

Successes and Challenges in Learning to Teach History as Inquiry: Novices' Uptake of Core Practices

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EXPERTS ARGUE that preservice programs should focus on a defined set of core teaching practices and structure their curriculum around them.¹ Such experts argue that practice-based teacher educators must “represent” and “decompose” core practices with novices and offer them opportunities to “approximate” those practices in low-stakes settings,² thus making the work of teaching more explicit and giving novices supported opportunities to learn. Yet, a focus on practice-based teacher education is not intended to frame teaching as a discrete number of steps to master. Instead, practice-based teacher education highlights the underlying knowledge and understanding that guide one’s teaching, as well as the ability to enact these ideas in a classroom setting. Indeed, it is a response to earlier reforms in teacher education that emphasized cultivating teacher knowledge³ and an attempt to address the gap between teacher thinking and teacher enactment.⁴ But, what is involved in learning core practices?

In this paper, we took recent work in history education that defines a set of core teaching practices for facilitating historical inquiry⁵ and used it as a lens through which to analyze the teaching of five

graduates from a preservice program that targeted many of these core practices. We asked the following questions: (1) How do participants take up core historical inquiry teaching practices? (2) What practices are these novices more and less likely to use? (3) In what ways, if at all, do novices' use of these core practices shift over time? We conclude by offering several recommendations regarding how teacher education programs might modify their curricula to better facilitate and support novices' use of core historical inquiry teaching practices.

Background

Applying practice-based teacher education to the field of history education requires a conception of what constitutes core practices in that field and which practices are most important to learn in the early stages of a teaching career. Novice history teachers must learn a great deal in their preservice programs if they are to meet expectations for today's schools. For the past thirty years, reformers and researchers have called for a focus on historical thinking and understanding in classrooms.⁶ These ideas recently have been synthesized in the *College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards*.⁷ Further, the *Common Core State Standards* add developing students' reading, speaking, listening, and writing practices to subject-area teachers' to-do list.⁸

Research gives us many clues as to how teachers might successfully support their students' understanding of history and related disciplinary literacy practices.⁹ Framing history as inquiry and providing the tools to engage in investigations (such as using central historical questions) are important first steps.¹⁰ Grounding inquiry in multiple historical texts or artifacts and preparing those so that they are accessible to students is also a consistent element of the literature.¹¹ Because the study of history is so reliant on analysis of historical texts and writing one's own argument, teachers also must provide direct instructional support for disciplinary reading and writing.¹²

A recent Delphi survey synthesized a set of core practices for teaching historical inquiry based on responses from a panel of twenty-six expert teachers, teacher educators, and history education researchers who gave ratings, comments, and suggestions over the course of three iterative rounds (The lead author was a participant

in this survey).¹³ From this process, nine final practices and accompanying descriptions emerged as core teaching practices for historical inquiry (e.g., using historical questions, modeling and supporting historical reading skills).¹⁴ In this paper, we build on this synthesis, applying it to analyze observations of five novices in their first two years after graduating from their teacher education program, as we investigated the ways in which these novices took up core historical inquiry teaching practices in their early years.

In addition to our concurrence with a fundamental premise of practice-based teacher education (i.e., that effective teaching involves use of core practices that can be identified, analyzed, taught, and acquired by novices), a second fundamental presumption guided our decision making in this study: Novices do not simply implement practices introduced in teacher education. Rather, novices will appropriate and skillfully enact such practices at different rates and to different degrees, reflecting somewhat predictable developmental factors,¹⁵ as well as unique combinations of factors related to disposition, beliefs about the nature of the discipline, and context.

Methods

Participants and Context

The data analyzed in this paper are part of a longitudinal research study on new secondary history and social science teachers' learning.¹⁶ That project followed ten teacher candidates during their preservice teacher education program and continued with six of the ten graduates (those who remained in-state with social studies teaching positions) during their first two years of teaching. In this study, we focus on five of these six teachers who not only remained in the area and taught social studies, but who also taught history specifically. One of our five participants, Ron, continued to teach social studies but did not specifically teach history in his second year of full-time teaching; therefore, we only report on his first year of teaching to keep the subject matter consistent.

All five participants graduated from the same master's certification program at a state university in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States. Gabrielle, James, and Ron started the teacher education program in the summer of 2007. Talia and Monica pursued an

Teacher Pseudonym	Type of Field Placement	Type/Focus of 1st Methods Course	Type/Focus of 2nd and 3rd Methods Courses	Taught for both Years
Gabrielle	Full-year internship with mentor teacher	<i>Graduate</i> – Understanding historical thinking, ways of representing history in classroom	<i>Graduate</i> – Teaching historical understanding, disciplinary literacy strategies, curriculum development, assessment, reflection/revision of instruction based on students' learning	Yes
Ron	Full-year internship with mentor teacher	<i>Graduate</i> – Understanding historical thinking, ways of representing history in classroom	<i>Graduate</i> – Teaching historical understanding, disciplinary literacy strategies, curriculum development, assessment, reflection/revision of instruction based on students' learning	No <i>(first year only)</i>
James	Full-year internship with mentor teacher	<i>Graduate</i> – Understanding historical thinking, ways of representing history in classroom	<i>Graduate</i> – Teaching historical understanding, disciplinary literacy strategies, curriculum development, assessment, reflection/revision of instruction based on students' learning	Yes
Monica	Full-year internship with mentor teacher	<i>Undergraduate</i> – Range of pedagogical methods for teaching social studies	<i>Graduate</i> – Teaching historical understanding, disciplinary literacy strategies, curriculum development, assessment, reflection/revision of instruction based on students' learning	Yes
Talia	Teacher of Record with on-site mentor assigned	<i>Undergraduate</i> – Range of pedagogical methods for teaching social studies	<i>Graduate</i> – Teaching historical understanding, disciplinary literacy strategies, curriculum development, assessment, reflection/revision of instruction based on students' learning	Yes

Figure 1: Characteristics of Each Novice's Preparation Experience

integrated teacher education route, taking four education courses as undergraduates and then joining the cohort in the fall of 2007. Gabrielle, James, Ron, and Monica completed a one-year internship with a mentor teacher in a local public school in the 2007-2008 academic year. Talia completed a one-year teaching position as the teacher of record in three courses at a local public school. Although she had a mentor, he was a full-time teacher and typically spoke with her during a free period instead of observing her teaching. Talia and Monica's first methods course covered a range of pedagogical methods for teaching social studies, whereas Gabrielle, James, and Ron's first methods course focused on understanding historical thinking and ways of representing history in the classroom. However, all five participants completed the same second and third methods courses in the fall and spring. Together, these latter two courses emphasized teaching historical understanding rather than memorization; specific strategies to teach historical reading, discussion, and writing; curriculum development; assessment; and reflection and revision. The second and third methods courses treated writing as a form of assessment, as well as a set of practices that can support historical thinking. The first author taught the second and third methods courses. Characteristics of each candidate's preparation experience are summarized in **Figure 1**.

Data Sources

Throughout the first year of the data collection phase of this longitudinal study, researchers took detailed observation notes to capture entire lessons, which ranged in length from 45-75 minutes. In the second year, we reduced the number of observations per unit because, based on first-year data, we determined that we needed fewer observations to attain a stable picture of instruction. Classroom artifacts (e.g., teacher handouts and student work/assessments) also were gathered to triangulate observational data. Furthermore, interviews at both the beginning and end of each unit were conducted in the first year to delve into teachers' thinking regarding their instructional actions. During the second year, interviews were conducted at the beginning of the year, end of the first unit, and end of the year. The reduction in the number of interviews occurred because teacher availability became more limited.

For this study, we selected from among all the observations in order to get a representative sample and a comparable number of observations per teacher. We included at least the first, middle, and last observation for each history unit taught, unless there was some major interruption to what would have been a regular day (e.g., a special lesson on that year's presidential election). This resulted in approximately eighteen observations per teacher, except for Ron, who taught history only for one year. For this teacher, nine observations were used. Considering the higher number of available lesson observations from the first year of the study, the first year data reflects a sample of the observation notes, while the second year observation data was considered in total.

Framework for Data Analysis

Development of codes. The outcome of the Delphi panel's work was a list of core practices that epitomize inquiry-oriented history instruction.¹⁷ To develop our coding protocol, we used the Delphi panel's original enumeration that was finalized after three rounds of data collection and analysis.¹⁸ We used this 2012 enumeration because it most closely represented panelists' feedback. Also, this enumeration delineated three teaching practices that were later combined in the Delphi report and we wanted to test their existence as distinct teaching practices by applying them as codes to research data (CP10-12). In addition, the original enumeration maintained engaging students in historical investigations (CP9) as a distinct practice, and we wanted to test the subsequent decision to subsume all practices under it (as in the Delphi study). Therefore, our codes for history teaching core practices were:

- CP1 – Use historical questions
- CP2 – Select and adapt historical sources
- CP3 – Model and support historical reading skills
- CP4 – Employ historical evidence
- CP5 – Use historical concepts
- CP6 – Facilitate discussion on historical topics
- CP7 – Model and support historical writing
- CP8 – Assess student thinking about history
- CP9 – Engage students in historical investigations

- CP10 – Set historical context
- CP11 – Connect to personal/cultural experiences
- CP12 – Explain and link historical content

Since experts in the field of history education had developed this list, it reflected a conception of what constituted *best* practices among accomplished history educators. Our study, however, was focused on novice teachers who, by definition, are not expected to enact accomplished practice upon completion of their preparation. In our endeavor to establish a threshold for proficient *novice practice*, we began our study knowing we would need to adapt the Delphi panel's list. To do this, we modified the panel's descriptors of each core practice to reflect reasonable expectations for novice teachers. We based these modifications on considerations of our novice teachers' actual practice. In a sense, our preliminary process of establishing codes was both prescriptive and emergent.

In adapting the descriptor of each core practice to reflect the practice of novice teachers, we theorized three hierarchical levels of practice. The top level hypothetically would be reserved for expectations for *accomplished teacher practice*, and most likely applied to experienced teachers rather than our study of novices. Below that, we created a middle level for *proficient practice* and a lowest level for *beginner practice*, both of which applied to novices. As such, we decided to use the subcode "Level 2" for any practice that we thought reflected proficient use and "Level 1" when any practice was taken up but limited in some fashion.

As an example of the results of this adaptation process, we took the panel's description of CP2 (Select and adapt historical sources) and modified it into both Level 2 ("proficient") and Level 1 ("beginner") codes. The original description of this core teaching practice stated:

The teacher centers instruction on appropriate and engaging historical sources that include various types of texts and artifacts and illustrate multiple perspectives and interpretations. Sources should include both primary and secondary texts and may include images, political cartoons, documentaries, movies, graphs/charts, and maps. This practice also focuses on how the teacher prepares and/or adapts historical sources—such as excerpting documents or utilizing scaffolding questions—to help make them accessible to students.

History Teaching Core Practice	Level 2 Criteria	Level 1 Criteria
CP1: Use Historical Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> question is historical, central to the lesson/unit, and stated or printed on materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> question is not historical, only posed at beginning, or not aligned to objectives
CP2: Select and Adapt Historical Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> teacher uses multiple primary or secondary sources with authorship and date given 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sources are misaligned to content, singly used, or lack authorship and date
CP3: Model and Support Historical Reading Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> teacher models and supports opportunity for historical reading (e.g., attention to sourcing and context) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> teacher models <i>or</i> provides opportunity for historical reading; no meaning is drawn from reading practice
CP4: Employ Historical Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> teacher/students use multiple sources to justify claims; teacher conveys purpose of evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> source is singly used as evidence; sources are not connected to question or claims
CP5: Use Historical Concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> teacher explicitly illustrates or explains concept; concept frames lesson 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> teacher does not explicitly illustrate or explain concepts
CP6: Facilitate Discussion on Historical Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> talk among teacher/students and student to student includes multiple turns and centers on questions, sources, claims, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> teacher minimally takes up student ideas; talk centers on comprehension or summarizing
CP7: Model and Support Historical Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> teacher models and supports opportunity for historical writing (e.g., making claims and citing evidence) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> teacher models <i>or</i> provides opportunity for historical writing
CP8: Assess Student Thinking about History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> teacher purposefully assesses students' historical analysis and gives feedback, including one-on-one feedback, in class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> assessment is misaligned to content/objectives; teacher does not give feedback
CP9: Engage Students in Historical Investigations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> teacher combines multiple practices among questions, sources, reading, and/or writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> practices are misaligned; students investigated sources without historical purpose
CP10 & CP12: Set Historical Context & Explain/Link Historical Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> teacher purposefully sets context or uses examples/analogies to explain ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> teacher sets context or explains ideas through cursory comments
CP11 Connect to Personal/Cultural Experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> teacher purposefully draws on students' experiences to compare to the past 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> teacher does not appropriately connect history and present or makes cursory connections

Figure 2: Summary of the Coding Protocol for Core Practices

To apply this to novice practice, we created the following descriptors:

Level 2 – It was sufficient for a novice to use either primary or secondary sources. It was sufficient for a novice to use prepared curriculum materials when presenting sources; they did not have to find their own. However, source authorship and date information must be included, as well as acknowledgement if the source has been adapted and by whom.

Level 1 – While acknowledging use of source(s), we counted the use of the practice as limited in some way for a number of reasons: if the sources were misaligned with content, if the sources were presented but the authorship (name, date, etc.) was not provided, if only one source was provided, or if sources were used as illustrations but were not interrogated.

In either scenario, if the teacher only used a textbook account in his/her lesson, then we did not apply this code at all. However, if the teacher used the textbook account as a comparison to other sources or used specific maps, cartoons, images, etc. from a textbook, then we did count the use of the practice at either Level 1 or 2 according to the descriptors above. **Figure 2** displays the coding protocol that we developed.

Application of codes. To analyze our data, we decided that our scope of analysis should be episodes within each lesson rather than lessons as a whole. This would permit us to see how often practices were used *throughout* a lesson rather than just *if* they were used in a lesson. In chunking the lesson observations into episodes, we employed common criteria. We noted an episode break every time there was a change in subject, a change in activity structure (e.g., from lecture to group work), or an introduction of a different source of information (e.g., from PowerPoint presentation to primary source).

While episodes within lessons were the primary unit of analysis for our codes, after multiple attempts to apply the original Delphi panel enumeration, we decided that this did not apply well to CP9 (Engage students in historical investigations) because every episode was coded CP9 if there was some attempt at historical investigation, regardless of the particular practices used to support investigation. Instead, we coded the entire lesson once if the practice was employed. We did this because we saw investigations as the macro frame for lessons or curricular units. In fact, we concluded that the other eleven practices functioned as sub-practices within the larger investigation

practice. We also encountered so much overlap when we tried to develop reliable exemplars of two practices—set historical context (CP10) and explain and link historical content (CP12)—that we combined them into one practice (CP10/12 – Set historical context and Explain/link historical content). After testing the core practices by applying them to teaching data, our thinking was similar to the Delphi panel’s final iteration of the core practices.¹⁹

We established reliability among all three raters via a two-step process. First, we jointly coded two series of lesson observations. This gave us the chance to establish common understanding of the core practices as they manifested themselves in the observations of the novice teachers. After coding these observations, we conversed about where we agreed and disagreed, which led us to further refine our coding protocol. In a second step, we each coded three additional observations from the same teacher and went through the same debriefing and refining of the protocol. Our inter-rater reliability after coding both of these series of lessons was 80% among all possible codes for all episodes/lessons.

After establishing these levels of initial reliability, we divided the remaining observation protocols by researcher and coded each observation. Coded observations were checked for inter-rater reliability throughout this time. In total, the first author and either the second or third author jointly coded 20% of all observations. The first author, who double-coded the lessons, agreed 96% of the time with the codes that were used by the other two authors after we initially established inter-rater reliability.

In looking across teachers and observations, we focused on our novices’ use of each specific practice. Analyzing one code (i.e., teaching practice) at a time, we compared the five teachers’ practices over the course of two years. Classroom artifacts and interview data were not coded for this study. However, they were used to provide context for interpretations of the lesson observation protocols, as well as for later triangulation of findings.

Findings

We found that although all five novices graduated together from the same master’s level teacher education program, their patterns of uptake of the core practices varied considerably. Three of the

Teacher Pseudonym	Cluster One				Cluster Two				Cluster Three		
	CP1	CP2	CP4	CP9	CP3	CP6	CP7	CP8	CP5	CP10/12	CP11
Gabrielle	.52	.57	.42	.94	.38	.40	.13	.27	.87	.21	.08
Ron	.25	.54	.26	.68	.25	.13	.14	.33	.54	.15	.03
James	.40	.56	.35	.80	.25	.22	.11	.10	.33	.36	.00
Monica	.03	.21	.01	.30	.11	.00	.01	.00	.09	.49	.00
Talia	.30	.57	.23	.50	.30	.13	.03	.09	.47	.32	.02
Average two-year use across all five teachers	.30	.49	.25	.64	.26	.18	.08	.16	.46	.31	.03
Average two-year use by cluster	.42				.17				.27		

Figure 3: Two-Year Overall Average Use of Each Core Practice (either Level 1 or Level 2) by Teacher (by percentage of observed episodes). For Ron, the scores represent a one-year average since he only taught history in his first year after completing the program.

five novices (Gabrielle, Ron, and James) from the start regularly employed (at least at a basic level) many of the core historical inquiry teaching practices identified in the Delphi panel survey and emphasized in their preparation program. Gabrielle, in particular, consistently used such practices quite effectively. Comparatively, our fourth teacher (Talia) used the core practices less often and less effectively overall, especially in her first year, although she improved in both the amount and quality of her use of several of the practices in Year 2. Meanwhile, our fifth novice (Monica) used the core historical inquiry teaching practices minimally throughout both years.

Furthermore, in initial passes through the data, we observed that use of certain core practices co-occurred and seemed logically to cohere. This observation led us to analyze and discuss the teaching practices as they cohered in three clusters when applied to the data. We viewed the first cluster, comprising core practices 1, 2, 4, and 9, as representing the *tools or structures* for historical inquiry. More specifically, we viewed use of the first three of these practices (i.e., using historical questions, selecting and adapting historical sources,

Teacher Pseudonym	Cluster One				Cluster Two				Cluster Three		
	CP1	CP2	CP4	CP9	CP3	CP6	CP7	CP8	CP5	CP10/12	CP11
Gabrielle											
Year 1	.53	.72	.42	.88	.38	.34	.10	.25	.81	.28	.11
Year 2	.51	.41	.42	1.00	.38	.45	.16	.28	.92	.13	.05
Δ Y1 to Y2	-.02	-.31[†]	.00	.12	.00	.11	.06	.03	.11	-.15[†]	-.06
James											
Year 1	.40	.53	.28	.59	.24	.22	.14	.07	.23	.39	.00
Year 2	.39	.58	.41	1.00	.26	.21	.07	.13	.42	.32	.00
Δ Y1 to Y2	-.01	.05	.13	.41[†]	.02	-.01	-.07	.06	.19[†]	-.07	.00
Monica											
Year 1	.06	.17	.02	.09	.04	.00	.02	.00	.11	.45	.00
Year 2	.00	.25	.00	.50	.17	.00	.00	.00	.07	.53	.00
Δ Y1 to Y2	-.06	.08	-.02	.41[†]	.13	.00	-.02	.00	-.04	.08	.00
Talia											
Year 1	.12	.57	.19	.17	.32	.08	.02	.05	.35	.29	.01
Year 2	.48	.56	.27	.83	.27	.17	.03	.13	.58	.35	.02
Δ Y1 to Y2	.36[†]	-.01	.08	.66[†]	-.05	.09	.01	.08	.23[†]	.06	.01

Figure 4: Change in Patterns of Use of Each Core Practice (either Level 1 or Level 2) from Year 1 to Year 2 by Teacher (by percentage of observed episodes). Ron is not included in these comparisons because he only taught history for one year.

[†] Change of +/-15% or more in use from Year 1 to Year 2.

and employing historical evidence) as the tools that constituted the fourth practice (engaging students in historical investigations). We viewed a second cluster, involving core practices 3, 6, 7, and 8 (i.e., modeling and supporting historical reading and writing, facilitating discussions on historical topics, and assessing students' historical thinking) as *teaching processes* by which historical thinking is promoted and made evident. The remaining core practices (5, 10/12, and 11) were connected by their concern with *teacher actions to enhance students' engagement* with and understanding of historical concepts and content.

In **Figure 3**, we share the *overall average* frequencies with which we observed each teacher engaging in each of the core historical inquiry teaching practices over the two years (one year for Ron). Percentages include either Level 1 or Level 2 use. This figure also presents data on average use of the practices among our teachers by

Teacher Pseudonym	Cluster One				Cluster Two				Cluster Three		
	CP1	CP2	CP4	CP9	CP3	CP6	CP7	CP8	CP5	CP10/12	CP11
Gabrielle											
Year 1 L2	.47	.42	.39	.58	.27	.18	.04	.16	.59	.12	.02
Year 2 L2	.39	.30	.42	1.00	.31	.24	.16	.28	.47	.09	.00
Δ Y1 to Y2	-.08	-.12	.03	.42[†]	.04	.06	.12	.12	-.12	-.03	-.02
James											
Year 1 L2	.37	.23	.23	.59	.06	.10	.00	.06	.06	.15	.00
Year 2 L2	.22	.30	.24	.84	.07	.21	.00	.10	.20	.04	.00
Δ Y1 to Y2	-.15[†]	.07	.01	.25[†]	.01	.11	.00	.04	.14	-.11	.00
Monica											
Year 1 L2	.03	.04	.00	.09	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.19	.00
Year 2 L2	.00	.09	.00	.00	.03	.00	.00	.00	.03	.23	.00
Δ Y1 to Y2	-.03	.05	.00	-.09	.03	.00	.00	.00	.03	.04	.00
Talia											
Year 1 L2	.07	.03	.07	.00	.09	.01	.00	.03	.08	.16	.00
Year 2 L2	.44	.21	.26	.50	.12	.02	.00	.05	.20	.22	.00
Δ Y1 to Y2	.37[†]	.18[†]	.19[†]	.50[†]	.03	.01	.00	.02	.12	.06	.00

Figure 5: Change in Level 2 Quality of Use of Each Core Practice from Year 1 to Year 2 by Teacher (by percentage of observed episodes). Ron is not included in these comparisons because he only taught history for one year.

[†] Change of +/-15% or more in Level 2 use from Year 1 to Year 2

cluster. In **Figure 4**, we disaggregate by year the data on each novice’s use of each core practice in order to demonstrate their different *patterns of use* of the practices. Finally, in **Figure 5**, we present our analysis of changes in the *quality of use* of each core historical inquiry practice by each novice. To illustrate quality, we present changes in each teacher’s Level 2 use of each core practice from Year 1 to Year 2. (Ron is excluded from Figures 4 and 5 because he did not teach history both years.) In Figure 4 and Figure 5, we highlighted instances where there was a +/-15% change in overall use or Level 2 use of a core practice from Year 1 to Year 2 to draw readers’ attention to particularly notable changes and patterns of change.

The data in these three figures is discussed by practice and cluster in the following sections. For example, **Figure 3** shows us that Gabrielle modeled historical writing (CP7) in 13% of the episodes overall and assessed student thinking about history (CP8) in 27% of

the episodes overall across both years. **Figure 4** digs deeper to show that she took up these practices only slightly more in Year 2 than in Year 1. Yet **Figure 5** highlights that the quality of her enactment of these practices in Year 2 was a notable improvement from Year 1, even though the amount that she enacted these practices was fairly stable across years.

Core Practice Cluster One: Tools or Structures for Historical Inquiry

CPI: Use historical questions. As demonstrated in **Figure 3**, two-year average usage of this practice among our novices ranged widely from 3% to 52% of the episodes. As evident from **Figure 4**, patterns of use were also inconsistent. One teacher used questions infrequently in both years (Monica), two more regularly from the beginning (James and Gabrielle), one varied greatly in his use of questions between units (Ron), and one improved in her use of questions from Year 1 to Year 2 (Talia). The quality of each teacher's question use also varied. Some posed *historical* questions that were central to organization of the activities within their lesson, as reflected in their Level 2 frequencies in **Figure 5**. For example, Gabrielle used the historical question, "Which Atlantic revolution was the most revolutionary?" to frame a lesson in her unit on the eighteenth-century Atlantic revolutions. Others, meanwhile, framed lessons with questions that were not historical, such as "How would you change an unjust government?" or that were not aligned to lesson activities or assessments, such as a question on what causes imperialism that was used to frame a lesson on specific events related to American intervention in the Philippines (Talia). Such use was coded Level 1.

Based on these participants, there appeared to be a developmental progression in the use of this practice from (1) no use of central questions to frame lessons (e.g., Talia in Year 1) to (2) use of a central question to frame the lesson that is not necessarily historical (Talia in Year 2) to (3) use of a central *historical* question to frame the lesson (Gabrielle, Ron, James) and, finally, to (4) use of a central historical question to frame multiple lessons across a unit of instruction, with selection of individual lesson questions that support this unit question. Only one teacher (Gabrielle) in one unit in her second year of teaching demonstrated this latter level of use of questions.

CP2: Select and adapt historical sources. Two-year average use of this practice ranged from 21% to 57% of episodes (see **Figure 3**). However, we frequently coded our teachers' use of sources Level 1 for several reasons (see **Figure 5**). First, in presenting sources to students, teachers often failed to include full attribution of the author and date. This was especially true if the sources were presented as part of a PowerPoint lecture presentation. In addition, single sources were often used to illustrate a point rather than presented as evidence to be interrogated. When teachers used multiple sources, they often split up these sources across student groups in a jigsaw format and concluded the lesson by having groups report out on their individual source rather than providing students with opportunities to corroborate across sources. This limited consideration of a central question in light of all the sources.

Most often, our novices did not locate, prepare, or adapt historical sources on their own. Instead, they reported (and observations confirmed) that they took prepared sources from district curriculum guides or from materials received or websites explored during their teacher preparation program (e.g., *Historical Thinking Matters*). Some also used curricula they found through their own searching (*The DBQ Project*). It was not always clear when a teacher had adapted such sources by shortening them or changing the language, as reviews of classroom artifacts indicated they often failed to include such information on the source documents.

CP4: Employ historical evidence. Two-year average use of this practice ranged widely from 1% to 42% of the episodes, as indicated in **Figure 3**. Furthermore, teachers did not always present multiple forms of evidence for students to consider. Hence, our teachers' use of evidence was frequently coded Level 1 in both years (see **Figure 5**). When teachers did present multiple sources, they most often did so by providing multiple primary sources of the same form (e.g., several text excerpts). There were not different forms of evidence (e.g., maps, charts, texts, images) for students to compare. Furthermore, as just described, when given evidence to work with, students were not often given multiple pieces of evidence or opportunities to corroborate sources. The progression in use of this practice appeared to be (1) use of sources exclusively as illustrations of content or concepts (Talia in Year 1) to (2) requests

that students use sources as evidence to make claims (Talia in Year 2, Gabrielle, Ron, and James throughout) and, finally, to (3) formal opportunities for students to interrogate and corroborate multiple sources as evidence in making historical arguments (Gabrielle on occasion in Year 2).

CP9: Engage students in historical investigations. Two-year average use of this practice again ranged very widely from 30% to 94% of the observations. However, as **Figure 4** demonstrates, each of the four teachers for whom we have two years of data had substantial gains in usage of investigations from Year 1 to Year 2. Of the group, Monica made the most substantial gains in use of this practice. Furthermore, as demonstrated in **Figure 5**, three of the four (Gabrielle, James, and Talia) increased the quality of their use of investigations substantially as well. Teachers' purposes for using investigations appeared to vary. For example, some teachers used investigations primarily as a way of delivering content (Talia in Year 2, Ron and Gabrielle in Year 1, Monica in Year 2). These teachers seemed to know what they wanted students to learn, but they took an inductive approach to reach those ends. Therefore, there was no real opportunity for their students to come to original conclusions that have not yet been reached by someone else (e.g., historians). Here, the purpose for an investigation may be the same for these teachers as when giving a lecture. For others, investigations were an opportunity to develop analytical and historical research practices (James from the start; Gabrielle in Year 2). Furthermore, although James had high usage overall, there were days when he focused on information only and his lessons did not involve investigation. Finally, none of our five novice teachers took up the most advanced form of this practice envisioned in the Delphi panel's work: giving students the opportunity to create and conduct original investigations.

Interaction among practices in Cluster One. While core practices involving CP1 (Questions), CP2 (Sources), and CP4 (Evidence) are the tools that enable historical investigations (CP9), the presentation of material sources was the foundation of the simplest of investigations. In fact, every time that CP9 (Investigations) was coded, so too was CP2 (Sources). Therefore, it can be understood

that sources are necessary to an investigation; however, they were not sufficient. Furthermore, while use of a central historical question to frame the lesson varied, with one exception, every time we coded a lesson as incorporating a Level 2 investigation (CP9), we also coded episodes within that lesson as containing both historical questions (CP1) and sources (CP2) at either at Level 1 or 2. This makes sense: if both sources and a central historical question were employed, then it was at least possible (though not inevitable) that the sources could be used as evidence to answer the central question.

Each of our teachers relied heavily on existing curriculum materials. Having access to high-quality instructional materials may have helped support use by the teachers in our study of all four of the practices in this cluster. For example, we noticed that those who had access to such materials through their district placements (Gabrielle, Ron, and James) implemented the inquiry practices in this cluster much more often, and at a more sophisticated level, than those who did not (Monica and Talia).

Core Practice Cluster Two: Teaching Processes that Promote and Make Evident Historical Thinking

CP3: Model and support historical reading skills. Overall, two-year average use of this practice by our novices ranged from 11% to 38% of episodes. Teacher modeling of historical reading, the hallmark of a Level 2 designation, was inconsistently evident. For example, as demonstrated in **Figure 5**, Monica did not engage in modeling of historical thinking in either year, whereas Talia began to model in Year 2. Meanwhile, Gabrielle and James demonstrated some of their strongest modeling in the first unit of their first year and continued intermittently thereafter. However, we observed only one instance of modeling historical thinking by any teacher that incorporated any explicit teacher think-aloud (Gabrielle in Year 1, first observation). Furthermore, our novices inconsistently *named* the practices they were modeling or asking students to use. Gabrielle and Ron did so regularly, whereas James, Monica, and Talia did not. Of note, only Gabrielle had a district curriculum that called for explicit teaching of specific historical reading strategies and provided guidance/tools to do so. Meanwhile, reading comprehension was emphasized in the district goals of the other teachers.

Sourcing was the most commonly taught heuristic. However, only Gabrielle, Ron, and James went beyond asking students to notice who wrote a document to asking them to use this information to draw inferences about perspective, bias, etc., which is the essence of the sourcing heuristic.²⁰ Opportunities for students to contextualize and corroborate perspectives, and teacher modeling of these heuristics, were far less frequent. Only Gabrielle modeled corroboration, and only in her second year. Gabrielle, James, and Talia created opportunities for corroboration of perspectives via jigsaws. However, the sources in these activities were usually intended to each represent a different “cause” of an event, such as World War I (e.g., imperialism, militarism), rather than representing multiple perspectives concerning a question of causation, such as whether German militarism was a cause of World War I (see CP2 above).

Teachers’ support for and modeling of historical reading appeared to reflect tensions between reading comprehension and historical reading. For example, in an interview at the conclusion of her first observed unit, Gabrielle explained that an understanding of perspective was the most important “take-away” she hoped her students would get from the unit, and she emphasized this understanding in her graphic organizers, questioning, and modeling. On the other hand, throughout our interviews with her, Talia emphasized content understandings as the most important “take-away” for students, and described her use of primary sources mostly as a means for making the content more interesting and vivid or accessible. Given that goal, the guidance and modeling she provided to her students were primarily regarding comprehension of what the author said without attention to the historical context, intentions, or meanings.

Among these five novices, the following continuum describes progression in the use of this core practice with different teachers starting and/or ending at different places along this continuum: (1) provision of basic reading comprehension support only; (2) provision of basic information regarding source and context, but with no naming or modeling of the heuristic; (3) encouragement, through questioning or worksheets, of students’ use of attribution information to evaluate or draw conclusions about sources; (4) modeling of how to locate and consider sourcing or contextual information or how to corroborate evidence; (5) explicit naming of the heuristic being used or taught; and (6) sharing of thinking

aloud during modeling to show students what it looks like to use a specific strategy. As discussed, we observed only one instance involving one of our teachers of this sixth level and it was in the course of her first observation of the first year.

CP6: Facilitate discussion on historical topics. These novices' use of discussion varied widely; two-year averages ranged from 0% to 40% of episodes observed (see **Figure 3**). As **Figure 5** demonstrates, however, although we coded a number of examples of use of discussion, classroom talk was mostly "spoke and hub" where the teacher was the main mediator, and the purposes were primarily description, summary, and comprehension (i.e., Level 1 use). Among our novices, there was relatively little evidence of teachers' asking students to justify their responses with evidence or to extend or critique the ideas of others.

The format and quality of discussion facilitation varied considerably. For example, Gabrielle was particularly adept at conducting discussions of visual sources, and Ron had his students engage in a Socratic seminar. Talia, on the other hand, used very little whole-class discussion in either year, even as she moved toward greater use of investigations. In her first year, she had difficulty facilitating small-group talk, with observers noting that students were generally off-task. This changed in her second year as she gave the students more investigative tasks to do. Finally, Monica engaged her students in whole-class and small-group talk. However, discourse focused on literal meaning of texts or factual recall. Such talk did not meet criteria for either Level 1 or Level 2 coding.

Interestingly, although collectively the novices did not demonstrate a lot of Level 2 discussions in the classroom episodes that we observed, in interviews, they did not express insecurity about their ability to lead discussions or ambivalence about the importance of the role of discussion in their teaching. This contrasts to their expressed insecurities and ambivalence regarding teaching writing and differences in their understanding of the purposes of assessment (see below).

CP7: Model and support historical writing. Two-year averages for use of this core practice ranged from 1% to 14% of episodes across the five teachers. Comparatively, Gabrielle, Ron, and James—

the same teachers who were stronger in providing historical reading opportunities—also provided more historical writing opportunities, although they were still infrequent. Writing supports provided to students were generally in the form of assignment directions and/or graphic organizers. Among the novices, explicit teaching of historical writing through modeling was rare. We observed only one occasion each where both Gabrielle and Ron explicitly modeled how to write a complete historical argument, including making a claim, assembling evidence, and connecting the evidence with the claim. However, in both instances, we coded their use of this practice as proficient. Because of the infrequency of writing opportunities and modeling, it was difficult to ascertain any patterns of development across the five teachers.

According to our interviews, writing was apparently understood differently by different teachers. Some (e.g., Talia) perceived writing primarily as a way to check students' recall of the material, while others (e.g., Gabrielle) discussed it as a means to promote as well as assess students' historical thinking. In addition, in their interviews, writing was perceived as extremely challenging by all of our novices, and despite the emphasis on writing in their methods courses, some even indicated ambivalence as to whether teaching writing was their responsibility as social studies teachers.

CP8: Assess student thinking about history. Overall, examples of assessment were somewhat more frequent than writing across all five teachers in the episodes we observed (0% to 33% of episodes as evident in **Figure 3**). However, worthy of note is that, as with discussion, the novices varied greatly in both their use and quality of use of practices to assess historical thinking. For example, as denoted by their Level 2 percentages in **Figure 5**, Monica did not implement any assessment activities beyond factual recall in any observed episode in either year, whereas Gabrielle incorporated activities that assessed her students' historical analysis skills in 28% of episodes in her second year of teaching.

Among the teachers who incorporated assessment activities more frequently (Ron and Gabrielle), the majority of examples of assessment came from eliciting and providing feedback on students' thinking in the context of small-group work. More formal activities to assess students' understanding of historical concepts

and historical analysis skills were less evident, although there were several, such as a unit culminating in an assessment where students had to write a paragraph answering whether they believed the Boston Massacre was indeed a “massacre.”

The district assessments for which the teachers had to prepare their students also differed significantly. Gabrielle’s students were expected to pass assessments that included written essay responses evaluating historical thinking. Ron, James, and Monica’s students faced assessments involving multiple-choice and brief constructed-response paragraphs, which require written summaries, but no historical thinking. Meanwhile, Talia’s students faced assessments composed entirely of multiple-choice and short-answer questions. Such differences may have impacted the novices’ uptake of inquiry-oriented assessment practices advocated by the Delphi panel and their preservice program.

Interaction among practices in Cluster Two. As demonstrated in **Figure 3**, novices’ use of the historical reading core practice did not relate closely to their use of the other three practices in this cluster. Logically, reading would appear to be related to discussion and writing because each is a component of disciplinary literacy that should enhance students’ historical thinking. However, that relationship did not hold here. Similarly, historical reading would appear to be logically dependent on use of sources. However, it is possible to use sources as illustrations and not teach students how to read them as evidence, as many of the novices did, as indicated by their much higher use of CP2 (Sources) than of CP3 (Reading).

Discussion, writing, and assessment, on the other hand, appeared to be interrelated because three of the five teachers (Gabrielle, James, and Talia) had their highest usage of all three practices in the same unit (Year 2, Unit 1). This was also the same unit in which each of these same teachers had higher than their two-year average (though not necessarily their highest) usage of CP1 (Questions) and CP9 (Investigations) and in which two of the three (Gabrielle and James) had higher than their average usage of CP4 (Evidence). This pattern seems logical because there is no need for argumentative writing if there is no question—and if no sources are provided and treated as evidence to answer the question. On the other hand, asking questions, reading sources, and calling for evidence do not

necessitate the incorporation of historical writing. More often, questions were answered in the context of class discussions and/or by completion of worksheets/graphic organizers. It also is logical for discussion to be a part of this cluster because the same historical investigative goals and processes that encourage historical writing also encourage historical deliberation. Finally, assessment is logically related to writing because the latter is a potent form of assessing thinking. Indeed, the strongest examples of the teaching of writing, incorporating modeling, were in relation to end-of-unit assessment tasks.

Core Practice Cluster Three: Teacher Actions to Enhance Students' Engagement with and Understanding of Historical Content

CP5: Use historical concepts. This practice was used by each of the novices, although their two-year average use ranged widely from 9% to 87% (see **Figure 3**). However, as **Figure 5** demonstrates, we frequently coded its use as Level 1, indicating that the teacher named or provided a definition for a concept, rather than teaching its meaning through examples, analogies, or by developing a definition inductively. An example of an effective use of inductive development of a concept was Gabrielle's facilitation of a whole-class visual analysis discussion of a portrait of Louis XIV to develop a definition of the concept of absolutism, as a prelude to learning about causes of the French Revolution.

CP10/12: Set historical context and Explain/link historical content. Overall, these novices used this practice fairly frequently, with two-year averages ranging from 15% to 49% of episodes. Interestingly, Monica, who demonstrated the least frequent use of the other ten practices, demonstrated use of this practice more frequently than anyone else (see **Figure 3**). As indicated in **Figure 5**, she also demonstrated Level 2 use of this practice more frequently than any of the other teachers in both years. Meanwhile, the teacher who incorporated the most frequent and advanced (i.e., Level 2) use of the other core historical inquiry teaching practices (Gabrielle) provided the least frequent and/or intentional explanations of context and linkages of content. Monica prepared PowerPoint mini-lectures (including references to maps, the textbook, timelines,

etc.) for almost every lesson to introduce lessons and provide background information, whereas Gabrielle's explanations were usually impromptu, particularly in her first year. They became less frequent but slightly more intentional in her second year. This dichotomy suggests that finding the right balance between inductive and deductive approaches was challenging for our novices, who may have approached this practice as an "either-or" decision rather than a "yes-and" practice.

CP 11: Connect to personal/cultural experiences. Making connections was the least frequently implemented core practice by all of the novices, with two-year averages ranging from 0% to 8%. As demonstrated in **Figure 3**, James and Monica did not make any connections to students' experiences in any observed episode. Among Gabrielle, Ron, and Talia, the few attempts that were made were almost entirely impromptu and hence coded Level 1 (see **Figure 5**). Worse, we observed one instance where a teacher (Talia) struggled with how to respond to the defensive and angry personal connections to texts that a few of her students themselves were making. For example, in her lesson on the Spanish-American War (Year 1, Unit 1), a Filipino-American student took umbrage at a political cartoon they were viewing that portrayed Filipinos, Puerto Ricans, and Hawaiians as children at a dinner table with their "parents" Uncle Sam and Lady Liberty. The student blurted out, "That's so messed up!"—to which Talia responded, "You're from the Philippines?" and kept on with her explanation of the cartoon. The student again tried to interject with a question about a baby named "Ladron" in a high chair next to the Filipinos in the cartoon, asking, "Are you trying to say we are thieves?"—to which Talia replied, "Ladron? Doesn't that mean 'a robber' in Spanish?" She then continued with her explanation asking the class, "Why do you think America has different children, different countries?" Our data suggest that, at least among these novices, their comfort level with and ability to help students make personal connections to their learning of history, and their ability to handle connections that the students themselves are making, were very limited. Given the limited focus on this aspect of teaching history in their methods courses, this finding is hardly surprising, although it raises clear implications for future revisions of methods course instruction.

Discussion

Frequency and Quality of Uptake of History Teaching Core Practices

Patterns of use of core practices among our five novices. Using the core teaching practices for historical inquiry identified by a recent Delphi panel as our analytical codes, we found that three of the five novice teachers in our study, Gabrielle, Ron, and James, regularly employed a number of the core historical inquiry teaching practices introduced in the teacher education program, even in their first year of teaching. Furthermore, they did so quite skillfully at times. One in particular, Gabrielle, was quite proficient and frequent in her use of almost all the practices from the start. A fourth, Talia, while having low initial levels of use of most practices, increased her use of a number of practices in her second year. Furthermore, the quality of her use of several practices (i.e., CP1, CP2, CP4, and CP9) improved substantially in her second year. The fifth novice, Monica, used the core historical inquiry teaching practices very little throughout her first two years with one exception. She set context and explained/linked content (CP10/12) with more frequency and skill than any of the other novices.

Overall, these novices used the four practices that provided tools or structures enabling historical inquiry (Cluster One) most frequently (42% of observed episodes/lessons). In particular, they presented students with historical investigations (CP9) and provided them with historical sources (CP2) more often than any other practices. Asking historical questions (CP1) and employing historical evidence (CP4) were the fifth- and seventh-most used practices. These practices were modeled regularly in the preservice social studies methods courses, and uncovered explicitly in the second and third methods courses.

Certain practices in Cluster Three were also among those most frequently employed by these novices. In particular, practices that supported students' understanding of the content—i.e., use historical concepts (CP5) and set context and explain/link content (CP10/12)—were the third and fourth most often used practices among these novices. Nevertheless, even though novices used these practices fairly often, their execution needed further development; much of the time, we coded these practices as Level 1, indicating that the attempt was there, but the execution was incomplete. Typically, teachers

explained concepts or content very briefly and spontaneously, without supporting tools or illustrations (e.g., timelines, maps, analogies) or prior planning. Despite the relative frequency with which the novices used historical concepts and explanatory lectures, helping students make personal connections to the content (CP11) was used least often of all practices. None of the practices in this cluster were attended to explicitly in the teacher education coursework received by these novices, so it is not surprising that this is an area for these teachers' further development and for greater consideration in methods course instruction. If we expect teachers to draw on students' background knowledge and experiences, such work must be modeled and practiced in teacher education as a part of historical inquiry teaching; otherwise, we risk portraying making connections with students as separate from inquiry teaching rather than as a foundation for it.

Overall, these novices used teaching practices that promote historical thinking and demonstrate and assess historical learning (Cluster Two) least often overall (in just 17% of observed episodes/lessons, either at Level 1 or Level 2). This was despite such practices having been emphasized in the methods courses received by each of these educators, especially the second and third courses. Of the four practices in this cluster, modeling and supporting historical reading skills (CP3) was used most often, placing sixth in teachers' average use of practices overall. Facilitating discussion (CP6), writing (CP7), and assessment (CP8) (other than multiple-choice) were used far less often. However, even though we saw these practices less often, when we did see them, the quality was fairly high. For example, on the few occasions when they did so, Gabrielle modeled how to source a historical text and Ron modeled how to write an argument as well as any expert.

Tensions between inquiry and content coverage. Every single teacher used historical investigations and sources (CP9 and CP2) at some point, as well as explained content and context (CP10/12). Yet, teachers' orientation to historical investigations and content varied: some of the teachers primarily used historical investigations as a vehicle for covering content (Ron, Monica, Talia) while others used them primarily as a means of fostering the skills of historical analysis (Gabrielle, James).

Ron's investigation of the U.S. transition from isolationism to involvement in World War II is an example of using an investigation to cover content. Over two forty-five minute periods, he used five different documents. Each document highlighted a different objective or belief argued by historians to be related to the central question of what objectives or beliefs led America to become a world power after World War II. Everyone read the first document together; then students worked in groups. Each group read one document and the groups reported what their document said at the end of class. Although students took notes on each document, they examined only one. When reporting out, they shared the details in the document rather than their analysis of it or how it compared to others in addressing the central question. The students' work with the documents was used to convey information about the central question more than to practice the skills of analysis or deliberate about different perspectives on the appropriateness of a particular argument. Students did have opportunities to practice analytical skills and historical reading as they worked with a single document, but they did not have a chance to corroborate.

In comparison, when Gabrielle taught a lesson on absolutism as a cause of the French Revolution in her first year, she emphasized sourcing and perspective. Students examined three documents, first as a whole class and then individually to understand the concept of absolutism. In both examples, students identified historical aspects of texts, such as who an author was, but the priority in each class differed—Ron's example focused on covering information, whereas Gabrielle's highlighted the reading and thinking practices of sourcing and perspective recognition. In other cases, teachers covered information on days when they did not conduct an investigation, framing these goals and activities as distinct. Instead of providing information in order to build students' background knowledge as an integral part of inquiry, teachers focused on *either* information *or* inquiry.

Use of existing curriculum materials more than creating new materials. Even though their preservice methods courses emphasized creating curriculum materials from scratch, these novices used or adapted existing materials with few exceptions. The preservice methods courses required novices to create six individual lesson plans and one unit plan, but we did not see novices use these. Instead, they

relied heavily on external sources of curricular materials, and the quality of those materials appears to have influenced the quality of their use of the core historical inquiry teaching practices. This analysis unearthed a real shortcoming of the preservice program: novices had not had practice or instruction in purposefully selecting and skillfully adapting existing curriculum materials, although they had practice in finding resources to construct their own lessons. Moving forward, this case study suggests that attention in preservice education to skillful selection and adaptation of existing curriculum materials is well warranted, even if it means students plan fewer lessons from scratch.

Preservice program experiences in relation to uptake of core practices. All five novices completed the same master's level teacher education program that emphasized historical inquiry and disciplinary literacy, although their methods preparation within that program differed somewhat as described earlier. We noticed that the three who completed the same integrated sequence of graduate-level methods courses also employed history teaching core practices most consistently, at least at a basic level. They used historical questions and concepts, employed historical evidence, engaged students in historical investigations, and modeled or supported historical reading. Furthermore, these three teachers also went on to teach in the same district. For the other two teachers, whose first methods course was taken as part of their undergraduate program and who went on to teach in a different district, the opportunities they had to learn in their preservice program may not have been strong enough to overcome influences or challenges they faced as new teachers in their district.

Limitations

Our findings are limited in three primary ways. First, as a case study of five novices, all graduates of the same teacher education program, our findings represent a small sample. Therefore, we cannot generalize these findings to other programs or novices. Second, no one has yet successfully identified an "optimum" level of implementation of core historical inquiry teaching practices. For example, how frequently should writing assignments be included in history lessons and how frequently should historical writing be explicitly taught and modeled? We likely would not want to see this practice used during every teaching

episode of every day—at the very least, students would likely rebel—but what is the optimal amount? What is the appropriate balance in a lesson between whole-class discussion, didactic instruction, and small-group or individual investigative work? For this reason, we analyzed the frequency with which we observed each novice using each of the core practices in comparison with the others and over time, not in comparison to an objective standard for appropriate levels of use. This approach presumes, perhaps wrongly, that more use of any of the core practices is generally better. However, future research should attempt to identify optimal frequencies and combinations of the core practices that result in improved student outcomes.

Finally, in this paper, we investigated which core historical inquiry teaching practices we saw novices using over the course of their first two years of teaching history, and the quality of their use of those practices. There could be many explanations for the outcomes and differences we noted. Teachers' uptake of the core practices likely is influenced by many external factors (e.g., school and district expectations and responsibilities, availability of materials and professional support) as well as internal factors (e.g., epistemological beliefs about history, instructional priorities). We began to note some of those differences here without delving into their possible importance for these teachers. In a companion paper, we examine the impact of a number of internal and external factors that might have contributed to the differences in our novices' uptake of core historical inquiry teaching practices identified in this study.

Conclusion and Implications

Two of the five novices did not regularly employ or had difficulty employing effectively the core historical inquiry teaching practices emphasized in their preparation program during their first two years of teaching. Furthermore, while the other three were far more successful in doing so, all five novices struggled with implementation of several practices, specifically, facilitating classroom discussions of historical topics (CP6), modeling historical writing (CP7), assessing historical thinking (CP8), and helping students to make personal connections to the content (CP11).

These findings suggest that certain modifications to preservice education may be necessary. First, we see that novices could

use more support in identifying and skillfully adapting existing curriculum materials, and that this could be at the expense of planning original lessons, which generally is a substantial component of most history/social sciences methods courses. Second, for every core teaching practice introduced in the methods courses, novices should be required to rehearse that practice with peers and enact that practice with students in classrooms. As is, the novices were given the option to try out a practice with an individual student or small group, but not required to enact the practice as they would were they the teacher of record. To do so would require greater coordination and partnership with mentor teachers than was in place at the time.

In addition, we intend to revisit in our methods courses how we teach discussion, writing, and reading, with particular attention to modeling. All three of these practices involve modeling and our novices modeled very little, even though doing so was emphasized in their preparation program. Modeling is an important step in “opening up” (i.e., representing and decomposing) expert processes that embed historical analysis and giving students an opportunity to learn them. Additionally, the instructional purposes of assessment were not sufficiently understood. Novices need calculated, program-wide support in offering assessments that elicit and promote student reasoning alongside testing student knowledge. Furthermore, helping novices understand the contribution of historical reading to reading comprehension and negotiate district and school pressures to focus exclusively on the latter may need to be taken up more directly by teacher education programs.

Finally, for these novices, providing background knowledge and promoting inquiry apparently were often understood as at odds with one another. In addition, novices did not see making personal connections as a part of the work of inquiry teaching. These are clearly not messages we would wish novices to take from teacher preparation. Helping novices to understand the importance of each, and to combine and balance these goals instructionally, is essential.

In sum, novices are clearly capable of learning to take up core historical inquiry teaching practices, and can improve their practice over time. At the same time, it is difficult to learn to teach historical inquiry. We can see where our efforts as teacher educators can be improved and focus there next in the hopes of better supporting novices’ learning in the future.

Notes

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