped classroom can yield more time to cover new items in the curriculum and that the flipped classroom makes class more enjoyable for students. Rather

than listen to a lecture, they have the chance to make their voices heard in what they are learning; they can ask questions, explore more content, and talk amongst peers to gather more knowledge. From this experience, the students came together and truly acted as a community. They worked well together as a class.

The use of technology also led to its own bin. Being a flipped classroom, technology is essential, as it is the deliverable for the main curriculum content. For this class, students openly said that the videos were fun, that they felt more productive, and they felt that they had more control in their own learning. Rather than hearing to a single lecture, students could repeat the videos as many times as they needed in order to help them understand the material. Rather than bogging down in the material from scratch, we could use the start of class time to clarify any lingering questions that they may have formed the night before. From there, discussion, using substantive sources, and using meta-concepts are already integrated into the school day before anything new is even addressed.

The next major bin formed from my coding is writing. Obviously, writing was a major feature I was assessing in my study, so I knew that I would be developing a bin that focused solely on writing skills. From the codes that I created, I noticed that the student voice, often demonstrated in the writing skill “style”, was a prominent feature in student writing. From the French Revolution test (p. 64) to the diary of a child laborer assignment (p. 75), students infused a lot of themselves into the work they were creating. Even for the most mundane of questions, the students found a way to be creative with their answer. For example,

when answering questions on the Martin Luther quote analysis assignment (p. 60) Carl would describe Martin Luther as having a “bigger ego” and that this ego would “fabricate the truth [if] you think about it.” At times, the class broke the fourth wall in their writing and would address me directly when expressing their ideas, which an interesting observation. It showed how open they were and that they were saying exactly what was on their minds (and this class was not shy in expressing themselves!).

Along with their self-expression, honesty, and creativity, they were also demonstrating historical thinking skills. Many of the questions that they were asked were multiple parts, so students had numerous things to address in a DBQ question or a test question. They had to make sure that they were using their sources and they were using argumentation to develop their ideas. When the question called for it, students would need to use substantive concepts. Many of the questions and assignments were not only evaluating their writing ability, but they were also assessing different meta-concepts. When grading the work, the class generally received high marks, as their writing was strong and they were showing proficiency in the skills I was evaluating.

From the bins, the only major issue that I encountered was that students would periodically forget to complete a set of video notes. Estella was my most frequent forgetter, but Olena and Yugi were probably next in line for the title. They managed to find ways to catch up, but even so, forgetting the video notes caused small hiccups at times. Some days required more in-class review than

others because of missing video note assignments. However, even though there were instances of forgetfulness, it did not stop the student from doing the classwork. No matter who forgot, when it came time for the activity to begin, they would dive right in with the rest of the class. For activities like DBQs, the content is in the readings, so they can use the class time to their advantage and use the activity as a means of gathering content, or they would talk to a classmate to get the summary of the key details. When it came to large projects and tests, the students showed that they comprehended the material, so the issue of forgetting was a worry that I did not fret over much. At the end of the day, the class was performing well.

Bins are great in that they provide an overview in what to expect for for the specifics of data analysis. I looked more closely at my data and discovered many things in my observations and in the products that students created throughout the course of the study.

Survey Data

Throughout the course of my action research study, I used surveys to check in with my students and their reactions to the flipped classroom. While I had some students that were incredibly vocal throughout the semester, the survey was a great way to hear all of my students' voices. In total there were three surveys.

The first survey was given at the very start of the action research study (Appendix E). I wanted to see what my students knew about the flipped

classroom, how they felt about using technology in the classroom, and how they like to learn. Students answered two styles of questions: multiple choice and short answer. For the multiple choice questions, all of them had options including “Strongly Agree”, “Somewhat Agree”, “Neither Agree nor Disagree”, “Somewhat Disagree”, and “Strongly Disagree”. For the short answer questions, students were given a prompt that they could answer in a paragraph or less.

From my first survey, I learned several things from their input. First, the class liked working hands-on with curriculum content and had no issues with taking notes in class. 50% of students felt indifferent towards working alone vs. working in a group, and this somewhat surprised me. Usually students are vocal about what they like in that scope of work. However, I think that their indifference worked to my benefit because I could pick and choose when they could work in a group and when they could work independently. From the survey, I also learned that I was working with students that felt were active participants in the classroom. In fact, 83% of the class felt that they participate in class often. When given the statement “I find it easy to pay attention in school”, 58.3% of the class said that they “somewhat agree” with the statement. So in all, they were a group that liked to be involved, but I knew that there would be some days where not everyone was going to follow along.

In the scope of technology, all of the students stated that they enjoyed using the iPad and preferred to complete their work on the iPad. 10 out of 12 students said their favorite app to use was Notability, but some others that were

mentioned as apps of interest included iMovie, Keynote, and “le internet”. When given the statement “I have participated in a ‘flipped’ classroom before” eight students said “strongly disagree”, one said “somewhat disagree”, two said “neither agree nor disagree”, and one said “somewhat agree”. I knew that, going into the study, none of the high school teachers had previously used the flipped classroom in their classes, especially with 9th graders. I should have followed up with the student who said “somewhat agree” to see where he/she participated in a flipped classroom before.

The short answer questions focused on learning styles. Almost all of the students addressed working with material hands-on or being interactive with the content in class. One student mentioned the benefits of a small class, and one student talked about the application of content making learning more valuable. When asked “Would you prefer to spend class time working on projects and content-related activities, or would you prefer to spend class time reviewing notes and holding class discussions?” it was a fairly even split. While six addressed a preference, five of the students said that they felt both were necessary in order for the class to be successful. As one student put it, “it depends on what the week consists of”. This shows that the students preferred to be in a classroom that was interactive, but the definition of interactive changes from student to student.

The second survey was conducted upon completion of the Renaissance unit. I wanted to see how students felt about the flipped classroom now that they had some time in the flipped classroom environment. Like the first survey, there

was a multiple choice section and a short answer section. Table 3 showcases the results of the multiple choice portion of the second survey. Note that the number presented indicates how many students gave that response:

Table 3

Student Responses to the Mid-Study Survey

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
“I always complete my video notes before class.”	7	4	0	0	1
“I think the video lectures are entertaining.”	7	5	0	0	0
“The video lectures are informative.”	12	0	0	0	0
“The content in the video lectures is easy to understand.”	11	1	0	0	0
“I like the style of the video lectures presented to me.”	9	2	1	0	0
“I have difficulty accessing the	0	1	0	0	11

video lectures.”					
“I prefer being in a flipped classroom over a traditional classroom.”	4	6	1	0	1

There was also one additional question presented in the multiple choice section that did not have the same choice options. When given the statement “I have watched the video lectures more than once”, seven students said “sometimes”, three said “yes”, and two said “no”.

The short answer responses helped to elaborate some of the data expressed in the multiple choice questions. Overall, I was pleased to see that almost everyone was enjoying the new classroom structure. When asked what they liked about the flipped classroom, answers varied. At least four students addressed the role of pacing; they didn’t have to wait for anyone to finish. If they didn’t understand something in the video, they could play it back and watch it again.

However, this does lead in to the major critique of the flipped classroom: if the students don’t understand the video when at home, how can they get help from the teacher? The students have a point, and we made efforts to resolve this issue during class time. One student expressed a major fault of the flipped classroom: no internet access. I had one student that would fall behind in the videos, and it wasn’t until this survey that I learned that she had troublesome internet service at home. This means that she couldn’t watch the videos for

homework every day, and would often complete the work during school before class started. While this is not the ideal set-up for the flipped classroom, there are alternatives to work around this issue. I provided more opportunities to watch the videos during class so that everyone could access the material with no issues.

The final survey was completed after the Industrial Revolution unit ended. Again, the structure included multiple choice and short answer. Table 4 shows the student responses to the multiple choice questions. I wanted to see if their opinions changed about the flipped classroom now that they had fallen into a routine with the coursework. I also wanted to get their perspective on writing within the course, as they were already strong writers. Would more exposure to writing-based activities lead to improvements in writing? Practice makes perfect, after all! Note that many of these questions are similar to the questions from the second survey:

Table 4

Student Responses to the Final Survey

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
“I think the video lectures are entertaining.”	7	3	0	0	0
“The video lectures are informative.”	10	0	0	0	0

“The content in the video lectures is clear and easy to understand.”	9	1	0	0	0
“I like the style of the video lectures presented to me.”	9	1	0	0	0
“I prefer watching videos in class rather than at home.”	2	1	6	1	0
“I prefer being in a flipped classroom over a traditional classroom.”	6	3	1	0	0
“I enjoy completing writing-based activities in class.”	2	4	2	1	1
“I learn a lot from doing/completing writing assignments.”	4	1	4	1	0
“I feel that my writing has improved over the course of the semester.”	3	4	1	1	1
“I would prefer to complete an essay-based test over a traditional test.”	1	3	4	2	0
“Writing an essay in an exam is easy.”	1	5	3	1	0

Based on the information, not much has changed between the mid-study survey and the final survey. More students indicated that the video lectures were entertaining, and more students indicated that they liked the style of the video lectures. This shows that I applied the second survey feedback to the remaining video notes in the study and the class acknowledged my efforts. The other area of improvement refers to the statement “I prefer being in a flipped classroom over a traditional classroom.” At first, most students indicated some preference in the flipped classroom, but by the end of the study, over half of the students showed “strong agreement” with the statement.

Although the students participated in a lot of writing activities, students had varied reactions about the writing in the classroom. They showed some interest in writing-based essays, but indicated that they preferred creative writing pieces to demonstrate understanding. The class does not find writing-based exams to be impossible, but they do not particularly enjoy them, either. Several students shared, however, that they like writing-based exams provide more options for what to address; the assessments use content to focus on skills rather than asking the students for rote memorization, and one or two students acknowledged this, as well.

Field Log

The field log was an essential component to my survey data. The field log tracked my daily observations of student behaviors and interactions with one another and with me during the course of the study. I also made note of the

activities completed each day. The field log helped me track student progress on historical thinking skills during class discussions and other activities where not all material was written down for further analysis. My field log was divided into two parts: the first column included the date of the observation, the second column included key observations collected throughout the course of the day, and the final column on the right addressed my reflections and further analysis of what happened in class.

From my field log, I could see that my students were demonstrating historical thinking skills not only in their writing, but also in their discussions. As we reviewed HATs, DBQs, and other assignments, students were able to explain their ideas clearly and work off of one another's ideas. My students could explain, compare/contrast, differentiate perspectives, debate, defend, analyze, and collaborate. All of these terms are examples of meta-concepts, which my students were modeling in the classroom.

The field log also provides evidence that my students were successfully using substantive concepts, or they were using questioning techniques to better understand unfamiliar terms. For example, with the Galileo assignment (p. 57), in order to argue whether or not Galileo was a heretic, the students had to know what heresy was and what it means when someone is called a heretic. For the Enlightenment Salon Skit (p. 66), not only did the students have to know the names of the philosophers, but they also had to address what each philosopher believed in. Along the way, we discussed common U.S. political terms like

Democrat and Republican, and so they were learning substantive concepts beyond the scope of the unit.

Because this class was so vocal, argumentation was easy to document as they would often engage in conversation. The day that the students debated over the greatest invention of all time was an opportunity to be more creative with argumentation, but the skill was still present (p. 79)! During the Renaissance test (p. 61), students had to give a report card grade to famous people of the Renaissance. Using argumentation, students defended the grades of Leonardo da Vinci, King Henry VIII, and the Catholic Church based on their influence during the Renaissance. When reviewing assignments, especially document-based assignments, the students would contextualize the material and they would effectively respond to historical questions. Historical thinking skills can not be evaluated separately; there is a lot of overlap that occurs among the skills. There are some activities where a specific skill may be highlighted more than others, but the other skills are not completely tossed to the wayside. Because of this, when an activity was logged in the field log, I would note that multiple skills were being used and evaluated at the same time.

From the field log, it was safe to say that my students rose to the challenge and were able to prove that they were historical thinkers. However, I needed to keep in mind that my students were only 9th graders. I would occasionally give readings that were too complex. Therefore the students would still use historical thinking skills to guide their work, but were not as effective in showing their

abilities, as they could not fully comprehend the difficult readings set before them. If I maintained a more gradual process towards more complex readings, my students would probably react to some of the activities differently.

Student Work - Kahoot and Quizizz Results

After several video notes assignments, the students would start class with a review of the video notes that they were assigned. The class would log in to either Kahoot or Quizizz and answer a series of questions. This would give me the opportunity to see what material was mastered and what material needed more time for reviewing. This also provided me with an opportunity to see who completed the video notes assignment before the start of classes. In total, the students participated in two Kahoots and four Quizizzes.

The table below shows the average for each of the Kahoot and Quizizz activities assigned. It also indicates the highest scorer for each activity.

Table 5

Kahoot and Quizizz Results

Kahoot or Quizizz	Date Taken	Topic	Class Average (to nearest whole number)	Highest Scorer
Quizizz	9/14/17	Renaissance Intro	61% (~4 out of 6 questions)	Yugi (100%)
Kahoot	9/19/17	Renaissance Art	71% (~6 out of 8 questions)	Eddie (100%)

Quizizz	9/27/17	Religion in the Renaissance	68% (~6 out of 9 questions)	Eddie (89%)
Kahoot	10/3/17	Renaissance Review	82% (~25 out of 31 questions)	Eddie (96.8%)
Quizizz	10/30/17	Reign of Terror	58% (~5 out of 8 questions)	Eddie (100%)
Quizizz	11/2/17	End of French Rev	74% (~4 out of 6 questions)	Eddie (100%)

More Quizizz activities were given at the time of the study because the class showed a higher preference towards using Quizizz over Kahoot. Also, for the sake of time, Quizizz was a faster process for implementation, assessment, and review over Kahoot.

Based on the data above, Eddie was the strongest performer of the reviews, as he often scored at the top. If he was not the winner of the game, he was in the top three scorers. On some days, Eddie would tie with at least one other student based on number of questions correct; however, because Kahoot and Quizizz provide scores based on speed, Eddie got the winning marks because he answered the questions faster than his classmates.

At first glance, the class averages seem too low. If the students were such strong performers on the assessments and in other activities, how could the class possibly get a 65% on one of the reviews? Upon closer inspection, when comparing the percentages to the number of questions given in the review, the

totals are not terrible. On average in a six-question review, students would get one or two questions wrong. This shows that they understood most of the material given to them in the video notes. Usually the class would get the same question wrong, which would indicate that the material was not understood by most students or that the question was poorly written.

After the Kahoot or Quizizz, we would review the most popularly incorrect questions as a class. The students could also ask clarifying questions to make sure that all aspects of the material are understood. When given clarification, students confirmed their comprehension of the content. It's likely that, if given the chance to take the Kahoot or Quizizz again, the class average would improve after completing a review.

Overall, the students demonstrated understanding of content knowledge through the video notes reviews. Students that failed to complete the assignments (which became the same one or two students every time) would not perform well on the Kahoot or Quizizz. However, when reviewing the material as a class, the verbally confirmed that they understood what was reviewed, and proved their comprehension in an independent or group activity.

Student Work - Tests

At the end of each unit, students were required to complete a test that would assess their understanding of content as well as argumentation, using sources, and other historical thinking skills. The first test, the Renaissance test, was the only traditional test given during the course of the study. Due to the fact I

was assessing writing in the study, I wanted to have the students write more frequently. Because of this, I changed the test structure to have open-ended questions which could include an essay, paragraph-based responses, or tasks that use content to create a product on the test.

The class average for the Renaissance test was 97%, the class average for the French Revolution test was 96%, and the class average for the Industrial Revolution test was 93%. The Enlightenment Salon, which was a project-based assessment, had a 100% for all students.

For the final section of the Renaissance test, and for almost every question of the other exams, students were answering historical questions. Historical questions ask students to not only address the question that acknowledges content, but use other skills as well. This includes argumentation and utilization of meta-concepts in order to provide a full and complete answer. For example, for the French Revolution test, students were given a choice between two questions. All of the students answered the following question: “Would you consider the French Revolution a successful Revolution? Why or why not?” For this question, students cannot go with just a simple “yes” or “no”. They must use evidence to support their thinking, which demonstrates content knowledge and skill mastery.

Overall, on open-ended tests, students performed incredibly well. They did show stress in that they were completing open-ended questions, they felt some relief by having access to their notes throughout the course of the exam. Having access to the notes does not mean that they don't know the material; they utilize

the material in the open-ended questions, forcing the student to still show knowledge of the substantive concepts used in the activity through application.

The biggest criticism that students would get on open-ended tests is the need for clarification. Students would give some statements that included multiple subjects in the sentence, but no matter who they were referring to, they only used the pronoun “he”. At times, their message became muddled because they were not specific as who they were referring to in the statement. This resulted in a loss of credit on their tests, as I was unsure who they were referring to (a comment I would frequently use was “who is ‘he’?” or “what is ‘it’?”). Over time, the students would make more efforts to be more specific in their writing.

Student Work - Writing Assignments (includes DBQs)

Beyond the scope of tests, the writing assignments students completed provided me with information that supported the study. The class was given a wide variety of writing assignments including, but not limited, to: Black Death Health Report, HATs, Renaissance Art Gallery, Create Your Own Renaissance Art, Galileo Document Analysis, Martin Luther Document Analysis, Declaration of Rights of Students, French Revolution DBQ, Enlightenment Salon, and the Diary of a Child Laborer. These assignments can be divided into three categories: Creative Writing, DBQ, and content-based writing.

Creative writing assignments sparked the most interest among students and provided the most engagement. When developing the diary of a child laborer, students were investing their time in doing research or developing their

characters. At times, they would hone in on the activity more than the content. During discussions and other assessments, students showed their understanding of the content by addressing facts they found in their research or recalling the diary assignment when looking further into the Industrial Revolution. Overall, the students showed more willingness to write for assignments that held a creative flair. Although the class performed well, their creativity at times got in the way of expressing the content with full accuracy.

Document based questions, or DBQs, varied in length, style, and delivery. Some DBQs acted more like HATs, where students focused on one document and answered a short set of questions. Larger DBQs, such as those completed during the French Revolution, challenged students by exploring multiple questions for a lengthy set of sources.

Due to the nature of the assignments, not all of the writing activities could be graded based on the standard rubric. Instead, the grading changed based on the nature of the assignment. For example, with the diary of a child laborer assignment, students needed to weave in a set number of facts within their piece of historical fiction. The Renaissance Art Gallery challenged students to apply their knowledge of art terms and art history to explain characteristics of Renaissance art and also defend that a self-created piece of art could be defined as Renaissance.

Because of the varying writing assignments given throughout the course of the study, I thought that it would be in best interest to look at the major categories

of writing as identified in my literature review. Using these terms, I can then proceed to include how the student-created content matched, or failed to meet, these specific categories.

Focus. In the sense of focus, the students were often given clear prompts that allowed students to address content within a few sentences, or within a full essay. In order to establish their perspective with every question given, they would need to include a guiding statement that answers the question (much like a thesis). The students were able to clearly convey their message in the questions that they gave using a narrow-focused statement, and then from there used content to support and elaborate upon the statement further. Students were able to keep their focus on the prompt given, not really staying far from the point that they were trying to make.

One of the biggest challenges of focus came from the French Revolution test. According to Dr. Andy Fishman, a co-author of the rubric that I used in the study, what makes a student advanced in focus is that they not only have a thesis that narrows the scope of the paper, but they continually refer back to the thesis before moving on to the next supporting idea. This could be a one-sentence conclusion to the paragraph or it could be an analysis of the content that connects to the author's point. Many of my students demonstrated proficiency in focus in the French Revolution test by having a clear thesis statement, but few referred back to the thesis in their body paragraphs. They would display the content and

provide some analysis, but not actually refer back to the thesis statement as a means of maintaining focus.

To support this information, in Appendix N, you will see two samples of student writing. The first demonstrates an advanced level of focus: the thesis is given in the introduction, and then in the body paragraphs, there is an acknowledgement of the thesis to ensure that the content supports the main point. The other sample is a proficient level of focus: although there is a thesis, there isn't a reference back to the thesis within the body paragraphs.

However, focus is not just limited to essays. When given multi-part questions or tasks with various components, students need to maintain focus in writing in order to ensure that all elements requested by the teacher are covered. For example, the Renaissance Art Gallery had students describe the painting, use art terms, and explain why the painting belongs in a gallery. Everyone was able to accomplish this task for each artwork they selected. For test questions, the students were directed to provide a set minimum of examples in order to defend their answers, and for DBQs, students were asked to refer to specific documents in order to support their thinking. If the teacher provides the structure, the focus is much more prevalent in the student work. When given the opportunity to branch out and have more freedom in writing, students will show proficiency in focus, but not all will be achieving the advanced level that teachers strive for their students to achieve.

Content. Every assignment asked students to use specific examples to support their thinking. In some assignments, such as a test question, students were asked to give a minimum number of evidence-supporting points. However, in other assignments, like DBQs, students had a little more freedom creating and defending arguments. Most historical thinking skills emerge from this aspect of writing.

Overall, with most assignments, students almost always referenced specific documents and sources when it came to analysis-based and defense-based questions. Where there was more than one assignment, students would specify examples by saying “In Document B...” or “I found this in Document C.” Students were able to demonstrate their utilization of content provided to them, but also show how this content supports an idea that may not be exactly the easiest to defend.

For more creative assignments, like the diary of a child laborer and the Renaissance Art Gallery, students weren’t always referring to specific sources; they simply had to integrate terms and facts seamlessly into a different work. Although Tommy wrote his art gallery on Enlightenment art pieces, and while Cecilia and Olena focused more on the story than the facts of child labor, they were still able to demonstrate the effectiveness and use of content in their work.

Content was a skill that my students were familiar with from the start of the study. Because they showed their ability to use content so early in the study, I tried using different activities to see how content would be applied in different

scopes of writing. Overall, it did not seem to phase the students that much. Everyone was able to demonstrate utilization of sources and application of content when possible in writing.

The most noticeably weak demonstration of content came from NG's French Revolution test. Rather than identifying specific people or events, she would use vague terms like "things", "stuff", "he", "she", and "they". Upon grading her work, I gave her constructive feedback that using vague terms doesn't show me all of what she knows. If she were to address items more specifically, I would have a stronger understanding of what she meant. I noticed improvement since her test. An example from her Industrial Revolution test, completed about one month after the French Revolution essay is shown below in Figure 9:

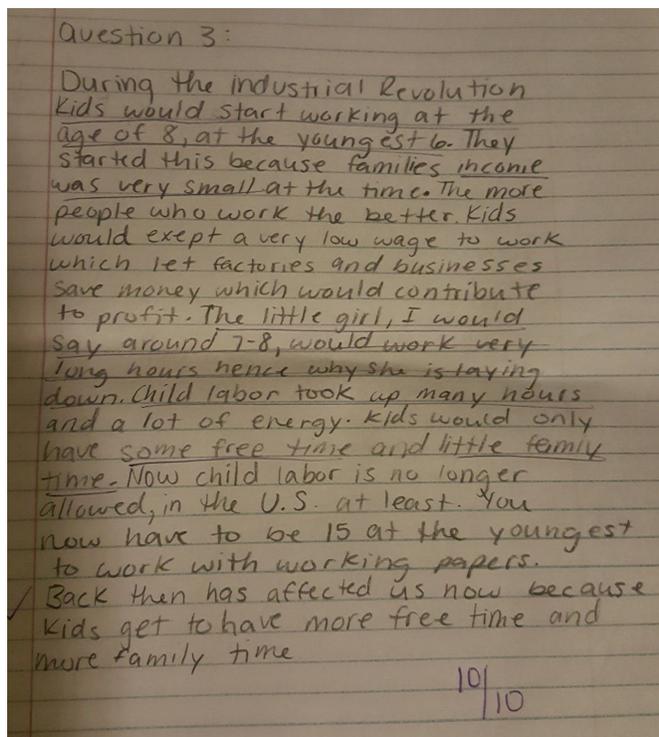


Figure 9. Emma's response to an Industrial Revolution test question

Organization. A simple concept that is often oversought, organization is one that is significant to the writing process. Whether writing one paragraph or five, organization still holds a presence in writing. Much like content, there was little to correct or overly-analyze in the realm of organization. When it came to writing paragraphs, clear topic sentences guided the reader of what to expect in the remainder of the paragraph. When it came to DBQs or HATs, students would say their “short answer” right away before using content to defend their ideas. There was little to critique or adjust during in the realm of organization; this was a skill they were already familiar with and showed mastery in early.

Any major focus on organization occurred during the Enlightenment Salon Skit, where students were writing collaboratively to create a script using the thoughts of Enlightenment thinkers. They had to develop lines that would flow from one idea to another without feeling rigid or choppy. One of the groups chose to write and group members would insert their philosopher’s lines as they saw fit. While many of the group members had no issue finding the appropriate places to insert their lines, Tommy frequently approached me throughout the course of the study. He had trouble finding places for his character to comment. This shows that he did not want to mess up the current status of the document’s organization, but at the same time could not organize his own philosopher’s ideas.

Overall, students mastered organization in writing, especially when working as individuals. The class encountered some challenges in organization while working collaboratively, but were able to problem solve within the group or with teacher feedback.

Style. Style is a writing feature that was strong among my classroom. Throughout the course of the semester, I was impressed at my students' voices as writers. They had so much personality. Whether it was for an in-class activity, a DBQ, or a test, they infused so much of themselves into their work. For example, Tommy would incorporate ASCII text and meme references within his writing. Sanaa was typically quiet in the classroom, but she was loud on paper; she once referenced President Trump as "that orange man" and said that "It could've been a legitimate picture, had cameras existed during those times" when talking about a Van Eyck painting of Mary and Jesus. If a student turned in an assignment without their name written at the top, I feel that I would have the ability to identify the student based on their writing style alone.

One of the most fascinating observations that I encountered when analyzing their writing is that their style changed based on the writing assignment that they were given. In-class activities generally had a casual, informal tone. The class still showed their understanding of the material and were able to meet the objectives of the assignment given, but they didn't have to always be 100% formal 100% of the time. When it came to tests and projects, their style shifted to a more formal and academic tone, as they were presenting a "final" piece of work

that had a heavier impact on their grades. More creative pieces allowed students to have a little more fun with their work; they could incorporate humor, personality, and “life” into the work that they were making. For example, when looking at Jimmy’s diary of a child laborer (Figure 10), one can see that it is riddled with grammatical and spelling errors:

I am 10 and half years, an boy and
doz not have very gud work condishuns. I sad be cuz of theez condishuns and how
dangorus. Useually I wak up at 4 am to git tu work on time evaryday. I work al day so I
cannot get egucashon. In the hotter months we work for about 20 hours out of the day.
Evaryone has to work in mi family to pay rent on time. It is vary stresful because
evaryone is out all the time.

Figure 10. A passage from Jimmy’s Diary of a Child Laborer assignment

However, this was intentional. Jimmy is a strong writer conventionally speaking. Even so, he knew that children during the Industrial Revolution were uneducated, so they would not be able to read or write in the first place. As a result, he accommodated his style to match the context of the time period and make his character more real.

When it comes to style, this was the class’ greatest strength in writing. They used appropriate tone, word choice, and sentence structure based on the assignment that they were given. They demonstrated not only the basics regarding style in writing, but showed that they can mold the style based on the assignment that is given to them.

Conventions. Out of all the categories, I feel this was was component of my student work that I felt I could nitpick the most. As seen throughout the data presented in my study, there are several misspellings and grammatical errors that appear throughout student writing. When it comes to misspellings, usually two letters were switched, a letter was omitted, or the correct letter was replaced with a different letter (ex: “shouls” instead of “should”). At times, the words that they used on one portion of a paragraph were misspelled, but weren’t in another portion. With grammar, there were some instances where students used “less” instead of “fewer”, occasional punctuation errors (comma splices), and some improper verb tenses were used in their writing.

Shao, one of the students in the class, frequently mixed up verb tenses in her writing. However, based on my observations, I was led to believe that Shao’s first language was not English; she spoke with a dialect and would verbally mix up tenses when communicating with me. Because of this, she would frequently check in with me to see if her text was grammatically correct and that it used proper spelling.

Shao is not the only student to approach me to check for conventions; many of the students would ask about their work to see if it was okay. Most of the feedback that I would give students in my editing would be focused on capitalization, making sure to italicize artwork titles, and spelling. As I am describing this, I am sure it sounds like their work was riddled with errors.

However, there were not that many errors in their writing. If graded, their work would always be proficient or advanced.

I will acknowledge that many of the assignments that they completed over the course of the study was typed on the iPad. Because of this, some of the errors that they may have typed would have been autocorrected by the software installed on the iPad. This means that they could have had more errors in their writing, but the technology within the iPad would have done some autocorrecting, or would have at least notified the student that there was an error. Even though I was able to make plenty of observations on their writing conventionally, much of it was pre-screened by the iPad.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Upon the conclusion of coding my students' work, my field log, surveys, and other points of data, I organized the different codes into a series of bins (Appendix M). Using the bins created, along with repeated looks at my collected data from my study, I came across several themes. These themes not only respond to my major research question, but go beyond to provide more insight towards the flipped classroom, historical thinking, and student writing ability.

1. When given the time to engage in hands-on learning activities, students can perform just as well, if not better, in the flipped classroom versus a traditional classroom; they will build upon their historical thinking and writing skills through exposure to primary source analysis, writing assignments (including essay-based exams), and collaborative critical thinking activities.

Evidence of this theme can be shown throughout the course of my action research study. From my research narrative, there are multiple instances where my students demonstrate historical thinking skills and show proficiency in writing. One of the easiest ways to demonstrate historical thinking is through writing, so, to me, the two topics go hand-in-hand.

From the start, my students demonstrated proficient writing and had some historical thinking skills developed, so the activities that I implemented during the course of the study helped to build upon the foundation they already had. For example, with the Galileo DBQ (p. 57) students were able to use substantive

concepts and use sources to develop argumentation skills. When exposed to primary source analysis, students are using historical thinking skills and often communicate their ideas through writing. These skills improved even further when looking at their French Revolution tests (p. 64). They were nervous about the concept of the essay, but when graded, were proficient or advanced in all categories. Emma, who was my lowest scorer on the French Revolution test, showed improvement in her writing when the following test came around (p. 107). The Enlightenment Salon Skit (p. 66) and the Industrial Revolution deep-end discussion (p. 71) model historical thinking skills, as well. These not only used argumentation and using sources, but these assignments encouraged other scopes of historical thinking like using meta-concepts, and asking historical questions. By collaborating and working together, students could fact-check one another, branch off into other topics of exploration, and even try to solve the national debt (THAT is critical thinking!).

Based on the timing of the units, and if I were to compare my timeline of the action research study with timelines of previous semesters, I moved further through content material than ever before. We were weeks ahead of previous World History classes. I feel that this is attributed to the fact that I removed at least 30-40 minutes of direct instruction in the classroom and replaced that time with skill-building activities and collaborative learning experiences. Much like Bergmann and Sams, I could see that my students were more engaged with the new-found time that was given to them, and my students' grades showed that this

was an effective process for them (2009). With this time, I was not only able to move further in the curriculum with my students, but they were also given the opportunity to work in ways that I never had the chance to do before. The study showed that, by flipping the classroom, there is time for students to work on these skills through more hands-on activities and that they will continue to work on their reading and writing as they are challenged with different history-themed activities.

2. If students are exposed to more writing opportunities in the classroom, students will have more time to practice and gradually improve upon their writing abilities (even though they may personally feel that their writing skills have not improved).

As seen in my literature review, to improve student writing, some suggest exposing students to more writing opportunities (p. 30). Open-ended assessments and writing-based activities are encouraged to have students write. Also, in order to motivate students as writers, teachers assigned creative writing opportunities more frequently. Throughout the course of the study, the students were completing writing-based assignments in various tones and formats. They wrote essays (p. 64), created scripts (p. 66), developed diaries (p. 75), and analyzed sources to defend historical perspectives (p. 60). Students were given opportunities to demonstrate the skills I was evaluating, but also received opportunities to be creative with history. I observed that they were engaged in the class and with the content, especially with assignments that interested them, such

as the Enlightenment salon skit and the diary of a child laborer. They enjoyed taking the content and using them in different modes to show what they have learned in a given unit or lesson. Out of all the writing assignments that they completed, most students said that a creative writing assignment was their favorite because they got to learn while also having the chance to be creative (p. 30). Also, implementing writing activities with varying processes kept students engaged because they weren't writing the same assignment repeatedly (in other words, they weren't writing essays every single time).

Looking at the data collected from the final survey of my study (p. 94) several students shared that they did not feel that their writing improved. However, when looking at their work, students showed improvement between the start and conclusion of the study. Through the examples seen in the data analysis and research narrative, students demonstrated key writing skills like content, organization, and style to show what they have learned. Conventions and focus were elements that students showed proficiency in, but needed more guidance to ensure full mastery of the skill. While not all students fully mastered these skills, they have definitely advanced their proficiency in the skill.

Much of the improvements and changes came from my feedback. Overall, there were two main categories of feedback that I gave: post-writing feedback and continuous feedback. According to my literature review, in order to improve writing, continuous feedback can be of great benefit for the students (p. 30). In many cases, students would advocate for themselves on projects and test prep to

make sure that their work was meeting my expectations and fulfilling the requirements of the assignment. Many students advocated for themselves by checking in with me directly (pgs. 62, 68). They would ask if it was “ok”, which, when analyzed further, meant “How are my conventions? Is my work organized? Do I have style? Is the content supporting my idea? Does my work seem focused?” In the immediate sense of feedback, I could have conversations with my students. If something did not read right, I could ask them questions as a means of feedback. With the back and forth, students were discovering the edits and changes that were needed to make their ideas clearer and appropriate to the assignment. While some required repeated correction at times, students were able to turn in a final product that met my expectations and proved their understanding of the content while demonstrating the assessed historical thinking and writing skills.

For larger assignments like a test, I used more of a finalized form of feedback with the students. This information was constructive and benefitted the students (p. 65). In fact, even one of them replied to me with a thank you. Because these assignments could not be amended or changed, students had to take that feedback and apply it to the next assignment. Students were successful in carrying that information to other writing assignments, especially when they were considered larger assignments like a project or test. Emma is a strong example of this because she showed growth between two unit tests set weeks apart from one another (p. 75). Tommy botched his Renaissance Art Gallery by addressing the

wrong content with a tone not appropriate to the assignment, but was able to redeem himself in later assignments by reading the directions more closely and monitoring his style in writing. Many of the students showed growth, and, if given more opportunities to write, would continue to grow and master major writing skills.

3. With the flipped classroom, student participation and engagement in the classroom increases, as more hands-on activities are presented to students and time is given in class for the students to complete and review assignments.

My literature review indicates that one of the major benefits of a flipped classroom is student engagement (p. 18). Instead of having a teacher give a lecture in every class, the students are required to be more independent in learning direct content. Their preparation allows for class time to include more hands-on activities, more intense discussions, and more time to enjoy the content. The students shared with me that they liked the flipped classroom model over the traditional setting (p. 19, 94), and when asked why, they indicated that they had more time to do more than they would in any other class. This data supports another piece addressed in my literature review: students overall respond more positively to a flipped classroom because they are more engaged in the curriculum (p. 18). Rather than lecture, students were reviewing and applying; the first step, direct instruction, was removed from the class routine.

Also, from my literature review, other benefits to the flipped classroom include more time and more learned content (p. 18). By the end of the semester, I was covering content that I never had the chance to cover before. In fact, I was approximately two weeks ahead of where I was in the past school year. The students also felt that they have more time with the material, even though we were actually moving at a faster pace. Because of this extra time, we could dive deeper in units that we were working through and we could go on exploratory inquiries like the Industrial Revolution deep-dive discussion (p. 71). In the past, I had cut the Enlightenment Salon Skit due to time, but knowing that we had the space for it in the semester, I reinstated the assignment.

4. When given video lectures created by the teacher, students are able to demonstrate comprehension, application, and other higher-order thinking of curriculum content through in-class reviews and written-based assessments, including essay tests and writing projects.

Based on the Kahoots and Quizziz activities given at the start of classes (p. 98) students on average retained over 60% of the material that they learned in the video notes. As previously mentioned, this sounds like a low number at first; however, it is important to consider that there were between 6 and 9 questions given for each of these activities. Also, some students forgot to watch the videos, which led to a lower percentage once they were put on the spot. This is a concern addressed in my literature review (p. 19); if they students aren't watching, then they aren't prepared. Estella experienced this firsthand during the study (p. 50)

and voiced her concerns, but over time managed her time to make the video notes a part of her schedule.

Looking at the reviews again, the students verbally addressed a preference towards Quizizz because they could move more independently through the questions without the pressures that Kahoot can place on a student. This leads me to believe that they felt they did better using Quizizz than they did using Kahoot for reviewing purposes. Because there is no even distribution of Kahoots and Quizizzes completed in the study, I cannot do a fair side-by-side comparison.

I did observe that, when reviewing video notes content, timing is of the essence. Referring back to Table 5, the lowest percentages come from 9/14/17 and 10/30/17. The first date mentioned was the first time that they ever used video notes and reviewed material, and because of this, they needed time to develop the “learning curve”. Over time, the scores improve. However, October 30th proved to be a challenging day. It was a Monday, and the video notes were assigned on Friday to be completed over the weekend. Students that wanted a homework-free weekend submitted the notes on Friday, and then forgot about the content over the weekend. When Monday came around, they had to recall information that they hadn’t seen in several days. The lesson was learned: students will demonstrate comprehension of the material, but will perform better on “pop quizzes” when they have less time between watching the video and the implementation of the Kahoot/Quizizz.

However, students were not limited to demonstrating content through Kahoot and Quizizz alone. They had to show their understanding of the material, and the application of the material in almost every assignment that they completed over the course of the study. With the Renaissance Art Gallery students were using substantive concepts to show that, with art they had never seen before, that they could identify sfumato, linear perspective, and pyramidal composition in a painting. In the Enlightenment Salon Skit (p. 66) student used resources to show the different thoughts of major philosophers from the time period. Tests and quizzes, as seen throughout the research narrative, demonstrated application of content and content knowledge through challenging and thought-provoking questions.

The students' grades also reflect the understanding of content knowledge the students demonstrated throughout the study. By the end of the study, the entire class earned a 93% or higher as their grade for the course. The class performed well on every project and assignment that was sent their way, and they managed the work with ease.

5. Some of the challenges associated with flipping the classroom include student forgetfulness (to watch the video and take notes ahead of schedule) and potential lack of comprehension as a result, and the teacher's need for time to make the video lectures with note sheets.

For a while, Estella was the voice of opposition towards the flipped classroom. She was the one that most frequently forgot to watch the video notes

(the first instance is found on p. 50 of the document). In response to talking about the flipped classroom model, she expressed her concerns: she said that, at times, she did not feel prepared because she didn't watch the video ahead of time. As a result, she would sneak some time in class to watch the video before starting the day's activity to feel more comfortable with the content. However, he was not the only person to forget the work. Following Estella, Yugi and Olena were my most frequent forgetters. I noticed that if I assigned video notes on a Friday, I had fewer students complete the work, resulting in poorer performances on the review Kahoot or Quizizz (p. 98). On days like these, we had to go back and review the content more closely, taking up time from the hands-on activity that we would be working on that day. By the end of classes, however, the students felt more comfortable with the content.

Student forgetfulness was not a surprise to me in the study. One of the downfalls that comes with the flipped classroom environment, forgetting to watch the videos, was identified in my literature review (p. 19). Students will not always remember to complete the work, so it is important that, as the teacher, you are prepared to use more time reviewing material or alter the delivery of the videos if too many students are forgetting.

One of the issues on my end was the video making process. When implementing a video-based flipped classroom, it is encouraged to have the teacher create his/her own videos. My literature review defends this point by saying that teacher-made videos are more closely tied to the curriculum and

present material the way the teacher wants the work to be presented (p. 17). While pre-made videos would also be helpful in saving time, they may not address all of the content that I want the students to know, or they may go too fast through the material, or they may focus on entertainment more than education.

Choosing to make my own videos was daunting, but rewarding. On average, I spent about 2-3 hours creating a 5-10 minute video from scratch. I would write out a script, create the Keynote, transfer the Keynote into image files, record my audio, and then compile all the work in an edited product. By the end of the study, I could put together a video more quickly, but even so, it took a lot of preparation to make every video for the study and beyond. Is there an easier, more time-efficient means of making a video? Absolutely. According to Bergmann and Sams, it should take about 30 minutes to create one 10-minute video (2012). However, this is if I were to screencast my recording, which I chose not to do. As the flipped classroom becomes more routine, I can become more efficient in making my videos for my students.

To put things in perspective, on average, about 2 videos were assigned each week. This means about 4-6 hours each week was dedicated to making videos for the class. However, with the success of the videos, I can now use them in future classes, making my preparation time for lessons much smaller.

NEXT STEPS

Now the question is, where do I go from here?

As far as flipping the classroom goes, I plan on continuing the flipped classroom model with my future history students. The structure that I used worked for the students, so I plan on following the same structure if more videos are needed in future curricula. This means that videos will be short, informative, and have just a touch of entertainment value that doesn't completely derail the material being covered. I would like to re-evaluate my current videos to see if I need to re-edit or combine concepts to make fewer videos per unit.

Overall, as far as implementation of the videos goes, I would like to keep it the same: assign approximately two videos per week, avoid assigning videos on a Friday, and use the start of class time to review the video rather than do a standard lecture. Based on the data, this was a process that worked for my class. However, as all teachers know, no two classes are the same. Because of this, I would consider providing the option to watch the videos in class in the future, especially with lower-level students. I wonder that, if the students worked independently on the videos at the start of class, that they would perform better on Kahoot and Quizizz reviews. One of the biggest pieces of feedback that I received from my students participating in the study was that if they didn't understand something, they felt that they needed to wait to ask me. If the students are watching the videos in class, then there was no wait time; they could ask a question right away if needed. Technically speaking, this process can still be

viewed as a flipped classroom, so it would still work. The abilities of my students and the environment that the class creates will help me determine the best way to implement the video notes for future semesters. However, because my first class responded so positively to the pedagogy, I don't plan on dropping the flipped classroom method any time soon. In fact, I am using the flipped classroom with my students in the new semester.

Between the current semester and the previous semester, I have noticed some differences in implementation of the videos. The World History classes that I currently teach are not honors courses, and the students present varying academic levels. As a result, I am bearing witness to how the flipped classroom is working in these courses and making adjustments as necessary to promote student progress.

In the scope of historical thinking skills, I know that I want to implement more activities that emphasize these skills at the individual and collaborative levels. I also want to make sure that the work I assign is designed for the appropriate grade level. There are a lot of resources available that can provide primary resources that I can use to create DBQs and HATs, but I need to make sure that the work is modified to match their reading levels and abilities. This means that I may need to make changes to a document from one year to the next. This may also mean that there are some activities that I can use in some class but omit them in others. Activities that may be too challenging can be replaced with other assignments that will still have the students working hands-on with history

and still provide an opportunity to demonstrate historical thinking, but does the process through other means. I would like to see what other activities researchers and teachers used to practice historical thinking and use those practices in my classroom.

During the study, I told my students about sourcing, contextualizing, and corroboration, but I never explicitly went through each historical thinking skill. We talked about argumentation, we reviewed substantive concepts, and I told them when they were using meta-concepts, but I wanted the demonstration of historical thinking to occur naturally. Therefore, I didn't dive deep into defining each skill with the class. I felt that if I described each skill with them, then I was trying to force the skill on the student, and I felt that I was making the student perform for the study rather than perform for their own interest in learning.

Within the scope of writing, I have a few ideas that would help improve student writing ability. I feel that I collected enough data to show that there was improvement in student writing, but I feel that there are ways that I could have improved my data collection in this area. I should have started the study with a straight-forward essay (I started with a survey and a DBQ), and then had the students complete another essay at the end to see a clearer example of improvement. I do not want to change the opportunities for students to get creative with history; if those were the favored assignments, I would want to keep those. However, if I were to do bookend essays, I can show their improvement instead.

Because my students from the study were strong writers, I did not need to complete major writing lessons to tell them how to do something in writing. Most of their direction came from feedback. With students that need more support, I would need to implement “how to” lessons in writing so they can learn how to use the skills needed to communicate a thought or idea to the reader. I have conducted some writing lessons in the past, so I feel they would be beneficial to classes that need assistance in writing. By scaffolding the skills instead of throwing them in all at once, students will have the chance to improve their writing ability.

If given the chance to repeat the study, there are some points of interest that I would explore further. One of the most prominent is how the flipped classroom will work in classes of other academic levels. While I am not going through the formal process of studying at this time, I am already noticing some differences. Historical thinking skills and writing skills need more development, and, as a result, we are spending more time working on building these skills through other activities. No two classes are the same; some of the activities I find to work this semester may not be as successful next year. Therefore, the process of flipping the classroom varies from class to class, year after year.

Another item that would be interesting to explore is how the flipped classroom with the intention to promote historical thinking and writing will work in other schools. I currently work in a city charter school, but I have experience in private and public institutions, as well. How would students perform in the flipped classroom if the pedagogy was implemented in a private or public school? Would

there be any differences between what happens in city schools versus schools in the suburbs? When researching the flipped classroom and preparing my literature review, not a lot of publications focused on the flipped classroom method similar to my use. There is a lot that can be explored here, and would be worth pursuing further if given the chance.

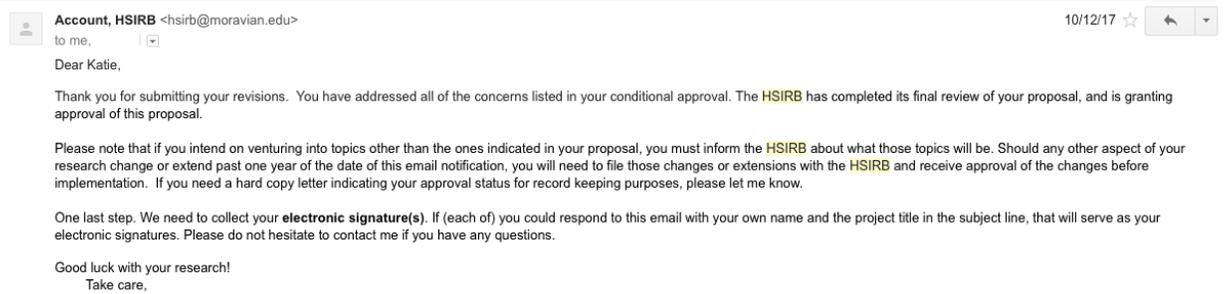
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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Approval of HSIRB from Moravian College



Appendix B: Letter of Informed Consent - Director of Education

September 2017

Dear _____,

Over the past several years, I have been actively pursuing my Masters Degree in Curriculum and Instruction at Moravian College. Through my courses, I have explored new assessment strategies, discovered how to implement historical inquiry in the classroom, and applied collaborative learning strategies that I now use with the students at String Theory Schools.]

As a part of the requirements to complete the graduate program, teachers must participate in a Masters thesis; the thesis is a long-term action research study of a teaching practice. My study will explore the effects of creating a flipped classroom environment to emphasize skill building in the classroom, specifically writing and historical thinking. In a flipped classroom, students are required to watch video-based lectures created by the teacher at home and take notes on the content; on the following school day, the content is reviewed and applied to various learning activities and assessments. I hope that, by dedicating more time in the classroom for writing and practicing historical thinking, that the students will develop the skills they need to achieve in high school by becoming stronger writers and critical thinkers. I also believe that this study will benefit the school, as we use iTunesU and other technological platforms for educational purposes, and that the results can help inspire other teachers to consider flipping their classrooms, as well.

In order to collect data for my study, I will be using student surveys, assessments (tests, quizzes, and projects), writing-based activities completed by the students, and classroom observations. With this data, I can see how students respond to a flipped classroom, and work on ways to improve my own teaching. I understand that maintaining the confidentiality of the students is paramount; I will not be using the students' names in any of the work that I present to Moravian College. I will also not use the name of the school, nor any teachers and staff that may have involvement in the study over time.

All students will have the option to participate; however, participation in the study is completely optional. If a student chooses not to participate, the World History curriculum will not change in any way for the student. I will simply not use their data in the action research study for my Masters thesis. Students have the option to withdraw from the study at any time in writing. Parents will also have the option to withdraw their child from the study at any time. Once a student or their parents withdraw from the study, the data will be completely removed from my research and they will not be included in the Masters thesis.

If you have any questions or concerns about my action research study, you may contact me via email at klowery@stringtheoryschools.org. My professor at Moravian College for this semester, _____, is available via email at _____. _____, my advisor at Moravian College, is available via email at _____.

Thank you for your time and for your permission to complete my Masters degree by pursuing my research study this semester. Please sign the following page to confirm that you have read this letter and that I can continue the study. It is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Katie Lowery-KinKade

I can attest that I am the Director of Education at the school where Katie Lowery-KinKade is teaching. I have read the above letter written by Katie Lowery-KinKade. Katie Lowery-KinKade has my permission to conduct her study on flipping the classroom.

Principal's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix C: Letter of Informed Consent - Parents

September 2017

To Whom It May Concern,

I am Katie Lowery-KinKade, your child’s World History teacher for the fall semester this school year. While teaching here at _____, I am also actively pursuing my Masters in Education at Moravian College.

As a part of the Masters Program, I will be conducting a research study in your child’s classroom to see if writing skills and historical thinking skills improve when students experience a “flipped” classroom environment. This means that, rather than complete the lecture in class, students will watch teacher-made videos about the curriculum content at home in preparation to apply the content to a skill worked on in class. During the action research study, your child will watch short videos about content at home and, on the following school day, apply the content to a writing-based activity or small group activities completed in class. This way, while students are continuing to learn the curriculum material, they are also making time in the school schedule to build skills needed for post-secondary education and standardized tests.

Your child’s participation is voluntary. In the event you choose not to have your child participate in the action research study, your child’s work will not be included in the data used for the action research study, and your child will not receive a penalty in his/her grade for not participating in the study. In the event you decide to withdraw your consent partway through the study, your child’s work will still be graded, but will not be included in the study data. To help maintain confidentiality for your child during the action research study, your child’s name will not be used in the thesis and presentation.

If you are interested in allowing your child’s work to be included in the data for the study, please sign the consent form below and have the bottom portion of the letter returned to me by **Friday, September 15th**. If you have any questions regarding the action research study, you may contact me via email at _____.

Thank you for your time. Your help is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
Katie Lowery-KinKade
High School Social Studies Teacher

Please Check One:

_____ I am giving consent for my child, _____, to participate in the study.

_____ I am NOT giving consent for my child, _____, to participate in the study.

Parent Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix D: Letter of Assent - Students

September 2017

Dear Student,

I am Katie Lowery-KinKade, your World History teacher for the fall semester this school year. While teaching here at _____, I am also actively pursuing my Masters in Education at Moravian College.

As a part of the Masters Program, I will be conducting a research study in your classroom to see if writing skills and historical thinking skills improve when students experience a “flipped” classroom environment. This means that, rather than complete the lecture in class, you will watch teacher-made videos about the curriculum content at home in preparation to apply the content to a skill worked on in class. During the action research study, you will watch short videos about content at home and, on the following school day, apply the content to a writing-based activity or small group activities completed in class. This way, while you are continuing to learn the curriculum material, you are also making time in the school schedule to build skills needed for post-secondary education and standardized tests.

Your participation is voluntary. In the event you choose not to participate in the action research study, your work will not be included in the data used for the action research study, and you will not receive a penalty in your grade for not participating in the study. In the event you decide to withdraw your consent partway through the study, your work will still be graded, but will not be included in the study data. To help maintain confidentiality for you during the action research study, your name will not be used in the thesis and presentation.

If you are interested in allowing your work to be included in the data for the study, please sign the consent form below and have the bottom portion of the letter returned to me. If you have any questions regarding the action research study, you may contact me via email at _____.

Thank you for your time. Your help is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
Katie Lowery-KinKade
High School Social Studies Teacher

I confirm that I am a student in Katie Lowery-KinKade’s classroom for World History in the Fall Semester in the 2017-2018 school year.

Please Check One:

_____ I am giving consent to participate in the study.

_____ I am NOT giving consent to participate in the study.

Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix E: Pre-Study Survey

Student Survey

Follow the directions indicated for each part of the survey. Please be honest in your responses and provide clear answers for any short answer questions present in the survey.

* Required

1. Email address *

Part One: The Basics

Answer the following questions to provide more information about yourself. You may need to fill in a blank with text or mark a multiple choice option. For all multiple choice questions, please choose only one option.

2. What is your gender? *

Mark only one oval.

- Male
 Female
 Prefer not to say

3. What is your ethnic background? *

Mark only one oval.

- White
 Black/African American
 Hispanic
 Asian/Pacific Islander
 Prefer not to say
 Other: _____

Part Two: Statements

Identify the choice that best relates to how much you agree with the statement. You can only choose one option per question.

4. I prefer when the teacher gives a lecture in class. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

5. I enjoy working with material hands-on in class. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

6. I don't mind taking notes in class. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

7. I prefer to work alone instead of working in a group. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

12. I enjoy using the iPad in class. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

13. I enjoy using the iPad to complete homework assignments. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

14. I think the iPad is distracting to me in class. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

15. I have participated in a "flipped" classroom before. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Part Three: Short Answer Questions

Answer the following questions in the spaces provided. Complete sentences are encouraged.

8. I like when a teacher gives writing assignments. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

9. If a teacher assigns homework, I often complete and turn in the work on time. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

10. I often participate in class (ex: raise my hand to answer questions, contribute to class discussions). *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

11. I find it easy to pay attention in school. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

16. What is your favorite way to learn? Why? *

17. What qualities should an effective teacher have? *

18. What is your favorite iPad app to use for classroom activities or projects? Why? *

19. Would you prefer to spend class time working on projects and content-related activities, or would you prefer to spend class time reviewing notes and holding class discussions? Why? *

Send me a copy of my responses.

Powered by
Google Forms

Appendix F: Mid-Study Survey

Student Survey II

Answer the following questions honestly about your experience with the flipped classroom in your World History class.

* Required

1. Email address *

Part One: Statements

Identify the choice that best relates to how much you agree with the statement. You can only choose one option per question.

2. I always complete the video notes before class. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

3. I think the video lectures are entertaining. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

4. The video lectures are informative. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

5. The content in the video lectures is clear and easy to understand. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

6. I like the style of the video lectures presented to me. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

7. I have difficulty accessing the video lectures. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

8. I have watched the video lectures more than once. *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Sometimes (I have watched some videos more than once, but not all)

9. I prefer being in a flipped classroom over a traditional classroom. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Part Two: Written Response

Please write your responses to the following questions in the space provided. Again, please be honest and clear with your ideas. Complete sentences are preferred.

10. What do you like most about the flipped classroom method? Why? *

11. What do you DISlike the most about the flipped classroom method? Why? *

12. What do you like about the style/structure of the video lectures? Why? *

13. Where do you think the video lectures could do with improvement? What do you suggest as a way to make the video lectures better? *

14. Is there anything that you want the teacher to know regarding the course or the flipped classroom? *

Send me a copy of my responses.

Appendix G: Final Study Survey

Student Survey III

Answer the following questions honestly about your experience with the flipped classroom in your World History class.

* Required

1. Email address *

Part One: Statements

Identify the choice that best relates to how much you agree with the statement. You can only choose one option per question.

2. I think the video lectures are entertaining. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

3. The video lectures are informative. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

4. The content in the video lectures is clear and easy to understand. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

5. I like the style of the video lectures presented to me. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

6. I prefer watching the videos in class rather than at home. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

7. I prefer being in a flipped classroom over a traditional classroom. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

8. I enjoy completing writing-based activities in class. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

9. I learn a lot from doing/completing writing assignments. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

10. I feel that my writing has improved over the course of the semester. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

11. I would prefer to complete an essay-based test over a traditional test. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

12. Writing an essay for an exam is easy. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Part Two: Written Response

Please write your responses to the following questions in the space provided. Again, please be honest and clear with your ideas. Complete sentences are preferred.

13. What do you like most about the flipped classroom method? Why? *

14. What do you DISlike the most about the flipped classroom method? Why? *

15. What was your favorite writing assignment that we completed in class (Examples: Diary of a Child Laborer, DBQ, Black Death Health Report...)? Why? *

16. What did you like about completing an essay-based exam? Why? *

17. What did you DISlike about completing an essay-based exam? Why? *

18. Is there anything that you want the teacher to know regarding the course or the flipped classroom? *

Send me a copy of my responses.

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Appendix H: Renaissance Test Sample (“Traditional Test”)

Part One: Multiple Choice

Directions: Identify the choice that best answers the question by circling one of the letters provided. 1 point each.

1. How did the Black Death spread from Asia to Europe?
 - a. “Miasma”
 - b. God was punishing the people
 - c. Fleas and rats on trading ships
 - d. None of these

2. All of the following were results of the Black Death **EXCEPT**...
 - a. People lost faith in the Catholic Church
 - b. Approx. $\frac{1}{3}$ of the European population died
 - c. “Ring around the Rosy” becomes a popular nursery rhyme
 - d. Trade routes collapse across Europe and Asia

3. What does “Renaissance” mean?
 - a. Life
 - b. Open
 - c. Rebirth
 - d. Classic

Part Four: Short Answer

Directions: Answer the questions in the spaces provided. You do not need to use complete sentences; however, you want to make sure that your answers are clear. 2 points each.

26. What were some major outcomes of the printing press? Provide two examples.

27. Why was the Catholic Church upset with Galileo and other scientists of the Renaissance?

28. Provide one similarity and one difference between Renaissance art and Medieval Art.

Appendix J: French Revolution Test

French Revolution Test

The French Revolution test is an essay-based exam. You will use your notes, your knowledge, and critical thinking to write an essay that relates to the French Revolution topic. You will have time in class to prepare for the exam with outlines and notes.

On test day, you will have 90 minutes to write out your entire exam. You will have access to your notes and activities on Notability on testing day.

Your essay will consist of at least 4 paragraphs (intro, 2+ body paragraphs, and conclusion) and will be graded using the rubric provided below.

THE ESSAY

Choose ONE of the two given prompts and answer the question in essay format.

1. Would you consider the French Revolution a successful revolution? Why or why not?
2. Many historians believe that the French Revolution is the most important event in human history. Write your argument that supports or denies this statement.

	FOCUS	CONTENT	ORGANIZATION	STYLE	CONVENTIONS
	<i>The single controlling point made with an awareness of task (mode) about a specific topic.</i>	<i>The presence of ideas developed through facts, examples, anecdotes, details, opinions, statistics, reasons and/or explanations.</i>	<i>The order developed and sustained within and across paragraphs using transitional devices including introduction and conclusion.</i>	<i>The choice, use and arrangement of words and sentence structures that create tone and voice.</i>	<i>The use of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation.</i>
4	Sharp, distinct controlling point made about a single topic with evident awareness of task (mode)	Substantial, specific and/or illustrative content demonstrating strong development and sophisticated ideas	Sophisticated arrangement of content with evident and/or subtle transitions	Precise, illustrative use of a variety of words and sentence structures to create consistent writer's voice and tone appropriate to audience	Evident control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation
3	Apparent point made about a single topic with sufficient awareness of task (mode)	Sufficiently developed content with adequate elaboration or explanation	Functional arrangement of content that sustains a logical order with some evidence of transitions	Generic use of a variety of words and sentence structures that may or may not create writer's voice and tone appropriate to audience	Sufficient control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation
2	No apparent point but evidence of a specific topic	Limited content with inadequate elaboration or explanation	Confused or inconsistent arrangement of content with or without attempts at transition	Limited word choice and control of sentence structures that inhibit voice and tone	Limited control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation
1	Minimal evidence of a topic	Superficial and/or minimal content	Minimal control of content arrangement	Minimal variety in word choice and minimal control of sentence structures	Minimal control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation
NON-SCORABLE			OFF-PROMPT		
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is illegible; i.e., includes so many indecipherable words that no sense can be made of the response • Is incoherent; i.e., words are legible but syntax is so garbled that response makes no sense • Is insufficient; i.e., does not include enough to assess domains adequately • Is a blank paper 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is readable but did not respond to prompt 		

Appendix K: Enlightenment Salon Skit Assignment

Enlightenment Salon Skit

During the Enlightenment, upper class civilians would often participate in salons. Salons were social gatherings of intellectuals, or well-educated people, to hold conversations on local news and in-depth conversations. Although salons are not an activity practiced today, they reflect what would be common practice during an era known for new ways of thinking and conversation.

Your group will work together to create a script of an Enlightenment Salon for the following thinkers. These thinkers make up your "cast":

- Niccolo Machiavelli (pre-Enlightenment, but still good to include!)
- Thomas Hobbes
- John Locke
- Baron de Montesquieu
- Voltaire
- Jean Jacques Rousseau

Your salon script will have the thinkers of the Enlightenment interact with one another and discuss key topics, like politics, human rights, progress, and society. Each cast member will have 10 lines in the production. Refer to your Enlightenment notes, Enlightenment Philosophies in the U.S. worksheet, and additional research (recommended websites below) to assist your script-writing process.

Remember, this is a CONVERSATION among thinkers. They will disagree. They will debate. Make their arguments known! Have them LISTEN and RESPOND to one another!

Grading will be based on the following:

- Requirements are met:
 - All Enlightenment thinkers listed above are represented in the salon skit
 - Each thinker has at least 10 lines in the skit (1-2 throw-away lines maximum per character)
- Content
 - Enlightenment thinker beliefs are accurately represented for each person. Ideas are clearly presented and, when given, are understood
 - Enlightenment content is presented in the salon. Additional research may be needed to enhance material, but content is presented in student's own words (not copy-paste!)
 - Recommended sites for research:
 - Britannica Online Encyclopedia
 - Bio.com
 - History.com - Enlightenment: Facts and Summary
- Script
 - Script holds a fluid, clear conversation among Enlightenment thinkers
 - Thinkers are listening and responding to one another. Debates are met with valid arguments
 - See requirements met for technicalities of script
 - Script is free of grammar and spelling errors

This assignment will count as a TEST GRADE for the Enlightenment. Refer to the rubric below for the specifics of grading:

CATEGORY	Excellent (10)	Good (8)	Fair (6)	Needs Improvement (4 and below)
Historical Accuracy	All historical information is accurate for each Enlightenment thinker.	Almost all historical information is accurate for each Enlightenment thinker.	Most of the historical information was accurate for each Enlightenment thinker.	Very little of the historical information was accurate for each Enlightenment thinker.
Required Elements	Group fully met, and perhaps exceeded, all basic requirements of the salon skit.	Group almost met the basic requirements of the salon skit.	Group met at least half of basic requirements of the salon skit.	Group met less than half of the basic requirements of the salon skit.
Role	Point-of-view, arguments, and solutions proposed were consistently in character.	Point-of-view, arguments, and solutions proposed were often in character.	Point-of-view, arguments, and solutions proposed were sometimes in character.	Point-of-view, arguments, and solutions proposed were rarely in character.
Script	Script is free of grammar and spelling errors. Flow and clarity is present throughout script, and skit plays out like a regular conversation. All characters are represented.	Script has at least 5 grammar and spelling errors. Flow and clarity is present in script, but plays out choppy once or twice. . All characters are represented.	Script has at least 10 grammar and spelling errors. Flow and clarity is attempted in script, but plays out choppy on several occasions . Not all characters are represented.	Script has at least 15 grammar and spelling errors. Flow and clarity does not appear to be attempted. Not all characters are represented.

Total: 40 points

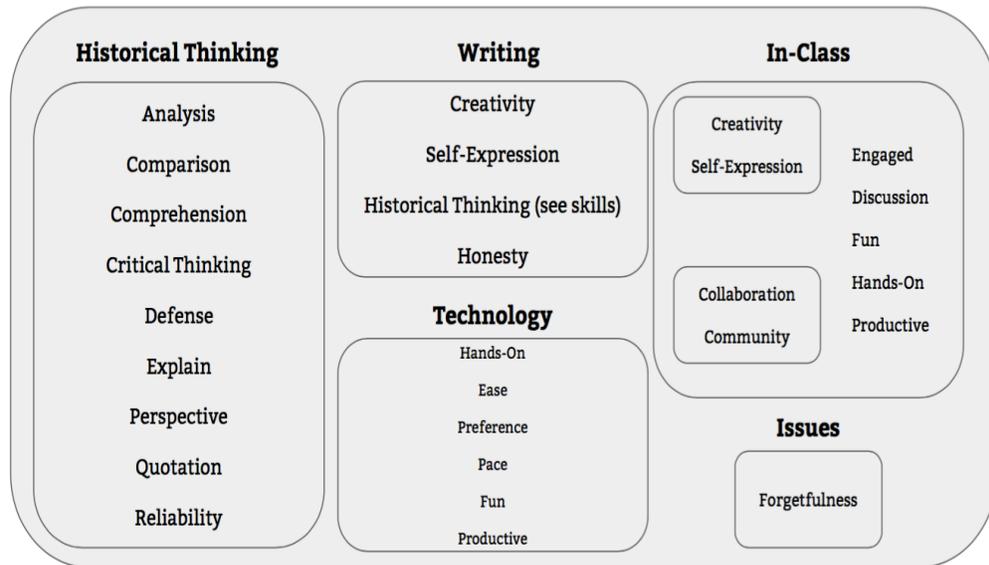
Appendix L: Industrial Revolution Photograph



Source:

<https://www.nhregister.com/entertainment/article/New-Haven-Public-Library-exhibit-shows-11405180.php#photo-13389267>

What Happens in a Flipped Classroom?



Appendix N: French Revolution Essay Comparison

French Revolution Test

After learning about the entirety of the French Revolution I think I'm confident in saying whether or not this Revolution was a success or not. I believe that this Revolution was a success in some parts but a failure in others. The fact the Third Estate was able to overthrow a monarchy and create a new constitution shows that yes, they were successful, but when you look back and see what they accomplished in the long run one could say that yes, the Revolution was a failure. I will talk about the many other reasons the French Revolution was a success and why it wasn't. My goal is to hit a middle ground and let you, the reader, decide for yourself. But before you make that decision we must go over the Revolution in its entirety, so let's dive in!

Before we discuss whether or not the French Revolution was a success or not we must know what happened during it. Before the French Revolution took place France was ruled by King Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette. France was also divided into three estates, the first, second, and third. The First estate was the clergy (the church) and made up of 0.5% of France. The second estate was the nobility, which made up 2% of France. The thing about the first and second estate is that they did not have to pay taxes. The last estate was the third Estate and consisted of the rest of the population of France. They had to pay taxes however. The problem is France was in debt and nobody had money. The upset third Estate wanted to create a new nation, one without the burden of a monarchy, but nothing could be done. Although they made up 98% of France they were still the minority. Even after they created the National Assembly there was little to be done. So the angered Third Estate took storm and dismantled the Bastille, a prison lurking over them, representing the Old Regime. This marked the beginning of the French Revolution. Now with no Monarchy who would lead France. This is where we transition into a man named Maximilian Robespierre come into play. Robespierre was leader of the Jacobins (a part of the National Assembly) and the Committee of Public Safety, this meant that Robespierre practically ruled France. Robespierre was a very violent man, goes as far to kill anyone who supported the King. With the King executed this began the Reign of Terror. Robespierre now in full power executed anyone who supported the king or who he just wanted executed. Within less than one year around 15,000 people were executed! It's funny to think that Robespierre turned into the thing he despised, a king. But the people tired of Robespierre overthrew him leading to his execution thus ending the Reign of Terror. Afterward the people didn't really know what to do, many attempts after and during the Revolution to create a constitution failed, and even though the fought to get rid of a monarchy, the people wanted a monarchy!

Now that we know all about the French Revolution let's discuss some reasons why it was successful. One of the main reasons the French Revolution was a success is because the Third Estate was able to do the thing they set out to do, create a new nation. The Third Estate were forced to pay taxes, but the problem was they had little to no money. Many meetings were held including the Estates General Meeting of 1789, but alas they couldn't get the votes of the Second or First Estate. The odds were against them, and there was little hope left. But the actions of the King anger the people, so they take action! They storm the Bastille, dismantling it brick from brick thus starting the Revolution. Soon after the Declaration of Rights of Man was created, and with that all power was removed from the king. But success doesn't also come from good intentions. That's where we're shift to Robespierre, who practically ruled France after the people overthrew the King. Now even if his intentions were good or bad he still accomplished what he set to do, and that was to execute the king and anyone who supported him. For a while it work, but that's just the thing, only for a while. That's where we can talk about why the French Revolution was not very successful.

Now that we know why some parts were successful, we must talk about why it wasn't. Now remember Robespierre because we're not done with him yet. See Robespierre essentially turned into a King. Now think about that, after people fought so hard to get rid of a monarchy, there leader was the equivalent of a monarch. But the people did overthrow Robespierre, which if you look at it is a success in and of itself. But this is where we transition into the main reason why the Revolution was unsuccessful. Notice how I said most things were worked out good for a while. That's because most things in the French Revolution didn't work out in the long run. The people wanted to break free of a monarchy and create a new nation, but their new leader was the equivalent of a monarch. And even after the French Revolution many attempts to create a new constitution failed. The problem is that there is no real progress with these goals. Things one way or another repeat themselves. Even though things seem successful doesn't mean that they necessarily are. But we're not done yet as we have one more small thing to talk about, and he's approximately 5 feet tall.

After the Revolution we are left with Napoleon. Napoleons was one of the attempts at a new constitution for France. Many people are unsure whether or not he was successful or not. So let's look and what he did good first. Napoleon was a Military General and was able to overthrow the directory, a previous failure at an attempt to make a new form of leadership. Napoleon soon declared himself emperor and as his time as emperor he did several good things such as improving industry and the economy. He even promoted human rights, well to an extent. Well what did Napoleon do wrong, well for one he's an emperor. You know like a king, the thing France fought so hard to get rid of. Another thing is that we was a little power crazy, even to the point of him losing power, twice! So that Napoleon for you, a short man with a short story.

In conclusion the French Revolution is up to determination whether or not it was a success or not. On the one hand the people of France and even Robespierre accomplished what they set out to do. In the case of the Third Estate it was to create a new nation without the burden of a monarchy. And for Robespierre he was able to execute anyone who supported the king. Hey I didn't say all intentions were good. But there was also the fact that history was practically repeating itself, and there was no real progression in France. One way or another a new form of leadership failed. But what do you think? Was it a success or a failure?

The French Revolution was a successful and unsuccessful revolution which is hard to believe but then again the French Revolution was something. Everyone was challenging and sick of the old Regime. It was time for change which the majority wanted but it took a lot to get there. The French Revolution changed a lot of ideas and didn't end on a good note but it had its great moments. The French Revolution showed how it was both successful and unsuccessful because people flip flopped about the monarchy, how the National Assembly was really great, and how Robespierre ruined most of that greatness, thanks Robespierre you weird cat freak! Heckling aside let's being.

To start, the French were really difficult from beginning to end. At first everyone was so happy that the third estate was going to make it more of a free republic than a monarchy. Soon after they realized that it wasn't as perfect as they thought. With people like Robespierre who kind of ruined anything. The idea of a republic ended up being tainted by corruption and greed from people. I get that King Louis XVI had to make sure he would be king but even he knew he was a bad king. Knowing that he wasn't ready he should have let the third estate have the National Assembly. Then they would look at the king more positively and this disaster wouldn't have happened. Still in the end everyone basically thought that this all happened since they tried to leave the monarchy so they went back to a monarchy which wasn't a really good moment. Speaking of the National Assembly let's take about how it could have been great!

The National Assembly was a great step for the third estate to finally get what they rightfully deserve. The third estate was treated horribly by Estates General leaving them only one vote even though they were the biggest estate. This system was unfair and purposely made sure that the third estate would never be heard. So the third estate took it into their own hand and created the National Assembly. The National Assembly was all the members of the third estate which came together to talk about France's problems. The King Louis XVI feeling threatened shut down the National Assembly but they promised to keep meeting until they had a fair constitution drafted. In the mean time they would meet in a Tennis court. Everyone was scared because they thought King Louis XVI would use the military to end the National Assembly. So they stormed Bastille to destroy it and symbol the start of the new Regime. Soon they drafted the Declaration of Right of Man and Citizen. This document was especially important because it didn't just give the third estate all the power, instead the third estate made the document fair and gave all the people equal rights. Alas even the National Assembly had a bad seed.

The Jacobin lead but the notorious cat faced maniac Maximilian Robespierre. The Jacobin was a group that started inside the National Assembly which only wanted to punish the people of the nobility instead of reasoning they liked chopping heads with their favorite weapon the guillotine. Robespierre was obsessed with the idea of the guillotine, he loved it so much that they would hang it up in the center of the town and start with the killings. The Jacobin wanted the king to die with the rest of old France which could have been avoided if the king just showed a little support even if he faked it. So King Louis XVI tried to flee to Marie Antoinette's home to leave but was captured and brought back to be executed marking the start of the Reign of Terror. Robespierre even accused Marie Antoinette of incest so she would be sent to the guillotine, that is just sick! The Reign of Terror eventually ended when Robespierre started killing members of the Jacobin bring the living members their senses and killed Robespierre. Which sucked because they ended up going back the Monarchy because of our favorite little midget Napoleon because they didn't really know what to do it just makes me so angry because this all started with them wanting to leave a monarchy so how did you ended up right back to were you started?

The French Revolution was both successful and unsuccessful but as you can see the French Revolution is just a series of wins and loses that really just can annoy you. I really didn't get a definitive answer because the Revolution showed how it was good and bad and over all useless because the ended were they started. It is just a really bad headache to me. The French Revolution was a just bad time for most of the people. If I just fix some of the minor details the Revolution probably wouldn't have ended in such a way that can give you a headache even all the pills in the world can't fix, so please learn from the French and follow through with your wars please!