READING ACROSS TEXTS: A RESOURCE FOR PLANNING MULTIPLE SOURCE COMPREHENSION TASKS

Authors:

Nicole Mancevice & Joan L. Herman

National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing
University of California, Los Angeles
Graduate School of Education & Information Studies

THE CENTER ON
STANDARDS &
ASSESSMENT
IMPLEMENTATION

WestEd CRESST

ORGANIZATION

OVERVIEW

This resource, *Reading Across Texts: A Guide for Planning Multiple-Source Comprehension Tasks*, synthesizes current research related to reading and making sense of multiple sources of information about a topic. College and Career Ready Standards (CCRS), such as the *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy* (*CCSS for ELA and* Literacy; National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010), set the expectation that students will be able to navigate multiple texts, evaluate the claims that authors make, notice and account for any conflicting points of view, and synthesize information as they develop an understanding of a concept or event.

CCRS establish these learning expectations, but they do not provide guidance for how to plan instruction. *Reading Across Texts* is part of a series produced by the Center for Standards and Assessment Implementation (CSAI) to assist educators as they use CCRS to plan instruction for diverse learners. This resource presents the best of what we currently know about how readers make sense of multiple texts, and what instruction might look like in the classroom. The studies reviewed in this guide involve a range of grade levels and subject areas. Some of the studies sought to understand how readers engage with texts without targeted instruction in how to do so. Other studies examined the effects of interventions that taught students how to strategically read and evaluate texts. Taken together, this body of work can provide us with helpful insights as to how to plan instruction across grade levels.

Reading Across Texts presents these insights from research as three broad categories of planning recommendations: 1) strategies for teaching students to evaluate sources of information, 2) strategies for teaching students to compare information across sources, and 3) considerations for framing instructional tasks that involve multiple-source comprehension. For each planning recommendation, there is a synthesis of what researchers have learned about how students read multiple texts without specific instruction, and instructional strategies that appear to help students learn to do this work.

What Is In This Resource

The three planning recommendations encompass a range of learning expectations presented in the CCSS for ELA and Literacy and other CCRS.[1] This resource is intended to help teachers plan instruction to address these learning expectations. It includes the following sections:

1) "Using This Resource to Support Lesson Planning" provides background information about planning lessons that align with CCRS.

2) "Introduction to Multiple-Source Comprehension," describes the critical thinking skills involved in multiple-source comprehension, and presents two classroom vignettes to illustrate how the work of reading one text differs from reading multiple texts on a topic.

3) "Evidence-Based Planning Recommendations" presents the three broad planning recommendations along with a synthesis of research related to each recommendation. These recommendations advance from strategies for evaluating individual texts, strategies for comparing information across texts, and approaches to framing instructional tasks.

4) "Making the Connection to College and Career Ready Standards" demonstrates how teachers might use these recommendations as they design lessons that align with CCRS. This section revisits the two classroom vignettes presented in the Introduction from the teacher's perspective.

5) "Concluding Comments" summarizes the key points of the resource, and provides a larger context for learning how to read, evaluate, and synthesize multiple texts about a topic.

The ideas presented across these five sections are cumulative, and complement other CSAI-developed resources about lesson planning and the formative assessment process. Educators can visit the CSAI resource library for more detail (http://www.csai-online.org/resources?csai-developed=1). *Reading Across Texts* is a practical application of the guidelines and recommendations presented in other resources in the CSAI series.

---

[1] This resource uses the CCSS for ELA and Literacy as an example of CCRS, but the recommendations are applicable to all states' CCRS.

USING THIS RESOURCE TO SUPPORT LESSON PLANNING

Reading Across Texts presents recommendations that can guide teachers' long-term planning in English language arts, history, and science, in addition to other subjects. To effectively plan individual lessons, it is important to understand what students need to learn, what students currently know, and how to design tasks that will support students' learning. Teachers can develop that understanding by incorporating formative assessment as part of their daily practice, which is an overarching goal of this series.[2] Formative assessment is a process of purposefully planning lessons that respond to these four questions:

- Where do students need to go?

- How will they get there?

- Where are they now?

- How will they be supported?[3]

To answer these questions, teachers may first identify intermediate steps, or Building Blocks, that will lead students from one-grade level standard to the next. Standards generally describe a quantity of learning that is too big to teach in a single lesson (i.e., one or two periods of instruction). When looking at grade-level expectations for reading multiple texts, a fifth-grade teacher, for example, would see the following standard in the *CCSS for ELA & Literacy*:

> Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.9)

The standard reflects what fifth-graders should be able to do by the end of the school year. It would be difficult, if not impossible, for students to achieve this standard within an isolated lesson. By identifying Building Blocks for achieving standards, teachers create a learning progression that can guide their planning for a series of lessons. Each Building Block reflects a "lesson-sized" portion of learning. Based on their knowledge of students, teachers may select one or more Building Blocks to address in a lesson.

---

[2] *Reading Across Texts* presents concepts related to formative assessment that are described in detail in other CSAI resources (e.g., *Building Blocks, Learning Goals, and Success Criteria; Developing and Refining Math Lessons; Lesson Revision*).
[3] Please see the CSAI resource guides and collections for more information about these questions and the formative assessment process.

They then identify Learning Goals that describe what students will learn – not what they will do – during a lesson, and set Success Criteria for what students will say, do, make, or write to show that they have met the Learning Goals. These Learning Goals and Success Criteria are meant to be useful for both the teachers and students. During instruction, teachers use the aligned Learning Goals and Success Criteria to gauge and respond to students' learning progress.

Teachers plan instructional tasks to support students' progress towards the Learning Goals and Success Criteria for a lesson. To support teacher planning, the recommendations in this resource offer guidance related to designing instructional strategies, and tasks that support students' comprehension of multiple sources of information. Section four presents examples of Building Blocks, Learning Goals, and Success Criteria related to CCRS that complement the planning recommendations. These examples are meant as an illustration of how to incorporate formative assessment as part of planning lessons that address multiple source comprehension. There is not one correct way to identify the Building Blocks between standards, nor is there one correct way to organize these Building Blocks into a learning progression. Teachers make these decisions based on their expert knowledge of curriculum, pedagogy, and students.

INTRODUCTION TO MULTIPLE SOURCE COMPREHENSION

On any given day, adults read and make sense of multiple sources of information in their professional and personal lives. School principals and teachers select instructional programs based on evaluation reports and professional articles. Scientists weigh the findings of studies they read in academic journals. Lawyers examine previous court decisions and legal reviews to prepare a case. These principals, teachers, scientists, and lawyers, as well as other professionals, also need to be able to search for, and evaluate, information that affects their daily lives – about loans, finding jobs, mortgages, and healthcare. The information that people seek, and how they read it, depends on their purpose for reading.

Students typically learn how to read text early in the primary grades, and they need to continue to learn how to read the many different types of texts that they encounter across grades and subject areas (Goldman & Snow, 2015; Lee & Sprately, 2010). Students need to learn strategies for evaluating where they find information, and strategies for developing an understanding of the issue addressed across these sources of information. Being able to evaluate, analyze, and synthesize the quality of information that one reads in an Internet search and in printed texts (e.g., books, newspapers, reports) is both an academic and practical life skill (Goldman & Snow, 2015).

To demonstrate the work of reading, and making sense of, information across multiple texts, this section presents two vignettes that describe fifth-grade reading tasks. One task involves reading a single text; the other task involves comparing information across three different texts. The two tasks are part of a sequence of lessons addressing the *CCSS for ELA and Literacy* standard:

> Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.6)

The first vignette focuses on two fifth graders reading one primary source as part of a history lesson. This primary source is a transcript of Benjamin Franklin's testimony before the British House of Commons. The lesson Learning Goals and aligned Success Criteria are listed in Table 1.

Table 1

Learning Goals and Success Criteria for Vignette One

Learning Goals	Success Criteria
• Characterize the points of view of Benjamin Franklin and the member of the British House of Commons. • Consider the information presented in relation to the colonies' changing relationship with Great Britain.	• Identify clues about the historical context in the primary source. • Use evidence from the text to describe Benjamin Franklin's point of view on the Stamp Act. • Use evidence from the text to describe the point of view of the member of the House of Commons on the Stamp Act. • Write questions about information in the testimony and the historical context.

Vignette One

Two fifth graders are making observations of a transcript of Benjamin Franklin's testimony in the British House of Commons. On the table in front of them, they have a modified excerpt of the transcript, a color photocopy of the published transcript cover, and a graphic organizer for their notes. They recognize Franklin's name and the Stamp Act. They notice the date of the testimony. They make a comment about the House of Commons. After a prompt from their teacher, the students start reading the transcript. They take turns reading lines from the text out loud; one student is the questioner, and the other is Ben Franklin. Although their teacher has modified some of the vocabulary in the excerpt, the students occasionally stumble over a word. Sometimes they try to figure the word out, but they just as often ignore it and continue reading. After they finish reading the text out loud once, they read it a second time to themselves. This time they're reading to annotate – they circle every time either speaker mentions the Stamp Act or taxes, and they underline any clues related to the speaker's points of view. They discuss their annotations, and work together to complete a two-column graphic organizer. In one column of the organizer, they jot notes about the interviewer's questions to Franklin. In the other column, they write notes about Franklin's responses. They write one sentence at the bottom of each column to summarize each person's point of view on the Stamp Act. Before the class dismisses for lunch, they write two questions that they now have about the American colonies and the colonists' relationship with Great Britain.

This first vignette zooms in on two fifth graders as they work to read and make sense of a single document. Their reading is affected by their respective reading abilities, prior knowledge about the historical period surrounding the American Revolution, interest in the subject, and understanding of the teacher's directions. They work together to understand this document, the information it presents, and the context in which the two speakers were acting. Although they do make connections with their prior knowledge about the historical context, their primary focus is to understand this one text.

The second vignette presents a task that these same fifth graders do one week later. They have now read two primary sources, and they have to compare these texts with a textbook excerpt about the time period. The lesson Learning Goals and Success Criteria are listed in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Learning Goals and Success Criteria for Vignette Two

Learning Goals	Success Criteria
• Compare primary sources to understand American colonists' reaction to the Stamp Act. • Apply knowledge of multiple accounts of the Stamp Act to critique a secondary source.	• Annotate the textbook to identify similarities with the information presented in the primary sources. • Annotate the textbook to identify differences with the information presented in the primary sources. • Write a one-paragraph critique of the textbook account of the Stamp Act.

Vignette Two

A week later, these same two fifth graders are reading a one-page excerpt of a textbook description of the Stamp Act. They have now read and taken notes on the points of view presented in two primary sources related to the Stamp Act: a selection of the transcript of Benjamin Franklin's testimony in the British House of Commons, and a letter from a Boston merchant who supports the Stamp Act. They have these two texts and their graphic organizers with notes on the table in front of them. Reading independently now, the students annotate the textbook excerpt as they read. They draw a double-underline underneath text that supports something they read in one of the two primary sources. They draw a wavy line underneath any differences between this description and the primary sources. And, they write an exclamation point next to anything that surprises them as they read. After they finish reading, the students take turns sharing their annotations for each paragraph. They disagree about whether one particular sentence connects to something they read in the merchant's letter, and they reach for the letter to double-check whether there is a connection. After they finish sharing their annotations, they start the last part of their assignment – to write a one-paragraph critique of the textbook description.

These two vignettes offer a window into the differences in the cognitive demands and learning expectations when reading one or multiple texts. In the second vignette, the same fifth graders not only have to understand each individual text, they have to actively reflect on how each text connects or differs from their developing understanding of this period of history (Rouet, 2006). The teacher has designed a reading task of two primary sources that intentionally puts students in a position to critique a textbook's description of American colonists protesting the Stamp Act (Bain, 2006; Leinhardt & Young, 1996). The students draw on what they have read to write this critique. By reading them together, the two vignettes highlight important similarities and differences between a task focused on reading one text and a task focused on reading two or more texts.

What Is Multiple-Source Comprehension?

In this resource, the term multiple-source comprehension refers to the cognitive work that a reader does to evaluate, read, and synthesize information from different texts (e.g., print documents, online resources, primary and secondary sources). The information presented is meant to help teachers think about the demands of planning reading tasks that involve more than one source of information—whether that source is printed text or some other kind of media. Throughout the document, the recommendations refer to "sources" as an umbrella category for the sources of information that students need to read, evaluate, and interpret (Goldman & Scardamalia, 2013), and "texts" are a common type of source for information.

In subjects like history and science, students often have to read many different sources of information within the same activity. Yet many of the reading strategies that make up the school curriculum (e.g., making predictions, summarizing, generating questions) are focused on reading and comprehending single, narrative texts or textbooks (Goldman & Snow, 2015). One promising way to teach students how to read and interpret multiple sources of information is with a "disciplinary literacy" approach to teaching a subject. A disciplinary literacy approach involves teaching students reading and writing practices that align with how experts learn and communicate within their discipline, as well as the knowledge necessary to comprehend multiple types of texts (Schleppegrell, Achugar, & Oteiza, 2004; Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008; Shanahan, Shanahan, & Misischia, 2011). When reading multiple accounts of a historical event, for example, students need to understand what each individual text says, how the context in which the text was created might relate to its content, and how these distinct texts relate to each other and a larger topic (Leinhardt & Young, 1996; Rouet, 2006; Wineburg, 1994; Wineburg, 1997). A disciplinary literacy approach to instruction views these reading and writing practices as inseparable from learning within the discipline.

CCRS set the expectation that students will learn how to critically read and synthesize information from multiple sources starting in the elementary grades. The *CCSS for ELA and Literacy*, for example, include standards that students should to be able to read and compare information across multiple sources, and be able to integrate and cite information from these sources to give an oral presentation, or to write an explanation or opinion piece.

In the following section, the planning recommendations advance from a focus on teaching students to critically read and evaluate individual sources, to teaching students to compare and contrast information across sources, and finally, to designing instructional tasks that involve reading multiple sources. These skills appear to be important aspects of work in college and future careers. There is also evidence that teaching students to do this kind of reading helps them to develop both knowledge of subject area content and reading skills (i.e., Reisman, 2012).

EVIDENCE-BASED PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation Area 1: Teaching strategies for evaluating sources of information and providing extended opportunities to practice

It is important to explicitly teach students how to evaluate texts as sources of information. To read and synthesize information across texts, students need to be able to evaluate each individual source. When reading multiple texts about a historical event (e.g., first Continental Congress, the Battle of Bunker Hill) or a topic related to science (e.g., predicting earthquakes, understanding the effects of fracking), they need to be able to determine if any given source is credible and reliable, and in the case of historical documents, the context in which an individual or organization created that document. Research has demonstrated that students—even elementary school students—are capable of thinking critically about authors, their credibility, and the information they present (e.g., Herrenkohl & Cornelius, 2013; VanSledright, 2002b).

While students are capable of learning to critically evaluate sources, they are not likely to engage in this type of thinking without instruction in how to do so (e.g., Wineburg, 1991). When faced with the task of identifying sources to answer a question, students are more likely to evaluate a text or online resource based on its content and topical relevance to the question than the authors' credentials or expertise (Bråten, Strømsø, & Britt, 2009). While it is important that students are able to determine whether sources are relevant to their purpose for reading, students also need to be able to evaluate the nature of the information in the source. Students need more than directions or prompts to evaluate sources (Britt & Aglinskas, 2002). Studies have found that students benefit from seeing these practices explained and modeled. The paragraphs below provide additional explanation of approaches to teaching students to evaluate sources of information.

Students need explicit instruction in how to evaluate the credibility of a source.

Studies have examined how high school and undergraduate students use information provided about a source when reading multiple texts. These studies have generally found that the students did not use this information to determine a source's credibility or trustworthiness. While students may notice information about a source (e.g., author, date of publication), they might not use that information to help them evaluate or interpret its content (Strømsø, Bråten, Britt, & Ferguson, 2013). In a study with high school students in an Advanced Placement history class, Wineburg (1991) illustrated how the students approached text as sources of information – a place to find a "right" answer. A study with fifth-grade students similarly found that students viewed texts as sources of information and did not question their content (VanSledright & Kelly, 1998).

The key "take away" from these studies is that students need to learn how to evaluate the quality of sources of information. In the few studies that have involved students in the upper elementary grades (e.g., Barton, 1997; VanSledright & Kelly, 1998), students did demonstrate that they could attend to an author's point of view and how that view might affect the reliability of information provided. Nevertheless, students needed instruction in how to use this information to question the content of a text. In a study with undergraduates (Britt & Aglinskas, 2002), researchers told one group of students to pay attention to the authors' bias and knowledge about a historical event while reading. Even the students in this group, however, did not do well with noticing and evaluating information about the text and author (e.g., date, author perspective, document type). These authors conclude that students need more than simple directions to pay attention to the source of information. Students need strategies and approaches for how to do this work effectively. As the studies in the following paragraphs demonstrate, students are able to learn and apply strategies for evaluating sources of information.

Teachers can model and provide students with opportunities to practice strategies that have positive effects on students' ability to evaluate sources of information.

A number of studies focus on teaching strategies for evaluating sources of information. Although specifics of the instructional approaches vary, the strategies share a common focus on intentionally bringing students' attention to information that is important to consider when weighing the credibility of content of a text. Some of the studies examine instructional approaches that align with the reading and writing practices in a particular subject area, such as history (e.g., Britt & Aglinskas, 2002; De La Paz & Felton, 2010; Nokes, Dole, & Hacker, 2007; Reisman, 2012a, 2012b; VanSledright, 2002b). These approaches involve teaching practices that historians use when reading and interpreting primary and secondary sources (Wineburg, 1991). Such reading practices include considering information about the person who wrote or created the source (sourcing), reflecting on the content of the source in relation to its historical context (contextualizing), and comparing the similarities and differences of information across sources (corroboration) (Wineburg, 1991). Other studies focus more generally on how to determine if an author is trustworthy or knowledgeable on a topic (Braasch, Bråten, Strømsø, Anmarkrud, & Ferguson, 2013; Macedo-Rouet, Braasch, Britt, & Rouet, 2013). All of these approaches all involve some degree of modeling reading strategies – demonstrating the invisible cognitive processes involved in reading and interpreting text – and providing opportunities for students to practice the strategies independently.

The following text presents summaries of a sampling of studies reviewed for this resource. These summaries highlight a range of approaches that teachers may employ to help students develop skill in evaluating sources.

High School

- Britt and Aglinskas (2002) examined the effects of a computer program, *Sourcer's Apprentice*, on high school students' ability to use information about sources, and the content within sources, to think about a historical controversy. The program provided some instruction in three historical reading practices: sourcing, contextualization, and corroboration. Students then read a variety of excerpts from six texts (e.g., letters, an autobiography, a novel) related to a historical controversy. The program prompted students to take notes on key information about the author, document, and content of each text. About the author, for example, students were asked to note who the author was, how the author knows about the event, and the author's motives for writing. The program provided feedback and hints to students if they did not take notes on the correct information. Over a series of studies, researchers found that students who used the program were more likely to correctly identify information about a source, as well as to cite and reference sources in their essays.

- In a study with eleventh-grade students, teachers used a "Document-Based Lesson" model (Reisman, 2012a, 2012b) to teach history over a six-month period. The model involved these core components: teachers built background knowledge related to a topic, students investigated a historical question with multiple sources of information, and teachers and students participated in a whole-class discussion related to the inquiry. Students examined primary sources that represented multiple perspectives on the question, which encouraged students to engage in historical interpretation. To prepare students to read the documents, teachers modeled and demonstrated how to use historical reading practices of sourcing, contextualization, corroboration, and close reading. Students then completed worksheets or graphic organizers that prompted them to use these historical reading practices as they read the texts and evaluated their content. The research found that students' ability to source and do a close reading of documents showed significant improvement; their ability to contextualize and corroborate documents did not show these same effects. The author proposes that perhaps students would have improved if they had more practice and discussion that focused on these practices. Across the five schools, the researcher found that students remembered more history content and had higher reading comprehension scores than students who did not participate in the lessons.

- In another study with eleventh-grade students, teachers explained, modeled, and gave students opportunities to practice a historical reading strategy (De La Paz & Felton, 2010). The strategy involved teaching students to consider the author and source, critiquing the source on its own and in relation to other sources, and constructing their understanding of the event. Students had sourcing handout that with prompts related to understanding the author and source, such as the type of document, and the underlying assumptions. There was also a writing strategy (STOP: "Suspend judgment, Take a side, Organize ideas, and Plan more as you write"). In the posttests, students were more likely to cite documents, quotes, or use quotes to support claims. They had more advanced claims and rebuttals. Students benefit from direct instruction in disciplinary literacy practices with extended opportunities to apply and practice these skills.

- Braasch et al. (2013) examined a sixty-minute intervention for upper secondary students in Norway. The instructors showed students examples of two different fictional students' work. Instructors told students that one had strong strategies and the other did not, but they did not tell students which example reflected the more or less productive strategies. The student example that demonstrated stronger strategies showed that the student evaluated the author, type of document, publication date, and where it was published. The example with weaker strategies did not address those text features; instead, the example showed that the student evaluated the source based on its content. Students filled out a graphic organizer about what the strategies were and why they might be helpful. The students who participated in the intervention included more science concepts from the useful documents. Students were also better able to distinguish the useful documents, and they more frequently used information about the source to justify its usefulness.

Elementary and Middle School

- In a four-month intervention, VanSledright (2002a, 2002b) taught fifth-grade students to read and evaluate primary and secondary sources as part of their history lessons. The instruction involved engaging students' in reading, interpreting, and discussing multiple documents about events. The instructor provided students with a series of questions to consider as they read a series of documents as "historical detectives." One example of these questions related to checking source reliability: "How do I decide how trustworthy and reliable a piece of evidence is?" (VanSledright, 2002a, p. 1097). The instructor also had conversations with students about distinctions between primary and secondary sources related. By the end of the intervention, students demonstrated that they were capable of recognizing primary and secondary sources, and cross-referencing and corroborating information across documents. However, there was a range in students' abilities. Students who were struggling readers didn't make as much progress (VanSledright, 2002b).

- Working with fourth- and fifth-grade students in France, Macedo-Rouet et al. (2013) examined the effects of a thirty-minute intervention on students' ability to evaluate sources of information. The intervention involved a five-steps. After introducing the lesson goals, the teacher asked students to talk about how they decide whether to trust someone's opinion. Then students independently read and answered questions about a text. As students read, the teacher prompted them to keep their previous discussion in mind. The third and fourth steps involved discussing the topic of the text, information about the characters and their opinions, and who might be more or less knowledgeable about the topic. Students discussed what it means to be knowledgeable and how people become knowledgeable about a topic. In the last step, the teacher highlighted that it is important to attend to different perspectives that they might read in texts. Students who scored lower on a pretest comprehension measure appeared to benefit more from the instruction than students who had scored higher on the pretest.

Students need to learn specific approaches for navigating Internet searches and evaluating online sources.

Although some of the strategies that students can use for evaluating information in Internet searches and sources are similar to evaluating other types of texts, the nature of Internet searches requires some unique instruction. Studies with middle school students (Braasch et al., 2009; Wallace, Kupperman, Krajcik, & Soloway, 2000) and undergraduate students (Goldman, Braasch, Wiley, Graesser, & Brodowinska, 2012; Wiley et al., 2009) have found that students often focus on the relevance of the source over the quality or credibility of the source and its content. While completing an online science inquiry project, for example, sixth-grade students were largely focused on finding just the "right" page that would answer their question (Wallace et al., 2000). The students were looking for one site to answer their research question, and they evaluated the site based on whether it looked as if it would answer their question. Regarding the relevance of a source, however, some authors (Braasch et al., 2009) propose that being able to evaluate content is an important first step when conducting an Internet search. Otherwise, students will likely waste time reading sites that do not support their purpose for reading. The authors suggest an iterative process of determining whether a site is relevant, and then if so, what information about the source might affect how they interpret the information.

These strategies can be taught. Wiley et al., 2009, for example, taught undergraduate students a strategy for evaluating online sources of information (i.e., SEEK: "Source of the information, the nature of the Evidence that was presented, the fit of the evidence into an Explanation of the phenomena, and the fit of the new information with prior Knowledge" [p. 1087]). Students who received training in SEEK were more likely to selectively reread reliable sources. The authors propose that teaching students the importance of considering an information source, evaluating evidence in the source, and making connections helped students to better evaluate sources. They suggest that the prompts and scaffolds support evaluation. Studies have also suggested that students who were more successful on academic outcomes were also better at evaluating sources (Goldman et al., 2012; Wiley et al., 2009).

Questions for Reflection

- How do you currently teach students to evaluate sources of information?

- In what ways are the instructional approaches described here similar to, or different from, how you currently teach?

- What are the expectations that students will evaluate and critique texts in your local curriculum?

- Based on the research presented above, what additional opportunities would you like to create for students to read and evaluate texts?

Recommendation Area 2: Teaching strategies for comparing information across sources

When reading about historical events or science topics, students are likely to encounter conflicting information across texts. Teachers have an important role in showing students how to navigate and reconcile conflicting information that they read. As discussed in the previous recommendation area, one part of this work is to teach students strategies for evaluating sources of information. Students will need these source evaluation skills when they encounter conflicting information about a topic; they need to be able to determine which sources are more or less credible or trustworthy (Bråten et al., 2009). Other essential considerations relate to how teachers frame what it means to learn from text, and the nature of texts that teachers introduce as part of instruction.

The studies reviewed here focus on how students read conflicting accounts and explanations of historical events and topics. One set of studies explores students' approaches to dealing with conflicting information, and the authors draw connections between how students handle the conflicting information and the classroom instruction they have experienced (VanSledright & Frankes, 2000; VanSledright & Kelly, 1998; Wineburg, 1991). Another set of studies examines how students process information across conflicting accounts of a historical event (e.g., Wolfe & Goldman, 2005). These studies highlight the importance of texts that teachers introduce in the classroom, as well as how teachers frame the work of reading and learning from these texts.

Students need opportunities to learn how to interpret multiple texts with potentially conflicting information.

Studies have described how students negotiate conflicting information that they encounter as they read multiple texts about historical events and topics (e.g., Barton, 1997; VanSledright & Frankes, 2000; Wineburg, 1991). In a landmark study, Wineburg (1991) illustrated how historians and high school students in an Advanced Placement history class approached text differently. Unlike historians, students in the study were looking at texts as sources of information. Wineburg argues that the students saw points of view as "sides," and that they did not often compare accounts of an event. He proposes that students need to learn to think differently about what it means to learn from text. Instead of thinking of history as a series of facts that can be read and memorized from texts, students need to learn to question texts and develop a complex understanding of historical events using multiple sources.

Studies of history instruction in elementary school classrooms have similarly found that students do not have strategies for resolving conflicting information that they encounter in texts (Barton, 1997; VanSledright & Frankes, 2000). These studies highlight the teacher's critical role in framing how students should read and use text as part of learning about history (VanSledright & Frankes, 2000; VanSledright & Kelly, 1998; Wineburg, 1991). If a teacher frames texts as authoritative sources of information, for example, then students are not likely to see a reason to read and evaluate texts differently (VanSledright & Kelly, 1998). In a study of history instruction in fourth-grade classrooms, VanSledright and Frankes (2000) found that one of the teachers emphasized research skills as part of learning history. The researchers noticed that some students said they would search for another

source if they found conflicting information. These students did not have strategies for evaluating sources or negotiating the conflicting information though. Students tended to report that they would defer to the source that had more information.

As noted in the previous section, students—even in elementary school—are capable of learning strategies for evaluating sources of information. There appears to be a fine line, however, between upper elementary students questioning texts, and students thinking that the authors of texts are lying (Barton, 1997; VanSledright, 2002a). After teaching history in a fifth-grade classroom for four months, for example, VanSledright (2002a) posits that some students were still struggling with the interpretive nature of reading about history, because they thought that there was a "truth" that they could find in a text. Through classroom instruction, and the tasks that they design, teachers send students messages about whether they should read texts as unquestionable sources of information, or whether they need to corroborate information across sources and weigh information in relation to its source.

Tasks that involve structured opportunities to compare multiple, conflicting texts may help students develop complex understandings of historical events.

Studies suggest that students can compare conflicting accounts of a historical event, and that students develop a more nuanced understanding of the event by making connections across texts. In a study with fifth- and sixth-grade students, Manning et al. (2008) gave students two texts about a historical event and asked them to respond to two writing prompts about the texts. One writing prompt asked students to identify agreements between the two texts; the other prompt asked students to identify the disagreements between the two texts. Students were generally able to corroborate when they wrote about the agreements between the texts. When they wrote about the disagreements between the texts, which appeared to be more challenging for students than the agreement prompt, students' most frequently noted information that was in one source but not the other one.

In another study with sixth-grade students, Wolfe and Goldman (2005) examined how students read and processed two conflicting accounts of the fall of Rome. They found that students who made more connections within and across texts – and explained these connections – developed more complex explanations of event. Both of these studies gave students a highly structured set of texts to read. Students only had two texts to compare. The researchers carefully selected these texts so that they provided conflicting accounts of an event, and in the case of Wolfe and Goldman (2005), the researchers created the texts to carefully present plausible interpretations from two fictional historians.

By strategically selecting texts with conflicting information, teachers can help students learn that explanations of historical events are complex (Wolfe & Goldman, 2005). Many of the models of history instruction reviewed here involve selecting texts that present students with differing perspectives and interpretations of historical events (e.g., Reisman, 2012a, 2012b). Students needed to read and interpret these texts to respond to an inquiry question. A study with high school students (Nokes et al., 2007) suggests that reading tasks that involve more than one text may prompt students to source and corroborate information across texts. Another study with undergraduate students (Strømsø et al., 2013) implies that tasks with multiple texts that have conflicting claims encourage students to consider the source of information. While simply presenting students with multiple texts is not sufficient for promoting critical reading, a task that requires students to read, evaluate, and corroborate information across texts is an important element of the equation.

Questions for Reflection

- What opportunities do you create for students to compare information across multiple sources?

- How do you teach students to notice and reconcile conflicting information?

- In what ways are the instructional approaches described here similar to, or different from, how you currently teach?

- What are the expectations of students for reading and learning from text in your local curriculum?

- Based on the research reviewed so far, what additional opportunities would you like to create for students?

Recommendation Area 3: Framing instructional tasks that involve multiple source comprehension

Students' purpose for reading affects how they approach reading multiple texts about a topic, and how they draw from and synthesize the information that they read (Wiley, Steffens, Britt, & Griffin, 2014). While the previous recommendation areas have focused on teaching students how to read and navigate multiple sources of information, the third recommendation area encourages teachers to consider the larger purpose for which students read. Specifically, studies suggest that there is a connection between the types of writing (e.g., argument, summary, narrative) that students are assigned, and how they read and synthesize information across texts (e.g., Wiley & Voss, 1999). This final recommendation bridges CCRS learning expectations for reading and writing.

Students' purpose for writing may affect how they synthesize information across multiple texts.

A series of studies have examined this relationship between students' purpose for reading, and how students interpret and incorporate multiple texts in their writing. Based on a study with tenth- and eleventh-grade students, for example, researchers proposed that writing prompts that focus on sourcing, corroborating information across documents, or determining the cause of events are more likely to prompt students to recognize different perspectives (Monte-Sano & De La Paz, 2012). There is also evidence that reading to write an argument appears to be related to how undergraduate students incorporate information, such as the number of causal statements that students include in their essays (Le Bigot & Rouet, 2007; Wiley & Voss, 1999).

Teachers need to consider how different types of writing can support students' comprehension.

Although the nature of a writing task (e.g., argument) appears to be related to how students make sense of multiple sources of information on a topic, it is also essential to consider how instruction shapes student responses. It is not sufficient to assign students to write an argument based on multiple texts (Stahl, Hynd, Britton, McNish, & Bosquet, 1996). Additional studies raise questions as to whether writing arguments is productive for students with low background knowledge on a topic (Gil, Bråten, Vidal-Abarca, & Strømsø, 2010a), or who have differing understandings of what it means to know something within a discipline (Gil, Bråten, Vidal-Abarca, & Strømsø, 2010b).

Related to the role of background knowledge, one study compared how undergraduate students with differing background knowledge on a topic wrote summaries or arguments after reading multiple texts on that topic (Gil et al., 2010a). The researchers found that students with more background knowledge on the topic wrote better arguments than students with low levels of background knowledge, which suggests that teachers must assure that students have adequate prior knowledge on given topics. The authors propose that students have opportunities to work in collaborative groups with peers who have differing levels of background knowledge on the topic under study. These collaborative groups could allow all students to develop the knowledge they need to be successful with the writing task.

Also, the authors suggest that it might be beneficial to allow students opportunities to read and summarize texts before developing an argument.

More recently, there have been studies that evaluated different approaches for teaching students to read and write about multiple sources of information. Some of these approaches are summarized below.

- Herrenkohl and Cornelius (2013) examined fifth- and sixth-grade students' disciplinary understanding as part of a curriculum design to teach argumentation in history and science. The curriculum involved teaching specific strategies for thinking in the respective disciplines (e.g., predicting and theorizing in science, sourcing and cross-checking information in history). To organize their evidence across lessons, students had SenseMaker boards, which were portable whiteboards that provided a template for students to organize information as they gathered it. In science, for example, the boards were organized for students to record their experiments. Students worked in groups to develop their arguments across the inquiry. They also had a class theory chart to record theories after group presentations, which the class revisiting and evaluated on a regular basis.

- De La Paz et al. (2014) studied the relationship between teaching eighth-grade students to consider perspective, contextualization, and substantiation when reading and in their respective historical writing. The study involved examining the effects of an eighteen-day intervention that included modeling expert reading practices. In the intervention, students had a series of questions on a handout to guide their reading of texts. These questions guided students to think about perspective, contextualization, and substantiation. Related to contextualization, for example, students had to determine the document type. The data suggest that the program improved students' historical writing. Although it didn't close differences between students who started at different places, all students made comparable gains.

- Wissinger and De La Paz (2016) examined strategies for teaching middle school students to develop an argument about historical controversies. They examined whether the students could learn specific heuristics for argumentation, and they focused on two specific heuristics: argument from expert opinion, and argument from consequences. During a three-week intervention, the teachers and students explored three historical controversies. The teachers introduced the argument heuristics and related critical questions (e.g., "Is the author an expert on the historical topic?" or "What are the good/positive consequences in following through with this decision?" [p. 48]). The students who learned the two heuristics for argumentation wrote essays that displayed more historical thinking than students who did not. The students in this group also appeared to learn more historical content.

Questions for Reflection

- What type of essays do students write in response to texts that they read in your classroom?

- How do you expect students to use and cite sources of information in their writing?

- In what ways are the instructional approaches described here similar to, or different from, how you currently teach?

- What are the expectations of students for reading and learning from text in your local curriculum?

- Based on the research presented in this resource, what additional opportunities would you like to create for students?

MAKING THE CONNECTION TO COLLEGE AND CAREER READY STANDARDS

When planning instruction, teachers can look to the CCRS (e.g., CCSS or state standards for ELA and Literacy, C3 Framework, NGSS) to get a better sense of grade-level learning expectations across the content areas. Each of these standards documents sets expectations that students will be able to read, evaluate, interpret, and synthesize multiple sources of information. To continue with the example presented at the beginning of this resource, here is one example of a fifth-grade expectation for reading informational text in the *CCSS for ELA & Literacy*:

> Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.9)

To address this standard, a fifth-grade teacher could return to the four questions that guide planning for formative assessment:

- Where do students need to go?
- How will they get there?
- Where are they now?
- How will they be supported?

The teacher's answer to the first question (i.e., "Where do students need to go?") begins with the standard listed above. To determine how students can reach this standard, the teacher may look to the fourth-grade standards, as well as to related fifth-grade standards, to sketch a possible progression of skills and knowledge. For this example, a fifth-grade teacher may consider whether students need to learn how to:

- Locate and select texts
- Read and evaluate information presented in a single text
- Integrate information across texts
- Cite sources of information accurately
- Apply the conventions of a particular genre of writing

Based on the teacher's evaluation of students' skills in these areas, the teacher could develop a learning progression for achieving the standard. As is illustrated later in this section, the intermediate steps on this progression, or the Building Blocks, are what the teacher will use to plan a series of lessons. The teacher selects which Building Blocks to address in a lesson based on the students' current skills and knowledge related to the learning progression. The teacher can then use these Building Blocks to determine Learning Goals and Success Criteria for lessons, and to plan instructional tasks that align to the Learning Goals and Success Criteria.

To plan instructional tasks, a teacher might consider the local school and district curriculum, students' specific learning needs, and the research available in professional resources, such as the planning recommendations presented here. The following examples return to the two fifth-grade vignettes. They illustrate how the *Reading Across Texts* recommendations can inform how teachers prepare instructional tasks.

Vignettes Revisited: Teacher's Perspective

In the two introductory vignettes, a fifth-grade teacher had designed a series of lessons to focus on a standard for reading informational text from CCSS for ELA and Literacy. The teacher had looked to the fourth-grade standard to develop a reasonable learning progression, or series of Building Blocks, between the fourth- and fifth-grade expectations.

> Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.6)

> Compare and contrast a firsthand and secondhand account of the same event or topic; describe the differences in focus and the information provided. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.6)

If by the end of fourth grade, this teacher's students were able to compare and contrast firsthand and secondhand accounts of an event, then what additional skills would they need to learn to achieve the fifth-grade standard? The teacher inferred that students would be able to identify whether an account was firsthand or secondhand. She also inferred that students would be familiar with the work of comparing points of view on an event. Below is one possible learning progression that the teacher developed.

> Building Block 1: Determine the document type (e.g., personal letter, professional letter, courtroom testimony, newspaper article, textbook, fictional narrative), and explain how the document type relates to the reader's expectations for the text content.

> Building Block 2: Identify the author or organization that created an account, as well as the time period in which they wrote the account, and make a prediction as to their respective points of view on an event.

> Building Block 3: Read an account and summarize the point(s) of view that it represents.

> Building Block 4: Make a connection between the point of view represented in an account and what the reader knows about the document type, author, and time when the account was constructed.

> Building Block 5: Identify any similarities in the points of view represented in the accounts.

> Building Block 6: Identify any differences in the points of view represented in the accounts.

To plan the lesson featured in the first vignette, the teacher focused on Building Blocks 3 and 4. The table below presents the Building Blocks, Learning Goals, and Success Criteria for this lesson, as well as the planning recommendation to which the instructional tasks align.

Table 3

Building Blocks, Learning Goals, and Success Criteria for Vignette One

Building Blocks	Learning Goals	Success Criteria	Recommendation
Building Block 3: Read an account and summarize the point(s) of view that it represents. Building Block 4: Make a connection between the point of view represented in an account and what the reader knows about the document type, author, and time when the account was constructed.	Characterize the points of view of Benjamin Franklin and the member of the British House of Commons. Consider the information presented in relation to the colonies' changing relationship with Great Britain.	Identify relevant clues about the historical context in the primary source. Use evidence from the text to describe Benjamin Franklin's point of view on the Stamp Act. Use evidence from the text to describe the point of view of the member of the House of Commons on the Stamp Act. Write questions about information in the testimony and the historical context.	Recommendation 1: Teach students strategies for evaluating sources of information and provide extended opportunities to practice.

To plan instructional tasks aligned with the Learning Goals and Success Criteria, the teacher drew from research presented in the second recommendation. She explicitly taught historical thinking practices (e.g., Reisman, 2012a, 2012b; Wineburg, 1991) as part of her history units of study. For a unit that explored causes of the American Revolution, the teacher designed a task to focus on close reading and contextualization. She both modeled the skills and provided students extended opportunities to practice. Students had to read an excerpt of Benjamin Franklin's testimony before the House of Commons. The teacher selected this document because it presented differing perspectives related to the Stamp Act. Students had to both pay attention to information about the historical context, and annotate the text with a focus on the points of view of Franklin and his interviewer. Working with a partner, students read the testimony, and completed a graphic organizer with clues from the text. They used that text evidence to write summary statements about the respective points of view for each speaker. To conclude the lesson, students wrote questions that they had after reading the testimony about the relationship between Great Britain and the colonies.

The table below expands the first vignette to include information about the teacher's thinking and instructional moves ("Teacher Perspective") alongside what the two focus students did during the lesson ("Student Perspectives"). This expanded view of classroom activity provides more description

as to how the teacher applied the recommendations in this resource, and how she incorporated the formative assessment process as part of her standards-aligned classroom instruction. Related to formative assessment specifically, the additional information shows how the teacher had anticipated students' responses when planning the lesson, gathered evidence of student progress toward Success Criteria, and took pedagogical action based on this evidence.

Table 4

Vignette One Expanded

	Teacher Perspective	Student Perspectives (Original Vignette)
Modeling strategy for close reading	It's the beginning of social studies period. Students are sitting in a semi-circle facing a marker board. Standing in front of the class, Ms. Cone is annotating a letter that she has projected on the board. The text is a primary source that the class has read recently. Ms. Cone "thinks aloud" as she circles and underlines words; she explains how she looks for clues about speakers' points of view based on the language they use. She has modeled other historical reading practices for students in previous lessons. This lesson would be the first time that students had to look for clues about multiple speakers' points of view in the language of the text.	
	Ms. Cone explains how students will use annotation to help look for clues about points of view in a primary source. She intentionally does not tell them much about the document; she wants them to practice noticing and discussing information about the source and historical context with their partner. She gives students directions for reading the text, and tells them that the materials are already in folders on their tables. Before students disperse to their tables, Ms. Cone reminds them to "source" the document before they begin reading.	
	Ms. Cone circulates among student tables and listens as students discuss and read the testimony out loud. After five minutes, she prompts students that they should start reading	Two fifth graders are making observations of a transcript of Benjamin Franklin's testimony in the British House of Commons. On the table in front of them, they have a modified

Anticipating student responses and providing support	the text soon. She had anticipated that students might find the document challenging to read. To support students' reading, the teacher had selected a key excerpt of the longer testimony, and she modified some of the language to make it more accessible. The teacher also strategically partnered students so that each pair of students included one student with strong reading skills. She thought that students would be able to help each other while reading.	excerpt of the transcript, a color photocopy of the published transcript cover, and a graphic organizer for their notes. They recognize Franklin's name and the Stamp Act. They notice the date of the testimony. They make a comment about the House of Commons and London. After a prompt from their teacher, the students start reading the transcript. They take turns reading lines from the text out loud; one student is the questioner, and the other is Ben Franklin. Although their teacher has modified some of the vocabulary in the excerpt, the students occasionally stumble over a word. Sometimes they try to figure the word out, but they just as often ignore it and continue reading.
Opportunity to gather evidence about Success Criteria Pedagogical action in response to evidence	By listening to pairs of students read, the teacher has an opportunity to gather evidence of what students notice about the historical context. She can also intervene if a pair of students seems to be struggling to read the text. After listening to a few pairs of students, the teacher notices that multiple students have a similar misunderstanding of a term used in the text. She gets the attention of the class; she briefly explains what the word means in this particular context, and how that meaning differs from the word's current common use. Students continue reading the text with their partners.	
Opportunity to gather evidence about Success Criteria Pedagogical action in response to evidence Opportunity to gather evidence about Success	The teacher continues to move from table to table as students annotate the text. She notices what students are annotating. The teacher answers any questions that students have – and notes which students may need extra support – but she does not interrupt as they work individually. She had decided to include an opportunity for peer assessment and feedback on the annotations. When students are discussing what they annotated as clues to each speaker's point of view, Ms. Cone strategically pays attention to students who seemed to have trouble annotating the text. She is ready to step in to support these peer conversations if necessary. Both these peer conversations and the students' completed graphic organizers will be evidence of whether students have met two of	After they finish reading the text out loud once, students read it a second time to themselves. This time they're reading to annotate – students circle every time either speaker mentions the Stamp Act or taxes, and they underline any clues related to the speaker's points of view. They discuss their annotations, and work together to complete a two-column graphic organizer. In one column of the organizer, they jot notes about the interviewer's questions to Franklin. In the other column, they write notes about Franklin's responses. They write one sentence at the bottom of each column to summarize each person's point of view on the Stamp Act.

Criteria	the Success Criteria.	
Opportunity to gather evidence about Success Criteria	With about ten minutes before lunch, Ms. Cone prompts students to finish their discussion of Franklin's and the interviewer's points of view. She asks each pair of students to write two questions that they have about American colonies and colonists' relationship with Great Britain. Ms. Cone wants students to link what they had read with the larger historical context – and to frame the class inquiry for the next day's lesson.	Before the class dismisses for lunch, they write two questions that they now have about the American colonies and the colonists' relationship with Great Britain.

In this vignette, the students were quickly able to identify some information about the source of this text prior to reading the testimony. The class was still developing an understanding of the historical context, so the students' comments on the context are understandably cursory. They then read the text twice: They read it the first time to get the "gist," and then they read it a second time to annotate for clues about speakers' points of view. Although students only had to read one text in this particular lesson, they still had to identify and consider multiple points of view within the text. The teacher was intentionally scaffolding students' ability to read and evaluate texts, and preparing them to read additional accounts and interpretations of historical events during this time period.

To plan the lesson featured in the second vignette, the teacher focused on Building Blocks 5 and 6. The table below presents the Building Blocks, Learning Goals, and Success Criteria for this lesson, as well as the planning recommendation to which the instructional tasks align.

Table 5

Building Blocks, Learning Goals, and Success Criteria for Vignette Two

Building Blocks	Learning Goals	Success Criteria	Recommendation
Building Block 5: Identify any similarities in the points of view represented in the accounts. Building Block 6: Identify any differences in the points of view represented in the accounts.	Compare primary sources to understand American colonists' reaction to the Stamp Act. Apply knowledge of multiple accounts of the Stamp Act to critique a secondary source.	Annotate the textbook to identify similarities with the information presented in the primary sources. Annotate the textbook to identify differences with the information presented in the primary sources. Write a one-paragraph critique of the textbook account of the Stamp Act.	Recommendation 2: Strategies for teaching students to notice and reconcile conflicting information

To plan instructional tasks aligned with the Learning Goals and Success Criteria, the teacher drew from research presented in the second recommendation. This vignette reflects instruction that took place a week after the lesson in the first vignette. The teacher designed the task to review and discuss connections across the historical accounts that the class had read so far. In addition to learning historical reading practices, the teacher thinks that asking students to make and explain connections across these texts will help them develop a complex understanding of the historical time period (Wolfe & Goldman, 2005). After reviewing the documents read so far, then students read a textbook excerpt that described the Stamp Act, and the annotated connections that they made while reading. By building students' prior knowledge on the topic, the teacher has tried to place students in a position of having expertise to critique the textbook (Bain, 2006; Leinhardt & Young, 1996).

As with the previous example, the table below expands the second vignette to include information about the teacher's thinking and instructional moves ("Teacher Perspective") alongside what the two focus students did during the lesson ("Student Perspectives"). This expanded view of classroom activity provides more description as to how the teacher applied the recommendations in this resource, and how she incorporated the formative assessment process as part of her standards-aligned classroom instruction.

Table 6

Vignette Two Expanded

		Teacher Perspective	Student Perspectives (Original Vignette)
		To begin social studies today, the class is sitting in a semi-circle facing the marker board again. Each student is holding a clipboard with a small stack of papers: copies of the two primary sources that students have read and annotated, and the graphic organizers with their notes. Standing in front of the class, Ms. Cone holds up each of the primary sources. She leads a whole class discussion about the sources. Together, they summarize each of the texts. They point out similarities and differences between them – in terms of the types of accounts, their authors, the dates written, and the content of the text. During the discussion, Ms. Cone prompts students to reference their annotations and graphic organizers evidence. She jots notes about the documents on the marker board for later reference.	

	Ms. Cone explains the task directions to students. She emphasizes that the class has developed knowledge and expertise about the historical period and Stamp Act through their reading. Students' job today is to read and critique a textbook account of the Stamp Act. Ms. Cone asks students to return to their seats and sit with their social studies reading partners.	
Anticipating Student Responses and Providing Support	Students continue to work with their reading partners. Because the class is reading an excerpt from a grade-level textbook, Ms. Cone isn't as worried about students struggling to read it. She anticipated that four students would likely have trouble though; she previewed the text with those four students in a small, guided reading group yesterday. Today those students are reading the excerpt for a second time.	[The] same two fifth graders are reading a one-page excerpt of a textbook description of the Stamp Act. They have now read and taken notes on the points of view presented in two primary sources related to the Stamp Act: a selection of the transcript of Benjamin Franklin's testimony in the British House of Commons, and a letter from a Boston merchant who supports the Stamp Act. They have these two texts and their graphic organizers with notes on the table in front of them. Reading independently now, the students annotate the textbook excerpt as they read. They draw a double-underline underneath text that supports something they read in one of the two primary sources. They draw a wavy line underneath any differences between this description and the primary sources. And, they write an exclamation point next to anything that surprises them as they read.
Opportunity to Gather Evidence about Success Criteria	Ms. Cone circulates among the tables as students read and annotate the textbook excerpt. She pays attention to how students are annotating the text, because this information is evidence of the Success Criteria. As with earlier lessons, she does not intervene while students annotate the text independently. She wants students to have an opportunity to share their thinking with a peer – their reading partner – for feedback.	
	Ms. Cone consults with pairs of students as they share their annotations. If she notices students doing something productive, such as referencing the original primary sources when they have a disagreement, Ms. Cone makes a brief announcement to the class. She points out the productive behavior, and she quickly explains why it is helpful.	After they finish reading, the students take turns sharing their annotations for each paragraph. They disagree about whether one particular sentence connects to something they read in the merchant's letter, and they reach for the letter to double-check whether there is a connection.
	With about fifteen minutes left in class, Ms. Cone prompts students to begin the last part of their assignment. She answers a few	After they finish sharing their annotations, they start the last part of their assignment – to write a one-paragraph critique of the textbook

	clarification questions that students have about the writing assignment, and then continues to circulate around the room and check in with individual students. This writing is connected to the last Success Criteria for today's lesson. Ms. Cone will review these paragraphs before the next lesson. She'll share some examples of these paragraphs with the class at the beginning of the next lesson to highlight how students critiqued the textbook description.	description.
Opportunity to Gather Evidence about Success Criteria		

Throughout this series of lessons, as well as previous history lessons, the teacher has emphasized how historians use sources as evidence about history. The teacher has intentionally selected texts that provide differing, and in some places, conflicting information (Reisman, 2012a, 2012b).

CLOSING COMMENTS

Reading Across Texts presents evidence-based recommendations, as well as examples of how teachers might use CCRS to plan with the recommendations in mind. The three recommendation areas are:

- Teaching strategies for evaluating sources of information and providing extended opportunities to practice
- Teaching strategies for comparing information across sources
- Framing instructional tasks that involve multiple-source comprehension

These recommendations go beyond merely introducing multiple sources of information—both print and online texts—as part of classroom assignments. Students also need to learn how to read these texts. Without instruction in how to read the texts, students may continue to read them as they would a textbook—as sources of facts (VanSledright & Kelly, 1998). Students need to learn how to judge whether a text is a trustworthy source of information, as well as what a particular author's point of view might be, and how that point of view would affect how the author presents information. These types of critical reading skills will help students weigh different accounts of events or topics. When students encounter conflicting information—whether it is about the Stamp Act or climate change—they will have strategies for reconciling those differences in information.

The skills involved in reading, evaluating, and making sense of multiple sources of information are challenging – but essential. They are central to learning across school subject areas. The purposes for which students read multiple texts will align with the disciplinary purposes for reading within a particular subject. While many of the studies included in this review focus on reading in history, these historical reading practices have a wider application for students. The abilities to think critically about texts as sources of information, and to compare information across texts, are also central to being an informed member of society (Wineburg & Reisman, 2015).

This instruction takes time. Although the studies reviewed here examined relatively brief periods of instruction, it is important to think about how this type of instruction can systematically incorporated throughout the school year. Teaching students how to read in this way may require teachers to make shifts in the types of texts they assign students to read, as well as what they ask them to do with the information they read.

The recommendations in this resource reflect disciplinary reading expectations and practices in current CCRS. The classroom vignettes illustrate how teachers might use these recommendations as part of designing lessons that incorporate formative assessment routines, which is a central theme of the CSAI resource series.[4] The CSAI resources are intended to help teachers align their daily classroom practice with CCRS in a way that promotes authentic, engaging learning opportunities.

---

[4] Please see *Building Blocks, Learning Goals, and Success Criteria; Developing and Refining Math Lessons; Lesson Revision* for information about the components of the formative assessment process.

REFERENCES

Bain, R. B. (2006). Rounding up unusual suspects: Facing the authority hidden in the history classroom. *Teachers College Record*, *108*(10), 2080-2114.

Barton, K. C. (1997). "I just kinda know": Elementary students' ideas about historical evidence. *Theory and Research in Social Education*, *25*(4), 407-430.

Braasch, J. L. G., Bråten, I., Strømsø, H. I., Anmarkrud, Ø., & Ferguson, L. E. (2013). Promoting secondary school students' evaluation of source features of multiple documents. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *38*(3), 180-195.

Braasch, J. L. G., Lawless, K. A., Goldman, S. R., Manning, F. H., Gomez, K. W., & Macleod, S. M. (2009). Evaluating search results: An empirical analysis of middle school students' use of source attributes to select useful sources. *Journal of Educational Computing Research*, *41*(1), 63-82.

Bråten, I., Strømsø, H. I., & Britt, M. A. (2009). Trust matters: Examining the role of source evaluation in students' construction of meaning within and across multiple texts. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *44*(1), 6-28.

Britt, M. A., & Aglinskas, C. (2002). Improving students' ability to identify and use source information. *Cognition and Instruction*, *20*(4), 485-522.

De La Paz, S., & Felton, M. K. (2010). Reading and writing from multiple source documents in history: Effects of strategy instruction with low to average high school writers. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *35*(3), 174-192.

De La Paz, S., Felton, M., Monte-Sano, C., Croninger, R., Jackson, C., Deogracias, J. S., & Hoffman, B. P. (2014). Developing historical reading and writing with adolescent readers: Effects on student learning. *Theory & Research in Social Education*, *42*(2), 228-274.

Gil, L., Bråten, I., Vidal-Abarca, E., & Strømsø, H. I. (2010a). Summary versus argument tasks when working with multiple documents: Which is better for whom?. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *35*(3), 157-173.

Gil, L., Bråten, I., Vidal-Abarca, E., & Strømsø, H. I. (2010b). Understanding and integrating multiple science texts: Summary tasks are sometimes better than argument tasks. *Reading Psychology, 31*(1), 30-68.

Goldman, S. R. & Scardamalia, M. (2013). Managing, understanding, applying, and creating knowledge in the information age: Next-generation challenges and opportunities. *Cognition and Instruction, 31*(2), 255-269.

Goldman, S. R., & Snow, C. E. (2015). Adolescent literacy: Development and instruction. In A. Pollatsek & R. Treiman (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of reading* (pp. 463-478). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Goldman, S. R., Braasch, J. L. G., Wiley, J., Graesser, A. C., & Brodowinska, K. (2012). Comprehending and learning from Internet sources: Processing patterns of better and poorer learners. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *47*(4), 356-381.

Herrenkohl, L. R., & Cornelius, L. (2013). Investigating elementary students' scientific and historical argumentation. *The Journal of the Learning Sciences*, *22*(3), 413-461.

Le Bigot, L., & Rouet, J.-F. (2007). The impact of presentation format, task assignment, and prior knowledge on students' comprehension of multiple online documents. *Journal of Literacy Research*, *39*(4), 445-470.

Lee, C. D., & Spratley, A. (2010). *Reading in the disciplines: The challenges of adolescent literacy.* New York, NY: Carnegie Corporation of New York.

Leinhardt, G., & Young, K. M. (1996). Two texts, three readers: Distance and expertise in reading history. *Cognition and Instruction*,*14*(4), 441-486.

Macedo-Rouet, M., Braasch, J. L. G., Britt, M. A., & Rouet, J.-F. (2013). Teaching fourth and fifth graders to evaluate information sources during text comprehension. *Cognition and Instruction, 31*(2), 204-226.

Manning, F. H., Goldman, S. R., Ozuru, Y., Lawless, K. A., Gomez, K., Braasch, J. L. G. (2008). Students' analysis of multiple sources for agreements and disagreements. In G. Kanselaar, V. Jonker, P.A. Kirschner, F.J. Prins (Eds.), *Proceedings of the eighth international conference of the learning sciences, International perspectives in the learning sciences: Creating a learning world*, *Vol. 2* (pp. 19–26). Utrecht, The Netherlands: Lulu.

Monte-Sano, C. (2011). Beyond reading comprehension and summary: Learning to read and write in history by focusing on evidence, perspective, and interpretation. *Curriculum Inquiry, 41*(2), 212-249.

Monte-Sano, C., & De La Paz, S. (2012). Using writing tasks to elicit adolescents' historical reasoning. *Journal of Literacy Research*, *44*(3), 273-299.

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, & Council of Chief State School Officers. (2010). *Common core state standards for English language arts and literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects*. Washington, DC: Author.

National Council for the Social Studies. (2013). *The college, career, and civic Life (C3) framework for social studies state standards: Guidance for enhancing the rigor of K-12 civics, economics, geography, and history.* Silver Spring, MD: Author.

NGSS Lead States. (2013). *Next generation science standards: For states, by states*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.

Nokes, J. D., Dole, J. A., & Hacker, D. J. (2007). Teaching high school students to use heuristics while reading historical texts. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *99*(3), 492-504.

Reisman, A. (2012a). Reading like a historian: A document-based history curriculum intervention in urban high schools. *Cognition and Instruction*, *30*(1), 86-112.

Reisman, A. (2012b). The 'document-based lesson': Bringing disciplinary inquiry into high school history classrooms with adolescent struggling readers. *Journal of Curriculum Studies, 44*(2), 233-264.

Rouet, J.-F. (2006). *The skills of document use: From text comprehension to web-based learning.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Schleppegrell, M. J., Achugar, M., & Oteíza, T. (2004). The grammar of history: Enhancing content-based instruction through a functional focus on language. *TESOL Quarterly, 38*(1), 67-93.

Stadtler, M., Scharrer, L., Brummernhenrich, B., & Bromme, R. (2013). Dealing with uncertainty: Readers' memory for and use of conflicting information from science texts as function of presentation format and source expertise. *Cognition and Instruction, 31*(2), 130-150.

Shanahan, T., & Shanahan, C. (2008). Teaching disciplinary literacy to adolescents: Rethinking content-area literacy. *Harvard Educational Review, 78*(1), 40-59.

Shanahan, C., Shanahan, T., & Misischia, C. (2011). Analysis of expert readers in three disciplines: History, mathematics, and chemistry. *Journal of Literacy Research, 43*(4), 393-429.

Stahl, S. A., Hynd, C. R., Britton, B. K., McNish, M. M., & Bosquet, D. (1996). What happens when students read multiple source documents in history? *Reading Research Quarterly, 31*(4), 430-456.

Strømsø, H. I., Bråten, I., Britt, M. A., & Ferguson, L. E. (2013). Spontaneous sourcing among students reading multiple documents. *Cognition and Instruction, 31*(2), 176-203.

VanSledright, B. A., & Frankes, L. (2000). Concept-and strategic-knowledge development in historical study: A comparative exploration in two fourth-grade classrooms. *Cognition and Instruction, 18*(2), 239-283.

VanSledright, B. A., & Kelly, C. (1998). Reading American history: The influence of multiple sources on six fifth graders. *The Elementary School Journal, 98*(3), 239-265.

VanSledright, B. (2002a). Confronting history's interpretive paradox while teaching fifth graders to investigate the past. *American Educational Research Journal, 39*(4), 1089-1115.

VanSledright, B. A. (2002b). Fifth graders investigating history in the classroom: Results from a researcher-practitioner design experiment. *The Elementary School Journal, 103*(2), 131-160.

Wallace, R. M., Kupperman, J., Krajcik, J., & Soloway, E. (2000). Science on the web: Students online in a sixth-grade classroom. *The Journal of the Learning Sciences, 9*(1), 75-104.

Wiley, J., Goldman, S. R., Graesser, A. C., Sanchez, C. A., Ash, I. K., & Hemmerich, J. A. (2009). Source evaluation, comprehension, and learning in Internet science inquiry tasks. *American Educational Research Journal, 46*(4), 1060-1106.

Wiley, J., Steffens, B., Britt, M.A., & Griffin, T. D. (2014). Writing to learn from multiple-source inquiry activities in history. In P. D. Klein, P. Boscolo, L. C. Kilpatrick, & C. Gelati (Eds.), *Studies in writing, writing as a learning activity* (pp. 120-148). Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill.

Wiley, J., & Voss, J. F. (1999). Constructing arguments from multiple sources: Tasks that promote understanding and not just memory for text. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *91*(2), 301-311.

Wineburg, S. S. (1991). On the reading of historical texts: Notes on the breach between school and academy. *American Educational Research Journal*, *28*(3), 495-519.

Wineburg, S. S. (1994). The cognitive representation of historical texts. In G. Leinhardt, I. L. Beck, & C. Stainton (Eds.), *Teaching and learning in history* (pp. 85-135). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Wineburg, S. S. (1997). Beyond "breadth and depth": Subject matter knowledge and assessment. *Theory into Practice*, *36*(4), 255-261.

Wineburg, S., & Reisman, A. (2015). Disciplinary literacy in history: A toolkit for digital citizenship. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *58*(8), 636-639.

Wissinger, D. R., & De La Paz, S. (2016). Effects of critical discussions on middle school students' written historical arguments. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *108*(1), 43-59.

Wolfe, M. B. W., & Goldman, S. R. (2005). Relations between adolescents' text processing and reasoning. *Cognition and Instruction*, *23*(4), 467-502.

APPENDIX: Studies Reviewed by Recommendation

Table 1

Studies reviewed for recommendation area 1: Teaching strategies for evaluating sources of information and providing extended opportunities to practice

Study	*Participants*	*Country*	*Focus of Research*
Barton (1997)	4th and 5th grade [2 classrooms]	United States	How students examined sources, and constructed understanding of history
Braasch, Bråten, Strømsø, Anmarkrud, & Ferguson (2013)	secondary school [130 students]	Norway	Effects of intervention on students' ability to evaluate source usefulness and trustworthiness, and use information from these texts
Braasch, Lawless, Goldman, Manning, Gomez, & MacLeod (2009)	5th and 6th grade [52 students]	United States	Whether students differentiated between more and less useful sources in a search results list, and what information students used to make distinctions
Bråten, Strømsø, & Britt (2009)	undergraduate [122 students]	Norway	Correlation between how students evaluate sources and their trustworthiness, and students' comprehension of the texts
Britt & Aglinskas (2002)	11th grade and undergraduate [study 1: 60 11th-grade students/ 49 undergraduate students; study 2a: 15 11th-grade students; study 2b: 29 11th-grade students; study 3: 23 11th-grade students]	United States	Series of experiments to examine how high school and undergraduate students use source information, and then evaluate how a computer-based program affected how students' sourced and corroborated texts
De La Paz & Felton (2010)	11th grade [160 students]	United States	Effects of teaching historical reasoning skills on students' written arguments
Goldman, Braasch, Wiley, Graesser, & Brodowinska (2012)	undergraduate [21 students]	United States	How learners process information in a web-based search
Herrenkohl & Cornelius (2013)	5th and 6th grade [4 classrooms]	United States	Development of science and history argumentation practices
Macedo-Rouet, Braasch, Britt, & Rouet (2013)	4th and 5th grade [study 1: 103 students; study 2: 96 students]	France	How elementary students distinguish information presented in sources, and evaluate source expertise, as well as the relationship between these skills and word reading
Nokes, Dole, & Hacker (2007)	11th grade [246 students]	United States	Effectiveness of teaching sourcing, contextualization, and corroboration with multiple texts to support students' content-area learning and historical reasoning skills

Reisman (2012a)	11th grade [236 students]	United States	Effects of the Reading Like a Historian curriculum on students' historical reasoning, content-area learning, and reading comprehension
Reisman (2012b)	same as above	United States	Structure of lessons in Reading Like a Historian curriculum
Stahl, Hynd, Britton, & McNish (1996)	10th grade [44 students]	United States	How students interpreted and used information about a historical event when reading multiple, conflicting accounts of the event
Strømsø, Bråten, Britt, & Ferguson (2013)	undergraduate [18 students]	Norway	How students notice and consider information about a source when reading multiple texts
VanSledright (2002a)	5th grade [23 students]	United States	Description of project to teach historical reasoning skills, and the challenges in teaching these skills to elementary school students
VanSledright (2002b)	5th grade [8 focal students/ same class as above]	United States	Analysis of pre- and post-historical reasoning tasks for 8 focal students
VanSledright & Kelly (1998)	5th grade [6 students]	United States	How a teacher and students approached the use of multiple texts to understand history
Wallace, Kupperman, Krajcik, & Soloway (2000)	6th grade [8 students]	United States	Understanding of how students conducted inquiry research assignment on the Internet
Wiley, Goldman, Graesser, Sanchez, Ash, & Hemmerich (2009)	undergraduate [study 1: 110 students; study 2: 60 students]	United States	Relationship between source evaluation and learning outcomes; effectiveness of teaching approach to evaluating source reliability
Wineburg (1991)	historians/ high school students	United States	How expert historians and students in Advanced Placement history classes reasoned and processed multiple texts about historical events

Table 2

Studies Reviewed for Recommendation Area 2:

Teaching strategies for comparing information across sources

Study	Population	Country	Focus
Barton (1997)	4th and 5th grade [2 classrooms]	United States	How students examined sources, and constructed understanding of history
Bråten, Ferguson, Anmarkrud, & Strømsø (2013)	10th grade [65 students]	United States	Correlation between prior knowledge, word reading, motivation, strategic reading, and multiple-text comprehension
Herrenkohl & Cornelius (2013)	5th and 6th grade [4 classrooms]	United States	Development of science and history argumentation practices
Manning, Goldman, Ozuru, Lawless, Gomez, & Braasch (2008)	5th and 6th grade [66 students]	United States	Describe how students negotiated conflicting information in two sources, and how they wrote about the agreement and disagreement across the texts
Nokes, Dole, & Hacker (2007)	11th grade [246 students]	United States	Effectiveness of teaching sourcing, contextualization, and corroboration with multiple texts to support students' content-area learning and historical reasoning skills
Reisman (2012a)	11th grade [236 students]	United States	Effects of the Reading Like a Historian curriculum on students' historical reasoning, content-area learning, and reading comprehension
Reisman (2012b)	same as above	United States	Structure of lessons in Reading Like a Historian curriculum
Stadtler, Scharrer, Brummernhenrich, & Bromme (2013)	undergraduate [100 students]	Germany	How participants' memory, and understanding of, conflicting information in one text or multiple texts
Strømsø, Bråten, Britt, & Ferguson (2013)	undergraduate [18 students]	Norway	How students notice and consider information about a source when reading multiple texts
VanSledright (2002a)	5th grade [23 students]	United States	Description of project to teach historical reasoning skills, and the challenges in teaching these skills to elementary school students
VanSledright (2002b)	5th grade [8 focus students/ same class as above]	United States	Analysis of pre- and post-historical reasoning tasks for 8 focal students
VanSledright & Frankes (2000)	4th grade [53 students/ 12 focus students]	United States	How teachers addressed historical concepts and research strategies as part of instruction

VanSledright & Kelly (1998)	5th grade [6 students]	United States	How a teacher and students approached the use of multiple texts to understand history
Wineburg (1991)	historians/ high school students	United States	How expert historians and students in Advanced Placement history classes reasoned and processed multiple texts about historical events
Wolfe & Goldman (2005)	6th grade [44 students]	United States	Analysis of how students processed contradictory texts about historical event, and how they drew on this information to construct explanation

Table 3

Studies Reviewed for Recommendation Area 3:

Framing instructional tasks that involve multiple source comprehension

Study	Population	Country	Focus
De La Paz, Felton, Monte-Sano, Croninger, Jackson, Deogracias, & Hoffman (2014)	8th grade [1330 students]	United States	Effects of a history curriculum that addresses historical reasoning skills in reading and writing
Gil, Bråten, Vidal-Abarca, & Strømsø (2010a)	undergraduate [study 1: 87 students; study 2: 47 students]	Spain	Relationship between assignment task (i.e., summary or argument) and prior knowledge of topic
Gil, Bråten, Vidal-Abarca, & Strømsø (2010b)	undergraduate [53 students]	Spain	Relationship between assignment task (i.e., summary or argument), epistemology, and prior knowledge of topic
Herrenkohl & Cornelius (2013)	5th and 6th grade [4 classrooms]	United States	Development of science and history argumentation practices
Le Bigot & Rouet, 2007	undergraduate [65 students]	France	Relationship between source presentation format, assigned writing task (i.e., summary or argument), and students' prior knowledge with students' comprehension of multiple sources of information
Monte-Sano & De La Paz (2012)	10th and 11th grade [101 students]	United States	Understanding degree to which writing task could explain students' use of historical reasoning skills and writing outcomes
Stahl, Hynd, Britton, & McNish (1996)	10th grade [44 students]	United States	How students interpreted and used information about a historical event when reading conflicting accounts of event
Strømsø, Bråten, & Britt (2010)	upper secondary [233 students]	Norway	Whether there is a relationship between students' memory of a source and their comprehension of individual and multiple texts on a topic
Wissinger & De La Paz (2016)	6th and 7th grade [151 students]	United States	Whether students could learn heuristics for argumentation in history
Wiley, Steffens, Britt, & Griffin (2014)	undergraduate, high school, and middle school [study 1: 150 undergraduate students; study 2: 88 high school students; study 3: 34 middle school students]	United States	Relationship between directions related to writing prompt and constructing timeline with the quality of students' essays about historical events
Wiley & Voss (1999)	undergraduate [study 1: 64 students; study 2: 24 students]	United States	Effects of source formatting (i.e., multiple texts or one textbook-like chapter) and writing task assignment on student outcomes