

Supporting Students' Comprehension of Historical Fiction with Informational Texts

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This investigation focused on the implementation of a unit for fourth grade students that incorporated both primary and secondary sources to support students' comprehension of a historical fiction novel, *Riding Freedom* (Muñoz-Ryan, 1998). Theoretical perspectives and reviews of literature informed the unit design and instructional decisions during the unit. Throughout the unit, multiple data sources were collected and analyzed that included (a) pre/post-assessment, (b) lesson plans, (c) my reflections and analysis of the lesson plan enactments, and (d) student assignments. Findings suggest that students who are not considered proficient readers on the state assessment can engage in challenging content and make rich connections to the characters, setting, and historical context of a novel. In addition, findings also suggest the importance of teacher reflection and analysis during action research.

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1.0 Introduction

Student reading proficiency scores in my district and at the national level are a cause for concern. Data from the National Center for Education Statistics (2017) revealed that only 37% of fourth-graders and 36% of eighth-graders scored at or above proficient on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). In the past four years, my building's reading scores on the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) have been declining. For the 2017-2018 school year, 36% of fourth-graders scored proficient on the assessment, which was a 16% decline from the previous year. When the testing data was analyzed for student strengths and weakness, it was determined that comprehending informational text is the biggest weakness among students in our building.

In the past, my curriculum has focused on narrative texts such as realistic fiction, mysteries, fairy tales, myths, and fables. Recently, with the CCSS, there has been an increased emphasis on teaching students to read informational texts. In fact, the CCSS, requires an increase in the proportion of informational texts recommended for students in grades K-5 to read. That proportion is 50 percent (National Governors Association for Best Practice & Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010). In my district, the emphasis has been on increasing student reading of informational texts. As a result, many teachers address this requirement by locating informational articles on the Internet and having students read and talk about them. However, such texts are decontextualized from units of study and the selection is random. In order for me to integrate informational texts into my ELA classes that are contextual and purposeful, I am engaging students in reading historical fiction and related informational texts in order to develop a deep

understanding of fiction and literary elements as well as factual information and its presentation in expository genres.

2.0 Review of Supporting Scholarship

In the sections that follow, I describe important theoretical perspectives related to multiple text comprehension. Then, I provide descriptions of instructional approaches that engage students in reading informational text related to historical fiction.

2.1 Theoretical Perspectives Related to Multiple Text Comprehension

Multiple text comprehension is an area of increasing importance in literacy research and practice as well as in the disciplinary fields of history and science. By using multiple texts in the English language arts classroom, teachers can connect to the CCSS/ELA standards and other disciplines by building a “foundation of knowledge in these fields that will also give them the background to be better readers in all content areas” (p.10). Cervetti and Hiebert (2015) asserted that knowledge supports every aspect of reading and the increase in informational text in the standards supports a focus on the development of knowledge, and the knowledge attained supports a student’s comprehension.

In the sections that follow, I explain three important theoretical perspectives related to multiple-text comprehension: the Construction-Integration Model, the Documents Model, and Intertextuality.

2.1.1 Construction-Integration Model

In the area of reading comprehension theory, Kintsch's Construction-Integration (C-I) model has been applied to reading pedagogy, curriculum, and assessment (Pearson & Hiebert, 2015). In this model, a reader can construct different levels of text representation depending on their knowledge, effort, and skill. The levels include the surface form, the textbase, and the situation model (Kintsch, 1988).

The surface code is the linguistic structure of the text and relies on accurate decoding at the word level. The textbase involves a reader's understanding of text ideas but not necessarily in a coherent way. Readers who integrate text information and prior knowledge to form a coherent mental representation of text information are able to construct a situation model of the text information.

2.1.2 Documents Model

An extension of the single-text construction-integration model is the Documents Model, which was proposed by Perfetti and colleagues (Perfetti et al., 1999). The Documents Model “explains how a good reader trying to understand the contents of multiple documents dealing with the same event or topic from different perspectives builds a coherent mental representation of the situation described across documents, at the same time taking note of sources of the different perspectives and understanding the relationships (e.g., similarities and differences) among them.” (Braten et al., 2011, p. 50). According to the Documents Model framework (Britt et al., 1999; Perfetti et al., 1999), learning from multiple documents requires two additional levels of representation: the intertext model and a situations model.

The intertext model represents information from multiple sources. This information can include what the reader knows or thinks about the text and sources, such as author, setting, and publisher, which can either be objective (date of publication) or evaluative (the author has strong opinions on this topic). Information about individual documents can connect to each other and content through intertext relations. These relations help the reader interpret content by looking at consistencies, inconsistencies, and corroboration of perspectives. These relations also can link to the author as the author can “mark” other texts through the use of predicates, such as “agrees with,” “disagrees with,” “supports,” or “opposes” (Perfetti et al., 1999).

Another representation required for a reader’s comprehension of multiple documents is the situations model (Britt et al., 1999; Perfetti et al., 1999). Readers organize the contents of each text into one integrated representation about an event or situation, a context such as a historical event (Boston Tea Party) or a scientific phenomenon (e.g., ecosystem). Readers create a situations model when they reconcile information from multiple sources and construct an integrated mental model about a specific situation. The processing required to do this results in deep understanding.

2.1.3 Intertextuality

In English language arts, the notion of connections among texts, or intertextuality, is not a new idea. Lenski (1998) defined intertextuality as a student’s understanding of a passage that is dependent upon prior knowledge with the topic, which can be through previous experiences or texts. Texts can be print sources such as stories, novels, poems, essays, but also non-print sources such as music, drama, video, art, and gesture. “Meanings of these texts are constantly being revised and reconstructed in the minds of readers to create an evolving web of meaning” (Lenski, 1998, p. 75). Good readers are natural synthesizers, and when interested in a topic will often

depend on future texts for answers to their questions. The effort to forge links among texts results in more robust and enduring understanding.

These three perspectives emphasize the importance of providing students with opportunities to interact with multiple texts to develop a more than a superficial understanding of a theme or topic. Both the documents model and the intertextuality perspective also emphasize the importance of an expanded view of the text. That view includes not only print but also visual and digital media. In the next section, I describe research about instructional approaches designed to engage students in multiple text comprehension.

2.2 Instructional Approaches for Engaging Students in Multiple Text Comprehension

Integrating multiple texts into instruction supports the CCSS/ELA standards. Many researchers have found that, with a careful selection of texts and instruction about how to work with multiple sources, students can gain a deeper understanding of a topic and become critical readers. Obtaining knowledge from multiple sources is “not just accumulating facts; rather, children need to develop knowledge networks, comprised of clusters of concepts that are coherent, generative, and supportive of future learning in a domain” (Neuman, Kaefer, & Pinkham, 2014, p. 147).

2.2.1 Multiple Texts in Social Studies

In an exploratory study by VanSledright and Kelly (1998), multiple sources, including historical fiction, were used to teach American history to fifth graders. In this study, six students

answered questions about their experience with multiple sources and how the sources affected their historical thinking, critical reading, and historical understanding. The evidence collected suggested the students preferred the use of multiple sources; however, the primary role the students engaged in was the location of facts within the sources. From this study, researchers determined two instructional shifts that could provide students with an accurate historical understanding of the event or time period. The first shift involved teachers focusing student attention on "how to draw from multiple sources to construct event models of historical topics" (VanSledright & Kelly, 1998, p. 261). This teaching included the role that bias plays in texts and how to use primary sources. The second shift was a switch in viewing history as objective and fact-based to a set of representations from various perspectives depending on who is telling the story. VanSledright and Kelly (1998) asserted that without these two instructional shifts "students will not necessarily develop into critical readers of history or move to more advanced levels of historical thinking and understanding" (p. 261), as opposed to continuing to have a superficial understanding of the topic.

VanSledright and Afflerbach's (2001) later study of fifth-grade students focused on the challenges embedded texts (texts that include primary-source text) have on middle school students and the nature of student's historical thinking. Like the students in the earlier study by VanSledright and Kelley (1998), the students in this study were accustomed to relating history to remembering facts, dates, places, names, and events. However, with embedded texts, the verbal responses from students proved that students were able to provide "personal and idiosyncratic responses" (p. 706). These responses created openings for critical analysis and discussion that could lead to developing critical readers in the social studies classroom. The researchers indicated that further research should continue to investigate embedded texts as well as how readers comprehend multiple sources.

VanSledright and Kelly (1998) found evidence of a student's more in-depth understanding of a topic through analysis of verbal responses, Roser and Keehn (2002) revealed student's talk across text types resulted in deeper, critical understanding of social studies topic. In over a 6-week period, researchers observed 4th-grade students engaged with multiple texts, including a biography, historical fiction, and informational books related to Texas's struggle for independence. From an in-depth analysis of students' conversations during discussion groups, researchers found a "fourfold increase in children's accurate notions about the period in state history; further, their misconceptions were reduced by half" (p.424). In addition, the researchers noted critical thinking in student's journal entries which included supporting ideas with evidence from multiple sources. Both teacher and student interviews showed interest in the topic continued after the unit, and students continued to lead their own inquiry.

2.2.2 Multiple Texts in Social Studies and English Language Arts

As teachers and teacher educators, Hinton, Suh, Colón-Brown, and O'Hearn (2014) reported outcomes of their interdisciplinary teacher study group developed to make connections across the content areas of ELA and Social Studies. Each study group meeting was video/audio recorded and transcribed. Themes that emerged from the data were (1) the importance of building historical background knowledge before reading historical fiction (2) the importance of nurturing historical empathy and (3) pairing historical fiction and nonfiction has value in promoting historical understanding. Although this study involved adult participants, their insights can be applied to students. Participants realized that collaboration was beneficial to both content areas and could potentially provide students with a deeper understanding of historical events while meeting both content area standards.

Freeman and Levstik (1988) explored the use of historical fiction in the social studies curriculum. Through this exploration, they reiterate the importance of (1) discussing the historical fiction piece as a literary entity and (2) analyzing the historical fiction for accuracy. Freeman and Levstik (1988) found using historical fiction would supplement the social studies text providing background knowledge, motivation, and an understanding of how historical events may have impacted people during a specific period. The texts support for "mature historical understanding" (Freeman & Levstik, 1988, p. 336) that would not occur by reading just the textbook.

Villano (2005) found incorporating multiple texts in her social studies curriculum solved her dilemma of her intermediate students not being able to comprehend the complex text "presented in a fifth-grade level textbook that discusses the intricacies of history" (p.122). In her action research, Villano (2005), began implementing various genres of text to supplement the textbook. These genres included historical poetry, picture books, and plays. Through picture books students were able to use illustrations to support their understanding of the topic presented in the textbook. The use of historical poetry and other historical genres were used to reinforce historical concepts taught in the curriculum. Through scaffolding concepts through the use of multiple texts Villano (2005) began to see a change in the way students interacted with texts and that students started to make deep connections of information presented across texts creating more critical, confident readers.

When reading historical fiction, analyzing accuracy helps students become critical readers. In an undergraduate setting, McTigue, Thornton, and Wiese (2013) explored the use of authentication projects with preservice teachers to model how to authenticate historical fiction with students. While reading historical fiction, participants were asked to keep this question in mind: Do you believe it? Preservice teachers used multiple sources including informational texts,

primary sources, and multimedia sources to authenticate historical events and the culture portrayed in the novel. This process required participants to not only read historical fiction with a critical perspective, but to bring in nonfiction sources to find accuracies and inaccuracies of the novel. Preservice teachers came away from this process with understanding the importance of authentication, how to support historical fiction with nonfiction texts, and how to teach students to be critical readers.

2.2.3 Text Sets

Bintz and Ciecierski (2017) suggested the use of hybrid texts to address the ELA anchor standards of the CCSS, which requires teachers to incorporate a substantial amount of informational text in their instruction. A hybrid text is a single text that integrates both narrative and informational text. Some biographies fall under the genre of hybrid text, when, for example, the biographical information is presented as a narrative, and related factual information appears through text features such as captions and primary source documents. The authors also suggested instructional strategies to support comprehension of a hybrid text. These strategies include the use of graphic organizers that help a student distinguish between interesting and essential information in the text. According to Bintz and Ciecierski (2017), when readers view these texts as symbiotic rather than separate it “builds on the natural curiosity and functions as an opportunity for inquiry” (p.68).

Bintz and Ciecierski (2018) proposed the use of tri-texts to support the CCSS, but also to support intertextuality. Tri-texts are “three texts conceptually related by topic, theme, genre, or author” (p.479). By using these texts, Bintz and Ciecierski (2018) claim that student thinking can

be deepened by reading multiple perspectives on one topic. Often perspectives will contradict or reinforce a concept and lead to student-led inquiry about the topic.

Gelzheiser, Hallgren-Flynn, Connors, and Scanlon (2014) provided a rationale for thematically related texts. In their previous research, with intermediate grade struggling readers, they discovered that “a limited knowledge base is one cause of these readers’ poor comprehension” (p.54). In response to these findings, Gelzheiser et al. (2014) promoted the use of simple texts such as picture books to develop students’ self-efficacy as readers and to build their background knowledge. Students who read simpler texts about topics including bees and colonial homes in order to build their background knowledge and learn about important concepts were able to comprehend more challenging texts about the same topics.

Lupo, Strong, Lewis, Walpole, and McKenna, (2018) also agreed that using multiple texts can be a way to build background knowledge and meet instructional goals culminating in reading a challenging “target” text. Lupo et al. (2018) suggested that focusing on students’ background knowledge would support the layers of comprehension needed to form a situation model because in order to create that model students need to call upon their prior knowledge and experience. Lupo et al. (2018) developed an approach they termed the quad text set framework to address this goal. The quad text set approach is based on two perspectives (1) increasing the amount of time for reading challenging content area text and (2) providing opportunities for students to read relevant, accessible texts. The quad text framework requires four different types of texts “one that is a challenging on or above grade level text (the target text) and three other texts that build the background knowledge and motivation needed to comprehend the target text” (p.436). These texts can include visual or video texts, informational texts, and accessible text(s) (from young adult

fiction, nonfiction articles, or pop culture). Pilot studies revealed the positive potential of the quad text approach.

The above studies reveal the potential of using thematically related texts to support students' comprehension. They inspired me to investigate the potential of such an approach in my own classroom.

3.0 Applied Inquiry Plan

Theoretical perspectives and educational standards emphasize the importance of supporting students in developing deep understanding of the texts that they read and of the potential for multiple texts of different genres to support such understanding. However, there are limited studies describing how educators can implement the use of multiple texts in elementary classrooms for the purpose of supporting both literary and historical meaning making. Bearing that in mind, I decided to conduct an inquiry to address the following questions:

- (1) How can a unit be designed to incorporate historical fiction and related informational texts to support students in using those resources to comprehend characters and events as well as historical context/setting?
- (2) How do students demonstrate their understanding of characters and events in historical fiction as well as historical context/setting throughout their participation in the unit's activities and assessments?
- (3) How does designing an inquiry focused on my own practice influence my identity as a leader scholar practitioner?

3.1 Context

The action research study took place in the district in which I am employed. The district has two elementary schools (K-5), one middle school (6-8), and one high school (9-12) and services approximately 2,200 students. My elementary school is situated within a college town

and services about 500 of the students in the district. Of those students 95% are white and 35% of students qualify for free and reduced lunch. Faculty of the district are all highly qualified.

I chose action research as the inquiry method for this study because, as a practitioner, I am responsible for student learning in this setting. According to McNiff and Whitehead (2005), “Educational theory needs to be seen not only to be in the scholarly books, but also to be embodied in the stories of teachers on the job” (p. 106). Throughout my inquiry, I purposefully connected my teaching in the classroom with theoretical perspectives on single and multiple text comprehension. From an action research standpoint, I reflected on each day’s lesson in the planned unit, and then made adjustments for the next day. This flexibility allowed me to adjust lessons based on my students’ responses while still aligning to the theoretical framework of my study.

I understood the limitations of this approach and worked to address them. The biggest limitation included my own bias toward documenting a positive result. As I am both the teacher and researcher, I addressed this bias by inviting my advisor to observe lessons, making the data accessible to my advisor and having a co-coder for a sample of the student assessments and assignments. The co-coder was another 4th grade teacher in my building. She and I have worked together on a daily basis both as classroom teachers and reading specialists. She was also familiar with teaching the novel *Riding Freedom*.

3.2 Inquiry Design

This study involved the development and enactment of an English language arts unit which included the study of characters, events, setting, and historical context. The unit included multiple informational texts to support the reading of the historical fiction novel *Riding Freedom* (Muñoz-

Ryan, 1998). *Riding Freedom* is about Charlotte Parkhurst, a girl who was raised in an orphanage for boys. As a child, Charlotte wasn't like most girls her age. She would rather work in the stable and be around horses rather than sew, play with dolls, and have tea parties. In the mid 1800s Charlotte's dreams of working with horses was not in her favor. However, through Charlotte's determination and her decision to disguise herself as a man, Charlotte escaped from the orphanage, became an expert horse rider, a legendary stage coach driver, and possibly the first woman to vote in the United States.

I selected this novel for multiple reasons. First, the author of the novel provides young students with a literary work that weaves history and fiction together by focusing on a real person, Charlotte Parkhurst, and her struggle for freedom as a woman in the mid-1800s. Historical fiction provides students with many opportunities to distinguish between fact and fiction while learning about characterization and the importance of a historical setting. Second, the readability of the text is at the instructional level for my students, and because the unit will make use of multiple texts to support students' background knowledge, all students will be able to engage with the ideas in the text. According to Priebe, Miller and Keenan (2012; 2011) when aided by background knowledge, below-level readers no longer demonstrated less understanding relative to on- or above-level readers. Finally, the historical context of the novel provides an opportunity for students to delve into the mid-1800s and encounter events that are important in United States history, such as slavery, the women's rights movement, and the California Gold Rush.

I introduced the unit to students by exploring the genre of historical fiction. This exploration included previewing multiple books that are considered historical fiction including books in the "I Survived" series by Lauren Tarshis in which many students are familiar. After

previewing these books, I explained the elements of historical fiction. Finally, I gave students copies of the novel *Riding Freedom* and they read the back cover.

I designed the unit activities and assessments that comprise the unit based on theoretical and research-based principles as shown in Figure 1 below.

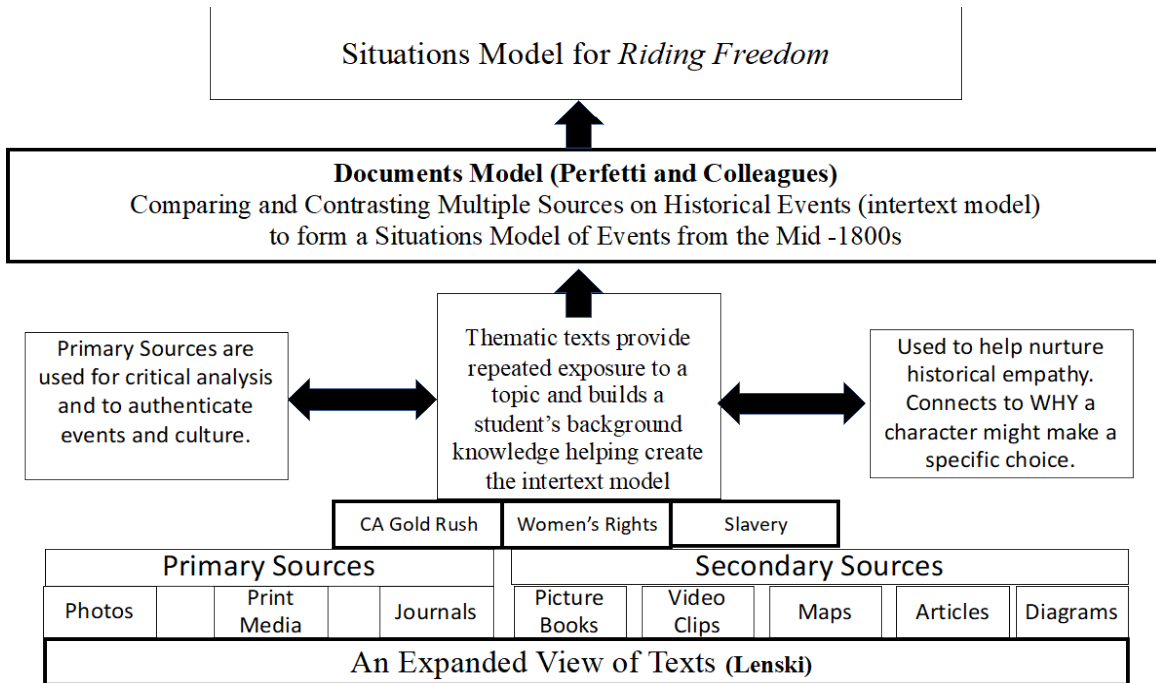


Figure 1 Theoretical and Research-based Principles Influencing the Unit Design

The primary theoretical perspective influencing the design of the unit is the documents model of Perfetti and his colleagues (1999). As an extension of Kintsch's (1988) model, learning from multiple documents requires two additional levels of representation: the intertext model and a situations model. The intertext model represents information from multiple individual sources. After reading these individual texts, the reader then creates a situations model (Britt et al., 1999; Perfetti et al., 1999) by comparing and contrasting information and then integrating the information to form one representation of the historical event that is being addressed in the novel.

In designing the unit, I first explored the use of multiple texts to connect both social studies and language arts. In Freeman and Levistik's (1988) and VanSledright and Kelly's (1998) studies students read historical fiction to support their understanding of the social studies textbook. By reading historical fiction, students were able to gain a deeper understanding of how historical events may have impacted people of a specific time period. Villano (2005) used shared readings of historical poetry, picture books, and plays to support 5th graders understanding of a complex social studies text. Another study by Hinton et al. (2014), reported that collaboration between English language arts teachers and social studies teachers could potentially provide students with a deeper understanding of historical events while meeting both content area standards. With potential positive outcomes in supporting both ELA and social studies with multiple texts, I began to select texts that would support the reading of the historical fiction novel *Riding Freedom*.

My selection of texts was also influenced by Lenski's (1998) notion of intertextuality, in which a student's understanding of a passage is dependent upon prior knowledge with the topic, which can be through previous experiences or texts. In supporting this notion, I chose thematically related texts centered around the historical context of the mid-1800s, focusing on topics of women's suffrage, the California Gold Rush, and slavery. These thematic texts are in the form of picture books, photographs, primary sources, secondary sources, video clips, maps, and diagrams. Choosing thematic texts provides repeated exposure to a topic and builds a student's background knowledge (Gelzheiser et al., 2014; Bintz and Ciecierski, 2018; & Lupo et al., 2018). The building of background knowledge will help support students in reading the historical fiction text by helping build intertextual connections. An example of a text set in this unit for the topic of slavery includes: an article, two picture books, video clips presented in the form of a slideshow, and two primary sources from the Library of Congress.

The inclusion of primary sources for students to analyze was emphasized in the findings of the studies by VanSledright and Afflerbach (2001) and McTigue, Thornton, and Wiese (2013). VanSledright and Afflerbach (2001) asserted that primary sources embedded in text books created opportunities for critical analysis, while McTigue, Thornton, and Wiese (2013) found primary sources useful to help students authenticate historical events and culture presented in a historical fiction novel. In this unit, students completed the analysis of primary sources in a whole group or small group situation with me. I chose this set-up so that students could learn how to analyze a primary source, and also to introduce the notion of historical empathy with the students.

Hinton et al. (2014) found that nurturing historical empathy to be an essential practice when reading historical fiction and informational texts about a time period in history. By looking at multiple perspectives during an historical time period or event, students were able to understand why a character made a decision in the novel. Students were also able to humanize a time period or event that otherwise would be hard to comprehend. In my classroom, an important personal goal is to build healthy relationships with students. In doing so, we share personal stories and talk about hard realizations of life. With these relationships, I knew that I could use primary sources to engage my students in the kind of difficult conversations that dealt with the mistreatment of people during the period of slavery and women's suffrage.

3.2.1 Participants

The unit was implemented in my fourth-grade classroom which is located in a rural school district in western Pennsylvania. The participants included 17 fourth grade students, 13 males and 4 females, at varying levels of reading proficiency. Out of the 17 students, 16 are White, and 1 student is Hispanic, while 10 of the students receive Title 1 services. According to the

Pennsylvania State Assessment in English language arts in third grade, the participants included 12 students who scored at the low proficiency level and 7 students scored at the basic level.

3.2.2 Data Sources and Analysis

In order to collect both qualitative and quantitative data on student comprehension of both literary elements and historical context, I collected multiple data sources. These included: (a) pre/post-assessment, (b) lesson plans, (c) my reflections and analysis of the lesson plan enactments, and (d) student assignments.

3.2.2.1 Pre/Post Assessments

A pre/post-assessment was designed to determine students' knowledge of the United States in the mid-1800s as well as their knowledge about historical fiction. The assessment included true and false questions and two open-ended questions related to characters, events, setting, and historical context. (See Appendix A).

3.2.2.2 Lesson Plans and Reflections

The foci of the unit lessons align to the Pennsylvania English Language Arts and Social Studies standards. Individual plans included objectives, resources, lesson sequence, and assessments. The lesson sequence includes guiding questions for the students aligned with the lesson assessment activity. Sections of the novel were either read aloud to students, read independently, or read with a partner. I planned to teach 15 lessons across a three-week period. The class periods during these lessons were approximately 60 minutes in length. I annotated the daily lesson plans after teaching each lesson, noting student responses as well as my own

assessment of the lesson activities and student learning. These annotations documented student engagement with the unit activities as well as my own evaluation of how those activities provided support for student learning. (See Appendix B).

3.2.2.3 Student Assignments

I created a binder for students to use throughout the unit. Pages in the binder (see Figure 2) included activities for students to complete as they read and respond to the novel.

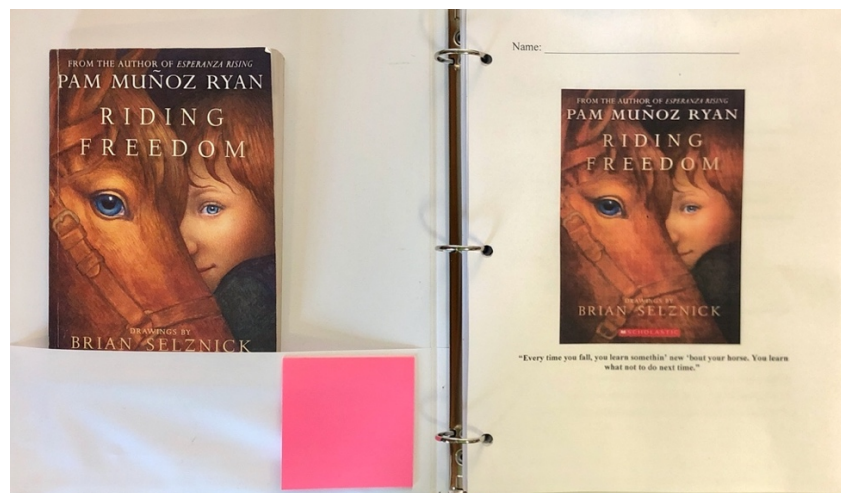


Figure 2 Student Binder

Student work was evaluated using both rubrics and checklists. Rubrics were used to evaluate summative assignments to determine whether or not students were deepening their understanding about a time in history through studying characters, events, setting, and historical context from multiple sources. Checklists guided students in their thinking and completion of the assignments. Primary source checklists provided guidelines for students to use while completing primary source analysis assignments. Another checklist provided insight into whether or not students are meeting lesson and unit objectives. (See Appendix C)

For the data sources listed above, I analyzed the pretest/posttests as well as my annotations and reflections on the lesson plans. I also made use of the rubrics and checklists for analyzing assignments in the student binders. For the final project, a storyboard response to one of three prompts was required of the student. A rubric was developed with criteria I wanted to address that aligned to the objectives of the unit. For the assessment of this project I enlisted the assistance of a co-coder. I explained the unit content and shared the unit resources with her. I discussed the storyboard assignment and reviewed the rubric. Then, I randomly selected nine projects and asked her to assess the storyboards. We compared our scores and discussed discrepancies. We achieved 87% interrater-reliability in our scoring.

4.0 Findings

Through the design, implementation, and analysis of the data, I found that supporting students with informational texts aided in their demonstrating a deep understanding of the characters, historical setting, and plot of the novel *Riding Freedom*. Throughout the implementation, I made informed revisions to the unit based on the needs of my students. These revisions included scaffolding both materials and discussions, making texts accessible to students, and revising the final project. Through analysis of the data, I found students were using the knowledge gained from both primary and secondary sources to make rich connections back to the novel. Throughout this process, I also realized the importance and impact of theoretically designed instruction can have in both student learning and my teaching practice.

In the sections that follow, I summarize the findings from the enactment of the unit and the analysis of the data sources as they relate to each research question.

4.1 Research Question 1: How can a unit be designed to incorporate historical fiction and related informational texts to support students in using those resources to comprehend characters and events as well as historical context/setting?

In this section, I describe the major revisions that I made to the unit. I see these revisions as an important development in the design of the unit.

4.1.1 Scaffolding

The first lesson in the unit involved students in using their social studies textbook to identify information about life in the United States in the mid-1800s. I noticed students struggling to independently identify relevant facts from their social studies textbook. At this point, I was already wondering about how I was going to address the more complex informational texts the student would encounter and the related tasks. In reflecting on what strategies to incorporate, I was reminded of Villano's (2005) study on using multiple texts to scaffold social studies concepts and a study by Roehling, Hebert, Nelson, and Bohaty (2017) on the use of paragraph frames to summarize text while teaching expository text structure. These studies provided instructional approaches that I could implement to in order to support students in reading texts and carrying out the given tasks of the unit. This support throughout the unit I am referring to can be defined as scaffolding. I am defining scaffolding using Graves and Graves (2003) expanded version of the original definition that in addition to helping children complete tasks that could not otherwise complete, scaffolding can aid students by helping them to better complete a task, to a complete a task with less stress or less time, or to learn more fully than they would have otherwise (p.30).

Villano (2005) noted that many students in her class lacked the prior knowledge of American history and were not able to scaffold new information themselves. To support students in developing their prior knowledge, she read aloud from the texts as students wrote down important facts. This read-aloud strategy was easy to implement in my lessons. In one lesson, the text was a slideshow with audio that allowed students to listen and re-listen to the slides as they wrote down facts. During the lesson, students were focused and were able to identify facts more easily than their independent reading of the social studies text.

In other lessons throughout the unit, I either read aloud the informational texts, or students worked with partners reading the text aloud to one another. Through making this revision, I observed students actually talking about the text with one another. During both partner reading and whole group discussions, I was able to scaffold the discussion through what Clark and Graves (2005) refers to as moment-to-moment scaffolding.

Moment-to-moment scaffolding during partnerships and discussions included asking probing questions and elaborating on student responses. One example of this type of scaffolding occurred when we were discussing Charlotte, the main character, and her relationship with Mr. Millshark, the overseer of the orphanage. One student commented: “I think Mr. Millshark doesn’t like Charlotte.” Though this was an appropriate inference, I wanted students to think more about why he didn’t like Charlotte. I wanted them to think about questions such as: Was it because she was a girl? Was it because she stood up for herself? By using probing questions such as “Why do you think that?” and “Why might he feel that way?” more thoughtful responses began to emerge in student writing from this student as well as other students. Examples included: “I think he (Mr. Millshark) doesn’t like Charlotte because she is a harder worker than the boys.” “I think that Mr. Millshark thinks she is better than the boys but doesn’t want to admit it.” “I think Mr. Millshark thinks girls should be treated like slaves.” Through scaffolding students were beginning to make connections and think more critically about the roles girls and women played during the time period of the mid-1800s.

4.1.2 Text Accessibility

The next revision I made to making the texts more accessible was supporting student summarization of the informational text in their written responses through the use of paragraph

frames. According to Roehling, Hebert, Nelson, and Bohaty (2017) paragraph frames are a way to support students in writing summaries in that their cloze format prompts students to include important information. Figure 3 is an example of a paragraph frame to help summarize informational text.

If You Were a Kid During the California Gold Rush by Josh Gregory

On January 24, 1848 _____ discovered gold. This discovery caused _____ to journey to _____. Many Americans came from the _____ coast. Some people would sail south all the way around _____ and back up to California. Others took a shortcut across _____. People coming from the Midwest traveled by covered _____.

Once in _____, people had nowhere to live. They quickly set up _____. These camps often began to grow into _____. Many people became miners, while others started businesses like restaurants. Prospectors, miners of gold, used a technique called _____. A miner would collect water, gravel, and soil in a pan and the heavy _____ would stay at the bottom. Mining for gold was dangerous, hard work. Often miners got sick or hurt and there were not many _____.

By the end of the 1850s, prospectors had found the gold that was easy to reach. Huge mining _____ with powerful equipment replaced individual miners.

Figure 3 Paragraph Frame to Support a Summary of an Informational Text

By reading and locating the important information needed to complete the paragraph students began to see connections across texts. For example, one student said: “On the computer it said they would whip him until he bleeds. Do you think that happened to Vern?” This example supports Freeman and Levstik’s (1988) and Hinton, Suh, Colón-Brown, and O’Hearn’s (2014) studies suggesting that that pairing historical fiction with informational text aids in promoting students’ historical understanding.

As the unit progressed, discussions about the informational texts and the novel continued with moment-to-moment scaffolding, the use of framed paragraphs, and frequently encouraging

students to share their responses and respond to others. The unit activities became more collaborative than independent, and the students and I were questioning each other's thinking when it came to the main character Charlotte's thoughts and actions. Through these scaffolded discussions and activities, I realized many students were creating both an intertext model and situations model (Britt et al., 1999; Perfetti et al., 1999) about the impact the historical events and setting had on Charlotte, the main character.

An example of a student developing an intertext model occurred after an activity on the Gold Rush. The activity asked the students to choose a route (the Overland Route, the Panama Route or the Cape Horn Route) to California and explain why they chose that route using a framed paragraph to organize their thoughts. This activity was after we read informational texts on the Gold Rush that included: a primary source (Shufelt's Diary), social studies text, a slideshow, and a map of the three routes. One student came up to me very excited to share her route, which happened to be the Overland Route. She responded: "Mrs. Wallace, do you know that the Overland Route is the only route I could choose?" I replied: "No, why?" She continued to tell me that she was a girl and girls were not allowed on ships, so that was the only route she could choose. She finished with "Charlotte went on the Panama Route, because she was disguised as a man." During this conversation, I realized in order to come to this realization, she had to construct a model about the routes to California during the Gold Rush and use all the information learned to determine there was only one possible route, while at the same time connecting back to Charlotte being disguised as a man.

4.1.3 Final Project

As the unit was nearing a close, I decided, based on the amount of scaffolding that I had provided for students, that I would choose a different format for the unit's final project. The original project was writing a narrative piece in which students followed a RAFT (role, audience, format, topic) format. According to Chick and Hong (2012), "the goal of RAFT is to differentiate according to students' interests and help improve social studies and language arts skills in ways that foster creativity, motivation, self-regulation, and higher order thinking" (p.117). Although this project would benefit the students, I felt it would be a better choice to complete with modeling each step to the students, and not independently.

I knew I wanted to emphasize the historical setting and events of the mid-1800s and at the same time wanted the project to be something that students could complete independently. As I was brainstorming possibilities, I thought about the interests of my students and studies on students responding to the reading of historical fiction. At the beginning of the year, I asked students to complete a questionnaire about general interests, and one of the questions was about self-selected reading. The majority of the students selected graphic novels as their genre of choice. When I asked the students what they liked about graphic novels, students replied that they were easier to read, and they liked the pictures. Their answers prompted me to reread a study by Kesler, Gibson, and Turansky (2016) in which students used digital storytelling to interpret and respond to historical fiction.

Though I did not have the time or resources to devote to digital storytelling, I thought the use of storyboards would support my students in their responses to *Riding Freedom*. First, through the use of storyboards students could show their understanding through the "intersection of images, words, and design features" (Reid & Moses, 2020, p. 463). Second, the storyboards could support

students' writing in that they had to decide on key points to make in a limited amount of space. The limited space could also alleviate some of the anxiety my students display when asked to write an essay. Finally, the storyboard provided the students with a clear beginning, middle, and end to help organize their writing. The students had the option to address the topic of slavery, the life of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, or traveling to California during the Gold Rush. Figure 4 is an example of the six-panel storyboard template used by students to draft their response. I discuss the results of this assignment in the next section.

In the novel, the stable master Vern, helped me escape. Vern's story is one of determination, just like mine. In the novel, Pam Munoz Ryan does not provide many details of his escape, just that people helped him along the way. Here is the story I imagined.	I imagined Vern...	

Figure 4 Six-panel Storyboard Template

4.2 Research Question 2: How do students demonstrate their understanding of characters and events in historical fiction as well as historical context/setting throughout their participation in the unit's activities and assessments.

In this section, I provide examples of students' learning across the unit related to their use of selected informational texts and their final projects. I also discuss the pretest/posttest results.

4.2.1 Informational Texts

At the beginning of *Riding Freedom*, readers meet Vern, the former slave who journeyed to the North to gain his freedom and became stablemaster. The author does not provide an account of how Vern traveled, but readers do discover that he uses his journey as the inspiration for the names of the horses. For example, one of the horses is named Charity for the good will of people who helped him along the way. Informational texts used at the beginning of the unit were designed to support students' understanding of how Vern may have traveled North and who may have helped him along the way. The texts were also used to provide and develop students' background knowledge of the historical time period of the mid-1800s. These informational texts included both primary and secondary sources.

4.2.1.1 Primary Sources

I selected three primary sources to support student's understanding of slavery: (a) a painting entitled "In the Swamp," (b) a painting entitled "Life of George Washington: The Farmer," and (c) an advertisement for slaves to be sold entitled "Gang of 25 Sea Island Cotton and Rice Negroes." (See pages 93-97 Appendix C).

When analyzing student responses to the assignment, I focused on comments and questions students had during the whole group analysis and examples of students expressing their empathy. The importance of nurturing historical empathy was an important theme that emerged from the study by Hinton, Suh, Colón-Brown, and O'Hearn (2014). During the analysis of the primary sources, students were asked to write about how they felt about each source and then they participated in a whole group discussion.

Related to the painting “In the Swamp,” students mainly noticed that the painting’s focus was on the slave and in the background of the painting it appeared that there were people and dogs searching for the slave. The students responded with the feelings of being sad or mad because they thought or knew slavery was wrong, as Avery remarked: “The picture makes me feel sad because slavery is wrong and that person is having a lot of stress.” Other students were very concerned about what would happen to the slave if he were caught. Tyler said, “if he gets caught he will be whipped until he bleeds” and Evan said, “if he gets caught he may die.” Many students also thought that perhaps the slave’s hands were clasped because he was praying that he would not get caught.

In discussing the painting “Life of George Washington: The Farmer,” students made observations that both white and black people were in the picture and it looked as though everyone was getting along. Avery responded: “I think this picture makes me happy because a black man is drinking water. If they were slaves they might not be allowed water.” When I questioned Avery about whether or not the black people were slaves, it was not quite clear to her, until Aden interjected: “George Washington had slaves, and look at the whip in the one man’s hand.” From this point on, there were questions concerning how George Washington treated his slaves. The same student, Avery, responded that if the slaves were treated “good” it was a little bit better, but not if slaves were still whipped. Overall, students were not sure how they felt about the painting because blacks and whites were working together.

The “Gang of 25 Sea Island Cotton and Rice Negroes” was an advertisement for the sale of slaves at a market. The document had to be analyzed differently from the paintings, and the students needed support in understanding the ages of the slaves, as well as such terms such as

“prime field hand.” In analyzing this document, most students again had feelings anger and sadness, similar to their reactions to the painting “In the Swamp.”

However, during their analysis of the advertisement, students were now thinking about being separated from their own family, and many were making connections to the picture book *Henry’s Freedom Box* that I had read a few days earlier. Liam responded that he was “mad” and thought “Many people were greedy because slaves were treated like property and sold for money.” Ella responded that she had hoped “parts of families got sold together like in *Henry’s Freedom Box*.” In response to Ella, Andy reminded her that although the mother and children were sold together, Henry had a different owner, and he never saw his family again. This statement prompted Ava’s response: “It makes me really sad because if someone took my family from me, I don’t know what I would do without them.” As the discussion continued, many students began relating this experience with possibly being separated from their own families or being in a family with divorced parents. Finally, Aden blurted out: “But this was during the time of slavery, this happened to many slaves. Remember, in the story it said that Henry was lucky he could even live with his family because he and his wife had different masters.”

This last statement prompted me to discuss the word “empathy” with the students for the first time during our discussions. I explained to students that they were thinking about themselves in the position of the slaves being sold and they were trying to imagine how they would feel in the situation, that kind of imagining is empathy. I continued to explain that we were also looking at the sales of slaves from multiple perspectives. One perspective was how we would feel in the present if this happened to us, and another perspective was how slaves, such as Henry, felt during this time period of the mid-1800s. We were thinking about the bond families have, which allows us to be empathetic and recognize how another might feel in a situation. Although I did not realize

it at the time, students were also in the beginnings of displaying historical empathy, as they were thinking about perspectives of people who actually lived during the mid-1800s and not the present time.

4.2.1.2 Secondary Sources

During the unit, students interacted with a number of secondary sources that included picture books, video clips, maps, and diagrams. Because of these experiences, students often made connections between the historical fiction novel and the informational text.

For example, after reading an informational text about Elizabeth Cady Stanton, students started comparing Elizabeth Cady Stanton to Charlotte, the main character in *Riding Freedom*. Jax wrote: “If Charlotte’s identity was known, this is what Charlotte would probably do, give speeches and write documents, and possibly help with the 19th amendment.” Ava wrote: “Charlotte was a girl that wasn’t treated right and Elizabeth Stanton fought for those rights.”

Another example showing deeper connections to the novel was shown after reading *Rough and Tough Charley* by Verla Kay. This picture book told the true story of Charley Parkhurst through verse. This discussion supported the work of McTigue, Thornton, and Wiese (2013) as students were becoming more critical readers by analyzing the accuracy of Charlotte’s life in the novel as compared to actual events. During this discussion, I was surprised at the exact details the students remembered. We were actually having a discussion, in which students kept elaborating on the events of the novel, while at the same time comparing them to the informational text.

One example of students being critical of Charlotte’s life events occurred after learning that our main character was actually named Charley Darkey Parkhurst. Ella questioned why the author called our main character Charlotte at the beginning of the novel and not Charley. Through discussion we, as a group, thought that perhaps the author wanted to show that Charlotte had to

change her name in order to disguise herself as a boy. Other students noticed that in the novel, she (Charlotte) wasn't replacing a horseshoe on a run, but she was breaking in wild horses when she injured her eye. Additionally, students brought up the fact that Charley did in fact save passengers while crossing a bridge. After this statement Andy replied: "Charley saved passengers just like in the book. Charley and the passengers are the only ones who know what happened. The fictional part is the creative part, that the author got to make up."

4.2.2 Final Projects

For the final projects, students were given the choice of three prompts (See Table 1).

Once they chose a prompt, students went back in their binders to reread their "notes" on that particular topic. Then, students used the storyboard template to draft their response from Charlotte's Point of View. (See Figure 4.) Students' responses were assessed on a 3-point scale using the rubric shown in Table 2. The 5 elements in the rubric include: (a) using first-person point of view, (b) literary elements of having a clear beginning, middle and end, (c) historical context, (d) the use of information gained from sources outside the novel, and (e) making a connection to the novel.

Table 1 Final Project Prompts

Prompt 1	Prompt 2	Prompt 3
<p>In the novel, the stable master Vern, helped me escape. Vern's story is one of determination, just like mine. In the novel, Pam Munoz Ryan does not provide many details of his escape, just that people helped him along the way. Here is the story I imagined.</p>	<p>In the novel, Frank Stevens and James Birch ask me to journey to California to drive for the California Stage Company. In the novel, Pam Munoz Ryan does not provide many details of my journey, so I am going to tell you about my month-long journey to CA.</p>	<p>In the novel, I meet a woman in Sacramento giving handbills to people supporting a woman's right to vote. It is on this day that I became determined to vote in an election and continue to show people I am as qualified as the next "man". During this time, I also learned about a brave woman named Elizabeth Cady Stanton.</p>

Table 2 Final Storyboard Rubric

Storyboard Rubric

	3	2	1
Point of View	I consistently used first person point of view.	I used first person point of view for the most part.	I did not use first person point of view consistently.
Literary Elements	My panels include a well-described setting, characters and a clear beginning, middle and end.	My panels include a setting, characters, and plot but some literary elements are not well described.	My panels are missing one of the literary elements or the elements are not well described.
Historical Context	The events and setting are historically accurate.	Most of the events and setting are historically accurate.	Many of the events and/or the setting is not historically accurate.
Reference to Informational Sources	I incorporated information learned from sources outside the novel in more than one panel.	I incorporated information learned from sources outside the novel in 1 panel.	I did not incorporate information learned from sources outside the novel.
Connection to Novel	I made many connections to the novel.	I made at least 1 connection to the novel	I did not connect to the novel.

The first feature assessed on the rubric was consistent use of first-person point of view. The majority of students were able to consistency write in first-person point of view with the character of Charlotte telling the story. Students wrote in first-person by using captions and speech bubbles. Ella used captions to show Charlotte was speaking, and in her illustrations Ella also used a speech bubble for Vern. For example, her caption read: “I imagined Vern working very hard and his master bossing him around being very rude and he is not treating him right. Like whipping him or not taking care of him. He would never stop working he did not get a break” and the speech

bubble above Vern read: “This is very hard.” Ella did this throughout her storyboard (see Figure 5) which added interest to the response while demonstrating that she knew how to write in first-person point of view.

Liam, on the other hand, did not use speech bubbles and the character of Vern did not appear in his illustrations. However, in each storyboard panel, Charlotte is telling the story of how she imagined Vern escaping. An example from Liam’s storyboard (see Figure 6) is Charlotte standing on a raft saying, “Vern escape(d) by getting on a raft. And he also got help by the abolitionists.” Although they used different approaches, both students were able to demonstrate that they knew how to write in first-person.



Figure 5 Ella’s Final Storyboard

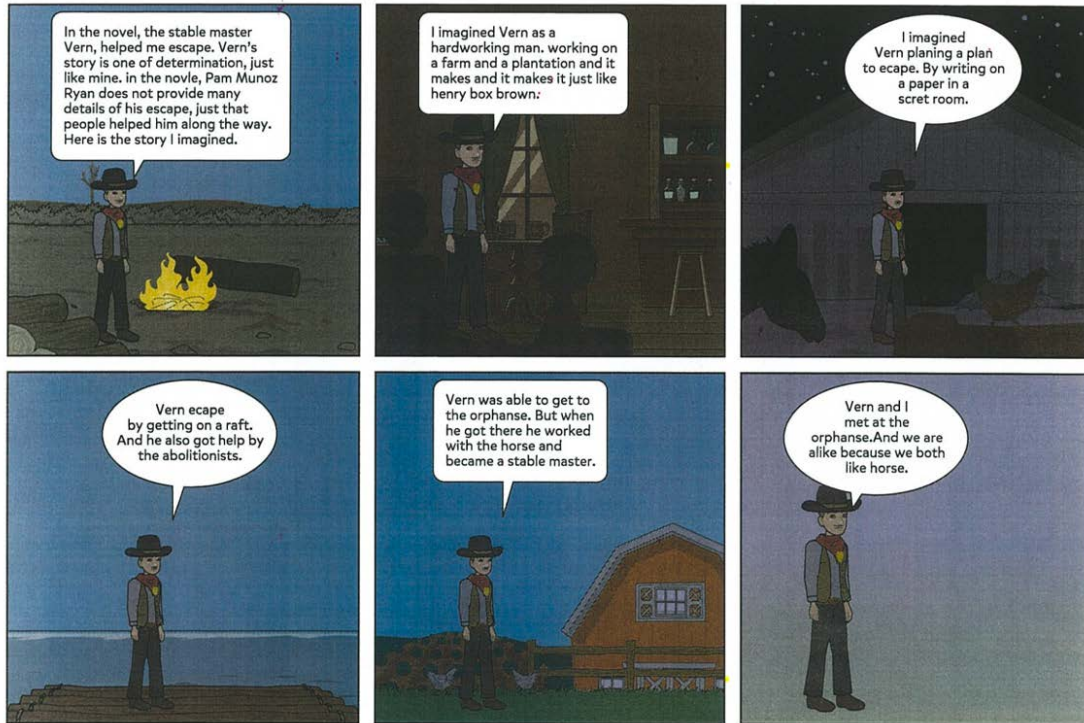


Figure 6 Liam's Final Storyboard

The second feature to be assessed was the use literary elements, specifically a clear beginning, middle, and end occurring within the students' storyboard. Three students did not meet these requirements. For example, Sarah's fifth panel of *Charlotte's Journey to CA* (see Figure 7), shows Charlotte in San Francisco, while her last panel shows her getting off a mule. This sequence was confusing to the reader and did not follow a logical organization.

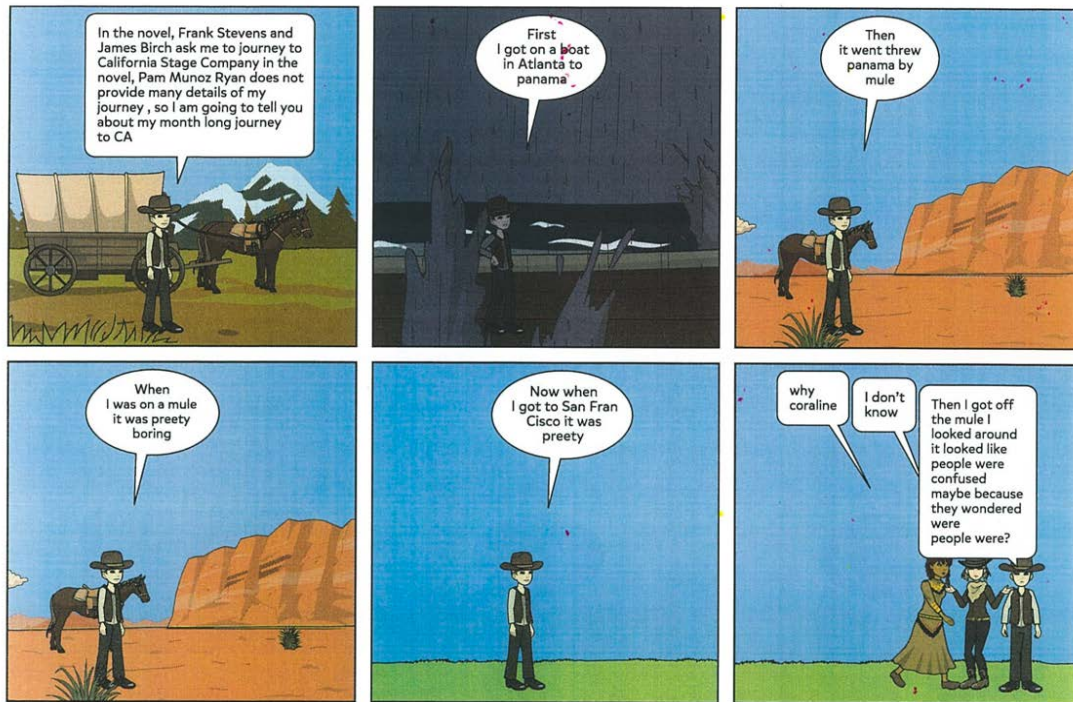


Figure 7 Sarah's Final Storyboard

The third category assessed was historical context. Students had to make use of clothing and settings that were appropriate for the mid-1800s. Prior to the lesson, we discussed possible search terms that would help in locating clothing and characters that would meet those requirements. The majority of students followed these suggestions and found clothing that was appropriate for the time period. Some storyboard panels that did not meet the requirements included panels by two students that showed modern buildings or characters that were dressed in modern clothing.

The fourth feature assessed included the mention of information that was gained from an informational text. Fourteen out of seventeen students provided at least one example of information that was not found in the novel. For example, in Milo's storyboard (see Figure 8), he included information about Elizabeth Cady Stanton and wrote, "And when I got there I thought to myself I can be like Elizabeth and secretly vote for Ulises Grant." Although the book does not say

who Charlotte voted for, we stopped for a brief moment during that day to discuss how Ulysses S. Grant was in fact a president, and he would have been someone who supported women.

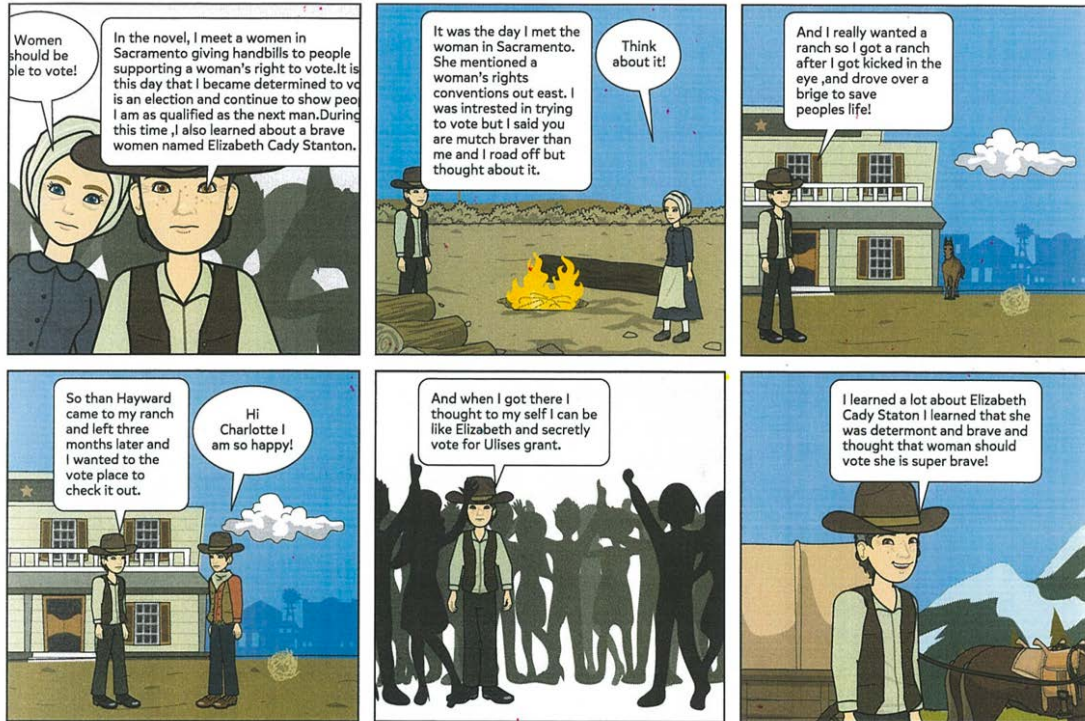


Figure 8 Milo's Final Storyboard

Students who wrote about Vern's escape used words and phrases including *abolitionists*, *the Underground Railroad*, and *running barefoot*. For example, Andy (see Figure 9) wrote "He probably used the Underground Railroad to escape and he may have also went with other slaves to escape and abolitionists helped him escape. He may have also used the north star."

Another example by Jax used Harriet Tubman as someone who may have helped Vern: "Maybe even Harriett Tubman helped." Some students referred to the book *Henry's Freedom Box* when talking about Vern's escape. Liam said: "I imagined Vern as a hardworking man. Working on a farm and a plantation and it makes it, it makes it just like Henry Box Brown." Another reference

to *Henry's Freedom Box* was a comment by Avery, who wrote: "I imagine Vern in a tobacco factory making tobacco leaf."

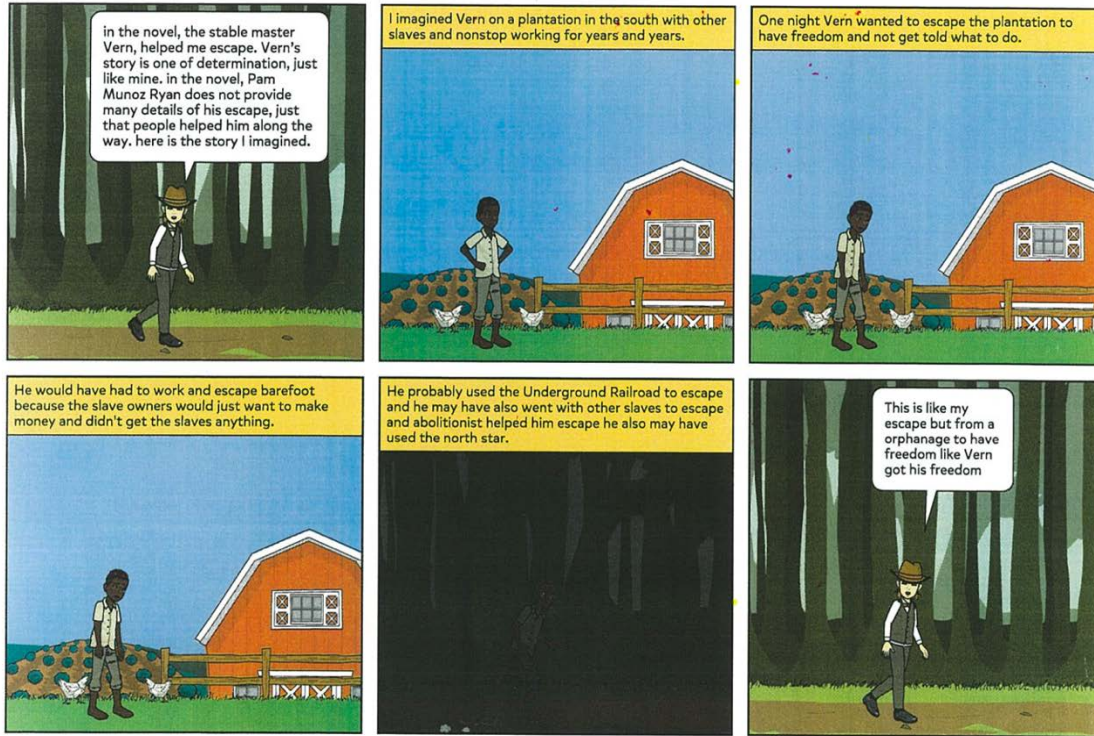


Figure 9 Andy's Final Storyboard

Students who wrote about the journey to California included references to the slideshow of pros and cons of the 3 routes as well as the primary source from Sheldon Shufelt's diary. Tyler wrote, "And our food was spoiled." Alex wrote: "And that's how I got to Sacramento, CA. Just like Sheldon Shufelt when he went to CA, except he did NOT go to Scaremendo." (See Figure 10). The students who did not mention outside sources wrote very few words throughout their panels. For example, Jon wrote: "Vern runs and hides in a bush in the morning" and Sarah wrote about the journey to California with simply the comment: "Now when I got to San Francisco it was pretty."

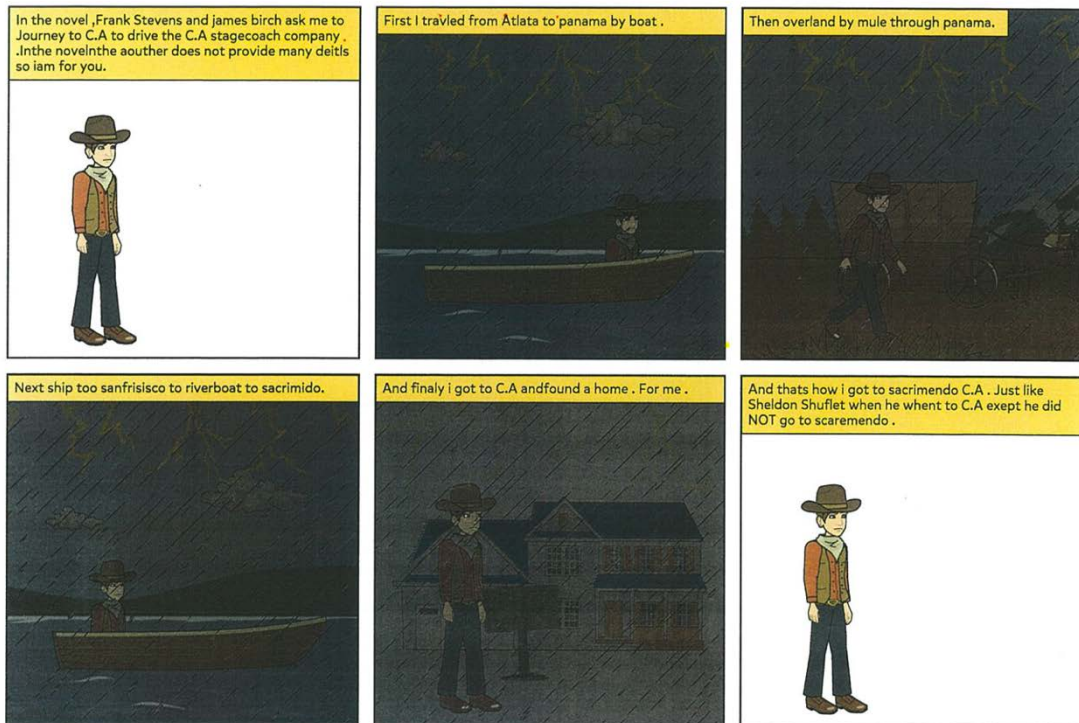


Figure 10 Alex's Final Storyboard

Finally, the last feature assessed on the rubric was making a connection back to the novel itself. Sixteen out of the seventeen students made some connection or mention of the novel or Charlotte's character in the novel. Most students who wrote about Vern's journey connected his escape to Charlotte's escape from the orphanage, a place where Charlotte needed to leave. Aden wrote: "He and I are similar because we escaped a place where we did not want to be in." Evan wrote "Vern and I connected by him knowing I needed to leave the orphanage, because it is terrible at the orphanage." Andy connected the need for freedom: "This is like my escape but from an orphanage to have freedom, like Vern got his freedom." Alex (see Figure 10) made the connection that Charlotte's journey could have been very similar to Sheldon Shufelt, but they went to different cities (San Francisco and Sacramento). In writing about Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Milo (see Figure 8) connected to Elizabeth and Charlotte both being determined and brave: "And when I got there I thought to myself I can be like Elizabeth" and "I learned that she was determined and brave and

thought women should vote.” Those students who did not make connections used very few sentences or needed to elaborate. For example, Lauren had three blank panels and the last panel read: “Thanks Vern” and “Your welcome Charlotte.”

Overall, the final storyboards showed student learning in making connections between the novel and the supporting informational texts. I realized that I did provide more informational texts as well as primary sources about slavery and wondered if that influenced the choice of 11 of the 17 students who chose to write about Vern’s escape.

Scores for the student’s final storyboards are shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Student Final Project Scores

Student	Topic	Point of view	Literary elements	Historical context	Multiple sources	Connection to novel	Score	Percent	PSSA Score
Liam	Vern	3	3	3	2	2	13/15	87%	Basic
Ella	Vern	3	3	3	3	3	15/15	100%	Proficient
Tyler	CA	3	3	3	3	2	14/15	93%	Below Basic
Avery	Vern	2	2	3	3	2	12/15	80%	Basic
Evan	Vern	2	2	3	2	2	11/15	73%	Proficient
Alex	CA	2	2	3	2	2	11/15	73%	Basic
Andy	Vern	3	3	3	3	3	15/15	100%	Proficient
Connor	Vern	2	2	3	3	2	12/15	80%	Proficient
Milo	Elizabeth	3	3	3	3	3	15/15	100%	Proficient
Curtis	Vern	3	3	3	1	3	13/15	87%	Basic
Aden	Vern	3	2	3	2	2	12/15	80%	Proficient
Jax	Elizabeth	2	2	3	2	3	12/15	80%	Basic
Lauren	Vern	2	1	2	2	1	8/15	53%	Proficient
Jon	Vern	3	2	3	2	2	12/15	80%	Proficient
Chris	Vern	1	2	3	2	1	9/15	60%	Proficient
Doug	Elizabeth	2	2	3	2	2	11/15	73%	Proficient
Sarah	CA	1	2	2	1	1	7/15	47%	Below Basic
Mean		2.35	2.29	2.88	2.24	2.12	11.9/15	79%	
Standard Deviation		0.70	0.59	0.33	0.66	0.70			

It is important to note that the overall mean score was 11.9 out of 15 or 79%. Disaggregating scores based on PSSA ranks are shown in the table below.

Table 4 Average Student Scores Based on PSSA Rank

PSSA Score	Number of Students	Average Score Percent
Proficient	10	80%
Basic	5	81%
Below Basic	2	70%

4.2.3 Pretest/Posttest

The pretest/posttest was used to gauge student knowledge of the mid-1800s and of the genre of historical fiction. All seventeen students completed both the pretest and posttest.

For the most part, student misconceptions about the mid-1800s on the pretest were resolved by fifteen out of seventeen students on the posttest. The two misconceptions shared by the most students included stagecoaches being used as transportation and that there were fifty states in the mid-1800s (See Appendix A).

There were three questions relating to the genre of historical fiction. The first question asked whether or not historical fiction included references to fictional as well as actual historical events. On the pretest twelve students thought historical fiction includes references to fictional as well as actual historical events and on the posttest fifteen students agreed with this statement.

The second question, question number 8, asked students if they had previously read any historical fiction. On the pretest, thirteen students responded that they have not read any historical

fiction novels, but on the posttest all students responded that they had read at least one, *Riding Freedom*.

The final question about genre, question number 9, asked why readers might chose historical fiction. The pretest responses were very general such as “to learn,” or simply: “I don’t know.” On the posttest, students elaborated on their responses, and none of the students responded with “I don’t know.” Student responses instead included: “to learn about the past,” “to learn about people and what happened before us,” “to learn through real and fake information,” and “Because it’s not just facts, it makes the story more interesting.” As I reflected on these responses, I concluded that students now had begun developing an understanding of historical fiction and the possible benefits of reading the genre.

4.3 Research Question 3: How does designing an inquiry focused on my own practice influence my identity as a leader scholar practitioner?

In designing and implementing this inquiry, I have developed my identity as a leader scholar practitioner in these two ways: (a) by understanding the importance of connecting theory and practice (b) by reinforcing my desire to be an instructional leader.

4.3.1 Theory into Practice

My problem of practice emerged after my district adopted a set of standards that required an increased use of informational text in the English language arts curriculum. Although students in our building were demonstrating proficiency on literature-related tasks, they were struggling to

comprehend informational text. In response to this problem in my practice, I started to incorporate more informational articles into my lessons; however, students were still struggling and not making connections to the information. I decided to try incorporating the informational texts into a unit built around a historical fiction novel. The unit would provide a context for learning from informational texts related to the time period and the historical events that took place during the time period.

According to Buss and Zambo (2016), action research allows “researchers to make midcourse corrections based on the researcher’s knowledge of the desired outcome and what the current data have suggested” (p. 147). As I was implementing the unit, using action research, I was able to reflect on my own teaching practice and make changes to the unit along the way. These changes included varying the level of scaffolding during lessons, changing lesson activities, and stopping lessons to address questions and misconceptions.

One instance in which the day’s lesson did not go completely as planned was when students were sharing which route they would take to California during the Gold Rush. This activity was in the format of a journal entry, modeled on the primary source document: Shufelt’s Diary. Most students were beginning their travels either in 1848 or 1849, but Jax started his journey in 1855. This start date sparked criticism from the other students and clearly upset Jax. In that moment, I decided to stop the lesson and complete a short fact-finding activity using a book that we had read entitled *If You Were a Kid During the Gold Rush* (Gregory, 2018). Students quickly found out that the Gold Rush began in 1848 and ended by 1860 and that 1852 was an especially active year. When the facts were shared, Jax’s choice of 1855 was validated and the original lesson continued.

As I reflected on what happened during the above lesson, I was thinking about the theories informing the design of my unit. I realized that students were creating intertext models based on the informational texts in the unit. Because students had opportunities to interact with multiple texts, they were able to demonstrate the importance of consulting those texts in order to resolve questions.

After conducting my action research, and reflecting on events such as the one above, I am contemplating more than ever the question posed by Schutz and Huffman (2017), “How can we become more powerful as professionals conducting research inside our own teaching practice?” (p. 9). I witnessed students grappling with multiple sources to create intertext models about what was happening not only in the plot of the novel, but also during the historical period of the mid-1800s in the United States. I was witnessing, in my own classroom, students’ development of a deeper understanding of the mid-1800s and the character of Charley Parkhurst. The theoretical perspectives of the Construction-Integration Model, the Documents Model, and Intertextuality had motivated my unit design, and I was able to see the effects of theoretically principled curriculum choices.

4.3.2 Becoming and Instructional Leader

Schutz and Hoffman (2017) asserted that “in practice-based research, there are rarely endings, just middles” (p.11). In the middle is exactly where I feel I am in becoming an instructional leader. I am on the verge of being able to share my insights and practical knowledge with others, but I also feel confined in my current role as a fourth-grade teacher.

Sharing my passion with others right now includes a yearning to write curriculum using multiple texts to support the reading of historical fiction novels and feeling empowered to share

my findings with other teachers. Some options that I have been considering are presenting at a state or national conference, writing an article for publication, and looking at online options such as the International Literacy Association's ReadWriteThink lesson plans. In addition to these options, I will be presenting findings to the school board and at our district's summer professional development.

5.0 Discussion

The action research project described in this paper documents several important findings related to the scholarly literature, action research, and my students. I discuss each of these in turn.

First is the importance of theoretical perspectives and reviews of literature to inform curriculum development. Prior to the design and implementation of the *Riding Freedom* unit, I provided informational texts on specific topics for my students. However, I did not have a framework for thinking about how to integrate informational texts into meaningful units of study. My review of the scholarly literature provided me with both theoretical and practical ways to think about how a unit design might provide a context for students to engage with multiple texts. Specifically, using informational text sets to support the reading of a historical fiction novel. Lenski's (1998) description of intertextual configurations helped me to analyze the anchor text for important themes in the novel. This analysis foregrounded three themes important for understanding the context of *Riding Freedom*: (a) life in the 1800s in the United States, (b) slavery, and (c) women's rights.

I located informational texts, including articles, photographs, videos, and primary sources and sequenced them to correspond to places in the novel where students would be able to connect the information to the events in the novel. The intertext model provided a framework for me to reference as I sequenced the texts. For example, prior to incorporating the primary source "In the Swamp" I used a picture book, *Barefoot: Escape on the Underground Railroad* (Edwards, 1997) and a video slideshow to build students' background knowledge about slavery. Students used this newly acquired knowledge to support their analysis of the primary source and the analysis of the character Vern in the novel.

As students were using the knowledge gained through informational texts, I was aware that students also needed to see the connections among the texts. This awareness influenced not only the sequencing of the texts, but also the related tasks I asked students to complete. For example, one of the tasks required students to write a journal entry about which route they would choose to travel to California. In order to complete the task, students needed to incorporate information learned from a video, a picture book, a diary entry, and the novel. In organizing this information students transferred important information from each text to a guided note taking sheet. Students were then responsible for choosing the route they would take and writing a journal entry supporting their decision. While evaluating students' entries I noted the students had not just chosen the route the main character took, but instead weighed the pros and cons of each route to support their decision. This decision required a deeper understanding of how to travel to California in the mid-1800s, which was gained by connecting information from multiple texts.

Finally, the integration model emphasizes the importance of students synthesizing multiple sources of information to create a situation model of the novel *Riding Freedom*. Students' performance on the final task provided evidence that incorporating informational texts supported a deeper understanding of the characters, setting, and plot of the novel. After scoring and analyzing the projects, I found all but three students incorporated at least one piece of factual information that was not included in the novel. Additionally, all but one student made connections between the historical context of the novel and the main character's thoughts and actions throughout the novel. Through their responses to the final task students demonstrated how multiple sources supported and strengthened their understanding of the novel *Riding Freedom*.

The second finding is the value of the reflection and analysis that action research requires. Shutz and Hoffman (2017) asserted that "much like our teaching plans, our plans in action research

are in a constant state of flux” (p.10). As I reflected on and analyzed initial student discussion and assessment responses, I realized I needed to make some instructional changes. I needed to change how I supported students in reading and connecting the informational text to the novel. In response to my analysis, I referred back to the literature to determine what strategies would support my theoretical framework. I incorporated framed paragraphs to support summarizing informational text and moment to moment scaffolding during whole and small group discussions. Though these changes were not anticipated, I saw a positive change in students’ responses in subsequent lessons.

I also realized that I missed opportunities to support students’ vocabulary development. Looking back, I can see that selecting key words from the unit, words that would allow students to think and talk about important ideas, was something that I could have done but did not. For example, I could have highlighted the meanings of words such as *abolition*, *emancipation*, and *suffrage* and displayed charts with their meanings. Students would have been able to refer to the charts throughout the unit.

The third finding is the recognition that my students who were not considered proficient readers based on the state assessment were able to engage with important ideas and challenging content. Lupo and Tortorelli (2017) found that students were able to comprehend more complex texts when teachers engaged them with the topic and provided supports. In the unit, I provided time for students to interact with the novel and with the supporting texts. I originally planned on a three-week unit, but the unit lasted five weeks because students were engaged. They were connecting their learning from the informational texts to the setting, plot, and characters of *Riding Freedom*.

These connections among texts were similar to the findings in an exploratory research study in a self-contained upper elementary special education classroom by Palincsar, Parecki and

McPhail (1995). In this study, researchers noticed that students with comprehension difficulties used one text to help make meaning out of another text around the same topic. Through their observations, the researchers concluded that the students' "resourceful use of intertextuality suggests that intertextuality may provide both a tool for enhancing the achievement of these children and a richer picture of how children with comprehension difficulties approach text" (p.506). As I was watching my own students approach text, I realized that they were capable of reading complex texts and having rich discussions around the texts because of the unit structure.

In conclusion, I believe that these findings helped me grow professionally in understanding how to design theoretically principled curriculum. Through implementing the unit, I learned how to support my students in discussing and reading complex texts. It is my hope that sharing my experiences and resources will empower other teachers to engage in their own efforts.

In the future, I plan to address these findings in presenting a workshop to my colleagues, presenting an overview at a school board meeting, and modeling to my student teachers how to incorporate theory into practice. I am working with my principal to design a professional development workshop this summer that includes an overview of my unit, findings, and ways to incorporate informational text into our current district curriculum. I also plan to guide future student teachers in building lessons that incorporate theoretical perspectives by providing them with practical studies from journals such as *The Reading Teacher*.

Appendix A Pre/Post Assessment

Name: _____ *Date:* _____

1. Historical fiction includes references to fictional as well as actual historical events.

True or False

During the mid-1800s in the United States,

2. Stagecoaches were used as transportation. True or False
3. Women were able to vote in elections. True or False
4. There were 50 states. True or False
5. There was no slavery. True or False
6. Women had the same opportunities as men for education and jobs. True or False
7. Many people traveled west because of the Gold Rush. True or False
8. What historical fiction novels have you read?

9. Why do you think readers might choose to read historical fiction?

Appendix B Lesson Plans

Mrs. Wallace

Historical Fiction Unit

Novel: *Riding Freedom* by Pamela Muñoz-Ryan

Research Questions

- (1) How can a unit be designed to incorporate historical fiction and related informational texts to support students in using those resources to comprehend characters and events as well as historical context/setting?
- (2) How do students demonstrate their understanding of characters and events in historical fiction as well as historical context/setting by completing the unit?
- (3) How does designing an inquiry focused on my own practice influence my identity as a leader scholar practitioner?

Unit Essential Questions

1. What is historical fiction?

Historical fiction is a specific genre, or kind of writing. Authors of historical fiction set their stories in specific times and places.

2. Why do some readers choose to read historical fiction?

Some readers choose historical fiction to experience historical places, events, and people they want to know about. Others choose historical fiction because by reading a fictional

story they can understand history better by making connections to the characters and time period.

3. How can readers develop a deeper understanding of setting, characters, and plot in historical fiction by consulting multiple informational resources about a specific time period?

Readers develop a deeper understanding through studying images, photographs, and illustrations (primary sources) from the time period. They can also gather additional resources and texts to build background knowledge about the specific time period, event or person.

Social Studies Standards Addressed in the Unit

- Distinguish between fact and **opinion** from multiple points of view, and **primary sources** as related to historical events.
- Identify a specific research topic and develop questions relating to the research topic.
- Locate historical **documents, artifacts**, and places critical to United States history.
- Distinguish between **conflict** and cooperation among groups and organization that impacted the history and development of the United States.

ELA Eligible Content Addressed

Literature Text

- Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text explicitly says and when drawing inferences from the text.
- Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.
- Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story, drama, or poem, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character’s thoughts, words, or actions).
- Compare and contrast the treatment of similar themes and topics.
- Compare and contrast the point of view from which different stories are narrated, included the difference between first and third person narrations.

Informational Text

- Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.
- Explain events, procedures, ideas, steps, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.
- Compare and contrast a firsthand and secondhand account of the same event or topic; describe the differences in focus and the information provided.
- Describe the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information and text features in a text or part of a text.
- Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to demonstrate subject knowledge.
- Interpret text features (e.g., headings, graphics, charts, timelines, diagrams) and/or make connections between text and the content of text features.

Text-Dependent Analysis

- Develop an analysis using a variety of evidence from text(s) to support claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences.
- Link ideas within categories of information using words and phrases (e.g., another, for example, also, because).
- Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic and/or convey the experience and events.
- Provide a concluding statement or section related to the analysis presented.

Lesson	Annotations
<p>Lesson 1: Historical fiction and the setting of <i>Riding Freedom</i></p> <p>Objectives: Students will be able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify characteristics of historical fiction. ▪ Identify settings of historical fiction novels ▪ Identify the setting of <i>Riding Freedom</i> <p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ novel ▪ binder pages 1-6 ▪ copies of historical fiction novels ▪ timeline of historical events posted in the classroom. ▪ social studies textbooks (pages 65-68) <p style="text-align: center;">Lesson Sequence</p> <p style="text-align: center;">What is historical fiction?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Distribute binders to students and have them write their names on page 1. ▪ Read the title, author, and illustrator on the cover of <i>Riding Freedom</i> and explain that the novel is historical fiction. ▪ Introduce the genre of historical fiction by referring students to the graphic organizer on page 2 in the binder <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How is this genre different than other genres of fiction? (fairy tales, tall tales, mystery etc.) ▪ Discuss the first book <i>Sarah Plain and Tall</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Why do you think I filled in the blanks with 1800s, prairie, and westward expansion? 	

- What is westward expansion?
 - Record student's responses on chart paper
 - Show students the novels pictured on pages 3,4, and 5 and discuss what words to highlight and what is needed to complete the table.
 - Refer to and Introduce the timeline of US history posted in the classroom
- Discuss the three important historical events/situations that are addressed in *Riding Freedom*
 - Women's roles/suffrage, slavery, and westward expansion (CA goldrush)
 - Which books address this time period from the table?

What was it like in the United States in the mid-1800s?

- Conclude the lesson with reading pages 65-68 of the social studies text book and completing page 6 in their binders.

Assessment:

1. Ask students to explain what historical fiction is. Talk about why readers might choose to read historical fiction
2. What was it like in the United States in the mid-1800s? Have students share facts about the mid-1800s in the United States.

Lesson 2: Character Traits

Objectives: Students will be able to

- Identify text evidence that supports inferences about traits of characters
- Identify what makes *Henry's Freedom Box* historical fiction

Resources

- novel
- binder pages 7-9
- *Henry's Freedom Box* by Ellen Levine

Lesson Sequence

What are character traits?

- Discuss character traits.
 - How would you describe yourself? (on the outside)
 - How would you describe your personality? (the inside, your actions, your thoughts, who you are?)
 - Provide students with the character traits chart and ask students questions to prompt discussion
 - Go over the chart with the students.
 - Are there any traits that you do not know what they are?
 - Can some traits be both good and bad traits to have?
 - Can a character or person have many traits?
- Read *Henry's Freedom Box*
 - What is the setting of this book?
 - What clues does the author provide?
 - What character traits does Henry have?
 - Let's use our chart to help us.

- Discuss Henry's character traits and support the traits using pieces of text
- Start classroom resources chart with *Henry's Freedom Box*

What character traits describe Charlotte at the beginning of the novel?

The setting plays a vital role in historical fiction. When reading, readers should pay special attention to passages that tell about daily life. These details can reveal a great deal about the time and place in which the story is set.

- Read Prologue
- Discuss the text at specified stopping points
- Reread and highlight text in the binder that supports the character traits of Charlotte
- Complete pages 8-9 in the binder
- Start classroom Character Chart

Assessment:

1. What are character traits?
2. What are Charlotte's character traits? Provide evidence from the novel to support your claim.

Lesson 3: Character Points of View and Sequencing

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Identify roles of girls in the mid-1800s (discuss how/why the author included this)

- Make inferences based on the character's thoughts of Charlotte
- Sequence important story events.

Resources

- Novel
- Binder pages 10 and 11
- *Henry's Freedom Box*

Lesson Sequence

What are the important events in a story?

- Sequencing and inferring using *Henry's Freedom Box*
 - Discuss the events of the story from beginning to end
 - Using parts of the story on notecards, students will determine whether or not the event is an important event and discuss why...
 - Think: does the event change the story or the character?

What are roles of girls in the mid-1800s?

- After reading page 9 of Chapter 1, discuss why the author compared Charlotte to boys her age.
- Why do you think the author include this information?
 - In the notes section of the binder, write a list of expectations for girls
 - Ex: Girls are expected to have dolls and tea parties.
 - Ex. Girls are expected to sew.

What can readers infer from a character's thoughts and actions toward another character?

Today, as you read chapters one and two, you are going to be introduced to many characters at the orphanage. After our reading, you are going to make some inferences based on each what the character says in the story. You will also be selecting the important events that are occurring, just as you did in *Henry's Freedom Box*.

- Read Chapter 1
 - Stop at important events along the way.
 - Vern and his escape to the North
 - Hayward introduced
 - Charlotte wins a race against all the boys
 - Someone is going to get adopted.
- After chapter 1
 - How do you make an inference?
 - Use the text and background knowledge
 - What can you infer from people's facial expressions?
 - sadness, anger, happiness, excitement
 - What if the author includes actions or thoughts to go along with the facial expressions? Will your inferences change?
 - Discuss the character of Mrs. Doyle
 - Complete the table for Mrs. Doyle on page 10 discussing possible inferences.
- Read Chapter 2
 - Stop to discuss important events along the way
 - Charlotte does not line up when people come to the orphanage to adopt children
 - Freedom dies of an infection.

- Mr. Millshark tells Charlotte she needs to act more like a lady and can't be in the stables.
- Hayward gets adopted.
- Charlotte gets the idea to run away.
- After chapter 2
 - Complete the table for the other characters that are introduced in chapters 1 and 2

Assessment

1. What are some of the roles of girls in the mid-1800s?
2. What are the important events from Chapters 1 and 2?
Illustrate those events.
3. What can you infer from the thoughts and actions of one character toward another character? Give an example.

Lesson 4: The Underground Railroad

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Define the Underground Railroad in their own words.
- Explain how a slave may have traveled to the North,
- List 5 facts they learned about the underground railroad.
- Relate their learning to how Vern may have escaped and his character in the story.

Resources:

- Novel/Binder
- Slideshow from Scholastic
 - Life on the Plantation | Underground Railroad Student Activity. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bhistory/underground_railroad/plantation.htm

- Character Chart (Whole Class)

Lesson Sequence

What was the Underground Railroad?

The Underground Railroad was an important means for slaves to get to the North. Today we are going to view a slideshow and discuss how Vern may have escaped and traveled North to the orphanage.

- Watch the slideshow and complete the worksheet (Page 12)
 - Students may work in small groups or individually watching the slideshow in order to go at their own pace.
 - Slideshow can be accessed through Google classroom

How does the Underground Railroad relate to *Riding Freedom*?

- Read Chapter 3, stopping at predetermined stopping points
- Discuss Vern's character traits and add to the character chart
 - What traits would someone that escaped slavery have?
 - How do the names of the horses reflect Vern's traits?
 - Discuss Hope, Charity, Freedom
 - Complete question on Page 13 of the student booklet

Assessment:

1. What was the Underground Railroad?
 - List five facts you learned.

2. How does learning about the Underground Railroad relate to *Riding Freedom*?

- Vern escaped to the North and now we know how he may have traveled

Lesson 5: Primary and Secondary Sources

(Slavery)

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Define a primary and secondary source
- Analyze a photograph

Resources:

- Novel/Binder
- Primary Source Worksheets (2 Photographs)
 - Will hand out separately and be place in the resources section of their binder

Lesson Sequence

What is a Primary Source?

- Go over page 14 of the student booklet discussing primary and secondary sources.
 - Complete the activity at the bottom determining what is a primary source and secondary source. Discuss.

How do You analyze a Primary Source?

- Today, you are going to analyze 2 primary sources. You are going to do the first one as a group.
 - First, I am just going to look at this photograph for a minute and think about what I see at first glance.

Let's see...There is a man that appears to be hiding in some weeds.

- Next, I am going to place post it notes on my picture. This will divide it into quadrants, or 4 parts. We are going to number the post-its 1-4 so we all have the same quadrants.
- Now we are going to look at quadrant 1 with a magnifying glass. What objects do you see? Let's write them down (tall grass or weeds)
 - Move on to other quadrants writing down objects then again with actions.
- Discuss 2 questions students have about the photograph and write down 2.
 - Why are the horses and dogs painted with just lines in the background?
- Discuss 2 inferences that can be made and record them as well.
 - I can infer that he is heading North.
- Complete the 2nd photo analysis with a partner (pages 17 and 18)

How does Charlotte continue to show she is determined and tough in this chapter?

- Read the chapter stopping at various points in the chapter where Charlotte shows her determination. Discuss after the chapter to add evidence to the character chart of Charlotte.

Assessment

1. What is a primary source?
2. How do you analyze a primary source? partner analysis

3. How does Charlotte continue to show she is determined and tough in this chapter? (Discuss with examples on character chart.)

Lesson 6: Integrating Information from Multiple Sources

Time for Research (3 learning centers)

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Integrate information from two or more sources on the same topic in order to demonstrate subject knowledge
- Describe what it may have been like to be a runaway slave.
- Analyze a historical document

Resources

- Binder pages 19-25
- *If You Traveled on the Underground Railroad* by Ellen Levine
- *Barefoot: Escape on the Underground Railroad* by Pamela Duncan Edwards
- *Slavery, Civil War & Reconstruction- The Underground Railroad* (ReadWorks Article)
- Historical Document (Primary Source)

Lesson Sequence

How do You Analyze a Historical Document?

Analyzing a historical document

As a whole group model how to analyze a historical document using the checklist below.

- First, Let's take a look at this document and tell your partner what words stand out to you.
 - List words on the board.
 - Gang of 25 Sea Island Cotton and Rice Negroes
 - Thursday, Ryan's Mart
 - Conditions
 - Number, Age, Capacity
 - What do you think this document is?
Advertisement, Letter, Diary Entry?
 - What is the document advertising? A Slave Auction
- Next, think of the question words, who, what, when, where, why, and how. And ask yourself those questions about the document.
 - What is the document about? (a slave auction)
 - Who is being auctioned (25 Negroes)
 - *talk about the appropriateness of the word Negroes in this context
 - When are they being auctioned? (Thursday, September 25, 1852 at 11am)
 - Where are they being auctioned? (Ryan's Mart on Chalmers St. in Charleston)
- Now, think of 2 questions that you have about this document?
 - Provide students opportunity to write down their questions.
- Finally, write two inferences for the document. Let's do one together.

- I can infer that some slaves will be sold for more money than others. For example, a prime field hand is younger, and would probably cost more

Learning Centers

- Introduce 3 different centers available for students to develop their knowledge about slavery and the Underground Railroad
 - Go through student binder to explain what needs to be completed at each center
 - Listing of facts learned
 - How did the informational source help you understand what it was like to be a runaway slave?
- Center 1: *Slavery, Civil War & Reconstruction- The Underground Railroad* (Readworks Article)
- Center 2- *Barefoot: Escape on the Underground Railroad* (historical fiction picture book)
- Center 3: Informational Text -*If You Traveled on the Underground Railroad* by Ellen Levine (picture book)
- Cycle through centers (15 minutes each)

Assessment

1. How do you analyze a historical document? Checklist.
2. What are facts about the Underground Railroad and slavery? List.
3. How does the informational text help in understanding what it was like to be a runaway slave? Make connections to the novel.

Lesson 7: Turning Point of a Story

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Identify the turning point in a story
- Explain the events of a chapter

Resources:

- Novel/Binder pages 26-27
- *Freedom Box: The Story of Henry “Box” Brown* by Sally M. Walker

Lesson Sequence

What is the turning point of a story?

Today you are going to read another version of Henry’s escape. While I am reading, I want you to think about all the events that happened that led to Henry’s escape.

- We are also going to talk about the turning point in the story
- Discuss what a turning point is...
- Read the book noting events and locating the turning point

How does the turning point change a story?

Novel-Chapter 5 Read Aloud

- Stopping at predetermined stopping points to discuss major events that are happening.
 - Ebenezer finds Charlotte. Charlotte proves to Ebenezer she can do a good job in the stables. Ebenezer knows who Charlotte is. Charlotte proves

she can handle the horses. Ebenezer has a plan for Charlotte.

Assessment:

1. What is the turning point in the story?
2. How does a turning point affect the characters in a narrative?

Lesson 8: Parts of a Stagecoach/Stagecoach

Strategy

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Define the parts of a stagecoach
- Explain what it was like riding a stagecoach
- Analyze an event from a story

Resources:

- Novel/Binder pages 28-29
- Overland Stage Co Video
 - <https://statesymbolsusa.org/videos/stagecoach-westward-fronteir-travel-expansion-united-states-31410-hd>

Lesson Sequence

What are the parts of a stagecoach?

Today you are going to incorporate a video into our sources.

- First, I want you to take a look at the parts of a stagecoach and highlight the parts that you do not know what they are.

- For example, I know what brakes and spokes are because my bike has them, so I would not highlight them, but I may highlight mail bag, because why would it be needed on a stagecoach?
- As you watch the video, I want you to pay attention for the terms you did not know
 - Write what these terms are on your paper

What was it like to ride in a stagecoach?

- After the video, write down what you learned about what it was like to ride in a stagecoach

What is Charlotte's plan as she drives the stagecoach in Chapter 6?

- Read Chapter 6, and have students take notes about Charlotte's stagecoach travels.
 - Who is on this stage? What does Charlotte plan? How does she get out of the bog?

Assessment

1. What are the parts of a stagecoach? Diagram, define terms
2. What was it like to ride in a stagecoach? Information from video
3. What is Charlotte's plan as she drives the stagecoach in chapter 6?

Lesson 9: California Gold Rush Time to Research

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- List facts about the California Gold Rush
- Analyze a historical document

Resources

- Novel/Binder Pages 30-35
- *If You Were a Kid During the California Gold Rush* by Josh Gregory
- Excerpt from “The California Gold Rush, 1849”
Eyewitness to History
 - www.eyewitnesshistory.com (2003)
- Social Studies Textbook Pages 383-384

Lesson Sequence

What was the California Gold Rush?

Facts about the Gold Rush (2 independent learning centers)

- Students will work with a partner in reading “If You Were a Kid During the California Gold Rush” by Josh Gregory
 - Write 4-8 Interesting Facts (Page 30)
- Social Studies Text pages 383-384
 - Write down at least 4 things you learned about the Gold Rush from your social studies text on page 31

What was it like to travel to California?

- The third learning center will be guided by the teacher in looking at the excerpt about Shufelt’s Journey to CA

- Go through the process of looking at a historical document
- First, Let's take a look at this document and tell your partner what words stand out to you.
 - List words on the board.
 - What do you think this document is?
Advertisement, Letter, Diary Entry?
 - Who's journal entry?
- Next, I want you to think of the question words, who, what, when, where, why, and how. You will ask yourselves some questions about the document.
 - What is the document about?
 - When was the document written?
 - Where was the document written?
 - Why was the document written?
- Think of 2 questions you have about this document?
 - Provide students opportunity to write down their questions.
- Finally, write two inferences for the document.

Assessment

1. What was the California Gold Rush? List Facts
2. What was it like to travel to California? First-Hand Account

Lesson 10: Charlotte's Journey

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Discuss and take notes on the ways to travel to CA
- Determine important events of a chapter

- Explain how they would travel to CA in the mid-1800s

Resources:

- Novel/Binder Pages 36-39
- Map of Routes to California
- PowerPoint of Pros and Cons of travel to CA

Lesson Sequence

What were ways to travel to California?

Today you are going to learn about getting to California to find gold!

- Discuss and take notes on the map page about each route using the informational texts from yesterday as resources.
 - Discuss pros and cons of each route using the below sideshow
- <https://www.slideshare.net/KateSullivan8579/gold-rush-lesson-power-point>

What are the important events of Chapter 7?

- As you read chapter 7 today, think about:
 - How does Charlotte get to California?
 - What happens when she gets there?
 - Where does Charlotte end up?

Assessment

1. What were ways to travel to California during the Gold Rush? 3 main ways
2. What are the major events in chapter 7?
3. How would you travel to California? Different from Charlotte or the same?

Lesson 11: Women’s Rights and Suffrage

Students will be able to:

- Integrate information from two or more sources on the same topic in order to demonstrate subject knowledge
- Describe why Charlotte would consider an activist brave
- Determine a theme in a story from details in the text

Resources

- Novel/Binder Pages 40-45
- *Elizabeth Started All the Trouble* by Doreen Rappaport
- Informational Text article “The Fight for Women’s Suffrage” (ReadWorks)

Lesson Sequence

How can you identify a theme in a narrative?

- As we are reading *Riding Freedom*, there are some themes beginning to emerge.
- Who remembers what a theme is?
 - Let’s go over some of the books we have read and talk about possible themes
 - Have cards with common themes
- Today, I am going to read a story *Elizabeth Started All the Trouble* by Doreen Rappaport
 - While I am reading, write down 2 thoughts or actions of a character that surprised you, made you laugh, made you excited, etc. Something I would put a sticky note on!
 - When we are done, we will discuss how your findings could possibly support a theme
 - Group students note cards according to similarity on the board.

- Can we come up with a theme?
 - These cards would support a theme.
- Is there more than one possible theme?
 - Yes, if supported, stories can have more than one theme.

What was women's suffrage?

Learning Center 1

- Students are to work with a partner in reading the informational text article
 - “The Fight for Women’s Suffrage” (ReadWorks Article)
 - Complete page 43 choosing an activist and telling why Charlotte would think they were brave
- Primary Source Analysis-Document
 - Guide students through the document
 - Write any thoughts or observations down with each group

Assessment

- How do I determine the theme of a story? Whole group.
- What was women's suffrage?
 - Who were activists for women's suffrage during the mid-1800s?
 - Why would Charlotte think they were brave?
Completed Analysis sheet

Lesson 12: Theme: Overcoming Challenges

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Determine a theme in a story from details in the text
- Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and draw inferences

Resources

- Novel/Binder Pages 46
- *Miss Paul and the President: The Creative Campaign for Women's Right to Vote* by Dean Robbins

Lesson Sequence

How can you identify and support a theme from a narrative?

- Yesterday, you were able to identify and support some themes by identifying character's thoughts and actions.
- You are going to focus on themes again today. The theme is overcoming challenges.
- Read *Miss Paul and the President* stopping to discuss challenges in Alice Paul's life.
 - Record those challenges on chart paper
 - Discuss how did Alice Paul overcome these challenges
 - Add to the chart

How does Charlotte overcome a challenge?

- Read Chapter 8 Aloud
- Focus on challenges Charlotte faces in this chapter including and how she overcomes that challenge
 - getting kicked in the eye by a horse
 - Trying to drive horses again

- Ran the coach off the road (challenge)
- Overturned the coach (challenge)
- Couldn't use her left eye (challenge)
- How did she overcome her challenge with only having one good eye?
 - Take out a smaller team
 - Listen to the sound the hooves made
 - Use her sixth sense of handling horses
 - Memorize the route
 - Make ten clean runs
 - At the end
 - Charlotte drove through a storm and proved herself to James and Frank

Assessment

1. How can you identify and support the theme of a narrative?
2. How does Charlotte overcome a challenge?

Lesson 13: End or Beginning?

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Determine and support with text important events of the chapter
- Determine the theme of a story from details in the text

Resources:

- Novel/Binder pages 47 and 48
- List of possible themes in *Riding Freedom*

Lesson Sequence

What are some possible themes in *Riding Freedom*?

- Hand out the sheet with possible themes
 - Discuss each theme and determine whether or not we agree and could support the theme with text evidence

Is this the end or beginning for Charlotte?

- Today you are going to finish reading the novel. As you are reading the novel is coming to an end, but think about Charlotte--is the end really the beginning of a new adventure for her?
 - Stop at designated stopping points in the novel to discuss/think aloud
- Students will complete page 48 on their own

Assessment

1. What are possible themes in *Riding Freedom*?
2. Is this the end or the beginning for Charlotte? Determine why an event is important and support with text.

Lesson 14 and 15 Timelines

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Identify important dates in Charlotte's life (Real Life)
- Identify important dates in the historical fiction account (the novel)

- Identify historically important dates that relate to Charlotte's life
- Compare timelines

Resources:

- Blank Timelines
- Novel Pages (From the Author)
- *Rough and Tough Charley* by Verla Kay

Lesson Sequence

Who was Charlotte Parkhurst?

- Read *Rough and Tough Charley* by Verla Kay
- What other facts did you learn about Charlotte? List in notes section
- Read from the Author Section
 - Discuss the author's reasoning behind the story's timeline of Charlotte's life
 - As a class create a timeline of Charlotte's life in the novel, real life, and events that were occurring in history
 - Compare/Contrast on Day 2 of this activity

Assessment:

1. Who was Charlotte Parkhurst? Times lines completed as a whole group
 - Write down observations and thoughts from students

Lesson 16: Putting it ALL Together

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Write historical fiction set in the mid-1800s

- Develop the story using a variety of sources that were mentioned in class or researched on their own (teacher approval first)

Resources:

- Completed pages in binder

Lesson Sequence

What is historical fiction?

- Now that we are finished reading *Riding Freedom*, let's discuss the genre of historical fiction again.
 - Refer to the chart at the beginning of their binder and the book activity.

How do I write historical fiction?

- Today, we are going to become historical fiction writers.
- First, you will need to choose a character from the list.
 - Charlotte Parkhurst
 - A 10-year old girl (you can choose her name)
 - A 10-year old boy (you can choose his name)
- How will you write about it? (Remember who you are writing to...)
 - A Picture Book
 - A Short Story
 - Diary/Journal Entries
- Second, you will have to think of your audience (WHY? Discuss)
 - Our First Grade Buddy Class
 - Another 4th Grader
 - Mrs. Wallace

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Third, you will have to think of what is going on in history that you want to write about?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Slavery and the Underground Railroad?○ The California Goldrush?○ Women’s Roles and Fight for the Right to Vote | |
|--|--|

Assessment

How do I write historical fiction? See rubric

Documenting Student Understanding of Literary Elements and Historical Context

Student Name _____

Lesson	Page	Activity	Possible Points	Notes
1	6	6 or more facts from the SS text (65-68)	_____/6	
2	9	Meeting Charlotte Provide 2 pieces of text evidence to support character traits Explains thoroughly why the evidence supports the traits	_____/2 _____/2	
3	10	Character Point of View Supporting Explanation	_____/3 _____/3	
3	11	Plot Events Chapters 1 and 2	_____/8	
4	12	Slideshow Where might Vern have lived? Who might have helped Vern? At least 2 ways people may have helped.	_____/1 _____/2 _____/3	
4	13	How did the slideshow help you think about how Vern may have escaped? Explain.		

Lesson	Page	Activity	Possible Points	Notes
4	13	List 5 facts about the Underground Railroad	_____/5	
5	16	Photo Analysis: At the Swamp (Checklist)	_____/5	
5	18	Photo Analysis: George Washington (Checklist)	_____/5	
6	20	Document Analysis: Slave Auction (Checklist)	_____/5	
6	23	Learning Center 1: ReadWorks Article "Slavery, Civil War & Reconstruction: The Underground Railroad" 2 Facts	_____/2	
6	23	Learning Center 1: Connection (Notes)		
6	24	Learning Center 2- Historical Fiction Picture Book Barefoot: Escape on the Underground Railroad o 2 Facts	_____/2	
6	24	Learning Center 2: Connection (Notes)		

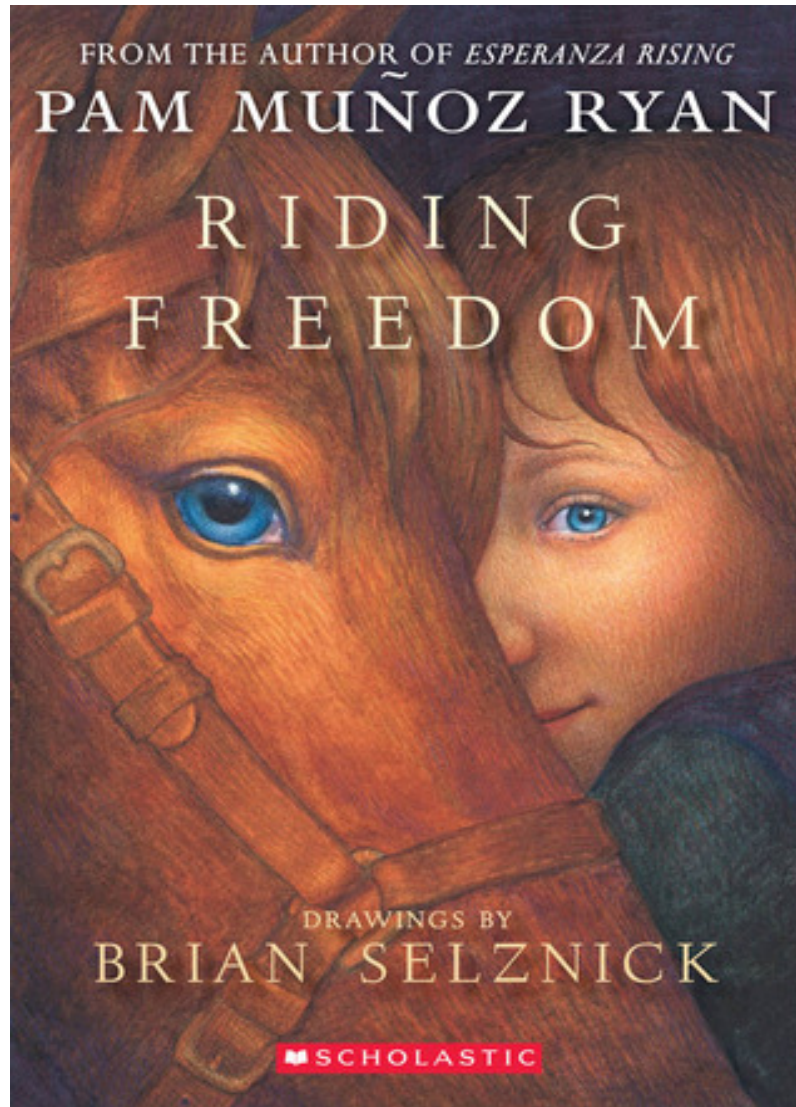
Lesson	Page	Activity	Possible Points	Notes
6	25	Learning Center 3: Informational Text If You Traveled on the Underground Railroad by Ellen Levine (picture book) ○ 2 Facts	_____/2	
6	25	Learning Center 3: Connection (Notes)		
7	26- 27	A Turning Point Questions 1-5 ○ complete answer 2pts. ○ meets convention standards 1pt.	_____/3 _____/3 _____/3 _____/3 _____/3	
8	28	Parts of a Stagecoach	_____/3	
8	29	Stagecoach Strategy What is her plan? What is she trying to do? Why is she trying to do it?	_____/3 _____/3 _____/3	
9	30	Learning Center 1: Informational Picture Book If You Were a Kid during the California Gold Rush by Josh Gregory ○ At least 4 Facts	_____/4	
9	31	Learning Center 2: Social Studies Book ○ At least 4 Facts	_____/4	

Lesson	Page	Activity	Possible Points	Notes
9	34	Learning Center 3: Primary Source Analysis: Sheldon Shufelt's diary How does this journey connect to the novel? (Notes on student responses)		
9	35	Document Analysis: Shufelt Checklist	_____/5	
10	36	Notes on Map Routes (Complete or Incomplete)		C/I
10	37	Events in Chapter 7	_____/5	
10	39	How would you travel to CA? See Checklist Note if a student's route is similar to Charlotte's		
11	43	Learning Center 1: "The Fight for Women's Suffrage" Article ▪ Two activists	_____/2	
11	43	Learning Center 1: "The Fight for Women's Suffrage" Article Why would Charlotte think she was brave?		

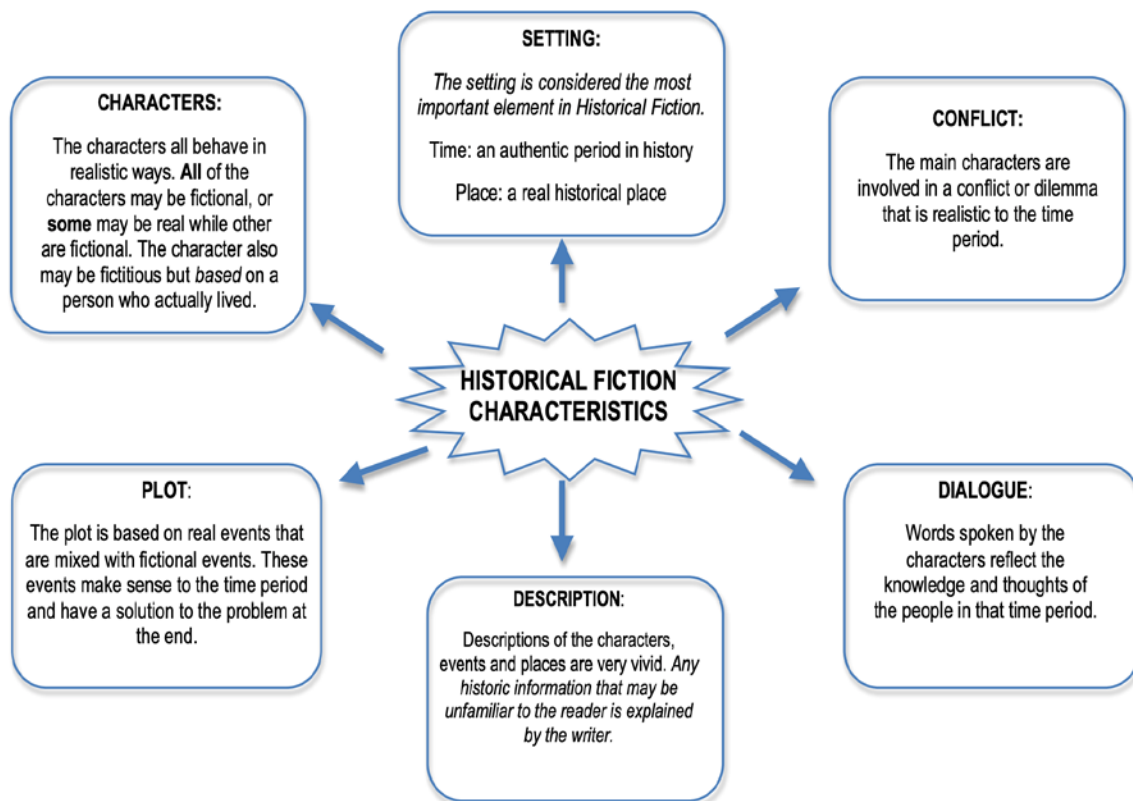
Lesson	Page	Activity	Possible Points	Notes
11	45	Document Analysis: Votes for Women Checklist	_____/5	
12	46	Charlotte's Challenges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is kicked in the eye by a horse and may lose her left eye ▪ Took a six-horse team out on her own ▪ To use her other senses and trust her knowledge of handling horses ▪ Storm, saved people, excitement ▪ Theme? Perseverance? 	_____/2 _____/1 _____/1 _____/1 _____/2	
13	48	End or Beginning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explanation ▪ Text Evidence Property Hayward Visits Registers to Vote	_____/2 _____/2 _____/2 _____/2 _____/2 _____/2	
14/15	49-51	Timeline Lessons (Discussion Notes)		
16	52-53	Historical Fiction Writing (Analyze)		

Appendix C Student Assignments

Name: _____



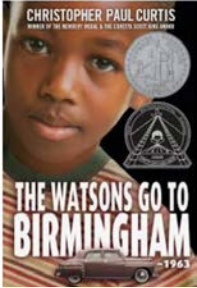



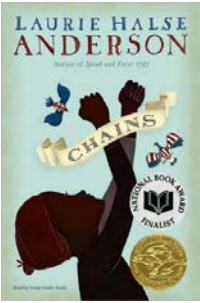
“Every time you fall, you learn somethin’ new ‘bout your horse. You learn what not to do next time.”

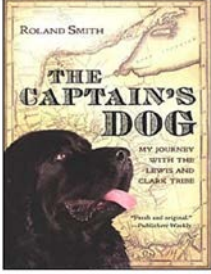
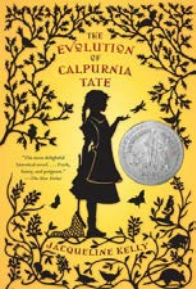


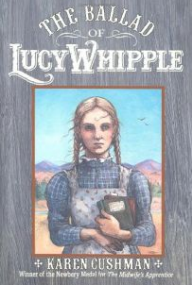
What is historical fiction?

Historical fiction is a specific genre, or kind of writing. Authors of historical fiction set their stories in specific times and places. Understanding the settings of historical fiction novels is important for understanding the characters and events in the novels. The novels below are examples of historical fiction. You will learn about the settings of the historical fiction novels show below as we discuss each.

Book	About the Book	Time/Place
	<p>Set in the late nineteenth century and told from young Anna's point of view, Sarah, Plain and Tall tells the story of how Sarah Elisabeth Wheaton comes from Maine to the prairie to answer Papa's advertisement for a wife and mother. Before Sarah arrives, Anna and her younger brother Caleb wait and wonder.</p>	<p>Late 1800s</p> <p>Prairie</p> <p>Westward Expansion</p>
	<p>Ten-year-old Ada has never left her one-room apartment. Her mother is too humiliated by Ada's twisted foot to let her outside. When her little brother Jamie is shipped out of London to escape the war, Ada doesn't waste a minute—she sneaks out to join him. So begins a new adventure for Ada, and for Susan Smith, the woman who is forced to take the two kids in. As Ada teaches herself to ride a pony, learns to read, and watches for German spies, she begins to trust Susan—and Susan begins to love Ada and Jamie.</p>	
	<p>Kenny Watson narrates the story of his African-American family living in the town of Flint, Michigan, in 1963. When the oldest son (Byron) begins to get into a bit of trouble, the parents decide he should spend the summer and possibly the next school year with Grandma Sands in Birmingham, Alabama. The entire family travels there together by car, and during their visit, tragic events take place.</p>	

Book	About the Book	Time/Place
	<p>Esperanza thought she'd always live a privileged life on her family's ranch in Mexico. She'd always have fancy dresses, a beautiful home filled with servants, and Mama, Papa, and Abuelita to care for her. But a sudden tragedy forces Esperanza and Mama to flee to California and settle in a Mexican farm labor camp. Esperanza isn't ready for the hard work, financial struggles brought on by the Great Depression, or lack of acceptance she now faces.</p>	
	<p>As the Revolutionary War begins, thirteen-year-old Isabel wages her own fight...for freedom. Promised freedom upon the death of their owner, she and her sister, Ruth, in a cruel twist of fate, become the property of a malicious New York City couple, the Locktons, who have no sympathy for the American Revolution and even less for Ruth and Isabel. When Isabel meets Curzon, a slave with ties to the Patriots, he encourages her to spy on her owners, who know details of British plans for invasion. She is reluctant at first, but when the unthinkable happens to Ruth, Isabel realizes her loyalty is available to the bidder who can provide her with freedom.</p>	

Book	About the Book	Time /Place
	<p>Born the runt of his litter and gambled away to a rusty old river man, the Newfoundland pup Seaman doesn't imagine his life will be marked by any kind of glory. But when he meets Captain Meriwether Lewis, Seaman finds himself on a path that will make history. Lewis is setting off on his landmark search for the Northwest Passage, and he takes Seaman along.</p>	
	<p>Calpurnia Virginia Tate is eleven years old in 1899 when she wonders why the yellow grasshoppers in her Texas backyard are so much bigger than the green ones. With a little help from her grandfather, an avid naturalist, she figures out that the green grasshoppers are easier to see against the yellow grass, so they are eaten before they can get any larger. As Callie explores the natural world around her, she develops a close relationship with her grandfather, navigates the dangers of living with six brothers, and comes up against just what it means to be a girl at the turn of the century.</p>	

Book	About the Book	Time/Place
	<p>California Morning Whipple describes her family's six-year stay in a small mining town during the Gold Rush. Her mother, a restless widow with an acid tongue, has uprooted her children from their home in Massachusetts to make a new life in Lucky Diggins. California rebels by renaming herself Lucy and by hoarding the gold dust and money she earns baking dried apple and vinegar pies, saving up for a journey home.</p>	

The book *Riding Freedom* takes place in the mid-1800s. Which of the above books also take place during this this time period? What is going on during this time?

The Mid-1800s

Write down at least 6 interesting facts that you learned about the mid-1800s from reading your social studies textbook (pages 65-68).

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

Character Traits

How is my character as a person?

nice	mean	Sad
bright	angry	antisocial
cheerful	bossy	comfortless
caring	cruel	depressed
charming	dark	down
considerate	disrespectful	friendless
delightful	evil	gloomy
encouraging	harsh	glum
friendly	hateful	heartbroken
kind	impolite	heavy-hearted
likable	insensitive	hopeless
loving	raging	isolated
peaceful	rude	lonely
pleasant	selfish	lonesome
polite	spoiled	miserable
respectful	thoughtless	moody
sensitive	uncaring	sorrowful
sweet	unfriendly	unhappy
thoughtful	unpleasant	withdrawn

Does a lot	Does very little
active	bored/boring
adventurous	dull
ambitious	indifferent
bold	lazy
busy	neglectful
energetic	sluggish
hard-working	uninterested

positive	negative
cooperative	uncooperative
calm	reactive
dependable	undependable
fair	unfair
honest	dishonest
humble	conceited
mature	immature
patient	impatient
responsible	irresponsible
trustworthy	untrustworthy

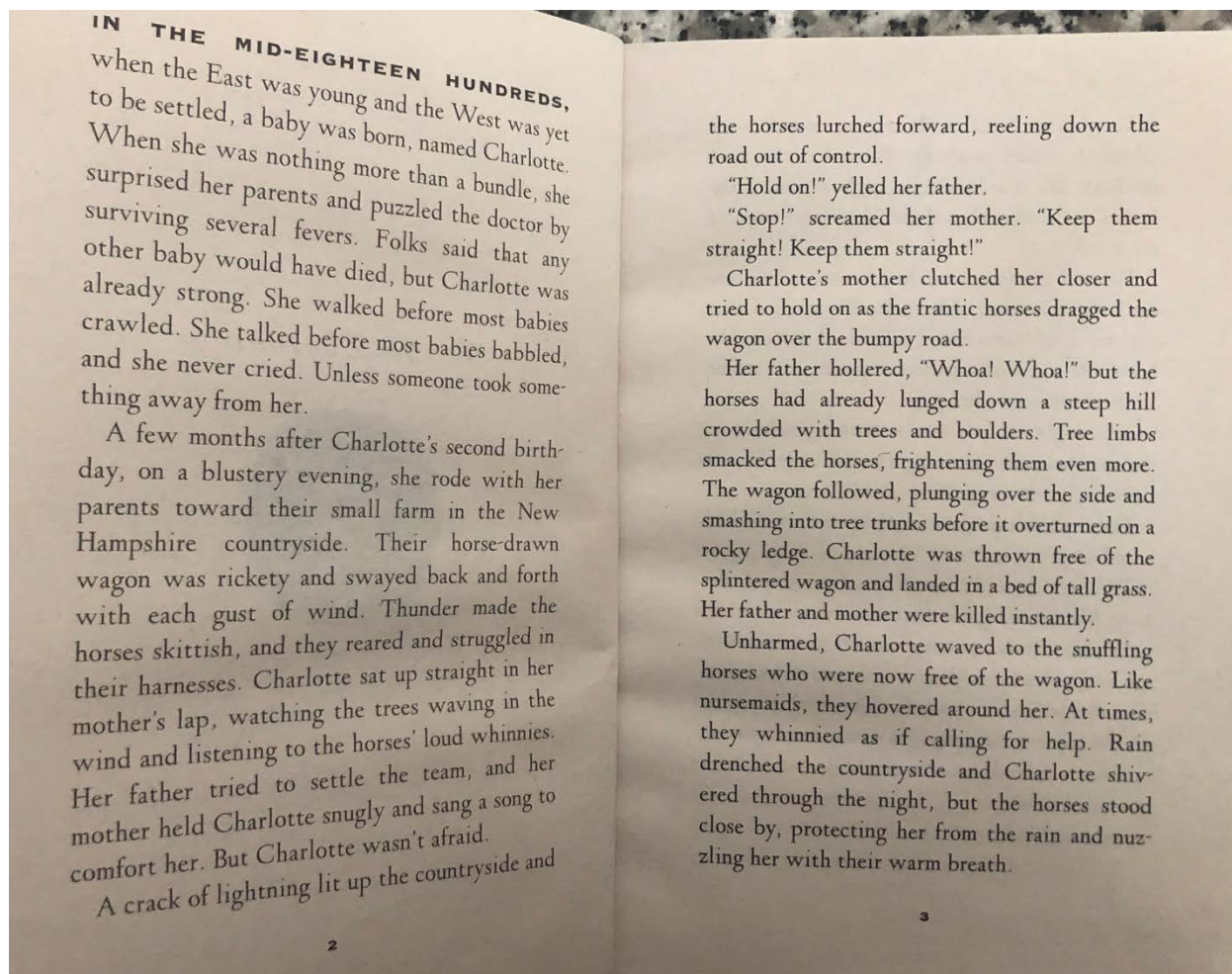
confident	nervous
assertive	anxious
brave	concerned
certain	fearful
courageous	hesitant
fearless	uncertain
independent	uneasy
sure	unsure

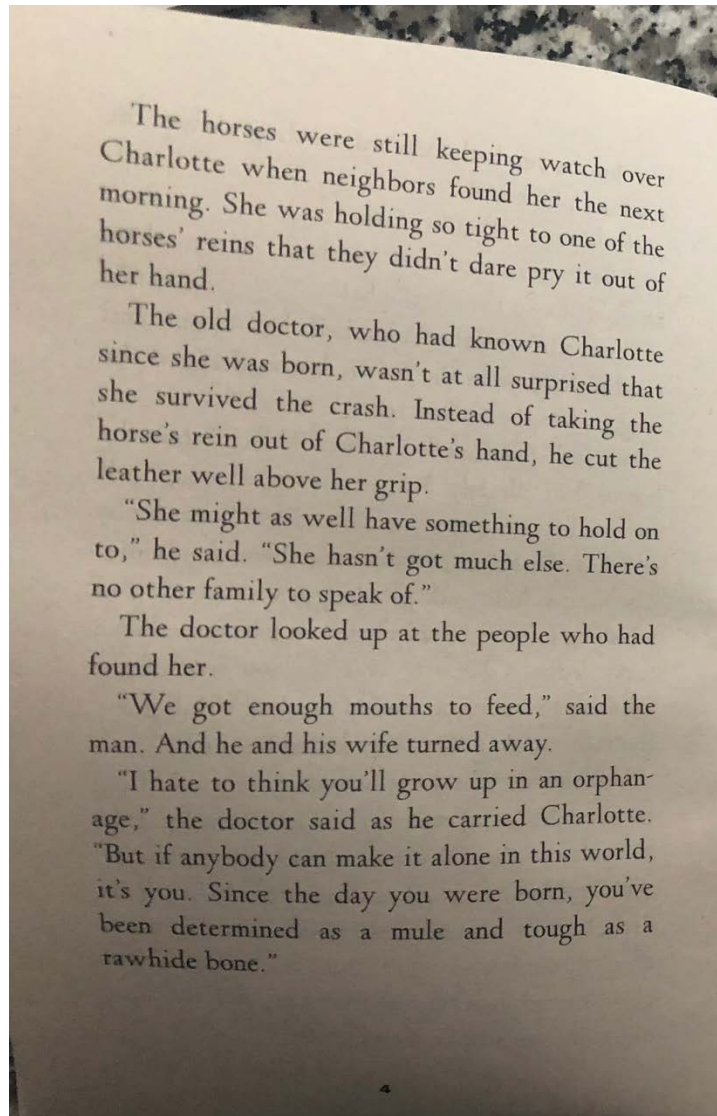
Opposites	
calm	hyperactive
funny	serious
gentle	rough
glamorous	simple
shy	loud
quiet	noisy

Meeting Charlotte

Often an author will reveal traits of a character in the very beginning of a story. Pam Muñoz Ryan does this in the very first pages of the novel *Riding Freedom*. Reread the pages below and highlight the text that supports the following quote:

“But if anyone can make it alone in this world it is you. Since the day you have been born, you’ve been determined as a mule and tough as a rawhide bone.”





In the prologue, the author describes Charlotte as tough and determined. An example from the text that supports these traits is _____

_____. Another example from the text supporting the idea that Charlotte is tough and determined is _____

Both these examples provide support for thinking that Charlotte is tough and determined because _____

Understanding Characters' Points of View

Readers organize the important information about the setting, characters, and events in a novel to help them understand what is going on and why. Think about the characters introduced in the first two chapters of *Freedom Riding* by completing the table below.

Character	What the character said	I can infer that... because...
Mrs. Boyle (the cook)	“yelled at Charlotte for being too noisy or too quiet or gazing out the window at some horse in the pasture...” (p.6)	I can infer that Mrs. Boyle doesn't like Charlotte because no matter what Charlotte does Mrs. Boyle finds fault with it.
Vern (stable master)	“She's a help in the stables. She does the work of three of them boys and she knows the horses as good as me.” (p.26)	
Mr. Milshark (overseer of the orphanage)	“I heard that she rode a sick horse in the race yesterday and that the horse died in the morning. A young man wouldn't have made such a foolish decision. She'll stay in the kitchen where she belongs.” (p.26)	
Hayward (Charlotte's friend)	“I asked them if they wanted a girl, too, but I guess they don't.” (p.28)	

Plot Events

Directions: Identify the four most important events in *Riding Freedom* in chapters 1 and 2 and list them in the order in which they occurred. Describe and illustrate each event.

First,

—



Next,

—



Then,

—



Finally,

—

The Underground Railroad

In chapter 1, the author introduces Vern, who escaped from slavery and now works at the orphanage in the stables. Vern names the horses using his journey to freedom as inspiration.

- Hope: for his hope to gain freedom
- Charity: good will of people that helped him on his way
- Freedom: Something he had gained after his journey

In the mid-1800s the Underground Railroad was an important means for slaves to get to the North. After viewing the slideshow answer these questions, which may help you in thinking about how Vern escaped.

1. Where might Vern have lived before working at the orphanage?

2. Who may have helped Vern during his journey to freedom?

3. What are some ways people may have helped Vern?

4. Explain how the information in the slideshow helped you in understanding more about the character of Vern and his journey to the North?

List 5 Facts about the Underground Railroad that you learned today.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Primary and Secondary Sources

A **primary source** is created by a person who **witnessed or experienced an event firsthand**.

Primary sources can include:

- Diaries
- Letters
- Historical documents
- Photographs
- Videos
- Newspaper articles
- Interviews
- Artifacts, or objects made or used by people
- Buildings and their architecture, or design

Sources can be written down, like a letter. They can also be oral, or spoken, like a recording of a speech or an interview.

A **secondary source** is a source written or created by someone who **did not witness or experience an event**. Most books about history are secondary sources even though their writers do much of their research using primary sources.

Your social studies **textbook**, for example, is a secondary source. Reference books like **atlases** and **encyclopedias** are also secondary sources. **Biographies**, or books about people's lives, are also secondary sources.

Determine whether the sources listed below are primary or secondary sources.

An advertisement of a slave auction during the mid-1800s	A diary of a girl traveling with her family to California during the Gold Rush
A YouTube video describing how a slave might have escaped to the North	A painting from the mid-1800s depicting a runaway slave
A picture book of Charley Parkhurst	A historian explaining what it was like to be a woman in the mid-1800s

What do you see in the painting?
(Objects/People)

What actions are happening in the painting? (ing)

What questions do you have? (at least 2)

What inferences can you make?
(at least 2)



Stephens, H. L. (ca. 1863) *In the Swamp*. ca. 1863.
[Photograph] Retrieved from the Library
of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/93505069/>.

How does this picture make you feel? Why?

Photograph: Primary Source Analysis Checklist

- I looked carefully at all parts of the photograph analyzing it into quadrants and using a magnifying glass.
- I wrote down all objects and people I saw in the photo.
- I wrote down action words describing what was happening.
- I wrote at least 2 questions I had about the photo.
- I made at least 2 inferences about the photo.
- I thought about how this primary source made me feel. I listened or added to the discussion with my small group and Mrs. Wallace.



*Life of George Washington-
The farme /
painted by Stearns; lith.
By Régnier.
Lithograph.
Paris
Lemercier, ca.
1853. From the
Library of
Congress,*

What do you see in the painting? (Objects/People)

What actions are happening in the painting? (ing)

What questions do you have? (at least 2)

What inferences can you make? (at least 2)

How does this picture make you feel? Why?

What does this document tell you?

Who:

What:

When:

Where:

Why:

How:

Sept 25, 1852

GANG OF 25 SEA ISLAND COTTON AND RICE NEGROES,

By LOUIS D. DE SAUSSURE.

On *THURSDAY* the 25th Sept., 1852, at 11 o'clock, A.M., will be sold at RYAN'S MART, in Chalmers Street, in the City of Charleston,

A prime gang of 25 Negroes, accustomed to the culture of Sea Island Cotton and Rice.

CONDITIONS.—One-half Cash, balance by Bond, bearing interest from day of sale, payable in one and two years, to be secured by a mortgage of the negroes and approved personal security. Purchasers to pay for papers.

No.	Age.	Capacity.	No.	Age.	Capacity.
1 Aleck,	33	Carpenter.	16 Hannah,	60	Cook.
2 Mary Ann,	31	Field hand, prime.	17 Cudjoe,	22	Prime field hand.
3—3 Louisa,	10		3—18 Nancy,	20	Prime field hand, sister of Cudjoe.
4 Abram,	25	Prime field hand.	19 Hannah,	34	Prime field hand.
5 Judy,	24	Prime field hand.	20 James,	13	Slight defect in knee from a broken leg.
6 Carolina,	5		21 Richard,	9	
7 Simon,	1½		22 Thomas,	6	
5—8 Daphne,	infant.		5—23 John,	3	
9 Daniel,	45	Field hand, not prime.	1—24 Squash,	40	Prime field hand.
10 Phillis,	32	Field hand.	1—25 Thomas,	28	Prime field hand.
11 Will,	9				
12 Daniel,	6				
13 Margaret,	4				
14 Delia,	2				
7—15 Hannah,	2 months.				

De Saussure, Louis D. *Gang of 25 Sea Island Cotton and Rice Negroes*. Print advertisement, 1852. Advertising Ephemera Collection – Database #A0160, John W. Hartman Center for Sales, Advertising & Marketing History, Duke University

List at least two questions you have.

○

○

What can you infer from this document?

How does this document make you feel? Why?

Slavery, Civil War & Reconstruction: The Underground Railroad

by ReadWorks



"The Underground Railroad" by Charles T. Webber, 1893

The Underground Railroad was not a railroad. It wasn't underground either. But it did help show thousands of black men and women the way from the slavery of the south to freedom in the north.

Before the Civil War, it was illegal to help slaves escape because slaves were considered property. However, many people thought slavery was morally wrong. They were willing to put themselves at risk to help slaves escape. The Underground Railroad was the system of men and women who hid slaves in their homes and on their farms as they made their journey to freedom. The stops along the way were called "stations," just like the stations on a railroad train. Each house told the fugitives where they would find the next friendly house. The railroad was so secret that each station along the way knew only about the house before it and the house after it. That way no one could tell on the entire system and find out the whole route of the Underground Railroad.

Slaves often traveled only by night to avoid capture. Before they reached their first house, the North Star was their only guide to freedom. The stars of the northern night sky look like they move around the North Star. By following the North Star, slaves could be sure that they were traveling north.

The people who helped slaves escape were called conductors. Harriet Tubman is one of the most famous conductors. After she escaped herself, she risked her life again and again to help hundreds of other men and women escape. Harriet Tubman refused to let slaves turn back once they were in her group on the Underground Railroad. White men might capture anyone who left. Then the whole group would be in danger. She would never allow this to happen. Legend says she would pull out a gun and tell the nervous person, "You'll be free or die a slave." No one ever disobeyed her, and they all reached freedom.

She was selfless her whole life. During the Civil War she worked as a nurse and a spy for the Union army. She would tell Northern generals where the Southern troops were. The gravestone of this truly remarkable woman reads: "Servant of God, well done."

Time for Research

Learning Center 1: ReadWorks Article

“Slavery, Civil War & Reconstruction: The Underground Railroad”

Write down two facts that you learned about runaway slaves.

1. _____

2. _____

How did this article help you in understanding what it was like to be a runaway slave?

Time for Research

Learning Center 2-Historical Fiction Picture Book

Barefoot: Escape on the Underground Railroad

Write down two facts you learned from this picture book?

1. _____

2. _____

How did this historical fiction picture book help you in understanding what it was like to be a runaway slave?

Time for Research

Learning Center 3: Informational Text

If You Traveled on the Underground Railroad by Ellen Levine (picture book)

Write down two facts you learned at this learning center:

1. _____

2. _____

How did this informational text help you in understanding what it was like to be a runaway slave?

A Turning Point

Chapter 5 describes a turning point in the novel for Charlotte. At the beginning of the chapter, Charlotte meets Ebenezer Balch and tries to convince him to let her work with his horses. Ebenezer gives her a chance and by the end of the chapter he gives her a remarkable opportunity.

1. Why does Ebenezer give Charlotte a chance to work with his horses at the beginning of the chapter? What convinces him?

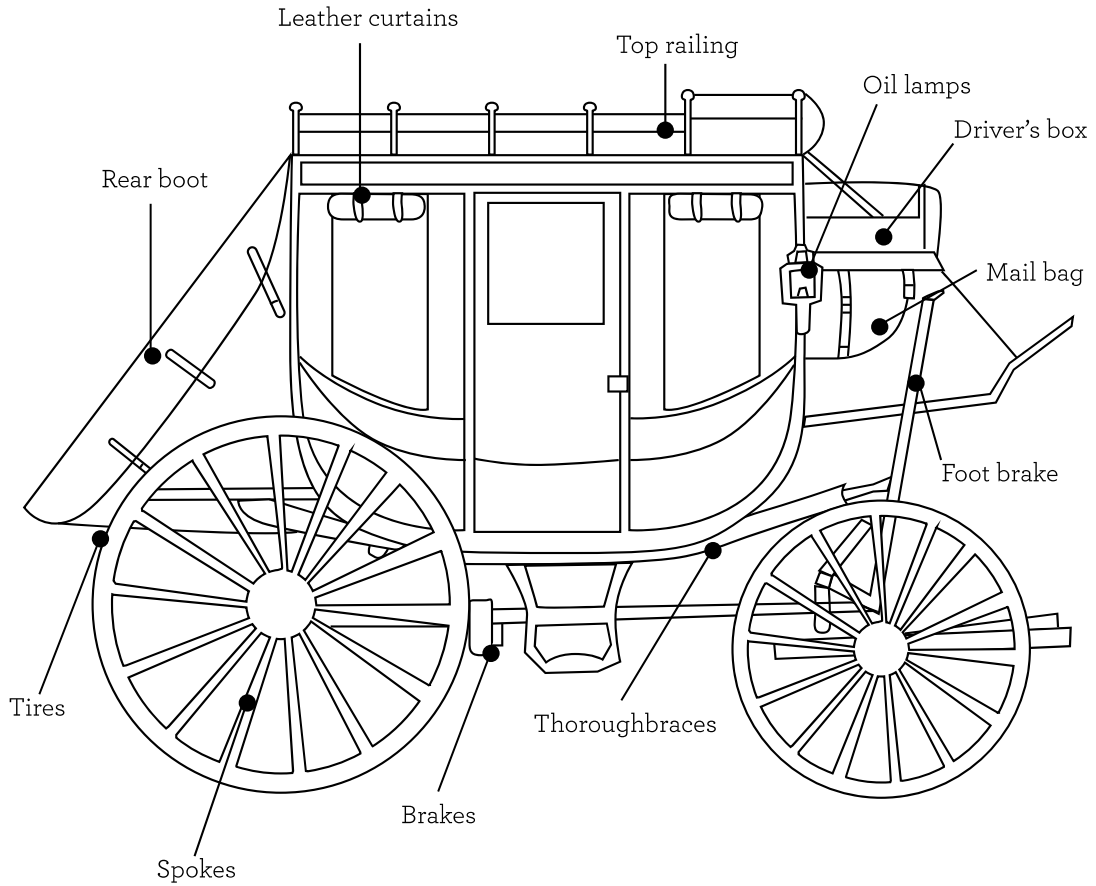
2. How does Charlotte continue to prove that she can do a good job for Ebenezer?

3. What does Ebenezer do to show that he knows who Charlotte is?

4. How does Charlotte show Ebenezer that she can handle the horses?

5. What is Ebenezer's plan for Charlotte?

Parts of a Stagecoach



Study the diagram above. Highlight the parts that you do not know. After or while watching the video, define those terms in the space below. Write about two things that you learned.

Terms	What I learned from the video...

Time for Research

Learning Center 1: Informational Picture Book

If You Were a Kid during the California Gold Rush by Josh Gregory

Write down **at least** 4 interesting facts that you learned from reading this informational text.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

Time for Research

Learning Center 2: Social Studies Book

Read pages 383-384 in your social studies textbook. Write down at **least 4** interesting facts.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

Below is an excerpt from Sheldon Shufelt's diary about his journey to San Francisco, California.

Passage to California

On May 11, 1849 Shufelt sailed out of New York harbor headed for the Isthmus of Panama (at the time a part of Columbia). Although he experienced a few days of sea sickness, he describes the voyage as enjoyable. We pick up his story as he makes his way across the isthmus to the Pacific Ocean hoping to find passage on a ship bound for San Francisco:

"(We) proceeded up the river in canoes rowed by the natives, and enjoyed the scenery & howling of the monkeys & chattering of Parrots very much. We pitched our tents at Gorgona & most of our party stayed there several weeks. S. Miller & myself went on to Panama to look out for a chance to get up to San Francisco. Of our ill success you have probably been informed & consequently of our long stay there, & of the deaths in our party. Yes, here Mr. Crooker, J. Miller & L. Alden yielded up their breath to God who gave it.

After many delays & vexations, we at length took passage on a German ship & set sail again on our journey to the Eldorado of the west. We went south nearly to the Equator, then turned west, the weather was warm, the winds light & contrary for our course. Our ship was a slow sailer & consequently our passage was long & tedious. One of the sailors fell from the rigging into the water & it was known that he could not swim, so the excitement was great. Ropes, planks and every thing that could be got hold of was thrown to him. He caught a plank & got on it, a boat was lowered & soon they had him on board again. He was much frightened, but not much hurt. We had one heavy squall of wind & rain, that tore the sails & broke some of the yards in pieces, & gave us a quick step motion to keep upon our feet, but soon all was right again & we were ploughing through the gentle Pacific at the rate of ten knots pr hour.

On the 85th day out we hove in sight of an object that greatly attracted our attention & ere long the green hills of San Francisco bay began to show their highest points, & soon we were gliding smoothly along between them, down the bay, & when the order came to let go anchor, we brought up directly in front of the City amidst a fleet of vessels, of all kinds & sizes."

"The California Gold Rush, 1849" Eyewitness to History, www.eyewitnesshistory.com (2003).

Primary Source: Document Analysis

What does this document tell you? Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?

List at least two questions you have.

What can you infer from this document?

How does this document connect to Riding Freedom?

How did this journal entry make you feel? Why?

Primary Source: Document Analysis Checklist

___ I listed what I saw in the document by asking myself:

- Who
- What
- When
- Where
- Why
- How

___ I wrote at least 2 questions I had about the document.

___ I made at least 2 inferences about the document.

___ I thought about how this primary source made me feel. I listened or added to the discussion with my small group and Mrs. Wallace.



Overland Route	Panama Route	Cape Horn Route

Events in Chapter 7

Directions: Recall the five most important events that took place in Chapter 7 of *Riding Freedom*. Record the events below. Then write a summary.

First

Then

Next

Next

Last

<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

How would you travel to California?

In the novel, we discover that Charlotte traveled to California first by boat from Atlanta to Panama, next by mule through Panama, then by ship to San Francisco, and finally a riverboat to Sacramento. Her trip took a month. Today, we learned about the three main routes to travel to California. Below, you will explain how you would travel to California during the mid-1800s. Make sure to use the checklist and your notes to make sure you have a complete answer.

Checklist: How would you travel to California?

- I chose one of the three routes to get to California
 - Overland
 - Panama
 - Cape Horn

- I explained **why** I chose the route

- I explained **why** I did not choose the other 2

- I explained **how** long my journey took

- I explained **how** I felt before, during, and after my journey

Women and the Fight for Equality

This text is adapted from an original work of the Core Knowledge Foundation.

Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton were women's rights activists and social reformers during the 19th century.

Lucretia Mott and her husband, James, were active in many of the reform movements of the day. Mott once organized a campaign asking people not to buy products made or raised by enslaved workers. Those products included cotton clothing, sugar, and rice. She hoped that would convince plantation owners to give up slavery. Still, despite her reform work, Mott always felt that as a woman she did not receive the same level of respect as a man. She later said that women's rights were "the most important question of my life from a very early day."

As for Elizabeth Cady, she learned about the unequal treatment of women very early in life. Her father was a lawyer and a judge. "Oh, my daughter," he said on one occasion, "I wish you were a boy." As a girl, Elizabeth could never become a lawyer like her father.

Cady resolved to show her father that she was as good as a boy. She learned to play games, such as chess, that men said were beyond the mental powers of girls and women. She studied Greek and Latin. She studied mathematics. Still, no matter how well she did, she could not go to college. Colleges were for men only. Cady had to attend a school for women in Troy, New York, instead.

After graduating, Cady became active in a number of reform movements. She soon met Henry B. Stanton, a leader in the antislavery movement. The two decided to marry. In those days, women promised to "love, honor, and obey" their husbands in the marriage vow.

Elizabeth Cady insisted on removing the word obey. The Stantons spent their honeymoon in London, England, where they attended the World Anti-Slavery Convention.

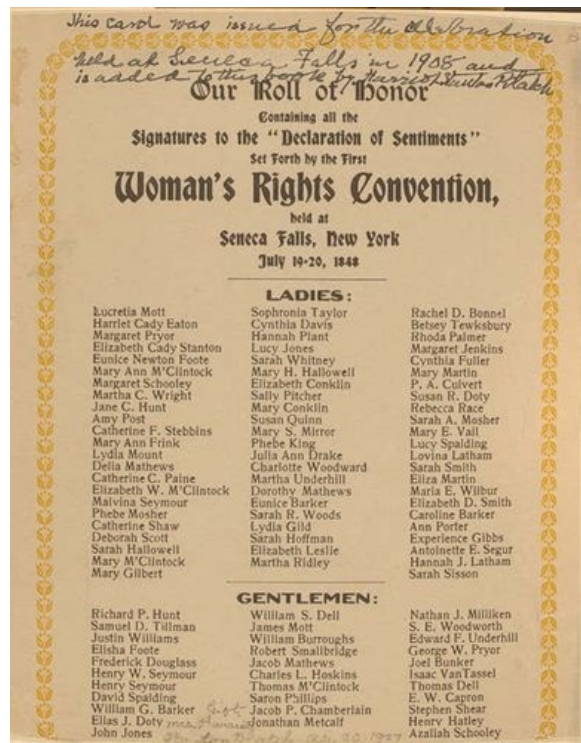
This convention is where Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton first met.

At this convention, women delegates were told they could not take part and that they had to watch from the balcony. Both were angered by their treatment. By the time they left London, they had promised each other to hold a convention on women's rights in the United States. For eight years, nothing came of the promise. Elizabeth Cady Stanton was busy raising a family. Lucretia Mott was involved in other activities. Then on July 13, 1848, Mott visited the Stanton's home in Seneca Falls, New York. That afternoon over a cup of tea, Stanton, Mott, and three local women decided to hold the long-delayed convention.

The next day, this notice appeared in the Seneca County Courier newspaper: "Woman's Rights Convention: A Convention to discuss the social, civil, and religious conditions and rights of woman will be held in the Wesleyan Chapel, at Seneca Falls, N.Y." Few would have guessed that this short announcement would start one of the biggest reform movements in U.S. history.

On July 19, six days after their initial meeting, two hundred women, and even some men, showed up at the Wesleyan Chapel. On the second day, a larger crowd of women and men attended.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton read aloud a Declaration of Sentiments she had written. The Declaration's first words echoed another famous declaration: "We hold these truths



United States. Library of Congress.
"Signatures to the Declaration of Sentiments".
1848. Print
In 1848, a women's rights convention was held in Seneca Falls, New York. Women, along with some male supporters, gathered.

to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal." Stanton went on to list fifteen ways that women were treated unequally.

At the end of the Declaration, Elizabeth Cady Stanton shocked the audience. She demanded that women be given the right to vote. For some reformers, that was going too far. Lucretia Mott tried to discourage her friend. Demanding the vote "will make us look ridiculous," she said. "We must go slowly." But Mott eventually agreed. So did a majority of the convention.

Today, it is hard to imagine anyone disagreeing with the goals of the Seneca Falls Convention. However, that was a different time. The few newspapers that paid attention to the meeting made fun of it. One laughed at the women's demands to vote, become lawyers, and keep their own property. While they were at it, said the newspaper, they should have demanded that men "wash dishes, handle the broom, darn stockings, wear trinkets, [and] look beautiful."

None of this ridicule stopped the women's movement. After the Seneca Falls meeting, women in a half-dozen other states organized similar meetings.

The movement for women's rights had other heroines besides Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott. There was Lucy Stone, the first American woman to deliver a public lecture on women's rights. When Lucy Stone married, she kept her own name.

There was Elizabeth Blackwell. She became the first woman graduate of a medical college.

Then there was Amelia Bloomer. She wore large, roomy trousers with a short skirt over them because they were more comfortable than the heavy dresses women were expected to wear.

There was also a woman named Sojourner Truth. Nearly six feet tall and wearing a white turban, Sojourner Truth became a familiar person at public meetings on women's rights. She was a former enslaved worker, and she could not read or write. But she could speak. To those who said women were weak, Sojourner said, "I have as much muscle as any man, and can do as much work as any man. I have plowed and reaped and husked and chopped and mowed, and can any man do more than that?" When Sojourner Truth was speaking at a different convention, a few rowdy men showed up to jeer.

Sojourner Truth had these words for them: "I am sorry to see [some men] so short-minded. But we'll have our rights; see if we don't; and you can't stop us from them; see if you can. You may hiss as much as you like, but it is comin'."

Sojourner Truth was right. But, it would be some time before it happened.



In 1851, in Akron, Ohio, Sojourner Truth (pictured) delivered her famous "Ain't I a Woman?" speech.

**Time for Research
Women's Rights**

**“You know, there are men that support our movement too, young man.”
“I agree with them men,” said Charlotte. “You are much braver than me.”**

**Learning Center 1: ReadWorks Article
“The Fight for Women's Suffrage”**

Write about two activists and what they did to help women's suffrage, the right to vote.

1. _____

2. _____

Choose one of the activists above and tell why Charlotte would think they are brave.

What does this document tell you?

Who:

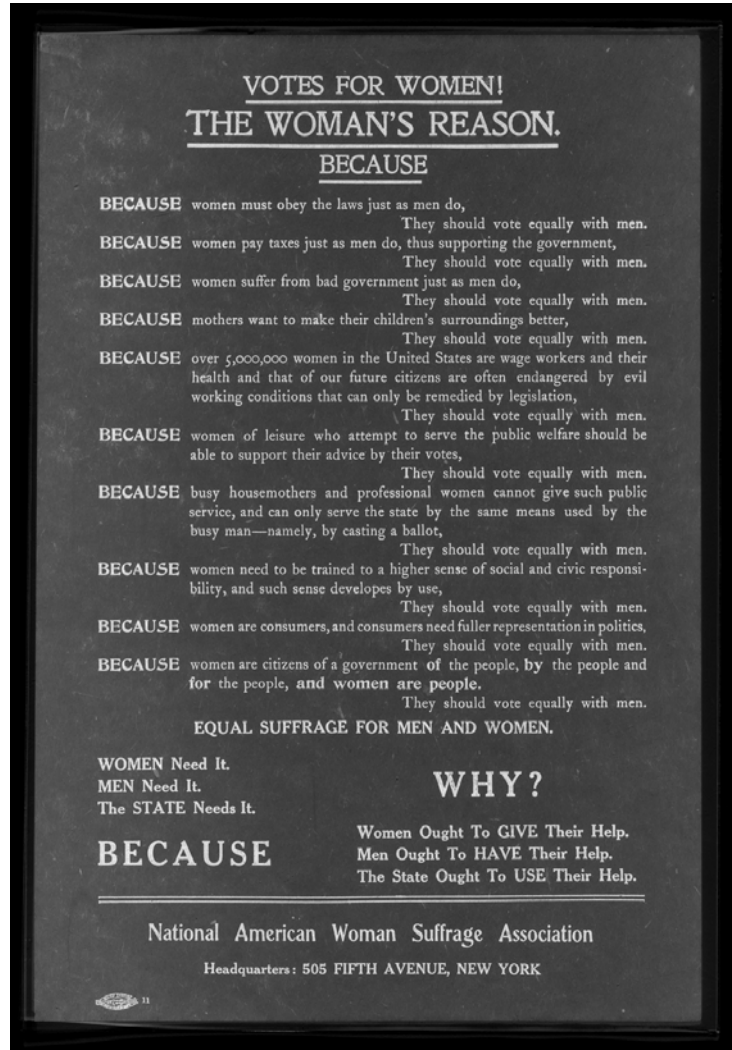
What:

When:

Where:

Why:

How:



List at least two questions you have.

What can you infer from this document?

How does this document make you feel? Why?

I listed what I saw in the document by asking myself:

- Who
- What
- When
- Where
- Why
- How

___ I wrote at least 2 questions I had about the document.

___ I made at least 2 inferences about the document.

___ I thought about how this primary source made me feel. I listened or added to the discussion with my small group and Mrs. Wallace.

Charlotte's Challenges

“But if anyone can make it alone in this world it is you. Since the day you have been born, you’ve been determined as a mule and tough as a rawhide bone.”

In Chapter 8, Charlotte faces many challenges. Fill in the blanks after you read the chapter. You may have to go back and reread.

Throughout Chapter 8, Charlotte continues to show her determination and toughness. First, in the beginning of the chapter Charlotte _____ . When Charlotte asks James how soon she can drive, James tells her she can only stock tender and not drive. After about a month, Charlotte decides to _____

Charlotte has many challenges during this time. One challenge is when _____ .

Another challenge is when _____

Despite these challenges she was determined. Her plan was to _____

At the end of the chapter _____

Riding Freedom: Theme Topics/Note Page

Making Choices:

Freedom:

Overcoming Obstacles:

Perseverance:

Friendships:

Identity:

End or Beginning?

Chapters 9 and 10 describe many important moments in Charlotte's life. After reading about the events listed below, STOP and explain WHY the event was important to Charlotte. Support your thoughts with evidence from the text.

Charlotte buys a piece of property.
This event is important to Charlotte because it has been a dream of Charlotte's to own her own piece of land and a home that she could call hers.
Text Evidence She says, "I am going to buy somethin' I've wanted since I was knee high." "It's somethin' much better than both of them things."
Hayward Comes to Visit Charlotte
This event is important to Charlotte because
Text Evidence
Charlotte registered to vote in Santa Cruz County.
This event is important to Charlotte because
Text Evidence

Today, we are going to become historical fiction writers. First, you will need to choose a character from the list and highlight that character. Then you will decide what you are writing (a picture book, journal entries, a newspaper article, or a letter). Next, you will decide who you are writing to. Finally, you will choose a topic to write about.

Highlight Your Choices Below

Who are you? First-Person	What are you writing?	Who is your audience?	What is your Topic?
Charlotte Parkhurst	A Picture Book	Other 4 th graders	Women's Roles in the mid-1800s
A ten-year old girl	Journal Entries	A Friend	Women's Suffrage
A ten-year old boy	A Newspaper Article	Mrs. Wallace	The California Goldrush
	A Letter	A historical figure we learned about	Slavery

Rubric: Being an Author of Historical Fiction

	3	2	1
Point of View	I consistently used first person point of view.	I used first person point of view for the most part.	I did not use first person point of view consistently.
Literary Elements	My writing includes well-described setting, characters, and plot.	My writing includes a setting, characters, and plot but some literary elements are not well described.	My writing is missing one of the literary elements or the elements are not well described.
Historical Context	The events and setting are historically accurate.	Most of the events and setting are historically accurate.	Many of the events and/or the setting is not historically accurate.
Reference to Multiple Sources	I incorporated information learned from 3 or more sources.	I incorporated information learned from at least 3 sources.	I incorporated information learned from less than 3 sources.
Connection to Novel	I made many connections to the novel.	I made at least 1 connection to the novel	I did not connect to the novel.

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