

AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

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Title: Decision-making Behaviors of Preservice Teachers as They Plan for Social Studies in Elementary Classrooms

Abstract approved:

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Instructional time for social studies in elementary classrooms has decreased since the passage of Goals 2000 and No Child Left Behind, with content contracted to align with reading goals. Consequently, opportunities for preservice teachers to observe and teach social studies lessons have diminished. This qualitative multiple case study examines the practices that preservice teachers develop and apply in making decisions concerning social studies curriculum. Three elementary level preservice teachers who had, or were earning, another degree in addition to their degree in education were participants in the study. The study offers insights into three research questions: 1) How do preservice elementary teachers construct an understanding of the teachings of social studies? 2) What knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes do preservice teachers draw upon as they make decisions about social studies

teaching? and 3) How do preservice teachers reflect upon and revise their own teaching of social studies?

Data from student-produced texts, interviews, classroom observations, a focus group, and researcher memos were analyzed using an inductive approach drawing on Charmaz's *Constructing Grounded Theory* (2010) and situational analysis (Clarke, 2005). Five factors intersected for each participant in constructing their understandings of social studies instruction: academic background, learning preferences, beliefs and attitudes regarding education, a conception of the teacher's role, and aspects of college coursework in education. The participants' academic background, knowledge of students' prior learning, content standards, curriculum emphasis at school sites, and beliefs about purposes for social studies shaped their decisions about social studies instruction. Each participant reflected on technical aspects of lessons primarily using descriptive language. Reflection considering multiple perspectives and the social and historical contexts for lessons occurred when the participants had academic backgrounds related to social studies fields, or when there were multiple lessons related around a topic. In these cases, reflections demonstrated greater depth and complexity. Participants' opportunities to revise lessons varied. In general, the findings suggest that when background knowledge was related to social studies fields, preservice teachers found alternative ways to approach subject matter and multiple occasions to integrate social studies.

This study has implications for the coursework and practicum components of preservice teacher education.

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**Decision-making Behaviors of Preservice Teachers as They Plan for
Social Studies in Elementary Classrooms**

by
Cynthia Basye

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Dean of the Graduate School

I understand that my dissertation will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my thesis to any reader upon request.

Cynthia Basye, Author

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Decision-Making Behaviors of Preservice Teachers as They Plan for Social Studies in Elementary Classrooms

Chapter One: Introduction

Isn't it strange? We always fight a war over there – like Vietnam and Afghanistan and Iraq.

It's because there's nothing there, just dirt and wrecked up buildings. It's a good place to have a war.

Well, we have nice things here, like houses and schools. We don't want to have a war here and wreck our stuff.

Well, Saddam started it. He attacked us on 9-11.

No he didn't! Bin Laden did.

Then why are we fighting in Iraq?

It was the fall of 2003, my fifth grade students were studying the 1960s in the United States, and they saw a connection between Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Iraq. That discussion in class was a reminder to me of how students worked, often together, to understand the events in the world. They had seen news images of neighborhoods destroyed by fighting, heard politicians speak of “fighting them over there, not in the streets of America,” and listened to family discussions. Their conclusion about the landscape of war made me aware of their need for different images and narratives, and more discussion as they constructed a deeper understanding of places and events. Their questions about who we are, how we got here, and how we can live together in an equitable manner are at the core of social studies.

As an elementary classroom teacher, I loved teaching social studies and engaging students in explorations that brought together history, geography, culture, social movements, and community. The discussions were often rich and revealing in terms of students' ways of making sense of new information, their frames of reference, and strategies for solving problems. After sixteen years as an elementary classroom teacher, I began working with preservice teachers in a post-baccalaureate teacher education program at the University of New Mexico. I supervised apprentice teachers in their mentor's classrooms and intern teachers in their own classrooms. At this time, I also had the opportunity to teach social studies methods to students in the College of Education. The intern teachers with whom I worked began the fall term with their own classroom and usually, by early November, they had established a way of teaching. I was intrigued by the differences in these teachers who had been through the same university program. Some intern teachers involved their students in discussion, drama, art, inquiry, and literature as they taught social studies. Others depended on textbook chapters and end of unit questions for their instruction. I wanted to understand the differences I encountered.

My initial research interests focused on how a social studies methods course could support beginning elementary teachers in their teaching. My interests and questions have evolved. Understanding that a course on methods or instruction is an important piece of the process of learning to teach, I began to see that any research in this area had to consider multiple elements, including pre-student teachers' backgrounds and beliefs about learning, the college of education's mission and

program of studies, the support teachers and clinical experiences, the school district's goals, and the elementary students and their communities. What at first seemed a straight forward question has become more complex.

Purpose of the Study

Social studies in elementary schools has the potential to address multiple, related purposes. The subject focuses on the social aspects of our lives and, as such, can deal with issues of identity and supporting students as they search for answers to questions about who they are as individuals and as members of family, social, and cultural groups (Kumashiro, 2004). It provides a place where students can examine interactions between people, and the relationship of people to their environment (Gregg & Leinhardt, 1994; Noddings, 2005). The social studies provide students with the tools for research and analysis as they develop their understanding of how the world works, including the study of the contradictions between ideals and lived realities, and the work of people to address that gap (Banks, 1997; Barton & Levstik, 2004). The social studies offer a setting in which students can develop the academic and social skills and the attitudes necessary for shaping their own futures, for participating in their communities, and for democratic living in a diverse society (Banks, 1997; Sanchez, 2007). The social studies classroom is a site where students can work for the common good, can express their concerns and advocate for themselves and others, and can see their needs and the needs of others addressed (Ladson-Billings, 2005). Each of these purposes depends on a rich body of information that is informed by multiple voices and experiences.

The purpose of this study is to examine the behaviors that preservice teachers develop as they make decisions concerning social studies curriculum. As a teacher educator I want to better understand the ways in which a college course in social studies teaching and the clinical experiences in classrooms support teachers in their curriculum planning and teaching. What do preservice teachers bring to and take away from these experiences that enable them to begin making choices that support their students' learning, and begin to consider the implications of those choices?

Three questions guided this study:

1. How do preservice elementary teachers construct an understanding of the teaching of social studies?
2. What knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes do preservice teachers draw upon as they make decisions about social studies teaching?
3. How do preservice teachers reflect upon and revise their own teaching of social studies?

Rationale for the Study

Preservice teacher education provides a structured program and setting in which prospective teachers develop the skills, knowledge, and dispositions that enable them to begin teaching in elementary classrooms. Institutions accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) are committed to preparing teachers who have in-depth knowledge of content and the pedagogical content knowledge and skills to help all students learn (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, n.d.).

Social studies is a valued subject area in many education settings, both K-12 and at the college level. However, in some it is marginalized, sometimes to a point where it becomes part of the “null curriculum” (Eisner, 2002), “the nonrandom, structured absences within a curriculum that works to silence and thus eliminate the existence of alternatives” (Segall, 2002, p. 47). The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation (U. S. Department of Education, 2002) supports instruction in some of the content areas of social studies, but there is no mandate or funding for assessment. Consequently, social studies receives less attention in schools than those subject areas with required testing. Elementary students’ interest in their world and their need to participate in it, however, do not follow the dictates of legislation.

Instructional time for social studies in elementary classrooms has decreased since the passage of the Goals 2000 and NCLB legislation (Fitchett & Heafner, 2010). To meet the mandates of NCLB, social studies subject matter has often been contracted to align with reading curriculum goals, while pedagogy has become less child centered (Au, 2007; Boyle-Baise, Hsu, S. Johnson, Serriere, & Stewart, 2008). There are fewer opportunities for teaching social studies and consequently fewer opportunities for preservice teachers to observe and participate in classroom social studies planning, instruction, and assessment.

Limitations on instructional time and the need to integrate subject matter place teachers in a position to think critically about the educational significance of additions or changes to the educational program (Parker, 2010). When integrating social studies with reading/language arts, elementary teachers must decide whether the social studies

content is a platform from which to teach reading skills, or reading is a process for accessing and examining social studies content (Boyle-Baise et al., 2008). Teachers have the opportunity and responsibility to make both large and small pedagogical decisions in their classrooms. Even with the constraints of mandated curriculum and testing, teachers still consider the knowledge that is worth knowing, the points of view worth considering, and the issues worth examining (Cornbleth, 1985; Segall, 2002; Sleeter, 2009).

Research on changes in instructional time and modification of classroom instruction has been conducted with in-service teachers. There is little research, however, on how preservice teachers at the elementary level learn to teach social studies in an educational climate where the subject matter is de-emphasized in coursework and classrooms, or how they learn to integrate social studies with other subject matter to meet multiple objectives and the needs of diverse learners. This proposed study begins to address the need for research about how preservice teachers learn to teach social studies in the current elementary classroom.

Audience

This study is intended to inform educators at a college level as they prepare new teachers for elementary-level classrooms. It is also intended for elementary classroom teachers and school administrators as they provide practical onsite instruction and support for beginning teachers. There are an increasing number of partnerships between colleges and school districts, and alternative routes to teacher certification (Cochran-Smith & Power, 2010). Teacher educators need to consider

how preservice teachers bridge the college and public school discourses so that teacher education programs can effectively utilize the resources in those settings.

Teachers are decision makers in a changing educational landscape. Decision-making is part of a recursive process that includes knowledge of subject matter, pedagogy, students, and reflection on action. Decision-making also includes questions of moral purpose: how we teach for equity, close the achievement gap, treat students with respect, and change the social environments in classrooms and schools for the better (Fullan, 2005). Increasingly, classroom teachers are called on to make choices about what content, which objective and whose perspective to include. They are asked to integrate content while maintaining subject matter integrity. How beginning teachers are prepared for that process is of concern to teacher educators at the college level and in elementary schools.

A question for researchers in education is whether their study is valuable for informing and improving educational practice (Eisenhart & Howe, 1992). This study will offer insights into preservice teachers' understandings of social studies, its purpose and practice. This study will help teacher educators better understand the behaviors preservice teachers develop around decision-making. The results from the study can inform integration of course work and practicum experiences in ways that draw upon the strengths of each setting while supporting the preservice teachers' development.

Epistemology

The paradigm of critical constructivism best fits my beliefs about knowledge, how one comes to know, and the role of education in our society. Constructivism “construes learning as an interpretive, recursive, nonlinear building process by active learners interacting with their surround – the physical and social world” (Fosnot & Perry, 2005, p. 34). There are two major trends in constructivism. The cognitive constructivist theorists draw on the works of Piaget and are concerned with conceptual processes and the individual’s meaning-making of the physical world. Cognition becomes an active process in which new experiences and information are adapted and organized through a dynamic mechanism called equilibration (Fosnot & Perry, 2005). The new resulting cognitive constructions are more complex, making possible more sophisticated thinking and action. Social constructivism draws on the theories of Vygotsky which hold that the mental action of the individual is situated in cultural, historical, and institutional settings, and that developmental progression leading to self regulation is a social process (Diaz, Neal, & Amaya-Williams, 1990). Cobb (2005) states that cognitive constructivist and sociocultural perspectives focus on different types of knowledge and that learning is “both a process of self-organization and a process of enculturation that occurs while participating in cultural practices, frequently while interacting with others” (pp. 50-51).

My beliefs are also informed by critical theory. As a social theory, it is concerned in particular with issues of power and justice and the ways that the economy; matters of race, class, and gender; ideologies; discourses; education; religion and other social institutions; and

cultural dynamics interact to construct a social system.
 ((Kincheloe, & McLaren, 2008, p. 407)

Critical research has the potential to inform the researcher, the study participants, and his or her audience and to promote dialogue and debate.

Critical constructivism best fits the purposes of this study. Education is the process of being schooled and those who are involved, whether as students or teachers, construct meaning around and in that process. Education is a socially constructed institution designed for social and cultural reproduction and transformation (Cornbleth, 2000). The varied approaches to social studies teaching represent epistemological beliefs about how knowledge is constructed, whose knowledge is privileged, and how students come to know or learn. I believe a study that is focused on how students of education make sense of social studies curriculum and teaching while participating in educational institutions must consider both the constructivist and critical aspects of their experience.

One of the challenges of teaching social studies and conducting research related to social studies are the varied meanings and perceptions of the term. In chapter two I present an overview of various approaches to social studies teaching.

Summary

The purpose of this study is to better understand preservice teachers decision-making behaviors in social studies. The study is formed around three questions: 1) How do preservice elementary teachers construct understandings of the teaching of social studies? 2) What knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes do preservice teachers draw

upon as they make decisions about social studies teaching? and 3) How do preservice teachers reflect upon and revise their own teaching of social studies?

In this chapter I have provided a rationale for the study. A summary of the literature reviewed shows changes to social studies instruction due in part to the testing mandates embedded in national education legislation. Classroom teachers are asked to make decisions about subject matter and pedagogy in order integrate content and meet the tested learning objectives. There is little research on how preservice teachers in course work and practicum placements learn to make the decisions regarding social studies instruction. I have discussed the research perspectives of critical constructivism and critical theory that I brought to the study.

This study is intended to add to the understandings that college level teacher educators, school administrators, and mentor teachers draw on in their preparation of new teachers. It is hoped that the study results can inform the integration of course work and practicum experiences that support new teachers' development.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

Preservice teacher education provides a structured program and setting in which prospective teachers develop the skills, knowledge, and dispositions that enable them to begin teaching in elementary classrooms. Social studies as a subject area is distinctive in that it is valued in some, but not all settings, and that it is defined in multiple ways. One of the components of a powerful teacher education program is the existence of a school and university faculty “linked by strong relationships, common knowledge, and shared beliefs” (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 41). Additionally, in such a program there is “coherence based on a vision of good teaching grounded in an understanding of learning, that permeates all coursework and clinical experiences” (p. 276). Preservice teachers bridge college and community settings as they develop a knowledge base of subject matter, pedagogy, and students, and gain practical experience in school environments. How do they integrate these experiences with their own background beliefs in order to effectively begin teaching? The literature reviewed in this chapter will set a foundation for a study of decision-making behaviors of elementary level preservice teachers as they plan for and teach social studies in classrooms.

Over the past century there have been differing and competing approaches to, and definitions of, social studies. This chapter begins with an overview of these approaches for social studies and a description of settings for social studies implementation. This is followed by a review of social studies education in

elementary classrooms. The chapter will conclude with a review of literature that examines the prospective teacher's development of knowledge of teaching, decision making for teaching, and reflective practices.

Approaches and Settings for Social Studies

Over the past century, educators and theorists have presented a range of approaches for the content and purpose of social studies as a subject area. Social studies has been viewed as a means of instruction in traditional history and patriotism, as well as an arena for analyzing social issues and critiquing the established order. It has been viewed as a way to develop social and citizenship skills and attitudes. The models have been influenced by the demographic nature of the country at the time, economic needs, war and perceived threats, and beliefs about the role of education in society (Evans, 2004). The six most significant approaches are examined in this section.

Early twentieth century. In the first decades of the twentieth century, the United States experienced social, economic, and political change, with an influx of immigrants from southern Europe, migration of African Americans from the southeastern states to the west and north, and a shift from a predominantly agrarian to an urban industrial society. The 19th Amendment gave women the vote. Progressive reformers came to view education as an institution addressing the problems of democracy (Crunden, 1991; D. Johnson, 2000; Mathieu, 2009).

In 1912, the National Education Association established the Committee on Social Studies as a subcommittee to its Committee on Articulation, which had been

created to coordinate school curriculum and college admission. The Committee on Social Studies' 1916 report challenged the dominance of history in school curriculums and recommended instead a focus on social studies with good citizenship as its aim. In the preface to the report, Thomas Jesse Jones, Committee Chairman, wrote, "In facing the increasing complexity of society, it is most important that the youth of the land be steadied by an unwavering faith in humanity and by an appreciation of the institutions which have contributed to the advancement of civilization" (Saxe, 1991, p. 210).

Three dominant perspectives were represented in the Committee's work and the 1916 report. Social efficiency advocates asserted that after defining desirable characteristics of adults, curriculum makers could, through scientific study, work backwards to analyze the training procedures and methods to reach the desired end (Snedden, 1914). Progressive educators, drawing on the work of Dewey, advocated child centered curriculum, problem solving techniques, and the development of democratic behaviors (Saxe, 1991). The social gospel reformers advocated "Christian democracy based in classical liberalism" (Watkins, 2001, p. 199). Evans (2004) writes that this model for social studies was in some ways a response to the social, political, and economic conditions of the time. It included pedagogy that centered on students' needs and interests while encouraging obedience, loyalty, and conformity. It represented "a desire to Americanize the masses" through a curriculum "created by White, middle-class northwest European Americans who generally accepted the hegemony of their own group and ignored race as an issue" (p. 28).

Social reconstructionism. The decades following World War I brought forth increased urbanization and industrialization, concerns about the success of communism, and new psychological theories that located the control over behavior in the individual rather than with religious authority (Makler, 2004). One response to these changes and the accompanying sense of social instability was curriculum emphasizing social reconstructionism. Harold Rugg, George Counts, and other progressive educators viewed the existing social studies curriculum as supportive of the political and economic agendas of wealthy Americans. These educators wanted a new social studies curriculum that would acknowledge the existence of racial and economic tensions in American society, and that would prepare students to understand the sociopolitical and economic conditions of the contemporary world. They believed that society could be improved through education.

Counts (1932), representing a more radical wing of the progressive movement, criticized the current state of progressive education and its political neutrality with regard to political and social issues.

If an educational movement, or any other movement, calls itself progressive, it must have orientation; it must possess direction.... The weakness of Progressive Education thus lies in the fact that it has elaborated no theory of social welfare, unless it be that of anarchy and extreme individualism. (p. 6)

He further argued

There can be no good individual apart from some conception of the character of the *good* society; and the good society is not something that is given by nature: it must be fashioned by the hand and brain of man. This process of building a good society is to a very large degree an educational process. (p. 15)

Rugg (1936), like Counts, held that education programs were the key to a new social order. He believed that schools could promote intelligent understanding through the “study of problems and the optional courses of social action” (p. 301). He created the *Rugg Social-Science Course*, a series of 14 textbooks for social studies. The series was developed by “specialists on the frontier of thought who see society from a height, who detect its trends and the long-time movement of its affairs” (Rugg, 1930). The books had been field tested in schools and teachers had made suggestions for revisions, an innovative process for the time. The textbooks included charts, graphs, photographs, and political cartoons, and were designed to engage students in data analysis, interpretation, and critical thinking, rather than the simple memorization of facts (Makler, 2004). They integrated history and social sciences, introducing topics through social issues or problems connected to students’ lives (Evans, 2006). The textbooks were the first to mention African Americans and discuss in some depth the evils of slavery. While the language in the books was mildly negative toward African Americans, the books did advocate for racial tolerance and greater inclusion (Howard, 2004). The first of these innovative textbooks was sold months before the stock market crash of 1929, and over the next ten years the series sold over a million copies. They were the bestselling series of their time.

The *Rugg Social-Science Course* raised questions about the role of government in regulating business, the need to provide for social welfare, and the distribution of power and privilege (Evans, 2006; Makler, 2004). The books became a focus of

criticism from business and civic leaders such as Bernie Forbes of Forbes magazine, the American Legion, National Association of Manufacturers, and the Advertising Federation of America. There was organized opposition to the series through the media and conservative social groups. Rugg and his *Social-Science Course* were portrayed as subversive and un-American. Criticism of the United States' social and economic practices became less acceptable as the country's entry into World War II neared. As a consequence, the *Rugg Social-Science Course* lost favor in communities and fell out of use.

Expanding environments. The model of an expanding environment sequence for social studies curriculum, introduced by Hanna (1987) in the late 1950s, was based on the belief that children progress through developmental stages of social awareness. In designing the scope and sequence for a curriculum, Hanna identified categories of basic human activity to be studied in a sequence of levels, beginning with the child's family community and moving out to the national and world communities. He believed that students could examine the basic human activities, and that the understanding at one level would provide a foundation for the next level.

The curriculum valued academic content knowledge, the ability of educational leaders to develop objectives, and teachers' knowledge of their students. For Hanna, peace and security would be possible when "men universally hold in common great ideals, sound plans, and essential skills of cooperative action" (Hanna, 1987, p. 28). The curriculum he envisioned would provide students with carefully selected and directed learning experiences preparing them for participation in public and private

endeavors. However, a mechanism for examining the social issues or problems facing the community was not part of the content.

The expanding environments framework is enduring, continuing to be a dominant structure in elementary textbook design. Wade (2002) suggests that its persistence is due to its familiarity, logical order, and avoidance of controversy. Wade also questions the curriculum's relevancy, noting that many children today have experiences and knowledge that extend across levels, and the expanding environments approach limits learning about interrelationships of people and communities. The curriculum has also been criticized for being too oriented toward student age and drawing too exclusively on middle class examples of families and communities (Brophy & Alleman, 2006).

New social studies. During the Cold War era social studies courses in which the problems of democracy or social concerns were discussed continued to come under criticism, and the questioning of the United States was construed as sympathy for communism. Social studies practice during this time began to shift from an analysis of social problems to a re-emphasis on academic disciplines (Evans, 2004). The Woods Hole Conference of 1959, a project of the National Defense Education Act of 1958, brought together people concerned about science education in primary and secondary schools. One outcome of this conference was a focus on the basic structure, key concepts, and forms of inquiry of each discipline for the organization of curriculum. A second outcome involved the relationship between the learner and the content as expressed in this passage, "We begin with the hypothesis that any subject

content as expressed in this passage, “We begin with the hypothesis that any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development” (Bruner, 1960, p. 33).

In the ensuing years, the U. S. Office of Education initiated Project Social Studies to improve research, instruction, teacher education, and the dissemination of knowledge in the field. The majority of projects funded used the discipline structure approach. The developmental theories of Piaget also provided a foundation for the work, thus providing a “link between the organizing conjecture of field of knowledge and the developing intelligence of the young” (Dow, 1992, p. 164). Many of the projects that were produced brought the expertise of scholars into the classrooms and offered summer training programs for classroom teachers. New learning materials and technologies were introduced to K-12 teachers, helping to decrease the dependence on textbook reading as the primary instructional method. Discipline experts were elevated as the main source of knowledge and a Western academic structure for organizing knowledge was promoted. The curricula did not include community resources or concerns.

While the response to the New Social Studies was mixed, the principles involved remain in use in curriculum design. Taba (1971) uses concepts, key questions, and a spiraling curriculum as core pieces to her inductive approach to social studies. Wiggins and McTighe (2005) incorporate the spiraling curriculum, concepts as structures, and guiding questions as essential components in their approach to curriculum design. Learning about the importance of evidence and how historical

current history reform efforts (Barton & Levstik, 2004). Extensive professional development, necessary for some projects' implementation, is still evident today in teacher institutes. In addition to teachers learning content and assisting with pedagogy, more recent institutes have included teachers as curriculum developers, e.g., Teaching American History grants, a program focused on helping teachers develop understanding and skills for teaching traditional United States history ("Teaching American History," 2010).

Decision-making and inquiry. The expanding environments and the new social studies that emerged in the 1950s and 1960s were constructed around Western oriented academic knowledge and assumed that an objective truth could be discovered by students who followed a set of lessons. Issues related to cultural and ethnic diversity, gender, and social order were largely absent from those curricula (Banks, 1995). Two related approaches to social studies that counter the more academic and discipline focused curricula relate to decision making and inquiry.

Decision-making programs are based on the view that the goal of social studies is to prepare citizens so that they can contribute to the resolution of complex social, economic, and political problems. The decision-making process depends on students having knowledge that is acquired by a replicable process and reflects "the experiences and perspectives of wide range of groups within a pluralistic society" (Banks, 1997, p. 28). This is an active process in which students access, synthesize, and apply knowledge derived from the community and various disciplines. Students identify and clarify their own values and relate these to the knowledge they have

developed. The process can be applied to current issues or to an analysis of past issues. The teacher's role includes guiding students through a questioning process to develop concepts and identify and clarify their values.

An inquiry approach focuses on learning ways to gather evidence in order to develop understanding and reach a conclusion around a topic or issue of interest. Gay (1997) and Ladson-Billings (2005) contend that the prior knowledge and experience that some students bring to school more closely aligns with textbook knowledge, and those students are more likely to benefit from and engage with textbook oriented instruction. Other students in the same classroom may bring experiences that go against or are not represented in textbook lessons. Inquiry makes possible the investigation of topics and questions that fall outside mainstream curriculum. Barton and Levstik (2004) maintain that an advantage to inquiry-based teaching is that it provides practice in reaching judgments based on evidence, makes the knowledge construction process clear, and provides greater equity in students' access to historical knowledge. An inquiry approach "engages students in a process critical to democratic pluralism: that of reaching conclusions based on evidence" (p. 190).

There are challenges in implementing an inquiry approach that consequently limit its use in schools. In their review of research on inquiry based teaching, Aulls and Shore (2008) found that inquiry teachers need a greater depth of background knowledge and more flexible skills in management and organization than for more traditional instruction.

Multicultural education. Gay (1997) asserts that equality and interdependence, two essential concepts of democracy, are central to multicultural education. She writes, “The collective and well-being of society correlate directly with the health, happiness, and vitality of its individual members. Consequently, knowledge of, respect for, and promotion of cultural diversity are essential to the effective preparation of education for democratic citizenship” (p. 2).

In the United States, multicultural education developed in response to the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s and the ethnic revitalization movements that followed into the 1970s. Multicultural education challenged the assimilationist ideology in which an Anglo-Saxon dominant culture was the ideal and the assimilation of all other ethnic and cultural groups to that ideal was expected and inevitable (Banks, 2009). Initial efforts at developing multicultural education involved adding cultural celebrations and people of color to existing curricula, but did little to improve students’ learning or to address issues of discrimination and inequity. Over time multicultural education has come to mean “anti-racist and basic education for all students that permeates all areas of schooling, and is characterized by commitment to social justice and critical approaches to learning” (Nieto, 1999, p. xviii).

Banks (1997) describes five interconnected dimensions necessary for successful implementation of multicultural education. Content integration is the inclusion of content and examples from a variety of cultures to illustrate concepts and ideas in a subject area. Knowledge construction is the investigation of the processes by which concepts, paradigms, theories, and truths in a discipline are formed and

influenced by racial, class, ethnic positions. Prejudice reduction relates to the strategies that teachers can use to help students develop more democratic values and attitudes. Equity pedagogy includes the modification of teaching strategies to support learning for students from diverse racial, cultural, gender and social class groups. The final dimension is the creation of an empowering school culture and social culture.

Multicultural education reflects a sociocultural and sociopolitical perspective in which the learner actively constructs knowledge while interacting with others in social, cultural, and political spaces (Nieto, 1999). It recognizes that students bring experiences and ways of making sense into the classroom. Pedagogy in multicultural education promotes academic achievement, personal and social growth, and the development of decision-making and social action skills. It values home and community knowledge as a source of content and base for learning. Consequently, a responsibility is placed on teachers to possess an in depth knowledge of academic content, effective instructional methods, and knowledge of the students and their culture (Banks, 1997). In addition, teachers must continually reflect on their teaching in order to evaluate students' learning and to refine their teaching practice. There is no set method; rather, methods are continually being developed in response to students and their needs and abilities (Banks, 1997; Bartolome, 2009).

Settings for social studies. As social studies curricula are enacted in practice, there is often integration and overlap between the approaches described above. The particular settings in which social studies curricula are selected and practiced can determine or influence the approach being used. Banks (1997) has identified five

levels from which social studies education can be viewed and conceptualized.

Banks' first level is research and theory. This is typically conducted within a college setting. At this level instruction is often aligned with social justice and multicultural education curriculum.

The second level concerns state and district policies and curriculum, where social studies curricula are typically divided into four discipline strands – history, geography, economics, and civics and government. These are influenced by mainstream academic knowledge that draws from the “Western-oriented canon” and popular knowledge celebrating American exceptionalism (Banks, 1993). Policies and curricula are shaped by community members, educators, and national standards.

Textbooks represent the third level. Most textbooks are developed and marketed by large national publishers and the scope and sequence of the content is aligned with national and state curriculum standards. Elected and appointed school board members at both state and local levels approve textbook and instructional materials adoption.

Inservice development and training programs for social studies teachers is the fourth level. For elementary schools this may occur when a new textbook series or instructional materials are adopted and teachers are trained in their use and components. Additionally, professional development in social studies education is provided by community, state, and national organizations such as Portland Area Rethinking Schools, Classroom Law Project, Oregon Geographic Alliance, and the National Council for the Social Studies. The approach to social studies at this level is

shaped by both adopted standards and textbooks, and also by teacher interests, commitment, and beliefs.

Actual classroom practice represents the fifth level. The state and district curriculum standards and the adopted instructional materials provide guidelines for instruction. School administration, individual teacher's resources, the teacher's knowledge base, students' interests, and community resources can also influence the instructional approach in a classroom. Thornton (1991) describes teachers as "gatekeepers [who] make day-to-day decisions concerning both subject matter and the experiences to which students have access and the nature of that subject matter and those experiences" (p. 237).

Summary. These definitions and descriptions illustrate the range of goals and methods for social studies teaching and the influence of setting on how the subject is taught. In some of the approaches, social studies is viewed as a vehicle to transmit a set of cultural values deemed necessary for citizenship. Other approaches support the development of increasingly complex social science concepts. Some scholars and educators focus on multiple viewpoints, critical thinking, and problem solving around social issues. Social justice education is not typically considered a subject area, but rather a perspective for teaching. Its goals and methods, though, are consistent with many social studies approaches. Social justice is often included in mission statements for educational institutions. There is no single definition for social studies; however, most approaches consider the development of knowledge, skills, and values for citizenship to be a core component. The shifts between traditional, discipline-based

approaches and the student-centered, issue based approaches tend to follow the political climate of the times (Evans, 2004). Consequently, the social studies curriculum and textbook production become a reaction to or support for social developments in the country (Cornbleth, 2000).

Social Studies Teaching in Elementary Classrooms

A public school classroom is a setting in which most prospective teachers learn about the process of teaching, where they observe inservice teachers providing instruction and managing classroom routines, and also observe and interact with young students. Over the period of a school year, the prospective teachers transition from observation to teaching individual lessons, and finally into full student teaching, responsible for classroom instruction and management. Many teacher education programs require student teachers to develop lesson and unit plans that tie their teaching and assessment to the specific instructional resources and curriculum standards of their school district. In their summary of research on teacher preparation, Wilson, Floden, and Ferrini-Mundy (2002) found that the clinical experience was one of the most powerful components of the teacher education process for beginning teachers. While cooperating teachers and school placements differed, the clinical experiences offered student teachers a meaningful opportunity to learn about students, school culture, classroom management, subject matter, and strategies for teaching.

Because of the strong impact of public school classrooms on the learning of prospective teachers, it is appropriate to examine social studies instruction in those settings. The Center on Education Policy (McMurrer, 2007) surveyed 349 school

districts and conducted school level interviews in 13 districts across the United States in order to study the changes in instructional time for subjects since the enactment of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation. Sixty-two percent of the districts reported increasing instructional time in elementary schools for English language arts and math. The study showed 44% of school districts reduced instructional time for one or more subjects to accommodate the increases in English language arts and math instruction. School districts that had one or more schools identified for NCLB improvements were more likely to decrease instructional time for social studies, science, art, and music. At the elementary level, 84% of schools changed curriculum “somewhat” or “to a great extent” in order to emphasize content that would be later tested.

Using data from the National Center for Educational Statistics’ Schools and Staffing Survey, Fitchett and Heafner (2010) conducted comparative analyses to investigate the use of instructional time for subjects in elementary schools over five time periods, from 1987 to 2004. Their purpose was to better understand the status of social studies in public schools and the impact on instruction of Goals 2000 enacted in 1994, and NCLB enacted in 2002. Over the five time periods in the study, instructional time for language arts and math increased. There was a significant decrease in social studies instructional time after the inception of NCLB. The data also showed that the variability in instructional time for social studies decreased with the inception on Goals 2000, suggesting less teacher control of and more “restrictive forces” on instructional time.

In addition to allotted instructional time, researchers have found changes in curriculum as result of mandated testing. Au (2007) conducted a qualitative metasynthesis of 49 different studies on the effects of high-stakes testing on curriculum. He analyzed the studies looking at three aspects of curriculum: subject matter content, structure of knowledge, and pedagogy. Curriculum content change was documented in over 83% of the studies. In a majority of those studies, the curriculum was contracted by reducing or eliminating subjects that were not subject to high-stakes testing. Forty-nine percent of studies showed an increasing fragmentation of knowledge resulting in “small, individuated, and isolated test-sized pieces” (p. 262). Changes in pedagogy were documented in 77% of the studies. In a majority of those cases, the pedagogy became more teacher-centered. In his final analysis of the studies, Au examined the relationship between the three aspects of curriculum and found 21 studies that had the combination of contracted content, fragmented structure of knowledge, and more teacher centered pedagogy.

The characteristics of social studies instruction in six mid-western elementary schools were studied by Boyle-Baise, Hsu, Johnson, Serriere, and Stewart (2008). Teachers and principals in this study reported that NCLB and state academic standards were forces that constrained the teaching in schools. The pressure to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) focused instruction on reading skills. Teachers were encouraged by principals to maximize their use of time by embedding or integrating social studies into language arts. Reading comprehension became the focus of social studies to the exclusion of student centered strategies such as discussion, investigation,

and role play. Teacher-centered instruction, often through a question and answer format, was common. There was little evidence of language arts being used to enrich social studies content or as in-depth studies of concepts or events.

Summary. The four studies cited above show a trend in instructional time for social studies and in the type of instruction provided. The two quantitative studies (Boyle-Baise et al., 2008; McMurrer, 2007) show a decrease in the instructional time since the passage of the Goals 2000 and NCLB legislation. This decrease is more likely to occur in school districts that have a school identified for NCLB improvements. To meet the testing mandates of NCLB in reading, social studies subject matter has been contracted so as to align with reading curriculum goals. The curriculum has narrowed and pedagogy has become less child centered (Au, 2007; Boyle-Baise et al., 2008).

Constructing a Knowledge Base for Teaching

A “Framework for Understanding Teaching and Learning” was developed by the National Academy of Education’s Committee on Teacher Education to organize information related to effective teaching and learning (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). This conceptual framework is comprised of three interconnected pieces all concerning the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required for teaching. The first piece of the framework considers the teacher’s knowledge of learners and how they develop and learn within social contexts. The second piece concerns a teacher’s knowledge of subject matter, curriculum goals, and the purposes of education. The third piece of the framework considers a teacher’s knowledge of

teaching, classroom management, and assessment of students' learning. Essential to the entire framework is the belief that teaching is a profession with both moral and technical expectations, committed to the purposes of democracy, equitable access to quality educational opportunity, and support of participation in a democratic society. I will use this conceptual framework as the basis to examine literature related to the knowledge construction of preservice teachers.

Lortie (1975) drew on the concept of apprenticeship as he analyzed the socialization of new teachers into the profession. Unlike traditional apprentices who are afforded mediated entry into a field of work, teachers moved quickly from a student role to that of a teacher with full responsibilities for classroom instruction. However, their duties were not commensurate with their level of experience and knowledge. The apprenticeship that prospective teachers experienced came from their twelve or more years as students. Lortie termed this an "apprenticeship of observation." In their student role they experienced "protracted face-to-face and consequential interactions with established teachers" (p. 61). But, the relationship between students and their teachers is not simply passive observation.

Students observe experienced teachers carrying out only some of the tasks involved in teaching. They see the outward behaviors but do not see the decision making, analysis, evaluation, and study that engage teachers in preparation for their teaching, the "pedagogically oriented framework" (Lortie, 1975, p.62). Students' learning about teaching is "intuitive and imitative rather than explicit and analytical"

(p. 62), and does not represent the development of knowledge or skill that characterizes traditional apprenticeships.

Lacking a sense of the problematic and a sure concept of technical performance, they are not likely to make useful linkages between teaching objectives and teacher actions; they will not perceive the teacher as someone making choices among teaching strategies. (p. 63).

Preservice teachers' beliefs about teaching, both positive and negative, can serve as filters for new learning about teaching. In addition to perceptions about the process of teaching, preservice teachers may bring beliefs about their future students to their education programs. The student population in the United States is becoming more racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse and this trend is expected to continue. There are a high number of children living in poverty. The majority of teachers, however, are white, English monolingual, and middle-class (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). This cultural difference between students and teachers can lead to educational environments in which expectations, perspectives, methods, and instructional resources do not relate to or build upon their students' experiences and knowledge base.

The diversity and range of academic abilities of students in elementary schools now requires that teachers develop and apply an increasingly greater "knowledge of the social, cultural, and language backgrounds of their students when planning and implementing instruction" (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005, p. 233), in order to provide effective and appropriate instruction. When teachers value students' experiences in their community, then "classroom practice can build on the familiar

knowledge bases that students can manipulate to enhance learning in mathematics, social studies, language arts, and other content areas” (Gonzalez, 2005, p. 43).

Colleges of education provide experiences for prospective teachers to expand their knowledge of students and communities. Frederick, Cave, and Perencevich (2010) studied changes in the thinking of teacher candidates as they participated in a university class designed around social justice issues. “Candidates, whose educational and familial backgrounds were more homogeneous, were confronted with issues that forced them to rethink how they view diversity and the social context in which many people are still disadvantaged” (p. 321). Through a purposeful curriculum of school observations, readings, class discussions, and writing these sophomore level students moved beyond a superficial understanding of multicultural education and the socio-cultural histories of diverse communities. As they connected their school observations to readings of history and education and to class discussions, they started to examine current educational dilemmas, educational structures, and their historical context. The students’ conversations about education broadened to include the “learning of all children across race, class, and gender lines” (p. 321).

Preservice and new teachers face the challenges of learning to teach on their own as well as the pressures of high-stakes testing. Such an environment does not encourage risk taking in teaching or in curriculum development. Clayton (2007) suggests that changes in teaching practice may need to precede changes in thinking. She studied the relationship between conceptual changes and practical risk taking of three novice teachers who were participating in a year-long professional development

program. The teachers studied high interest topics in the context of their own teaching. The final project for the course was the development and enactment of curriculum in the teachers' classrooms. This research suggests that it is through their observation of students, discussion with supportive others, and reflection on teaching that novice teachers change their thinking, and that those cognitive shifts may take place over time.

Curriculum making (development and enactment) requires new teachers to consider the tensions of managing student relationships. Curriculum making also requires teachers to think about epistemological issues regarding the role of students and teachers together creating curriculum and constructing knowledge in the classroom. These are interrelated components and are relevant for novice teachers to explore. Clayton (2007) states that for the professional development conversations to be productive they must be linked to classroom practice.

The epistemological inquiry and self-reflection made possible through curriculum making as a development activity created opportunities for these new teachers to consider the consequences of their curricular choices in personal terms that, in turn, may have had more practical benefits for novice teacher development.
(p. 227)

Summary. These studies suggest that preservice teachers bring conceptions and beliefs about the act of teaching, the nature of K-12 students, and the process of developing effective instruction to teacher education programs. When preservice teachers were engaged in readings, observations, discussions, and curriculum making that were intentionally designed to challenge their preconceptions, they were able to

develop a more complex understanding of teaching and diverse communities. While preservice teachers may have shared some views, their experiences coming into an educational program were not identical. A key to cognitive change was the opportunity for preservice teachers to experience support as they challenged their own preconceptions and built new understandings.

Decision-making in Teaching

What knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes do preservice teachers draw upon as they make decisions about teaching in general and social studies in particular? An aspect to initially consider is preservice teachers' epistemology - beliefs about the nature of knowledge and the process of knowing. White (2000) examined preservice teachers' epistemology through their responses to problematic classroom situations. Descriptors of reflective judgment developed by King and Kitchner (1994) were used as a framework for White's categories. Reflective judgment is described as the ability to construct meaning and make judgments about unresolved or controversial issues. The beginning stages of reflective judgment are characterized by a belief that knowledge is certain or temporarily uncertain and is known by authorities. Problems are simple and have a correct answer or solution. Middle stages of reflective judgment are characterized by beliefs that knowledge is uncertain and does not come from authorities. Because people in these stages do not depend on one authoritative source, they may choose evidence that suits their opinion to justify action. In the highest stages are people who are able to evaluate different claims to knowledge. They can consider an expert's knowledge as evidence as they make judgments.

White examined preservice teachers' response across four dimensions of epistemology: certainty of knowledge, simplicity of knowledge, source of knowledge, and justification for knowing. The preservice teachers' responses in the study represented a range in relation to reflective judgment. Some believed that knowledge was certain, problems were simple, and experts could be depended on to make decisions. At the other end were those who believed that knowledge was nearly certain, problems were complex, and decisions could be made by considering multiple sources, including experts. White observed that the beliefs of "pre-service teachers in each category appear to interconnect in a web... [that] bounds a world view of knowledge and knowing related to teaching" (p. 299). Their particular world view was logically consistent and coherent. White also noted that

movement from category to category does not happen in stage-like fashion.... Rather, what appears to be the case is that once the pre-service teachers come to understand that some knowledge is uncertain in nature, they go through successive iterations of belief about the process of knowing. (p. 299)

College students operate at differing levels of reflective judgment, influencing their ability to evaluate and consider multiple viewpoints and contrasting evidence. White put forward the possibility that the interviews she conducted with students provided some contextual support that enabled them to score higher than they would have in a non-interview situation.

Sleeter (2009) examined decision making in relation to the developing epistemology of a novice teacher enrolled in a graduate level multicultural curriculum class. Drawing from the work of White's (2000) and others regarding thinking levels,

Sleeter constructed a heuristic tool for analyzing inservice teachers' ability to think complexly about curriculum. Along one dimension of the rubric were thinking levels labeled novice, developing, and accomplished, which corresponded to White's levels of absolutist, relativist, and reflective. Along the other dimension of the rubric were behaviors connected to decision making: task definition, perspective taking, self-reflexivity, and locus of decision making.

Throughout the course taught by Sleeter, the graduate students were engaged in a variety of activities that required them to analyze and consider multiple viewpoints and ideological perspectives. They participated in discussion groups, reflective writing, and curriculum development. Initially, the novice teacher in this study was motivated to include multicultural content in lessons and accepted the authority of the knowledge embedded in the school's curriculum. During the semester course she examined the epistemological assumptions in the textbooks. In developing a new unit, the novice teacher spent many hours researching content to build her knowledge base. By the end of the term the teacher had shifted from simply adding diverse perspectives to an existing curriculum to rethinking the content, viewpoints, and instructional strategies.

Sleeter (2009) noted that, "in today's standards-based context, schools tend to reinforce novice assumptions about knowledge by defining what to teach and expecting them to accept the state as the main authority over knowledge" (p.12). The discussion groups provided a supportive space in which teachers could raise questions

about readings, documents, and their own classrooms, and in the process develop epistemological sophistication related to teaching and learning.

In contrast to Sleeter's (2009) study of one novice teacher's epistemological development, Matthews and Dilworth (2008) studied five preservice teachers' understanding and planning of a specific content area, multicultural citizenship. This case study examined the relationship between preservice teachers' beliefs as evidenced in their "vision statements," talk during class sessions, and in interviews, and lesson planning around multicultural citizenship. The two social studies methods courses in which the study was set were organized around issues of multicultural citizenship, diversity and identity formation, and effective teaching in diverse classroom environments. Course instructional strategies included readings on multicultural history, reflective writing, peer teaching, and discussion. A goal for the course was for students to "gain transformative social studies knowledge" and integrate it into their teaching. Transformative knowledge, unlike mainstream Western-centric academic knowledge, includes multiple centers and highlights "marginalized voices as a way to decolonize the mind" (p. 369).

Mathews and Dilworth concluded that the preservice teachers' ideas about multicultural citizenship were still developing. One of the difficulties for this group of white preservice teachers was their examination of their own status and white privilege. While the preservice teachers accepted transformative academic knowledge, they were reluctant to include it in their lessons, in part because they didn't fully understand the content or know how to teach sensitive or difficult issues. The

researchers suggest that even when education programs are designed around multicultural citizenship education, the beliefs students bring to the classroom make it difficult to translate transformative pedagogy to their own classrooms.

Summary. The preservice and novice teachers in these studies brought to teacher education programs a range of beliefs about the nature or authority of knowledge. These beliefs affected their ability to consider multiple viewpoints and to rethink the structure of lessons and curriculum units. The teachers' decision making was related to epistemological sophistication. They were able to effectively include multiple viewpoints and experiences as their beliefs about the source and certainty of knowledge became less authoritarian.

Reflecting on Teaching

Decision making and reflecting on decisions are two complementary components of teaching. Darling-Hammond and Bransford (2005) state, "A central part of being a professional teacher is a commitment to help all students succeed" (p. 6). This commitment requires teachers to become "reflective decision makers who can carefully observe, inquire, diagnose, design, and evaluate learning and teaching so that it is continually revised to become more effective" (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 83). As teachers make decisions, they monitor their own thinking and action, and draw upon their knowledge of learners, subject matter, and teaching.

Teachers in public elementary schools work in a setting framed by standardized curriculum, research-based instructional materials and programs, and expectations for student achievement that are quantitatively measured. These settings

bring together students with a range of academic abilities, social and cultural backgrounds, and levels of language development. Teachers address individual and group needs for learning, while working to meet district goals for student performance. Classroom teachers straddle what Schön (1983) describes as the “varied topography of professional practice” where “there is a high hard ground where practitioners can make effective use of research-based theory and technique, and there is a swampy lowland where situations are confusing ‘messes’ incapable of technical solution” (p. 42).

Schön describes a process he terms “reflection-in-action” in which a practitioner, in trying to make sense of a phenomenon,

reflects on the understandings which have been implicit in his action, understandings which he surfaces, criticizes, restructures, and embodies in further action.... It is this entire process of reflection-in-action which is central to the “art” by which practitioners sometimes deal well with situations of uncertainty, instability, uniqueness, and value conflict. (p. 50)

A practitioner engaging in “reflection in action” becomes a “researcher in the practice context” (p. 68), who combines thinking and doing, inquiring and implementing, and in the process constructs new theory.

What is the process by which a prospective teacher becomes a practitioner who engages in “reflection in action?” What actions or experiences support a prospective teacher’s development in thinking about teaching?

Hollingsworth’s (1989) study of 14 elementary and secondary preservice teachers focused on their cognitive changes as they progressed through nine months of coursework and student teaching. The student teachers who were able to successfully

make changes to their practice, to find a balance between management and subject area teaching, had some shared characteristics. They saw themselves as learners and were able to accept error and change as part of their own learning process, and they recognized the need to change their initial beliefs with regard to classroom management. They had university supervisors and cooperating classroom teachers who supported and modeled the management change.

The student teachers who succeeded in making changes encountered cognitive conflict during their student teaching, often between their beliefs and those of their cooperating teacher. Through these disagreements, the student teachers were encouraged by supervisors and cooperating teachers to clarify their beliefs. They learned to integrate multiple aspects of teaching into “content-specific pedagogical routines” (Hollingsworth, 1989, p. 183). They also had opportunities to try their own ideas in different contexts. Out of this disequilibrium, they were able to develop a new, more complex understanding of classroom management and teaching that enabled them to focus on content pedagogy and to better understand their students’ learning. They learned to integrate the management and academic aspects of teaching.

While Hollingsworth did not refer to reflective practice, the characteristics and processes she described for the successful student teachers are the beginning steps of those behaviors that Schön described for “reflection-in-action” (Schon, 1983), that is, the ability to think about and critique one’s actions, make changes, and put into place a new action. The necessary component for the student teachers’ knowledge growth was strategic support of teachers and supervisors.

Ladson-Billings (2001) studied eight preservice teachers enrolled in an experimental teacher education program, Teach for Diversity (TFD). This program was designed around the theory of culturally relevant pedagogy, a theory developed by Ladson-Billings based on the following propositions: “Successful teachers focus on students’ academic achievement; Successful teachers develop students’ cultural competence; and Successful teachers foster students’ sense of sociopolitical consciousness” (p. 144). Over the fifteen-month TFD program, preservice teachers had practicum experiences in both community-based programs and public school classrooms and worked with students from diverse cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and ability groups. In their initial summer practicum, these preservice teachers observed and worked with students in settings such as day camps, recreation centers, and summer learning programs. This provided the preservice teachers with an opportunity to learn about the community and the culture, as well as experiences, and knowledge that students brought into the classroom. In weekly summer seminars, the preservice teachers “began to reflect on the process of interacting with children and learning to teach” (p. 154).

During their student teaching, each of the preservice teachers examined their own practice and the classroom context as they worked with struggling students. They were able to make adjustments or bring in new strategies and content to bridge academic curriculum and students’ lives. This reflection on teaching “represents a point of view – a view suggesting that the place for improving student performance begins with the teacher” (Ladson-Billings, 2001, p. 21). The explicit focus of the TFD

program on cultural competence directed the preservice teachers' attention to their students' cultural experiences both within and outside the classroom.

This research suggests that student learning is enhanced when teachers examine their practice within sociopolitical contexts and then implement practices that build academic competence. Ladson-Billing cautioned that time for reflection was a challenge for the preservice teachers in the TFD program as practiced.

Summary. These studies demonstrate that to help all students learn, teachers need to be able to think about and critique the multiple facets of their own teaching and, when necessary, develop a new plan. College instructors, supervisors, and mentor teachers were instrumental in helping preservice and novice teachers develop reflective behaviors. Purposeful attention to K-12 students' community and home experiences, combined with opportunities to test new ideas, receive targeted feedback, and engage in discussion, helped preservice teachers begin to ask questions about the effectiveness of their own teaching. With support, they began to develop the habits of reflection.

Summary

This review of literature suggests that a teacher's decision making behavior is part of a recursive process that also includes knowledge construction and reflection. Preservice teachers bring their conceptions of teaching, learning, and learners to an education program (Lortie, 1975). Once in a program, preservice teachers are asked to consider new ideas, create and implement lessons around often unfamiliar subject matter, and to interact with young students in classrooms. They often face

communities and students that are culturally, racially, linguistically, and economically different from themselves. Previously held ideas about teaching and learning are challenged.

Teachers' beliefs about the nature of knowledge, and how a learner comes to know, develop over time. Standards-based content conveys the idea to preservice teachers that knowledge is certain (Sleeter, 2009) and high-stakes testing discourages risk taking (Clayton, 2007). When preservice and novice teachers are motivated to add to or adjust curriculum (Sleeter, 2009), or when there is cognitive conflict over curriculum or methods (Hollingsworth, 1989), teachers are in a position to construct new knowledge about teaching and learning. The cognitive shifts occur as teachers test out their ideas, observe and assess students, and reflect upon the consequences of their teaching with the support and guidance of knowledgeable others (Clayton, 2007; Hollingsworth, 1989; Ladson-Billings, 2001). As a result of this cycle, new understandings of the nature of knowledge emerge (B. C. White, 2000), and more complex curriculum is developed (Ladson-Billings, 2001; Sleeter, 2009). The development of new knowledge is more difficult when teachers' previous experiences and knowledge are not appropriately challenged (Hollingsworth, 1989), or when new knowledge paradigms are simply substituted for old ones (Matthews & Dilworth, 2008). Clinical experiences are powerful components of the teacher education process because they offer student teachers a meaningful opportunity to learn about students, school culture, classroom management, subject matter, and pedagogy (Wilson et al., 2002).

Preservice teachers are able to develop a more comprehensive understanding of diverse learners and their communities when they participate in school and community programs and then have opportunities to connect their observations to readings and group discussions (Frederick et al., 2010). The preservice teachers' knowledge about students and their communities positions them to make culturally relevant decisions about content and methods (Ladson-Billings, 2001).

Since the enactment of Goals 2000 in 1994 and No Child Left Behind in 2002, instructional time for elementary social studies has decreased (Fitchett & Heafner, 2010). In many schools the content has been contracted to align with reading curriculum goals, and the pedagogy has become more teacher-centered (Au, 2007; Boyle-Baise et al., 2008). New teachers, who are still developing their teaching and content knowledge base, are asked to integrate content and make decisions about the educational significance of additions or changes to the educational program (Parker, 2010).

Research has been conducted on inservice social studies teachers' use of particular methods and the effectiveness of those methods. Research has also been conducted to better understand students' understanding of social studies concepts. History and geography are stand-alone subjects in middle and high schools and studies have been conducted to examine the learning and teaching of new teachers in those areas. The research studies with beginning teachers suggest that a supported process involving teaching, observation, assessment, and reflection can help those teachers think in more complex ways about teaching and learning. There is little research,

however, on how beginning teachers at the elementary level think about and make decisions regarding social studies content. This research study will add to our understanding of how preservice teachers build a knowledge base for teaching social studies, make decisions around social studies content, and reflect upon their teaching.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Introduction

As a researcher and teacher educator, I was interested in the ways in which a college course in social studies teaching and the clinical experiences supported teachers in their curriculum planning and teaching of social studies. What did preservice teachers bring to and take away from these experiences that enabled them to begin making choices that supported *their* students' learning and begin to consider the implications of those choices?

The purpose of this study was to examine the behaviors that elementary level preservice teachers develop and use as they make decisions concerning social studies curriculum. There were three questions that guided this study:

1. How do preservice elementary teachers construct understandings of the teaching of social studies?
2. What knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes do preservice teachers draw upon as they make decisions about social studies teaching?
3. How do preservice teachers respond to and reflect upon their own teaching of social studies?

Setting

The participants who volunteered for this study were elementary education students at a large northwestern university.

University. The university is nationally known for its research programs, and its college of education is accredited through the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). The college vision statement expresses a commitment to produce culturally competent educators who embrace diversity and social justice.

Double Degree. The Double Degree program is an undergraduate program allowing students to earn two bachelor's degrees. Along with coursework in their chosen field, students take an additional 40 credit hours in education. The education requirements consist of eight credits of core requirements, 17 credits of teaching methods, and 15 credits of student teaching. Students are licensed to teach after graduation.

Course. In the first term of the study, participants were enrolled in "Strategies for Teaching Language Arts and Social Studies," a two credit course. This elementary level course was one of the seven methods courses required for graduation. The course was designed to help students develop an understanding of a balanced language arts and social studies program. The course included theory and pedagogy, developmentally appropriate practice, children's literature, and state content standards. (See Appendix A for course syllabus)

Recruitment

Students enrolled in "Strategies for Teaching Language Arts and Social Studies" were initially contacted about the study through an email letter (Appendix B, Letter to Students). I visited the class after the letter, explained the study, and answered students' questions. Three students volunteered to participate. I provided

them each a copy of the Informed Consent Document as required by the Oregon State Institutional Review Board (Appendix C). I met with the volunteers individually and reviewed the Informed Consent Document and the study, answered any new questions, and explained that they were free to leave the study at any time. Contact information was included in the document in case the volunteers had questions or concerns about the study. Two copies of the document were signed. One copy was given to the volunteer and the second copy was delivered to Dr. Higgins to be kept in a secure site.

Participants

Three students volunteered to participate in the study. They were assigned pseudonyms to protect their identity. The participants were interviewed individually in order to learn about their educational and experiential backgrounds. Chapter four has a more detailed profile for each participant.

Hope. Hope is a 36 year old white female. She is married and has two children. Hope grew up in a small rural community in the northwest. Hope has a bachelor's degree in Spanish and a master's degree in anthropology. She is a post-baccalaureate student and will earn a degree in education. Her goal after graduation is to teach in a third through fifth grade classroom.

Laurel. Laurel is a 28 year old married white female. She grew up in a suburb of a large city in the northwest. Laurel's first degree is in English. Her goal after graduation is to teach in a third through fifth grade classroom.

Marcus. Marcus is a 28 years old white male. He grew up in the northeastern part of the United States. Marcus's first degree is in anthropology and he has broad

academic background in the social sciences. His goal after graduation is to stay in the region and teach.

Research Methodology

As a researcher, I was interested in how preservice teachers learned to teach social studies in elementary classrooms. I selected qualitative research methodology for this study because it provided me the tools and structure to conduct research and develop a better understanding of the experiences and perspectives of preservice teachers in their college and public-school settings. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2008), qualitative research is “a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of interpretive material practices that make the world visible” (p. 4). The approach is suited to researchers interested in how “social experience is created and given meaning” (p. 14).

I analyzed the data using an inductive approach drawing on Charmaz’s *Constructing Grounded Theory* (2010) and situational analysis (Clarke, 2005). Charmaz describes her approach, saying, “We *construct* our grounded theories through our past and present involvements and interactions with people, perspectives, and research practices” (Charmaz, 2010, p. 10). As I initially planned the focus of my study and the research questions, I continually came back to the situations and relationships inherent in becoming a teacher. The questions about learning to teach are located in situations. The situational analysis process developed by Clarke (2005) “supplements traditional or basic grounded theory with alternative approaches to *both* data gathering and analysis/interpretation” (p. xxii). In situational analysis “the

fundamental assumption...is that everything in the situation *both constitutes and affects* most everything else in the situation in some way(s)” (Clarke & Friese, 2007, p. 365). The situation is the site of analysis and “the first goal is to descriptively lay out as best one can all the important human and nonhuman elements in the situation of concern of the research” (Clarke, 2005, pp. 86-87). In the research process, maps are created “as a means of opening up and analyzing data cartographically, emphasizing relationality and positionality” (p. 292).

This research study involved three participants, each with distinctive experiences and perspectives. A multiple case study was a suitable structure for this study because it enabled me to study the participants as individual cases, and also to analyze across the case studies and look for commonalities. Yin (1994) describes a case study as a comprehensive research strategy that “investigates contemporary phenomena within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (p. 13). According to Merriam (1998), cross-case analysis “can result in building substantive theory offering an integrated framework covering multiple cases” (p.195).

Role of the researcher. In qualitative studies the researcher is the “primary instrument for gathering and analyzing data” (Merriam, 1998, p. 20). The researcher is subject to scrutiny as are other research tools. My researcher’s notebook documented the methods used, reflection on the process, and analysis of data. My personal interest or bias is presented in Chapter 1. In this study my role was that of observer.

Prior to beginning this study, I taught one term of the “Strategies for Language Arts and Social Studies” course at the university. I was familiar with the course syllabus and expectations for students in their part-time student teaching term. Through my professional experiences as a classroom teacher, course instructor, and supervisor of preservice and intern teachers, I developed an appreciation of the complex issues and work of preservice and classroom teachers.

Data collection. Data from student-produced texts, interviews, classroom observations, and a focus group were used for this study. Researcher memos documented the process and my thinking as I analyzed the data.

Student-produced texts. Student-produced texts in the form of course assignments were selected as an initial data source. These were “elicited texts” (Charmaz, 2010, p. 36) in which participants responded to the instructor’s course assignment. Elicited texts were selected because of their potential to elicit the “thoughts, feelings, and concerns of the thinking, acting subject as well as give researchers ideas about what structures and cultural values influence the person” (p. 36).

At the beginning of the “Strategies for Teaching Language Arts and Social Studies” class all of the students completed a short paper, responding to the following four prompts:

At this time, I think the purpose of teaching social studies is...

The strengths I bring to social studies teaching are...

To be an effective social studies teacher I will need to learn

Provide any background knowledge you have about your students in your elementary school placement that helps you in your curriculum planning and teaching.

Students were given class time to write and the paper was not graded. The instructor used the papers to assess students' initial understanding of the subject.

The first and second prompts relate to how preservice teachers construct knowledge for teaching. The second, third, and fourth prompts relate to the knowledge and resources that preservice teachers would draw on to teach social studies. The papers for the three participants were then re-typed by me and formatted for coding.

The second set of student-produced texts was a course requirement that included their reflections on the assigned chapters from the social studies textbook, *Visualizing Elementary Social Studies Methods* (Lee, 2008). Students were asked to do the following: Identify key ideas in the text and your personal reactions to these ideas. Answer the following questions: What good ideas did I get out of this reading? What does the information in the chapters mean to me as a teacher of social studies? (See Appendix A for course syllabus) The participants provided the researcher with copies of these documents which were then formatted for coding.

Interview. I selected the interview as second data source because it enabled me to ask preservice teachers individual questions related to reflections on their own teaching. Interviews have been described as conversations with a plan or purpose (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995; Merriam, 1998). They are useful tools when special types of information are desired and observation in the field setting is not feasible or likely

to generate that information (Merriam, 1998). Holstein and Gubrium (1995) suggest that all interviews are “interpretively active, implicating meaning-making practices on the part of both interviewers and respondents” (p. 4). They refer to these practices as “active interviews” and propose that “researchers acknowledge interviewers’ and respondents’ constitutive contributions and... incorporate them into the production and analysis of interview data” (p. 4). This active view rejects the approach in which the interview subject is viewed as a “vessel waiting to be tapped in favor of the notion that the subject’s interpretive capabilities must be activated, stimulated, and cultivated” (p. 17). The respondents are viewed as researchers of their own experience, who are actively composing meaning by “linking fragments into patterns and offering ‘theoretically’ coherent descriptions” (p. 29).

Within this active interview perspective, I approached the interviews as conversation with parameters. The first interview was conducted off campus, before the beginning of the participants’ full-time student teaching. The second interview was conducted at the participant’s elementary school after the classroom observation. I had questions prepared and viewed myself as one who “activates narrative production” (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995, p. 39). Because of my background in elementary classrooms and in teacher education, I was able to support participants, when appropriate, by providing relevant examples and “ways of conceptualizing issues and making connections” (p. 39). The transcripts and field notes from the interviews became a record of what was said and observed in the setting. The record also offered a view of how knowledge was organized in the participant’s experience.

The active interview was an appropriate tool because it was consistent with my constructivist research paradigm. The interviews were social interactions and the meaning that was generated through them was socially constituted. The structure of the interview sessions provided a setting in which the researcher's concerns could be addressed while supporting the meaning-making process. (See Appendix D for interview questions)

Classroom observations. Classroom observation was selected as a third data source. Observations take place in the natural setting and allow for "firsthand encounter with the phenomenon of interest" (Merriam, 1998, p. 94). The classroom observations provided a shared context around which to talk with the participants about teaching and learning, and allowed for references to specific incidents and behaviors during the interviews. Preservice teachers are frequently observed by university program staff. During recruitment for this study, and as observations were scheduled, I stressed that this observation was not evaluative.

In each classroom I sat off to the side while the participant taught a lesson or worked with students. The participants introduced me to their students, but I did not interact with them. I noted the physical setting of the room, the environmental print and displays, the teacher and student actions, and the sequence of activity. As much as possible, I transcribed the comments and discussion of the participants and students.

Focus group. A focus group was a fourth data source selected for this study. I wanted to provide a setting in which preservice teachers could discuss issues around social studies teaching from their perspectives. A goal of the focus group was to elicit

from participants their feelings, attitudes, and views about a selected topic and in their own words (A. Johnson, 1996; Puchta & Potter, 2004). Johnson (1996) cautions against allowing professionals to define a situation for users, instead advocating for a “process in which definition of needs emerges from the bottom up” and “gives status to the internal frame of reference to the client group, by collecting and analyzing perceptions and preferences as expressed by users” (p. 530). In a constructivist paradigm, meanings are constructed by individuals as they interact with others. Using this approach to research, “focus groups provide a social environment in which to articulate [meanings]” (Breen, 2006, p. 467).

I facilitated one focus group session in the spring term of 2011. I used the Success Analysis Protocol (J. P. McDonald, Mohr, Dichter, & E. C. McDonald, 2003) to structure the conversation. The purpose of this protocol was to encourage collaborative analysis of why things go right, in this case a social studies lesson. I chose this protocol because I thought it would elicit participants’ thinking about their knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes when making choices in their lessons. The protocol also asked them to reflect on their teaching and consider why lessons were effective.

The focus group sessions were audio-taped and then transcribed. During the sessions, I noted when individuals began speaking. I made field notes after the session to describe elements that could not be recorded. After transcription, the text was coded. (See Appendix E, The Success Analysis Protocol)

Memos. Memos are the researcher’s record of analysis, thoughts, interpretations, questions, and directions for further data collection (Strauss & Corbin,

1998). They are “sites of conversations with ourselves about our data” (Clarke, 2005, p. 202) and the “distillation process, through which the researcher transforms data into theory” (Lempert, 2007, p. 245). In my study, memos were written after each step of the research process to document the process and to capture my thinking as I analyzed the data.

Data analysis. Because the study was organized as a multiple case study, data was analyzed in two stages. In the first stage, the data were coded, organized in categories, and analyzed using charts and situational maps. In the second stage, the data were organized in matrices to allow for cross-case comparison and analysis.

There were multiple sources of data for this study. The instructor for the “Strategies for Language Arts and Social Studies” course provided copies of the participants’ initial prompt responses and these were re-typed for formatting. The chapter reflections from the course provided by the participants were in a Word document format. The transcripts from interviews, classroom observations, and the focus group were typed in Word documents. The margins were enlarged on all documents, and each line was numbered for reference. Before beginning my coding, I read through the course text and wrote a summary of each chapter. This gave me a reference for the participants’ chapter reflections and enabled me to distinguish between their restating or rephrasing of chapter concepts and their thoughts *about* the concepts.

First cycle coding. Initial coding was used, as it allowed me to break down data into “discrete parts, closely examining them, and comparing them for similarities

and differences” (Saldana, 2009, p. 81). Initial coding is appropriate for a grounded theory approach because it moves researchers to “remain open to exploring whatever theoretical possibilities [they] can perceive in the data” (Charmaz, 2010, p. 46). The participants’ responses to the initial prompt were coded first. As I read through each response, I assigned codes to words and phrases. After completing this first coding, I grouped the codes into categories that shared some characteristics. Because these first codes were drawn from responses to prompts, the categories reflected the nature of the prompts. I created a summary chart for each participant, and included the code, the representation from the data, and an identifying reference for the representation showing which document and what line in the document. The initial codes and categories have been compiled in Appendix F.

The chapter reflections, interviews, classroom observations, and focus group transcripts were coded following the process I used for the prompt responses. I added codes and descriptions to each participant’s summary. At the end of some coding sessions, I refined the categories by expanding or collapsing them. After coding data for all three participants, I looked at codes and refined them further so that categories were consistent across the three summaries. (See Appendix G)

Charting and mapping. To further analyze the data for each participant, I created large field grid charts on 18 x 24 inch sheets of newsprint and reorganized the coded data around research questions, looking for patterns, connections, and absences in the data. One chart concerned the participants’ knowledge of students, subject matter, and pedagogy. The horizontal axis comprised the three areas and the vertical

axis comprised rows for each document, e.g., prompt responses, chapter reflections and interviews. A second chart concerned the participants' references to their beliefs, attitudes, and their own learning experiences. Charmaz (2010) notes that an advantage of concrete images, such as diagrams, is in providing "a visual representation of categories and relationships" (p. 117).

I also constructed situational messy maps to help open up the data to see relationships between the elements (Clarke, 2005). For these maps I used phrases or words from the coded data. Clarke writes, "Once these maps are drafted, they are used in doing relational analyses, taking each element in turn, thinking about it in relation to the other elements on the map, and specifying the nature of that relationship" (p. 87).

Second stage analysis. After coding and analyzing the data for each participant, I developed charts to coordinate and analyze the data across cases (Merriam, 1998). These charts were organized around categories or codes from the summaries, e.g., role of the teacher, knowledge of students, models for teaching, and purposes for social studies. I used colored sticky notes, one color for each participant. I was able to rearrange the notes, gradually refining their placement so that I could see those elements and qualities that were common to all and those that pertained to only one or two participants. This data was further organized around research questions. An example of how data from different categories was organized to examine the relationships between beliefs and attitudes across the participants is displayed in Appendix H.

Validity

My research study grew out of an interest in the relationship between classroom teaching and elementary students' thinking in social studies. The entry point in research for me was teacher education in social studies. The questions I developed and my epistemological framework have shaped this study.

Qualitative and quantitative research differ in nature and purpose, and the steps the researchers take to check for accuracy and credibility in their findings also differ. In qualitative research, validity refers to procedures that are used to “demonstrate the accuracy of the findings and convince readers of this accuracy” (Creswell, 2009, p.235). Lincoln and Guba (1985), in their approach to validity, used the term “trustworthiness” to describe the overall quality of a piece of research. They suggest that when research is trustworthy it is “worth paying attention to, worth taking account of” (p. 290).

As I planned my study I considered the five interrelated general standards for validity in educational research presented by Eisenhart and Howe (1992). These researchers suggest that standards of validity should be “cogently developed, competently produced, coherent with respect to previous work, important, ethical, and comprehensive” (p. 656).

In their first standard, they state that “research questions should drive data collection techniques and analysis rather than vice versa” (Eisenhart & Howe, 1992, p. 658). The four data sources I used were useful for addressing the research questions as they allowed participants to view the questions from their different positions in the

education program and in time periods. I used memoing to capture my thinking during the process.

The second standard relates to effective application of collection and analysis of data. I referred to the literature regarding the research sources so that I was prepared to use them in a professional and effective manner. I examined literature on grounded theory and situational analysis to help me think through the analysis of data. My major professor and committee members provided valuable guidance and support as I worked with the data.

In the third standard, Eisenhart and Howe (1992) state that “studies must also be judged against a background of existing theoretical, substantive, or explicit practical knowledge” and “the assumptions and goals embedded in the development and conduct of the study must be exposed and considered” (p. 659). The background knowledge in this third standard includes the researcher’s own prior knowledge, bias and perspective. As I read and reviewed research in the field of education, my perspective was expanded. Initially, I was reading as a practitioner and I learned to read as a researcher. The literature review in Chapter 2 provides a theoretical and empirical background for the study.

The fourth standard in the model concerns the potential value of the research to inform and improve educational practice. My purpose for this study was to better understand preservice teacher behaviors and the support provided by teacher education programs, including clinical placements. That purpose was shared with participants at various points during the study. A goal for me was to describe the study, its rationale,

processes, and conclusions in a manner that was accessible to members of the education community.

The final standard of Eisenhart and Howe's model is comprehensiveness, "responding in a holistic way to balancing the first four standards as well as going beyond them" (p. 662). Throughout the process of planning the study and implementing it I continually checked for coherence.

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the behaviors that elementary level preservice teachers develop and use as they make decisions concerning social studies curriculum.

Three questions guided this study:

- 1) How do preservice elementary teachers construct an understanding of the teachings of social studies?
- 2) What knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes do preservice teachers draw upon as they make decisions about social studies teaching?
- 3) How do preservice teachers reflect upon and revise their own teaching of social studies?

Three elementary level preservice teachers in an undergraduate Double Degree program at a northwestern university volunteered to participate in the study. At the time the study began, the participants were enrolled in "Strategies for Teaching Language Arts and Social Studies," a two credit course.

The study was structured as a multiple case study with cross case analysis. There were four sources of data: student-produced texts, two interviews, a classroom observation, and a focus group discussion. Researcher memos were written after each step of the research process to document the process and to capture my thinking as I analyzed the data. The data was first coded using Initial Coding (Saldana, 2009), and then analyzed using situational analysis, a grounded theory approach developed by Clarke (2005).

The findings from the study are presented in Chapter 4. The chapter begins with an introduction and a profile of each participant. This is followed by three sections, each focusing on findings relating to a research question.

Chapter Four: Findings

Introduction

As a former elementary teacher, I was interested in how students learned about social studies subject matter and concepts, and the conditions that supported their learning. A critical component in student learning is the classroom teacher. As a teacher educator and researcher, I was interested in the ways in which a college course in social studies teaching and the experiences in elementary classrooms supported preservice teachers in their curriculum planning and teaching of social studies. What did the preservice teachers bring to and take away from these experiences that enabled them to make choices that supported *their* students' learning? I was interested in how preservice teachers learned to teach social studies in an educational climate that de-emphasized social studies content.

The first question in this research study concerned how preservice teachers constructed an understanding of teaching social studies given only one credit of social studies pedagogy and a de-emphasis of social studies curriculum in public schools. The second question concerned the knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes that preservice teachers drew upon as they made decisions about social studies teaching in their classrooms. The third question involved the role of reflection in the preservice teachers' instruction: How did they reflect upon and revise their own teaching of social studies? In order to investigate my research questions, I examined different aspects of three preservice teachers' experiences as they learned to teach social studies in the elementary school.

Data were collected throughout the participants' part-time and full-time student-teaching terms. During the first term of the study, participants were enrolled in "Strategies for Language Arts and Social Studies" at the university. At the beginning of the class they completed a short informal paper, responding to four prompts:

At this time I think the purpose of teaching social studies is...
 The strengths I bring to social studies teaching are...
 To be an effective social studies teacher I will need to learn...
 Provide any background knowledge you have about your elementary placement that helps you in your curriculum planning and teaching.

The participants were invited to add to their first and third prompt responses at the focus group session. The response to the first prompt is denoted as (P1) and the later addition to the prompt is denoted as (P2).

The participants also completed the required reflection papers on chapters of the text, *Visualizing Social Studies* (Lee, 2008). As part of the course requirement, students were asked to identify key ideas in the text and their personal reactions to these ideas. They were also asked to answer two questions: "What good ideas did I get out of this reading?" and "What does the information in the chapters mean to me as a teacher of social studies?" Chapter reflections are denoted as (R) and the number following (R) indicates the chapter in the text. One of the participants, Hope, submitted a final reflection and it is denoted as (RF).

Each participant was interviewed twice. The first interview was conducted after their part-time student teaching and is denoted as (I1). During their full-time student teaching, participants were observed in their classrooms, denoted as (O), and a

second interview (I2) was conducted. The three participants participated in a focus group discussion at the end of their full-time student teaching, denoted as (FG). After the focus group, the participants were invited to share a philosophy statement from their Capstone Project. Two participants volunteered their statements for inclusion in the study data. The philosophy statement is denoted as (PS). In this chapter, the numbers following the source indication refer to the lines in the formatted transcription or text.

The findings illustrate the themes and topics that emerged as participants completed their practicum in elementary education; interacted with teachers, students, and peers; considered educational settings and policies; and shared their personal background and beliefs. The findings from these sources are organized under the following categories: Constructing Understandings of the Teaching of Social Studies, Making Decisions about Social Studies Teaching, and Reflecting on Social Studies Teaching. Within each of these categories are sub-categories.

Profiles of Participants

The three participants in this study brought their beliefs, attitudes, academic work, and life experiences to their coursework in education and student teaching. These different elements had the potential to shape how the participants constructed understanding and developed as teachers of elementary social studies. A profile for each participant is included to provide background and context for the findings presented in this chapter.

Hope. Hope is 36 years old and identifies herself as a white female. She is married and a parent of two elementary aged children. Hope grew up in a small rural community in a northwestern state. She has many memories of working with her dad on the family farm, being with her mother cleaning and cooking, and playing with her many brothers and sisters. The family was somewhat secluded on the farm, which according to Hope was “really kind of wonderful. I had my own little oasis of life at home. We’d spend hours upon hours just outside... we had our own little forts that we made out of combines. We just had a blast” (I1, 48-51).

Hope attended a small elementary school and a combined middle-high school in her community. Her graduating class had only fifteen students, most of whom had been together since kindergarten. The schools struggled because of budget cuts and limited resources. She remembers the town supporting schools with levies to keep them going. Hope’s mother, like many other parents, volunteered in the classrooms or with special projects.

Her family was involved in local church activities. As an adult, she went on a church mission to Guatemala. It was during the training for mission work and then work in the countryside that she became fluent in Spanish. Later, Hope, and her husband and their first child spent a summer in Mexico continuing their Spanish language studies.

Hope has a bachelor’s degree in Spanish and a master’s degree in anthropology. The anthropology background helps her see students at a deeper level and develop insights into their learning. She describes being able to “step back and use

all the skills I learned as an anthropologist to create an environment that is beneficial” (I1, 190-194) She is a post-baccalaureate student and will earn a degree in education, tied to a teaching certificate. Hope’s goal is to teach in a third through fifth grade classroom. She feels hopeful about her future after graduation.

The small rural school for Hope’s part-time student teaching placement was similar to the one she attended as a child. In her placement school district, she observed extremely high levels of poverty, with the school providing before and after school care, including meals, for many students (P1, 18; I1, 148-153). The school district had a high level of homeless students including one in Hope’s class who was living with her mother and sibling in their truck’s camper shell (I1, 118-124). Hope saw the school as a safety zone for these students. According to Hope, poverty had an impact on students’ learning.

Everything from foster kids to abuse to not having enough food in the home. Single moms, single dads, and parents in jail. You can’t even imagine the kind of life these kids deal with on a daily basis and then coming to school and trying to learn. That’s secondary for a lot of them. (I1, 134-137)

The school for Hope’s full-time student teaching was in a larger city near the university. She commented during the focus group discussion that most of her students were from low income homes and the families did not venture out of town often. As a result, the students had limited exposure to places in the state (FG, 287-290).

Hope stated that the purpose of education is to teach students how to learn, rather than what to learn, and also how to deal with conflicts. To this she added, “But

more and more, I've also learned we're teaching social norms, teaching values – you don't cheat, you don't lie, you don't steal.... That's been an unexpected aspect of education that I'm happy to help out with, but I hadn't expected that to be part of it" (FG, 1016-1023).

Laurel. Laurel is 28 years old and identifies herself as a white female. She and her younger sister grew up and attended public schools in a suburb of a large city in the Pacific Northwest. She remembers as an elementary student wanting to be a teacher, and even in play situations taking on a caretaker role.

After graduating from high school, Laurel worked in the offices of a large national company. She also took classes at a community college and many of those courses were later applied toward her bachelor's degree. When the company outsourced its work, Laurel lost her job. It was then that she decided to attend college full time and complete the courses necessary to earn a teaching degree.

Laurel is enrolled in the undergraduate Double Degree program. Her first degree is in English. Her second degree is in education and is tied to a teaching certificate.

Read alouds were Laurel's favorite time as an elementary student and it was there she was introduced to Brian Jacques and his *Redwall* series. As an adult, she continues to love literature and eagerly talks about books she has read and those she hopes to read. Laurel describes how books are able to introduce us to different worlds and at the same time show us how people in those worlds are like us. Knowing what

her students are reading is important to Laurel and she frequently looks for current student favorites like *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* (Kinney, 2007).

Laurel and her husband participate in the Society for Creative Anachronism, an organization devoted to researching and reenacting European medieval history. In addition to creating her own character and participating in the events and games, Laurel enjoys learning about how people lived in the past.

Laurel now lives in a mid-sized town out of the metro area. She likes the scale of this community and would like to find a teaching job there or nearby after graduation. Laurel is hopeful that she will be able to work in the field of education, ideally as a classroom teacher in grades three through five.

In response to the initial prompt, Laurel wrote that many of the students in her part-time placement were from families with low socio-economic backgrounds. Additionally, she noted that many students in her class were English language learners (P1, 15). During the first interview, Laurel talked about one student whose family had been homeless for part of the school year. The student struggled academically as a result of the many absences from school (I1, 12-14). She said the school had a low level of parent involvement (P1, 18).

Laurel was placed in a fourth-fifth grade classroom for her full-time student teaching. This blended class had been created in response to budget cuts in the school district. The school was set in a middle income neighborhood.

When Laurel volunteered to participate in this research study, she explained that she had not had the opportunity to work with students in social studies in her part-

time student teaching placement due to the focus on reading and math in that classroom. Laurel felt that social studies was important for elementary students and hoped her participation would support teacher education in the field. Laurel stated that the purpose of education is to help one become a successful human being, who will be able to choose what to do in life, rather than be forced into situations (FG, 1002-1004).

Marcus. Marcus is 28 years old and identifies himself as a Caucasian male. He was raised in the northeastern part of the United States and has a younger sister. His father's job required travel and so the family moved around a lot. They lived in the inner city, suburbs, and the countryside. Marcus attended public schools; some very small with less than 100 students. His graduating class, in contrast, had more than a thousand students. The different schools and settings provided Marcus broad experience with and insights into public education. Travels with his father to a big city gave him occasions to "miss school, but not miss education" (I1, 171). By the time he was eighteen Marcus had visited all fifty states.

Marcus attended colleges in other states before settling in a mid-sized city in the Pacific Northwest. He was attracted to the city and college because of their proximity to the ocean, mountains, and a large metropolitan area.

Marcus is in the undergraduate Double Degree program. His first degree is in anthropology and his second degree is in education and is tied to a teaching certificate. Marcus began his university study in education but left it and to pursue other academic interests. Throughout his studies he found himself coming back to learning about and

working with people in poverty. His degree in education allows him to “work with and teach kids and be around those environments where information is constantly changing; where things that we knew were true within my lifetime aren’t true now” (I1, 189-192). Marcus has spent over a year at the elementary school where he is now student teaching. He began as a volunteer at the school and was then placed there for part-time and full-time student teaching. He has a broad knowledge base, especially in the social and geosciences. This is especially helpful when working with inquisitive fifth graders. When he is unable to answer their questions, he finds entry points for them to investigate their interests at a deeper level. After graduation he plans to stay in the region and teach.

Marcus’s part-time and full-time student teaching were in the same fifth grade classroom. Marcus wrote that most of the students in his placement were white, native English speakers. Several of the students were from single parent homes (P1, 21-23). During the first interview he explained that there was limited participation by family members due to lack of time and lack of transportation to the school (I1, 580-582). During the focus group discussion he noted that many of his students spent a lot of time at home, with unsupervised use of online media, particularly chat room and forums (FG, 150). Marcus also discussed some families that held extreme social or political views. One student used violent rhetoric toward the president and other Democratic figures, expressing interest in their death. A second student’s family believed that the moon landing and other technological achievements were part of a larger conspiracy (R7, 17-23).

Marcus stated that the purpose of education is to “create functioning people....little thinkers essentially, and helping them on their path to discover who they are” (FG, 1007-1011). He added that the emphasis should not be about what to think, but instead about learning how to think.

Constructing Understandings of the Teaching of Social Studies

As student teachers, the participants were both learning about teaching in their coursework and also engaged in teaching and working in classrooms. This section concerns the factors that contribute to the participants’ understanding of the teaching of social studies, organized under two categories: Self as teacher, and Self as learner. The findings are drawn from the participants’ prompt response (P), chapter reflections (R), interviews (I), classrooms observations (O), focus group (FG), and philosophy statement (PS).

Self as teacher. This category concerns the participants’ developing understanding of themselves as elementary-level teachers. The findings in this category are organized under three sub-categories: Personal qualities and academic background, Role of the teacher, and Beliefs and attitudes. The findings are drawn from their prompt response (P), chapter reflections (R), interviews (I), classroom observations (O), focus group (FG), and philosophy statement (PS).

Personal qualities and academic background. The initial writing prompt (P1) for the Strategies for Language Arts and Social Studies class asked participants about the strengths they brought to the teaching of social studies. During the first interview (I1) the participants were asked to expand upon their prompt response by describing

academic background, skills, and knowledge that contributed to their teaching.

Through both the prompt response and first interview all three participants identified personal qualities and academic background that they believed enhanced their teaching.

Hope. Hope had a Bachelors degree in Spanish and she described herself as culturally competent. She saw this ability to understand “not just linguistically, but also culturally” (I1, 229) as an advantage in both connecting with parents of her future students, and in recognizing and addressing the cultural biases in curriculum and assessment materials. Hope’s Masters Degree in Anthropology provided her with the skills of analysis and observation. She explained

The skills I learned as an anthropologist... really has set me up to create an environment that is beneficial. That I can step back and see through my anthropologist lenses per se and say, OK, the set up of this classroom is not working or the reason this student isn’t working is because of their physical isolation in the physical classroom or the other students by them. I just think it’s really helped me see things from a different perspective or on a different level. (I1, 190-198)

Additionally, Hope saw her own interest in the study of people, cultures, and history, and her ability to share that passion for learning with students, as strengths she brought to the teaching of social studies.

Laurel. Laurel’s first degree was in English. She had taken numerous courses in literature for her degree and was familiar with literature and the structure of texts. Laurel described her love of literature and its capacity for opening up other worlds to students. Literature, according to Laurel, was a good way to bring social studies out; it could include reading comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary (I1, 63-64). She was

building her knowledge base of children's literature that included social studies themes and which would support studies of history and social issues. By reading the books students choose to read, she could learn about their interests and in the process find a "hook for social studies" and ways to use maps and talk about settings and time periods (I1, 109-111). An appreciation of history and diversity and a curiosity to learn more are qualities Laurel identified as strengths that she brought to teaching social studies (P1, 7-8).

Marcus. Marcus's first degree was in Anthropology. This degree and the teaching certificate would make it possible for him to work with and teach children, particularly those living in poverty. He identified his broad academic background with a focus in anthropology, cultural geography, and international studies as a strength he brought to social studies (P1, 6-7). He described his background as

not very deep in most places, but it's really broad. It's enough to get me through the really superficial questions that most fifth graders have, and if they want to get in depth I can usually know where to point them and say, "Here's a good entry point for you on this much bigger topic."
(I1, 235-239)

That knowledge base and the ability to see multiple entry points enabled Marcus to modify and adapt lessons for students. "It's just a matter of pulling the strings and pulling it together to make it fit the kids" (I1, 552-553).

Summary. The three participants viewed themselves as individuals who enjoyed learning about other people and the contexts in which people live now or have lived in the past. All three participants were able to draw on their academic background to enhance their teaching of social studies. Hope saw how the skills and

concepts developed in her academic work in anthropology and Spanish would add to her classroom teaching and her work with families. Laurel saw how her knowledge of children's literature would help her find books that could bridge language arts skills and social studies content. Marcus saw how his academic background in social sciences provided him with broad content knowledge that would enable him to address a range of students' needs and interests when teaching social studies.

Role of the teacher. In their chapter reflections and interviews, the participants shared their understanding of elementary teachers' various roles. In the initial interview each participant was asked to think and talk about teachers they remembered from their own schooling. The participants discussed these teachers and others whose work helped them understand the role of the teacher. Findings regarding the roles for teachers are drawn from chapter reflections (R), interviews (I), classroom observations (O) and the focus group discussion (FG).

Hope. Hope described the teacher as one who helped students make connections in their learning. This idea was reflected in her writing about a reading discussion on a historical topic and how she was aware that students had different levels of background knowledge which affected their interest and participation.

The challenging part is to find a way to intrigue all students in some capacity. I feel that through inquiry that can be accomplished, if there is some type of concrete experience that they can pull from. The teacher's role is to help them to discover that connection! (R3, 39-44)

In the interview after her part-time student teaching, Hope stressed the role of the teacher as one who makes everyday connections across subject areas and between the children's home experiences and their learning at school (I1, 422-425). She

described a modification to a math lesson after her realization that students were not familiar with fractions: "I brought in wrenches and measuring cups. I brought in this realia and hands-on stuff that they could physically see and touch....It taught me this important lesson that everything has to be overlapping" (I1, 490-493).

Hope portrayed the teacher as a facilitator of students' engagement in learning. To help students maintain their engagement in learning, she believed teachers needed to use a variety of activities including reading, because it was a skill for lifelong learning, and also hands-on strategies, because they solidified learning (R10 & 11, 28-41). According to Hope, social studies content, though not often taught, provided an essential foundation for other curriculum areas. Regarding her role as a social studies teacher she wrote

I have learned that the only way that my students are going to learn these things is if I know them and take every opportunity to share my knowledge with them. If I am able to teach them the skills to be inquisitive and interested in topics then they will learn how to do it on their own. (RF, 81-86)

She described herself as a passionate learner and a model for her students, especially in the area of social studies (P1, 8-9). She emphasized that rather than imposing her own beliefs on students, she could help them find their own passions and beliefs (R1, 47-49).

Hope's definition of the teacher as one who facilitates engagement was influenced by teachers she had as a child. In both reflection descriptions and in interviews, Hope described her middle school history teacher as brilliant and as having very strict standards for behavior in his class. He used a storytelling approach that,

according to Hope, made history real (I1,281-285). Although not identifying individual teachers, Hope described the positive experiences in her elementary school where students were engaged in projects, students made costumes and put on plays, and students studied energy and built and cooked in solar ovens.

Hope also described the teacher as one who helped students bridge their home lives and experiences to the social and academic expectations of school. In talking about her experiences as a student teacher, Hope described Valentine's Day, the difficulties in class, and the model provided by her cooperating teacher. After a very difficult day with numerous angry outbursts, the teacher finally asked the class to sit down. The teacher then asked the students

“How many of you came to school angry at something that happened at home this weekend?” There were seventeen students in the classroom and twelve raised their hands...But I love what the teacher did. She said, “You know I can't solve any of those problems at home, but I can make a safe environment here at school and it requires all of you to help make it safe. We have to treat each other with respect. We can't throw things at each other. We can't say mean things.” (I1, 129-131, 139-143)

Laurel. Laurel described the teacher as the person who knows students and content and is able to plan curriculum based on that information. In a chapter reflection, Laurel wrote that when teachers know what students know, they can “expand on that knowledge, rather than rehash something that they have already learned” (R3, 31-33). In the interview after her part-time student teaching, she stated that it was important to know what students know at the beginning of the year, and that beginning of the year assessments could provide teachers with that information (I1, 8-9). She said that it was important for her as a teacher to find ways to build on

students' interests when teaching social studies (I1, 106-107). For Laurel, students' knowledge and interests were starting points for a teacher's planning.

Examples of building on students' knowledge and interest were displayed in lessons Laurel taught in her full-time placement. After observing her cooperating teacher lead students through a discussion of a weekly student magazine, Laurel taught her own lesson. In Laurel's lesson, she asked students to make connections to their previous vocabulary work while they read and discussed the magazine. She also introduced the role of communication as a new connection between the news story topic and the students' current social-studies focus. Laurel's state poster lesson, in which students drew a state map and added facts about the state, was similar to the thirteen colonies poster lesson her cooperating teacher had presented earlier. Laurel added a famous person component to her lesson, so that students could research a person of personal interest. She noted that this added element created meaningful context for her students (FG, 538). In both of Laurel's lessons she enhanced on the modeled lesson by adding context that was relevant to students' interest.

In reflection papers and interviews, Laurel described the challenges teachers faced and the role of the teacher as a manager of curriculum content and instructional time. In one chapter reflection she wrote, "My students right now rarely get more than reading, writing, and mathematics. Science, art, and social studies have to somehow be integrated into the rest of the day" (R4, 19-23). In a later interview, Laurel noted that there was not enough time to expand on topics that might be of interest to her students, such as the timeline that accompanied the article they had read. Laurel

attributed the time limitations to the school's daily instructional schedule (I2, 125, 129-133). Her observations and comments suggest that, because of testing mandates and rigid schedules, the teacher must find spaces in the instructional day to address additional topics and also make connections to prioritized content. Laurel recognized that teachers needed to be flexible in the delivery of instruction so as not to lessen valuable learning time for students (R14, 26-27).

Marcus. Marcus addressed the role of the teacher in both general terms and in terms specifically related to social-studies teaching. He stated that an effective teacher should not teach students what to think; rather, the teacher should provide students with the tools that demonstrate different ways of thinking (R1, 57-60). Related to this role was the job of helping students develop personal and civic competence. Marcus noted his students echoed their parents' beliefs about current events and situations in the world. He said that teaching the basic skills of research and analysis were necessary if his students were to become members of a participatory democracy (I1, 322-328).

In an early chapter reflection, he wrote that from his perspective, the role of the teacher was to present social studies "to the students in a meaningful, approachable manner which creates more than just a pile of facts but instead lets the students approach the topics, investigate them, and come to their own conclusion" (R1, 50-55). He explained that as a teacher he must take the district's curriculum, contextualize it, and make it relevant for students. As an example, when Marcus's students learned about the branches of government and the President's cabinet, they also learned how

the decisions made by the Secretary of Education affected their experiences as students (O, 35-45).

Marcus's understanding of the teacher's role was influenced by teachers he had as an elementary student and teachers he worked with at the school where he volunteered then worked as a student teacher. He described one elementary teacher that he had for three years. She was a student teacher during his fourth grade year, and later a school faculty member in the school district. He remembered her as setting high requirements and standards for him and for being engaged with her students. She was

very involved with my parents and very involved with my family, knew my situation and knew the situations with the other students, essentially for three years. She was one of the best teachers I ever had, who I look to for inspiration for how to deal with my kids.
(I1, 253-258)

Marcus was aware that some of his students had a limited vision of their future and his goal was to "create some opportunity for them to buy into their own education" (R1, 29-30). He worked with "two tremendous teachers who constantly went out of their way to show these kids that they were valuable, appreciated members of our school and gave them chances to have some say in how things were done" (R1, 37-42). In both of these models, Marcus construed the teacher's role to include active involvement in their students' personal well-being and academic success.

For Marcus, the teacher's role also entailed being engaged in professional development opportunities. He wrote, "I view it as my job to stay up on new pedagogical theories, teaching techniques, and instructional tools, while also

constantly learning about the material that I teach” (R2, 59-62).

Marcus talked about how his perception of teaching had changed over time as a result of his volunteer work and student teaching at his school.

Part of what kept me out of teaching was that I viewed teaching as teaching in a bubble. You’re off on your own and you don’t have a lot of support. What I’m seeing now is that it’s important to get out of that bubble, to create connections and relationships with other teachers. (I1, 375-378)

Summary. Each of the participants understood the role of the teacher to include the responsibility for knowing their students’ interests and needs and then planning relevant lessons. The participants also held that teachers should help students make connections between lesson content and the students’ own knowledge and experiences. Related to this role, Laurel saw the need for the teacher to manage instructional time and content in environments that were sometimes constraining. Hope recognized her role as a model for learning and engagement. Additionally, Marcus placed on teachers the responsibility for helping students to develop personal and civic competence.

All three participants looked for and recognized teaching models as they worked in schools as preservice teachers or volunteers. Hope and Marcus worked in schools with high levels of poverty and where students sometimes exhibited behaviors that interfered with their learning. They both reported working with cooperating teachers who consciously strove to create caring and responsive classrooms. The teachers responded to difficult situations with compassion, bridging the circumstances of students’ experiences to the life and goals of the classroom. Laurel described

situations in which she drew on observed lessons for examples of how to teach particular lessons.

Hope and Marcus each identified an elementary or middle school teacher who had a strong positive influence on their own education and their attitudes toward learning and teaching. These teachers were remembered as being strict, with clear expectations for students.

Beliefs and attitudes. Beliefs are those propositions that an individual holds to be true (Borg, 2001). Teachers may hold beliefs about the process of teaching, the nature of learning, and what it means to know a subject. Teachers can also hold beliefs about students and characteristics embodied by students. The beliefs teachers hold help them interpret and make sense of complex problems and contexts, and to develop strategies for action (Nespor, 1987). Attitudes are evaluative tendencies, and they can guide action in immediate social contexts and influence planning (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; Ledgerwood & Trope, 2010). The participants' beliefs and attitudes about the role of education, the nature of knowledge, the processes of teaching and learning, and the students in their classrooms were evident in their chapter reflections (R), interviews (I), and focus group comments (FG). After the focus group the participants were invited to share a philosophy statement that had been included in their Capstone Project. This statement was not part of the original data sources. Two participants volunteered their statements for inclusion in the study. The philosophy statement is denoted as (PS).

Hope. Hope shared the philosophy paper in which she described her beliefs about teaching, learning, and students. Hope believed that she could be an effective teacher by using aspects of five different educational philosophies: perennialism, essentialism, existentialism, social reconstructivism, and progressivism. Her beliefs and examples from her lessons and comments are drawn from her philosophy statement, interviews, and the focus group discussion. Also included are examples from those sources that reflect her attitudes toward learning and families.

Hope believed that education was of central importance and that through learning, students would find success in their lives. According to Hope, the teacher should teach students how to learn and help them to see the power in knowledge, while modeling a love for learning. (PS, 23-29). She related this belief to the philosophy of perennialism. Hope expressed her own love of learning throughout the study. In the first interview she said, "I love immersing myself in new knowledge and new areas and new skills. There's all those new areas of growth and self-development. I think that if I see myself as a learner, those that I teach will feel that and realize that and say, 'I want to be a learner, too'" (I1, 379-383).

Hope believed there were certain facts that provided students with building blocks for learning. She related essentialism to the "hard reality that facts make the world go round" (PS, 31-32). In her comments and writing, she referred to foundational knowledge that was necessary for academic success. She noted that much of this foundational information related to social studies topics. Hope also observed that the standardized tests sometimes reflected a cultural context that was unfamiliar to

students who had English as a second language. Of the cultural context in the tests she said, “It’s completely biased and unfair and stereotypical” (I1, 577-578).

In addition to learning foundational information, Hope held that students should also pursue their own interests and that, through this pursuit, they would develop a love of learning. She wrote, “Education should be an exciting experience that you want to come back to again and again” (PS, 43-44). A key to this process was for students to “see that learning, even the things they don’t like, can be fun and enriching, not drudgery and painful” (PS, 52-53). Helping students to find their interest or passion and to develop patience in the process of learning was the teacher’s responsibility. Hope related this aspect of teaching and learning to existentialism.

Hope believed that students learned through being actively engaged over time in projects and activities and by being able to apply what they had learned (PS, 74-90). She related this belief to the philosophy of progressivism. Hope’s beliefs about students becoming socially conscious also acknowledged their developmental levels. She wrote, “Small children just need a small understanding of the world....As children grow older, I feel it is necessary to let them know of some of the injustices that are in the world, and even exist in some of the very homes that they live in” (PS, 66-72). She did not want students to see themselves as victims; rather, she hoped to create a safe environment and to instill a sense of hope in the future. She linked these beliefs about social consciousness to the philosophy of social reconstructivism.

Beliefs about families and attitudes toward them were shared in Hope’s chapter reflection, interview, and focus group comments. She believed that parents played a

role in education. She said that connecting with parents was a pivotal part of a teacher's work with children in the classroom (I1, 232-233). She also spoke of the importance of utilizing the resources parents had to offer and creating a classroom where all parents felt welcome and at ease (I1, 332-345). She felt her language skills and cultural fluency would be an asset in developing positive relationships with families.

Hope responded with both empathy and concern when she observed how families were not always able to provide the academic support that was necessary for their children. She thought that students from families with low socio-economic status often missed opportunities for the deeper discussions at home that would build foundational knowledge. She wrote, "Their parents probably don't sit around the dinner table and have conversations about what is happening in Egypt or why the United States entered World War II" (RF, 37-40). She also expressed that parents with limited formal education may have difficulty providing help with school work, especially when new programs were introduced (I1, 349-351). As a result, teachers had to help students build knowledge in class by integrating social studies topics throughout the day and had to teach students the skills for independent learning (RF, 81-86). When she responded to a question about the purpose of education, Hope said that the teaching of social norms and values was becoming the teacher's responsibility. She was shocked that the rules of school were not necessarily the rules that students experienced in their homes (FG, 1016-1021).

Laurel. The following findings about her beliefs and attitudes are drawn from chapter reflections, interviews, and focus group discussion. While Laurel chose not to share her philosophy statement, she did meet to review and discuss this section.

Laurel shared her belief that students should understand how historical events have shaped the present and how their actions today will affect the future (R5, 39-45). She also shared that every citizen should be informed about issues and should understand the power of their vote (R7, 16-22). For Laurel, the aim of education was to help one become a successful human being who will be able to choose what to do in his or her life (FG, 1002-1003). She expressed that literacy and reading were of central importance, and students should be provided support and instruction in this area to allow them to develop skills and interest necessary to pursue their goals and participate in society.

Regarding the process of teaching, Laurel believed that content standards were a central element in a teacher's decision making. She wrote that teachers should begin by identifying standards for lessons, rather than simply working standards into enjoyable activities. She felt that content standards provided a good benchmark of where students should be academically (R4, 12-15). Laurel wrote that it was important for teachers to understand what they were teaching and how lessons connected to each other. By planning out their lessons, teachers would be better prepared for students and be able to make adjustments to their lessons when necessary (R2, 15-22).

Beliefs about the process of learning emerged in her reflection papers and comments. For Laurel, learning was dependent upon both the pursuit of one's own interests and the consideration of different viewpoints. By including a variety of instructional strategies, lessons would be more interesting and would appeal to different learning styles (R5, 51-52). Students would also benefit from the opportunity to explore different points of view (R5, 36-38). She also recognized the potential for learning in students' discussions: "It gives you power, too. When you're taking part you can help steer and influence what's being talked about" (FG, 894-895). Laurel described how the students' interest in the Oregon Trail changed when they were able to pursue sub-topics such as hunting and the role of women (FG, 895-906). During the focus group, Laurel shared that she thought learning was more likely to occur when students encountered and interpreted information, and then created a product showing their understanding (FG, 432-434, 455-458).

Laurel's attitudes toward teaching and learning were reflected in the concerns she raised about her schools' instructional schedule restricting what subjects could be taught at what times, limiting how students' interests could be pursued and the integration of subject matter (I2, 118-141). She was also concerned that a focus on standardized testing narrowed the curriculum to reading, writing, and math (R4, 19-26).

Beliefs about self-assessment as a component of learning emerged as Laurel included more complex projects in her teaching. In the focus group she described her state poster project lesson and her initial difficulty in assessing projects. Following a

suggestion from her university observer, she implemented a strategy that provided criteria for students to assess their own work. She commented that self-assessment was an important skill for students to learn. The process increased their independence and conveyed the idea that the completion of work was not simply to meet a teacher's expectation, but was an intrinsic value one should develop (FG, 480-483, 489-491).

Laurel expressed beliefs about students that related to the nature of their childhood. In the focus group she stated that children of today had different childhoods than she and her fellow student teachers had experienced. She said, "They have all these things. They don't go out and play baseball as much unless it's an organized sport put together by their parents" (FG, 136-139). According to Laurel, children of today lived in an instant gratification society in which technology played an important role (FG, 116-117, 602-603). She was concerned that technology in classrooms was distractive and often detrimental to students' learning (FG, 115-116, 131). Laurel felt that easy access to technology hindered the ability of students to use hard resources such as books and encyclopedias (FG, 425-427). She was concerned that students chose to rely on the internet for information and images, rather than expending effort to read and then write what they had learned, or to draw their own images illustrating what they had observed. Laurel was worried that students would not value information that was easy to come by (FG, 418-421).

Marcus. Marcus's beliefs about teaching and learning were explicitly stated in his writing and comments. He acknowledged that the philosophy of social reconstructivism and the work of Paolo Freire influenced his thinking about the role of

education and the process of teaching (R5, 12-15; I1, 544; PS, 11-12). Additionally, Marcus noted the influence of the child-centered pedagogies of Rudolph Steiner and progressivism on his thinking about teaching and learning (I1, 129, 558-561; PS, 11-12). In a chapter reflection, he wrote that one of his key beliefs was that teachers should “present students with the tools to learn and the various arguments, then let them decide” (R7, 13-15). This idea was reiterated in his philosophy statement when he wrote, “The key is not teaching students what to think, but how to think....I want to produce students who can think for themselves and evaluate sources to determine their credibility” (PS, 25-27).

Marcus’s beliefs about the role of content standards were linked to his beliefs regarding students’ thinking and decision making. He believed that national standards would ensure that all students learned what he termed “the basics,” and that state and local standards were needed to reflect knowledge about local history and the environment in which students lived (R3&4, 29-40). Marcus questioned some traditional content being taught in classrooms. He discussed how elementary students were still taught that America was discovered by European explorers. He explained his efforts to present a more accurate story. “Even ignoring the Native Americans, which I hate doing, but the Vikings were here five hundred years before Columbus was here. That matters, doesn’t it? Doesn’t it matter how we use this language and use this knowledge?” (I1, 194-197). Marcus held that potentially controversial topics, when included, should be “tied to standards and presented in a format which is truly

open to all viewpoints, including those which may challenge the views held by the instructor” (PS, 29-31).

Marcus believed teachers should design lessons that considered students’ personal contexts, addressed students’ learning styles, and were relevant to students’ interests (PS, 3-8). He wrote that when information was contextualized, students were better able to see its relevance (R8&9, 3-10). Marcus described many of his students as disenfranchised, living in economically poor households, and with few models for academic success (R1, 32-37; I1, 67). In his philosophy statement he applied the idea of contextualization to his students.

While students living in generational poverty do not need to hear about the possibly debilitating effects it can have, understanding the history and structure of social processes and policies could increase the ability of students to understand and empathize with their situation (and others living in different contexts). (PS, 20-23)

Marcus believed his students had the potential to be a powerful generation because of their interest in the internet and ability to use it as a source of information (I1, 69-73). To realize this potential, Marcus held that students needed to move beyond an unquestioning acceptance of what they read and hear, and to learn the skills of critical analysis (I1, 89-95).

In one interview Marcus explained his frustration with the objectives and attitudes toward public schools.

I feel like the education system historically was built to pull people up. Now, we have all this tiering and stuff and where rich people are spending lots of money to get schools to be run a certain way. They’re sending their kids to schools that aren’t run that way at all. Most of the education department sends their kids to private schools. What

does that tell us about our future as public school educators?
(I1, 130-135)

Marcus spoke of his classroom as a place for students to pursue interests and develop behaviors that would lead to school participation. "If they're zoned out during school, it's not ideal, but if I can get them to care, if I can get them to read about something, it's a little victory that gets us heading down the right path" (I1, 463-465).

Marcus recognized the potential conflict between his beliefs regarding social reconstructivism and his understanding of how his students learned. He noted that some students required more structure and guidance in their classrooms, and he considered it his responsibility to create those conditions. "The lesson I had to learn was that I'm not teaching for me, I'm teaching for them" (I1, 553-554).

Summary: Throughout the study the participants shared their beliefs and attitudes regarding the role of education in students' lives, the nature of knowledge, the processes of teaching and learning, and the characteristics of students and their families. These beliefs and attitudes were expressed in chapter reflections, interviews, focus group discussion, and philosophy statements.

The participants each believed that, through education, students would develop the capacity to make choices about their future, be able to pursue their interests, develop a sense of self worth, and develop the skills to participate in society. Laurel spoke more specifically about the role of literacy in one's academic and personal success.

Regarding the process of teaching, the participants expressed that teachers were responsible for knowing their students and the content they were to teach. They

believed that teachers could facilitate students' learning by using instructional strategies that considered individual learning styles and by making connections between the content and students' interests. Hope and Laurel expressed that students were more likely to learn and remember information when they spent time on projects, researching, writing, drawing, and arranging elements for presentation.

The participants each addressed the nature of the knowledge that was to be taught, learned, and assessed. These beliefs about knowledge had the potential to be contradictory. Laurel and Marcus believed that established content standards were an acceptable goal and measure for what students should learn. These standards, therefore, provided a guide for teachers' planning. Hope believed that some information was foundational as it provided core background knowledge for students' learning and academic success. Both Hope and Marcus expressed concerns, however, about some of the content that was taught or tested in schools. Hope saw that standardized tests were culturally biased and assumed knowledge that many English language learners did not have. Marcus questioned the adequacy and accuracy of some historical accounts presented to students. Additionally, Hope felt that the information provided to students about the world should be geared to their age level, and that knowledge of injustice in the world should be gradually introduced. The participants also held that, for learning to be meaningful for students, the subject matter either had to be relevant to their interests and lives, or students needed the opportunity to develop and pursue their own interests.

The participants expressed beliefs and attitudes about the students and families with whom they worked. Laurel thought her students had more “things” and their non-school hours were spent in activities structured by their parents. She was concerned that her students showed low effort and interest with regard to learning. Marcus was concerned that many of his students were disenfranchised and lacked family models for academic success. He believed in his students’ potential to be a powerful generation. Hope believed that parents played an important role in a child’s education, and she was concerned that many families were not able to provide the type of support that students required for academic success.

Summary: Self as a teacher. Over the course of this study the participants were developing a conception of themselves as teachers. They drew on their academic backgrounds in language arts and social sciences to enhance or give context for their social studies related lessons. In addition to increasing their knowledge base, their work in other academic areas provided them the particular skills of analysis or inquiry of that field of study.

As they taught in classrooms and reflected on readings, the participants identified various roles and responsibilities of teachers. They recognized planning lessons relevant to students’ needs and interests, and at the same time helping students make connections to lesson content as central responsibility of teachers. The participants also identified different additional roles and responsibilities, such as modeling engagement in learning, managing instructional schedules, and fostering skills for civic competence. The participants’ understanding of the teacher’s role was

further influenced by teachers with whom they worked and teachers from their own childhood. From these teachers, they learned particular strategies and observed supportive ways of interacting with students.

The participants shared their beliefs and attitudes about the role of education, the process of teaching and learning, the nature of knowledge, and characteristics of students and families. Beliefs about the role of education ranged from ensuring success in life and understanding the effects of one's actions, to developing skills for decision making. While academic content standards were generally accepted as a goal and measurement for learning, questions were raised about cultural bias, inaccuracy, and inadequacy of some content material and standardized test questions. The participants believed that students were more likely to learn when content was presented in a meaningful context, using instructional strategies that were appropriate to students' learning styles. Concerns were expressed about the influence of technology on students. The participants perceived increased student dependence on the internet and a decrease in students' interest and effort in school. There were also concerns about the ability of many families who were of low socio-economic status and with limited education to provide the support and direction necessary for their students' learning.

Self as a learner. Over the two terms of the study, the participants discussed the conditions, processes, and purposes for their own learning. The findings for this category are drawn from chapter reflections (R), initial and second interviews (I), classroom observation (O), and focus group discussion (FG). The findings are

organized under two subcategories: Process of learning and Coursework and discussions.

Process of learning. Each of the participants made references to their own learning in their chapter reflections (R). In the initial interview after their part-time student teaching, participants were asked to expand on their examples by relating how they saw themselves as learners (I). Also in the interview they were asked to describe influential teachers from their own childhood. This section includes findings that illustrate the participants' use of models as they learned how to teach. Additional findings are drawn from the classroom observation (O) and second interview.

Hope: Learning by doing. Hope described herself as a very applied learner and she liked experiences that involved many senses. An example of this approach would be the way in which she learned to speak Spanish for her mission work in Guatemala. "You're in class 18 hours out of every day learning Spanish and religion.... You're with the same small group and you just eat, drink, everything in Spanish. It's a huge immersion type of thing.... It's an incredible experience" (I1, 249-255). Hope continued her Spanish language study by later spending six weeks in Mexico.

Hope frequently used her interactions with her own children as a reference for her thinking about how children learned and the types of experiences that supported their learning. In an early chapter reflection she wrote about her own lack of knowledge for planning a science unit. "I started by asking my 11 year old son what he knew. He had recently finished a unit on the moon and was able to give me some

great insights to how 5th graders think and act” (R2, 22-26). These insights helped set a direction for her research and lesson planning. In a reflection on the chapter concerning geography, she wrote about observing her children learn concepts of distance and spatial location as she engaged them in GPS use in their local environment (R6, 33-41). In another chapter reflection on technology use, Hope related the suggested criteria and benefits of technology use to her interactions with her own children and their experiences using Google Earth (R14, 25-30). Hope was able to apply the concepts she was learning in her readings to her experiences with her children. These experiences in turn helped give meaning to the concepts.

Hope described teachers from her childhood who engaged her in learning. She described her middle school history teacher as

kind of intense, but he presented information in a way that was so engaging and so interesting. I hung on every word that he said and I wrote notes like crazy, but never studied for a test, because I knew the information so well because of the way he presented it. ... It was like watching a soap opera movie everyday in class.
(I1, 287-291, 302-303)

In social studies in particular, she found that movies, documentaries, and reading, especially historical novels, helped her build an understanding of a topic and establish dates and events. As a teacher, she benefitted when she had the opportunity to apply ideas and strategies in the classroom. However, her part-time student teaching did not provide Hope much opportunity to put into practice what she was learning about social studies teaching. She wrote, “But to be able to learn social studies topics and to be able to apply it and teach it, truthfully, I haven’t done it much

yet, because in my part-time student teaching we didn't really dive into social studies much. We were so focused on preparing for state testing" (I1, 406-408).

Laurel: Learning by reasoning and understanding context. In describing herself as a learner Laurel said, "I'm not a date person. Memorizing a long string of dates is painful. Knowing the reason behind them is helpful" (I1, 107-108). Consistent with this preference was her description of a recent class field trip to historical sites. She responded to a question about the trip with an in-depth description of the sites, how people had lived and the purpose of the sites in the region's history (I2, 51-84).

When asked about teachers from her childhood or student-teaching experience who were positive models, Laurel remembered an elementary teacher, Mrs. W. This teacher from elementary school was "strict, but always interested in us. She had clear expectations" (I1, 85-86). Laurel described a project in which students researched and then created a model of a South American city based on their research. Mrs. W. added to the project by sharing her own slides from a trip to South America. She also used a simulation strategy with the class as part of their Oregon Trail project. Each table was their own wagon train. Students had assigned roles and had to make decisions about the journey as they traveled. Building models after conducting research and participating in simulations were approaches to teaching well suited to Laurel's learning style.

Regarding her learning about teaching social studies, Laurel frequently responded to the teaching strategies and approaches that were presented in the textbook chapters, imagining how she could use them in her classroom or how there

could be difficulties in implementation. Laurel's reflections on these chapters characterized her willingness to consider new ideas.

Laurel related occasions when teachers she had observed in her practicum became models for how to teach. During her part-time student teaching experience, Laurel sought out ideas on the internet for lessons for her math unit, and in at least one instance she found a teaching model. In a video recorded lesson the teacher used Google Earth to teach the concept of perimeter. Laurel incorporated this strategy in her own lesson where students were to measure the perimeter of their own school site and of national landmarks (R14, 39-47). In her full-time teaching, Laurel observed her cooperating teacher lead students through reading and discussion of articles in weekly student publication. After observing the teacher several times, Laurel was able to follow the example in her own lesson (I2, 102-103). Laurel's state poster lesson was similar to her cooperating teacher's earlier lesson on American colonies. By researching a state and adding elements of personal interest, her students gained in-depth knowledge of that one state and created a meaningful context for learning the facts about the state. A class field trip in her full-time student teaching provided Laurel an additional model for social-studies instruction. This all day field trip entailed visits to two historical sites in the region, a trip of over 200 miles and four hours on the bus. Laurel explained the purpose of the trip as "kind of a tie into the Oregon Trail" (I2, 62) and "sort of a culmination. It sort of worked into the fifth graders' work. They had been doing things about the colonies" (I2, 96-97). She

described a fairly rushed trip in which students interacted with some exhibits, ran around sites, wandered through the museum, and purchased snacks (I2, 68-94).

Marcus: Learning from experience, meaningful context, and personal connection.

Learning happened for Marcus when he immersed himself in the experience. He explained that he was drawn to teaching because of his desire to learn, to help others learn, and to participate in the process. Marcus wrote, "I want an excuse to subscribe to too many magazines, bury myself in books, and go to conference after conference in search of new ways to present material to my students" (R2, 47-51). Understanding through experience, meaningful context, and personal connection was clear in Marcus's description of how he had recently learned to make a basket in his archeology class. He wrote

A Native woman taught us how to create baskets in the traditional manner, allowing us to use stone tools to strip bark from willow and using our mouths to split the branches into workable parts. As I was doing the activity I was instantly struck by how interesting it would be for my students. It is one thing to hear about how Native peoples crafted watertight baskets from local plants, it is another thing entirely to head out, gather plants, work the material and create the baskets yourself. (R3&4, 18-28)

Marcus completed a research project and volunteered at the elementary school a full year before his placement there as a student teacher. He lived in the school district and frequently encountered students in the neighborhood. His knowledge of students was a result of working in their classrooms and observing and interacting with them in the neighborhood. This gradual shift from observer and volunteer to classroom teacher allowed him time to construct his knowledge of students and build a relationship with them. Marcus explained, "I just sat back and picked the kids I

thought I could interact with without endangering their learning because I don't want to be a student teacher or volunteer who says, 'Do this,' and then ruins that kid's day" (I1, 40-42). He described being able to recognize changes in some students' expression and behavior that suggested to him that he needed to "back off and step down" (I1, 35).

As a teacher, he recognized the importance of being able to fail and then to learn from that experience. In thinking about his previous job teaching summer school, he explained that student misbehavior was a result of boredom, not an inherent character quality. It was his responsibility to rethink his plan for students (I1, 508-511).

Marcus wrote about his experience as teaching *with* his cooperating teacher; working alongside her rather than just observing her. In a chapter reflection he described a process early in the school year prior to his student teaching placement. The two of them planned, made materials, and then became aware of their students' lack of prerequisite knowledge. The teacher and Marcus had to rethink the lessons and the schedule for placement on the instructional calendar (R7, 3-12).

In the interview after his part-time student teaching, he talked about being included in the informal lunchtime discussions among the grade level teachers, and participating in the more formal Professional Learning Community work and discussions. He said, "There's a lot I get from teachers, too... we sit and talk about what we're doing and plan ahead... There's cross sharing" (I1, 363-367).

Marcus's longer experience at the school provided him an opportunity to observe different teachers, principals, counselors, and behavior specialists interacting with students in difficult situations. He felt this practical experience better prepared him for work in classrooms where there might be behavior difficulties. Commenting on college coursework he said, "It made me more knowledgeable, but I don't know that it made me a better teacher,that's where I feel like I've been blessed by being in a place where the class is kind of wild and crazy sometimes" (I1, 518-523).

Marcus's experience in the school was a support as he applied education theories to his own teaching. In responding to a question about the benefits of a longer experience, he said

I was able to go "Here's an idea I really like and I really want to teach this idea.... How am I going to apply it to my really high kids and to my low kids, and to the kid who doesn't care?" I had this little triangle of kids and I put the idea in the middle and asked, "Where do I need to push this and where do I need to pull it?"... Having the experience with the students helps me take the theory and say how I'll actually put it into practice. (I1, 535-542)

Summary. The participants described or provided examples elucidating how they learned new information and developed understanding about the process of teaching. Hope learned best when she was able to encounter new information using multiple senses and then apply what she had learned. Laurel learned about subject matter and instructional strategies when she examined new information, actions, and ideas within particular contexts. Marcus learned through experience and personal connection in authentic settings. Both Hope and Marcus had extensive interactions with children prior to their student teaching. Hope, drawing on her relationship with

her own children, observed how authentic experience and exploration played an important role in children's learning. She also understood how background knowledge, developed in part through discussion, provided support for students' reading comprehension. Marcus's gradual entry into the classroom gave him time to observe and work with students. He took note of this information as he planned for their range of abilities and behaviors.

Coursework and discussion. During the first interview, each participant was asked to describe how their education coursework supported them as learners. Group interaction or discussion was brought up by participants in each interview. To explore that topic further, a question about class discussion was asked during the focus group. The findings are from the first interview (I1) and the focus group (FG).

Hope. In the interview following her part-time student teaching, Hope talked about the push that education course instructors made for the integration of subjects in lessons and units. She said that integration sounded like a good model and she tried to put it into practice, but it was difficult because of the different course requirements (I1, 467-474). Hope had recently completed a single topic work sample that provided her with a good foundation for planning. She anticipated creating a work sample in the next term that would allow her to bring in more than one subject area (I1, 513-518).

Hope found the discussions around *Visualizing Social Studies* (Lee, 2008) to be a very positive experience in the "Strategies for Teaching Language Arts and Social Studies" class. Speaking about the chapter on geography she said

Everybody brought something different from their reading....Some people thought it was really important to know the five major cities in Germany and have that factual memorization. Other people thought, "I need to know where north, south, east and west is and where I fit into that." Geography is just a huge area of social studies and it interrelates into every topic because it's – "Where did that happen?" (I1, 588-594)

During the focus group, Hope again explained how discussions in class provided an opportunity to hear other opinions and perspectives and to learn from people who had different life experiences. Discussions, she said, could make a topic more relevant to the students' own learning (FG, 861-866).

Laurel. When asked what she found helpful in her education courses, Laurel responded that she liked the way in which children's literature was brought into the "Strategies for Teaching Language Arts and Social Studies" class, as it helped her to see how literature could be used to bring out social-studies topics (I1, 62-64). She was frustrated, however, by the use of time in some classes. She thought the practice of going around and asking each person to share a resource was often a poor use of class time. Laurel saw some teachers who were passionate about their subject, but spent too much time on certain projects. "I don't need to be treated like an elementary student. I want methods to catch students' attention and classroom management. I want to learn how to go in-depth with a book and have writing more nuanced" (I1, 58-62).

When a topic in class was opened up for discussion, Laurel found it more interesting because, instead of only the teacher's example, there were now "twelve different opinions and different points of view" (FG, 874). She described how discussions supported her learning style.

I learn more from discussion than from the teacher talking because I'm involved in it. I'm seeing other people's point of view from what's going on and I'm going to remember it more if I talk about it....Some people have a learning style where you have to talk about it in order to help you remember it. (FG, 876-881)

Laurel further explained that discussions gave students power over their learning because they could guide and influence what was being talked about. She noted that while discussions were positive learning experiences, there was never adequate time in class for them. She said, "We'd really be getting into a topic and then, 'Oh, we've got to stop talking about this now and move on,' but we were just getting to the meat of something that was really fantastic and interesting for either social studies or for reading" (FG 1103-1106).

Marcus. Marcus found those aspects of courses that encouraged education students to build a community and share resources to be the most helpful. His experiences at an elementary school made him aware of the importance of creating connections and relationships with other teachers (I1, 335-336). He described an occasion in the Strategies for Teaching Language Arts and Social Studies class in which technology resources were shared among students. Rather than every student "googling 'teaching resources social studies website,'" (I1, 394) they described their use of a good website and received feedback from their peers. By trading sites, students acquired four times the number of useful websites and suggestions for their use.

Conversely, some courses required students to devote as much as five hours of class time to complete a project they could later present to elementary students.

Marcus said projects like these were not a good use of his time. He preferred not to use class time on something that could be explained in a handout.

Discussions in class, according to Marcus, provided students an opportunity to bring in their own contexts and to promote new ways to think about topics. They were a setting in which people could guide their own education, test out their comprehension, and ask questions for clarification. Discussions were also places to build a more complex understanding. He gave an example:

We did that little timeline at one point and people made connections over the timeline. Somebody talked about the Gulf War and the guy sitting next to me and I both went "Oh, 1993, wow!" and this person's like "No, the Gulf War, like four years ago."...It's such a small, six or seven year age gap, but a six or seven year age gap is a whole world of experience. (FG, 1107-1113)

Summary. New ideas and approaches for teaching social studies were introduced to student teachers during their course work, and the participants' way of processing that information varied. Laurel found it helpful to see how children's literature could be brought into social studies topics. Hope found the model of subject integration useful but was frustrated by the inability to put it into practice. Replicating projects intended for elementary students was viewed by Laurel and Marcus as a poor use of limited instructional time.

All three participants viewed discussions as a useful strategy for working with new content. Class discussions provided them a time and place to hear the opinions and perspectives of classmates, often leading to new ways of thinking about a topic. Through discussions participants could guide their own learning and find personal

ways to relate to a topic. Moreover, participants viewed their classmates both as people to learn from and to learn with. Class discussion provided a setting in which meaningful learning could happen.

Summary: Self as a learner. The participants viewed themselves as active learners who recognized and sought out experiences and models to develop their knowledge and skills for teaching. They each described conditions that supported them and the processes they engaged in as they developed their knowledge about subject matter and the teaching process, and how students learned.

The participants found useful instructional approaches presented in their course work. The use of children's literature in social studies was a strategy easily implemented by the participants. More difficult was the integration of subject areas because of differing college course requirements. Laurel and Marcus expressed frustration with the use of excessive class time to replicate elementary student projects. Class discussions were viewed positively by the participants. These discussions provided participants an opportunity to hear the opinions and experiences of their peers, find relevance, and guide their own learning. Through these exchanges, participants were able to build their understanding of teaching and learning.

Two of the participants, Hope and Marcus, drew on their prior experiences with children as they planned for the classroom. Hope's observations and interactions with her own children helped her understand how authentic experience, exploration, and discussion supported students' learning. Marcus's volunteer work with students

prior to student teaching gave him time to observe students' behavior and learning styles.

Hope and Laurel identified teachers from their childhood who positively impacted their education. These teachers had high expectations for both academic work and behavior, and used instructional strategies that were effective with Hope and Laurel. Laurel and Marcus found models for their teaching as they volunteered and student taught in classrooms. Laurel found models for instruction in her placement class and on the internet. Marcus found support for planning in grade-level teacher groups.

The participants engaged in a variety of activities to build the knowledge and skills necessary for teaching. They considered approaches presented in their textbook and professional resources, recognized and sought out teaching models, and observed and interacted with students. They viewed their classmates as valuable co-learners.

Summary: Constructing Understandings of the Teaching of Social Studies. The five sub-categories in this section demonstrate a variety of influences affecting the participants in constructing an understanding of the teaching of social studies. The categories represent experiences, knowledge and beliefs that the participants brought to their practicum, as well as the new experiences and understanding they developed as preservice teachers and learners in a public school setting and the teacher education program. A graphic showing the connections between the five sub-categories is included for each participant in this summary. The lines between elements in each sub-category show connection, not causality.

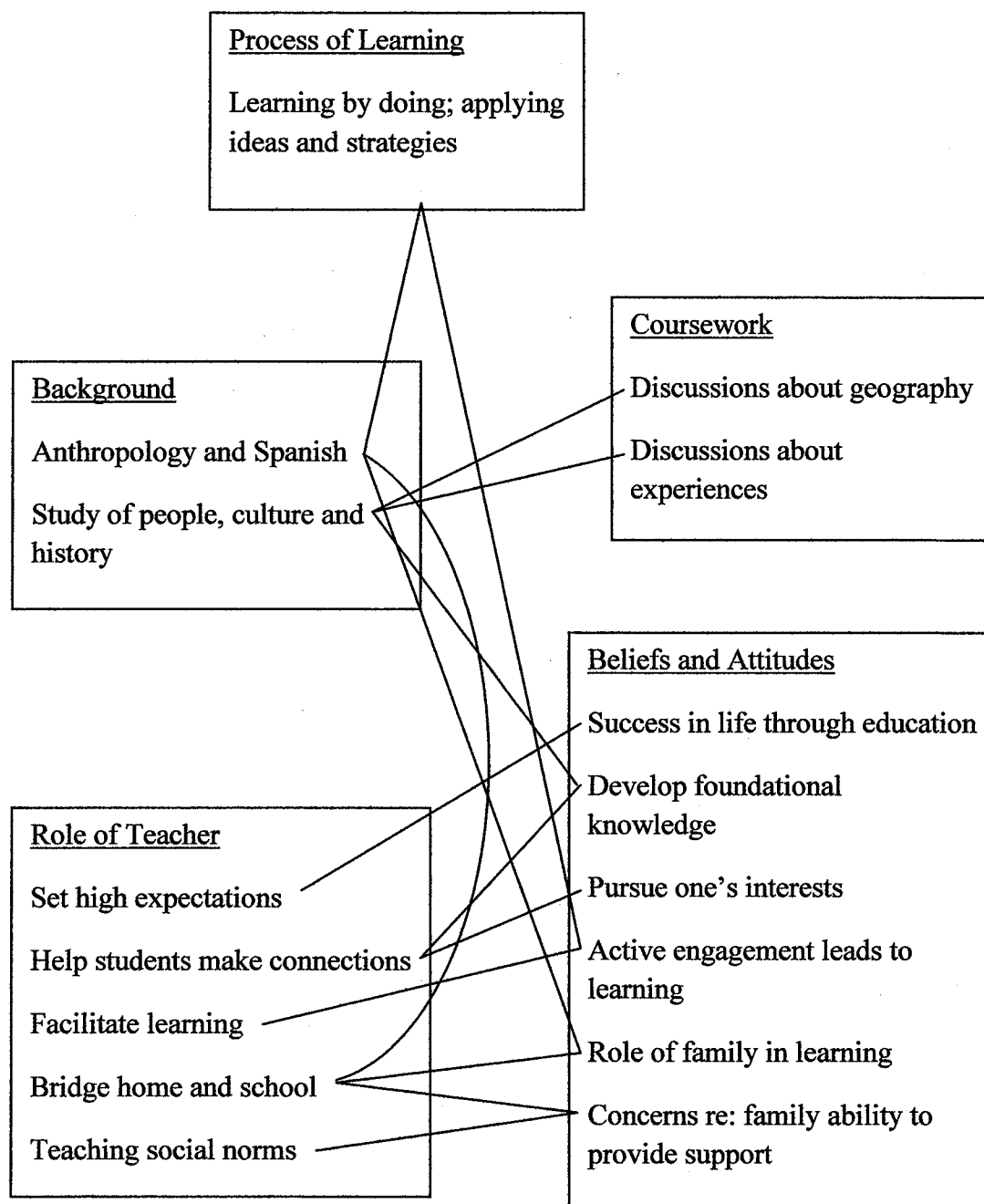
Hope. (See Figure 1 for a graphic of this summary.) Hope brought an academic background in anthropology and Spanish to her studies in elementary education. Through her work in anthropology, Hope developed an understanding of people, culture, and history. This academic work also provided broad background knowledge in social studies subject matter, and the observational and analytical skills to assess the learning environment. Both anthropology and Spanish provided a lens through which to evaluate materials, and the skills and knowledge for building positive relationships with families. Hope learned best when she was able to immerse herself in a situation and to apply new ideas and strategies. This learning approach was appropriate for both anthropology and language learning. For example, she learned to speak Spanish while spending 18 hours a day speaking only Spanish as she trained for missionary work in Guatemala, an experience she described as “incredible.”

Hope’s academic background and her preferred ways of learning were reflected in her beliefs and attitudes, and in her conception of the teacher’s role. Hope believed that students learned through active engagement, a process similar to the practices that were effective for her. Essential to achievement for students was the development of a foundational knowledge base, comprised in large part of social studies subject matter. Related to these beliefs was the conception of the teacher as one who facilitated learning, especially through active learning, and who helped students build a strong foundation of knowledge. Hope believed that families played an important role in a child’s education, but she was concerned that they were not

always able to provide support because of their economic circumstances or because their cultural background did not directly connect to the curriculum being taught. It is important to note that Hope recognized the cultural bias in some curricular materials. For Hope, the teacher's role included welcoming families into the classroom, and helping students to bridge their home and school experiences. Hope held that students would find success in their lives through education and through the pursuit of their personal interests.

Hope encountered new ideas and strategies about social studies teaching through the "Strategies for Teaching Language Arts and Social Studies" course that corresponded with her part-time student teaching. The emphasis in her placement class at that time was preparation for standardized tests. Consequently, Hope's opportunities to apply ideas and strategies were very limited. More beneficial were the discussions in the "Strategies for Teaching Language Arts and Social Studies" class, as they gave a chance to hear the perspectives of other preservice teachers regarding social studies subject matter and teaching.

Figure 1. Hope: Constructing Understanding of the Teaching of Social Studies



Laurel. (See Figure 2 for a graphic of this summary.) Laurel's second degree was in English and she spoke of her love of literature and its capacity for opening up other worlds to readers. An appreciation of history and diversity were qualities that she brought to the teaching of social studies. Laurel learned best when she was able to consider new ideas and understand their context; knowing the reason why something happened was more important than simply memorizing a date. As a young child learning social studies, she benefitted from experiences in which she could create models after conducting research. As an adult, she valued those experiences that enabled her to learn about the situations in which people live and events take place. In learning to teach social studies, Laurel sometimes followed the model presented by her cooperating teacher for discussions and projects.

Laurel's academic background in English and preferred ways of learning were reflected in her beliefs and attitudes. She held that an aim of education was to help students become successful human beings able to make choices about their lives, and that learning to read and write was central to educational and personal success. Related to these ideas was her belief that students should develop the skills necessary for self assessment and the pursuit of one's interests. Laurel's beliefs about students' learning were consistent with her own learning preferences: the importance of understanding context and reasons behind events. She believed that students should understand how historical events have shaped the present and how actions today will affect the future. Laurel was concerned by what she perceived as students' lack of

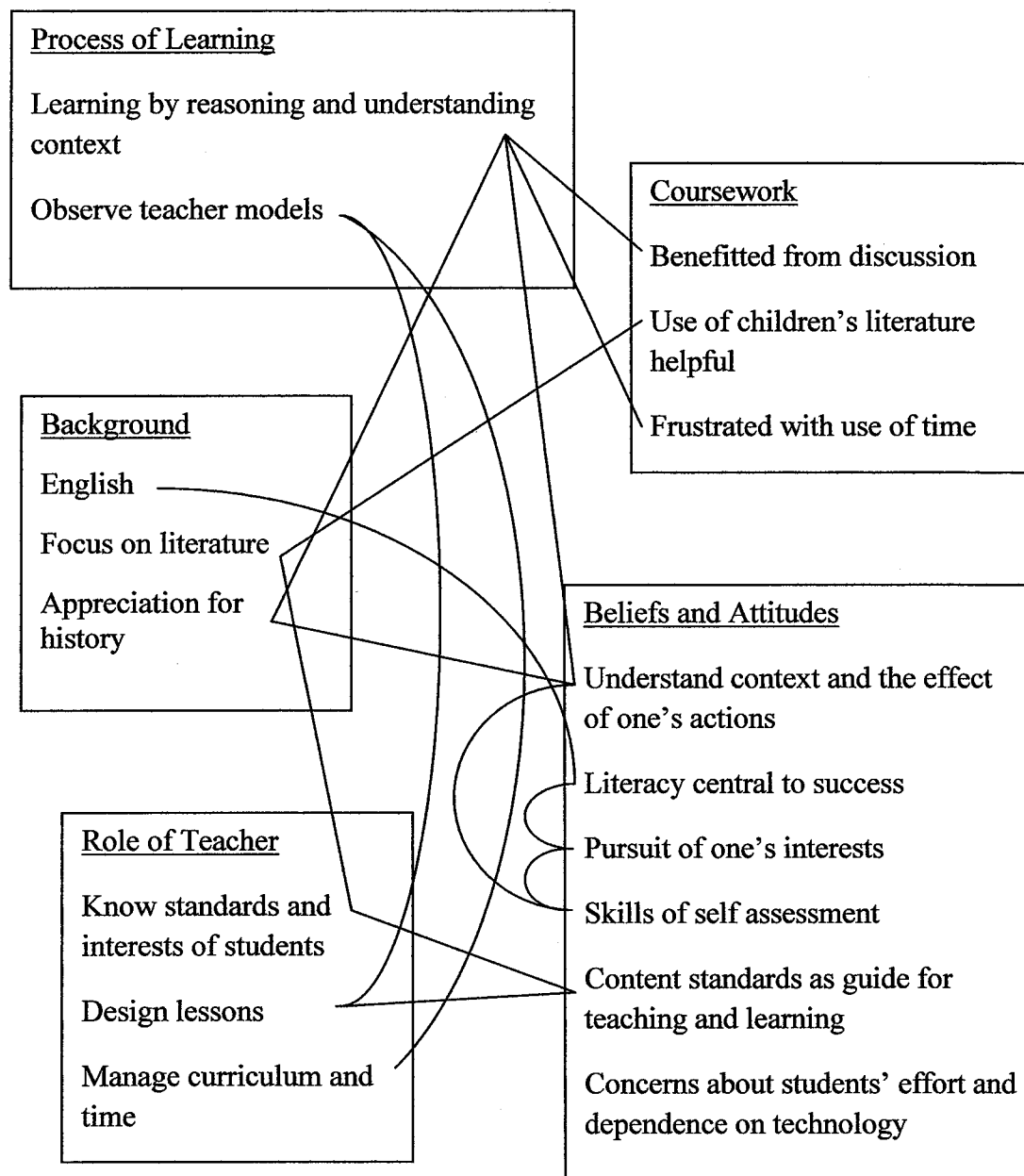
effort and their dependence on the internet, both of which affected their ability to engage in grade-level research.

Laurel considered content standards to be both an acceptable guide for a teacher's planning and a good benchmark for students' learning. Part of the teacher's role, therefore, was to design lessons that addressed content standards while considering students' interests and prior knowledge. Laurel drew on her background in English and sought out popular children's literature as a way to better understand her students' interests. Another aspect of the role of the teacher was that of manager of instruction, coordinating curriculum demands, students' needs and interests, and schedule requirements. This conception of teacher as manager grew out of experiences during her part-time student teaching, where instruction was limited to reading, writing, and math, and during her full-time student teaching where school-wide schedules limited her ability to follow students' interests and integrate subject matter.

Through the "Strategies for Teaching Language Arts and Social Studies" class, Laurel saw how social studies topics could be addressed through the use of children's literature. However, Laurel's approach to children's literature as social studies text reflected a language arts perspective, focusing more on reading skills than social studies concepts. This was the approach modeled by her cooperating teacher during her full-time student teaching. The social studies lessons modeled by her cooperating teacher, and later taught by Laurel, focused on learning facts and interesting information. In her chapter reflections, Laurel discussed the new ideas and strategies

about social studies teaching that were presented in the “Strategies for Teaching Language Arts and Social Studies” class. There were not opportunities to put these into practice or to observe them in her part-time student teaching due to her placement class’s emphasis on reading, writing and math. Laurel expressed some frustration with the use of class time in her own course work, but found the class discussions useful in that she was able to influence what was discussed, and hear other points of view. She found that discussions were a good way for her to process information.

Figure 2. Laurel: Constructing Understanding of the Teaching of Social Studies



Marcus. (See Figure 3 for a graphic of this summary.) Marcus had a broad background in anthropology and the social sciences. He drew on this knowledge as he planned lessons, and it provided a lens through which to assess the accuracy and adequacy of the social studies subject matter he found in textbooks and supplemental materials. Marcus learned best from experience, meaningful context, and personal connection. He spent over a year at his placement school, enabling him to develop an in-depth knowledge of his students and the community. That experience provided a meaningful context in which to examine the theories that were presented in his education courses. Marcus's relationship with the teachers at his school gave him access to a range of perspectives and experiences, and a more gradual and supportive introduction into the culture of teaching than is typical of the experience for most student teachers.

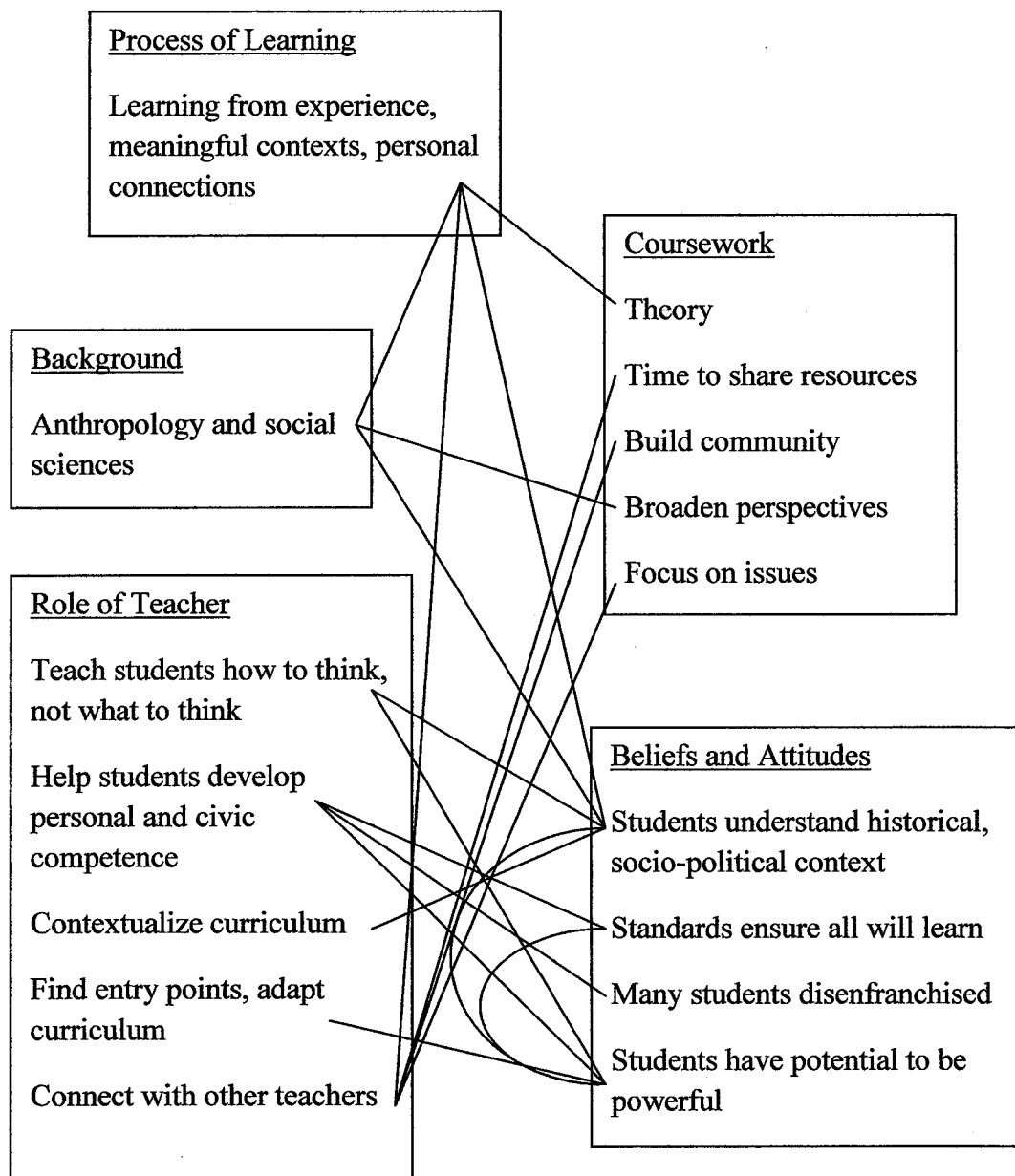
Marcus's social science background and his preferred ways of learning were reflected in his beliefs and attitudes, and in his conception of the teacher's role. Marcus believed it important for students to develop an understanding of the historical and socio-political context in which they live. Marcus held that national content standards would ensure that all students learn "the basics," and that the state's standards should reflect local knowledge and environment. He also believed that, in the classroom, controversial issues should be tied to content standards and presented in a format open to multiple viewpoints. Although Marcus accepted national and state content standards for curriculum planning, he questioned the accuracy and perspective represented in some social studies curriculum materials. He viewed many of his

students as disenfranchised, living in economically poor conditions and with few models for academic success. While Marcus had concerns about his students' circumstances, he also saw the potential for them to be a powerful generation.

According to Marcus, teachers should support students by creating a meaningful context for the curriculum, and then let students investigate topics, drawing their own conclusions. Marcus believed that teachers should promote the development of personal and civic competence by presenting students with the tools to learn and the skills for research and analysis, as a foundation to prepare them for membership in a participatory democracy. His knowledge base in the social sciences was additionally helpful as he worked to find entry points and ways to adapt and extend social studies subject matter for his students. For Marcus, the role of the teacher included personal learning and growth through participation in professional development activities, staying abreast of theories and new instructional practices, and developing relationships with other teachers.

Marcus's coursework gave him an opportunity and setting in which to build relationships and share resources with other preservice teachers. During the class discussions, he was able to share viewpoints, ask questions, and focus on issues pertinent to his teaching experience. As a result he built a more complex understanding of topics and the teaching and learning process.

Figure 3. Marcus: Constructing Understanding of the Teaching of Social Studies



These five aspects of teaching and learning intersected differently as each participant constructed an understanding around the teaching of social studies. The participants' learning style, beliefs about education, and their conception of the role of the teacher influenced the experiences that were beneficial to them. Their understanding of social studies teaching was both enhanced and supported by their coursework in education and academic knowledge and skills from other fields.

Making Decisions about Social Studies Teaching

Much of the participants' writing, comments, and discussion concerned the complex and interconnected processes involved in teaching and learning social studies. As the participants worked in schools, taught lessons, and interacted with teachers and students, they became increasingly aware of how external factors affected their educational experience. This category is organized under five sub-categories: Purpose for social studies and social studies subject matter, Organizing for instruction, Pedagogical strategies and approaches that support student learning, Technology, and External factors that impact teaching.

Purpose for social studies and social studies subject matter. At the beginning of the study participants responded to a prompt, "I think the purpose of teaching social studies is..." During the focus group at the end of the study, the participants were invited to add to their responses. Purposes for social studies were also expressed by participants in their reflection writing and comments. Closely related to participants' ideas about purpose are their ideas about social studies subject matter, regarding what it is, and what it should be. The participants' views on the

purpose of social studies and subject matter content are drawn from the prompt responses (P), chapter reflections (R) interviews (I), lesson observation (O), and the focus group discussion (FG). Examples from participants' work with students that reflect either the purpose of social studies or subject matter are included.

For point of reference, the text used for the "Strategies for Teaching Language Arts and Social Studies" class explains social studies as "ultimately a set of courses that enables students to understand human experiences" (Lee, 2008, p. 5). The text also references the National Council for the Social Studies definition, "The integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence" (p. 6). Civic competence is defined as "Understanding important social issues, participating in dialogues and conversations about public social life, volunteering and serving in public roles, and taking action when problems demand involvement" (Lee, 2008, p. 403).

Hope. Four purposes for social studies were apparent in Hope's writing and comments: broaden perspectives, provide a fun and meaningful context for learning, find relevance in one's life, and build foundational knowledge. At times the purposes were complementary and a single lesson could address more than one goal.

At the beginning of the study Hope wrote that one purpose of social studies was to "Help students see the real world perspective" (P1, 2). This idea was evident in her full-time student teaching when she began a lesson on continents and oceans. In this lesson students were to identify and locate the continents and oceans on a world map, a third grade curriculum standard. Hope introduced the lesson by reading *How I*

Learned Geography (Shulevitz, 2008), a story told through the experience of a young boy living in Central Asia during World War II. Throughout the lesson she invited discussion about the boy's experiences and made connections to her students' lives (O, 5-8, 31-40). During the focus group Hope described another lesson in which she brought in travel magazines and brochures of locations in the state to help students learn about their home environment, connect to their experiences in the state, and present them with possibilities for their future explorations (FG, 377-382).

In the initial prompt response Hope also wrote, "Make learning fun -Social studies to me is like jam on the bread – it makes everything else good!" (P, 3-4). Hope repeated this analogy in a chapter reflection, in the interview, and in the focus group. In one reflection she added that social studies could "make any topic more interesting and more applicable to everyday life" (R1, 4-6).

The third purpose for social studies concerned finding relevance in one's life (P2, 1). For Hope, topics were relevant when students could attach personal meaning and importance to them (FG, 655-656). She wrote that "it can be where they find their passion....social studies can be the motivation for students to have something to write about, or explore" (RF, 13-19). She used her own love of learning about people and places as an example in the reflection.

Another purpose for social studies was to build foundational knowledge. After working with students who were taking standardized tests during her part-time student teaching, Hope saw that many of the stories and questions on the tests related to social studies topics. Students who had that background knowledge had a better

understanding of the readings and as a result were more successful in their tests (I1, 494-500). An additional example of how foundational knowledge aided students was provided by Hope in the focus group. She commented on Laurel's states poster project.

And truthfully, the thing that's important isn't that they have it memorized, it's that when they hear it on the news they'll be like, in their brain, "I kind of have a good idea where it is." It's not a foreign topic to them. They can make those connections across the curriculum....When they're reading a story and it's about someone from Ohio, "I know something about Ohio. There's somewhere for it to go in my brain and attach to." (FG, 542-548)

Hope made references to specific social studies subject matter. Her second work sample, completed during her full-time student teaching, focused on geography. In the lessons students learned about their home state and became familiar with places and features of the state and their location on a map. Hope wrote that she loved the concept of incidental geography as presented in the social-studies text (R6, 9). Lee (2008) defines the concept as "The geographic knowledge we have developed from everyday life and experiences" (p. 140). Hope wrote, "They need to have a conscious awareness that others exist, and how they exist in their own worlds. It is important to keep track of those things, like how to get from your house to the school, or the store" (R6, 22-26). She made a second reference to specific subject matter in her response to Marcus's lesson on social media technology and the Egyptian revolution.

That one individual, someone who's menial, that doesn't have much say in the world, can make such a difference. I think anytime you bring up that kind of story – that's why history is so fascinating to some people because it's typically someone who didn't have any power, that they did

something and made a difference in the world and now we remember them. That's powerful! (FG, 55-61)

Hope also made more general statements regarding social-studies subject matter and its appeal to students. She expressed that it made everything more interesting and gave meaning and excitement to what students were learning (RF, 10-11 & I1, 526). She wrote that students could find their passion in social studies topics and use those topics as a focus for their writing (RF, 12-13, 18).

Laurel. In her initial prompt and early chapter reflections, Laurel developed three purposes for social studies. In her first chapter reflection she wrote that she had previously thought that social studies concerned “looking at the circumstances of how people live” (R1, 23-24). This statement reflected her earlier initial prompt response in which she wrote that the purpose of social studies concerned broadening students’ awareness of the world, its diversity, and showing “that there are different ways to do the same things” (P1, 4-5). Laurel then considered a second purpose that expanded on her first objective, when she wrote, “I can see how taking an in-depth look at our own and other cultures can help to promote changes for the good of all” (R1, 24-27). In response to a chapter on civic competence, Laurel wrote of a third purpose relating to historical knowledge and the importance of students understanding why the world is as it is, the effects of historical events on the present, and imparting an awareness that students’ own actions will impact their futures (R5, 39-45).

Laurel shared her thinking about social studies subject matter in chapter reflections, in an interview, and during the focus group discussion. In her first chapter reflection, she recognized that social studies included the subjects of history,

geography, civics, economics, and behavioral sciences (R1, 19-21). Laurel understood that fourth grade social studies included learning the states and their capitals, state history, and Oregon Trail history, while fifth grade social studies included the study of the American colonies and revolution (I2, 62; FG, 401-402, 977-978). In the focus group she shared her lesson in which the fourth grade students, after learning the states and capitals, created individual posters about different states (FG, 409-412). These posters contained facts such the flower, bird, tree, song and motto of each state. The fifth grade students in her class had been working on their study of the American colonies and had previously completed similar posters for each of the thirteen colonies.

The lesson Laurel taught while being observed for this study used *Time for Kids* as a focus for reading and discussion. *Time for Kids* is a weekly publication for students that includes some current events, as well as short articles on science, health, and popular culture. Laurel noted that during those weeks when the classroom curriculum included science, this publication was the only social studies that students received. She had observed her cooperating teacher use the publication with students and saw value in including it in the classroom because of the high student interest. She was not aware of any social studies standards for current events, but did see how she could incorporate language arts standards for reading, vocabulary, comprehension, or writing into the lessons (I2, 220-225).

During the focus group Laurel shared another example connected to social studies purpose and subject matter. In responding to a comment from Marcus, Laurel

described a student's Invention Convention project, a portable toilet. When Hope related the student's project to current work in Haiti to provide environmentally safe sanitation systems, Laurel responded, "That's a social studies topic" (FG, 812). She then described other projects by the student, fund raising for Japan and Haiti after natural disasters. These actions, according to Laurel, represented the student's awareness of problems and her need to do something in response. While these projects were independent student work, the outcomes relate to the purpose Laurel had stated at the beginning of the study, "Promote changes for the good of all" (R1, 26-27).

During the focus group Laurel shared her concerns regarding her students' dependence on the internet, their lack of motivation in some assignments, and her success in introducing a rubric for students to evaluate their own work. Also during the focus group, Marcus expressed that it was important for students to see how a historical figure could have both good and bad qualities, and shades of gray. Laurel responded by describing a writing process in which students were asked to write about a topic, finding what was good, bad, and in between, so that "you force them to find the gray in it" (FG, 928-929). At the end of the focus group discussion Laurel added to her initial prompt response about the purpose of social studies, writing, "Social skills, morals, to be able to see beyond black and white" (P2, 1).

Marcus. In his prompt responses, chapter reflections, interviews, and focus group discussion, Marcus shared his thinking about social studies subject matter and identified the purposes for social studies. He wrote that social studies included a

variety of occasionally disparate topics and that it was concerned with the big ideas of the world (R1, 48-50; R3&4, 7-8). He compared social studies to anthropology, in which he saw “culture summed up as differences” (R1, 44-45). Marcus wrote, “My version of social studies includes similarities as well, highlighting that at the heart of it all people are more similar than they are different” (R1, 45-47). Marcus taught lessons that addressed the state’s fifth grade curriculum content: European explorers and the impact of exploration on people living in the western hemisphere, the events and people of the American revolution, and the roles and responsibilities of the three branches of government.

Marcus wrote that a purpose for social studies was to “Help students gain context for the world around them” (P1, 2-3). This statement is similar to his later prompt addition, “Develop student perspectives of the world around us” (P2, 1). Related to these purposes are Marcus’s comments about the importance of relevance in subject matter. For his media literacy work sample he relied heavily on social studies topics. He said, “The best way to get into the topic of media is keep it relevant....So much of school is looking backwards that I think kids feel a little lost sometimes” (I1, 426-430). Marcus described a successful social studies lesson connecting social media technology, the American revolution, and the Egyptian revolution of 2011. The lesson related the actions of Paul Revere, whom the students had studied, to the Egyptian activists.

What I did was looked at – was this relevant to my kids’ interests? I looked and have some context and I can make this connection for them. I knew about 80% of my kids were on Facebook and it turned out that over half were on Twitter....What made it successful was

that it was relevant and it let them see themselves as having some power.” (FG, 32-39)

A second purpose included in his initial prompt response was “Synthesize ideas and discover creative solutions to complex problems” (P1, 3-4). This purpose was also evident in his lesson about revolutions and technology. Regarding the lesson, Marcus added that the lesson concerned the role of communication and control of information in a revolution. He asked his students, “How can you have a revolution where, strictly speaking, there wasn’t violence started by the activists? ...Did you have to be a silversmith or a fancy person to be Paul Revere in this revolution?” (FG, 76-80).

A third purpose for social studies was to “Teach skills such as compassion and empathy at macro and micro level” (P2, 2). This purpose was evident as Marcus addressed one of the fifth grade history topics for social studies, the impact of European exploration on people living in the western hemisphere. He wrote that the idea of teaching empathy was very important to him and related it to Freire’s social reconstructivist philosophy (R5, 11-15). He described a lesson on European explorers in which he claimed students’ possessions in the name of various monarchs and countries. He repeated the illustration again when teaching about the Lewis and Clark expedition. Students, he said, “were struck by the audacity of the Americans walking around claiming the land of the very people who were saving their lives” (R5, 27-29). Marcus accepted the content standards as a required element in his lessons; however, he questioned the narrative in curricular materials that presented Europeans as discoverers of America.

Marcus expressed that gaining a sense of civic pride and developing the skills of research, analysis, and persuasion to participate in a democracy were purposes of social studies (R7, 54; I1, 325-328). These goals concern civic competence and were related to subject matter and content standards in lessons taught by Marcus. As a result of lessons his students were able to name the branches of government and how the actions and policies of the executive branch affected their school experience (O, 37-45). Related to both civic pride and participation skills was a service learning project Marcus had planned in which his fifth grade students would develop a composting curriculum and subsequently train fourth grade students for the coming year. He said, "I think it's the kind of thing where they're getting to leave something behind at the school. And they can go to it and say 'I did that, here's a change in the community that's changed because of me.' It's a really big deal" (I1, 595-597).

A final purpose for social studies was "Provide students with an understanding of events which have shaped their lives (visible and invisible)" (P2, 3-4). Subject matter which has relevance to students' lives and experiences supports this goal. In speaking about social media and the Egyptian revolution Marcus said, "It helped kids see themselves as shapers of history and culture....That shift - *history is happening* instead of happened" (FG 27-30).

Summary: Through their readings, work in classrooms, and discussions, the participants were developing an understanding of the purposes for social studies and of social studies subject matter. They each created lessons that addressed social studies content standards. Two of the participants, Hope and Marcus, developed a work

sample that either focused on social studies content or included studies content as a way to address their lessons' objectives. The participants expressed purposes for social studies that fell into three categories: the development of broad knowledge regarding the world, the understanding of the impact of historical actions, and the development of skills for participation in society.

When responding to the initial prompt regarding the purposes of social studies, all three participants articulated a goal of increasing students' understanding of the world. This goal was explained as gaining contextual understanding of the world, seeing real world perspectives, or being open to diversity in the world. In addition to this broad goal, the participants each expressed other goals at the beginning of the study. Hope thought that by adding social studies content to other subject areas, the resulting lessons would be more interesting to students. Laurel thought it important for students to develop an understanding of how actions in the past have shaped the present, and that actions in the present will affect the future. Marcus saw the synthesis of ideas and the development of creative solutions to complex problems as purposes of social studies.

As participants worked in classrooms, new purposes emerged that related to the needs of their particular students in school and community settings. The development of skills for participation in society was a purpose identified by Laurel and Marcus. For Laurel, the development of morals and social skills related to taking responsibility for one's self. For Marcus, the development of civic pride and academic skills of analysis and persuasion would enable his students to participate in a

democratic society. Marcus also thought it important for students to understand the events that have shaped their lives. Hope expressed that a familiarity with social studies content provided students with a background knowledge for reading comprehension and academic success.

Each of the participants discussed subject matter that tied to content standards for their grade level and that related to the purposes for social studies. For Hope and Laurel, the subject matter consisted primarily of factual or interesting information about people, places, and events. For Marcus, the subject matter also provided opportunities in which to examine the perspectives of people, to develop skills of analysis, and to make personal or inter-subject connections.

Organizing for instruction. This sub-category includes the participants' thinking and experiences related to what a teacher needs to know, consider, and do in order to provide effective instruction in social studies. The protocol for the focus group asked participants to describe a successful social studies lesson and their perception of why it was successful. The three participants then commented on the lessons. After each participant had an opportunity to share and receive feedback, the participants discussed the common elements or qualities of the lessons and their insights into successful social studies instruction. The findings for this sub-category are drawn from chapter reflections (R), interviews (I), classroom observation (O), and the focus group (FG).

Hope. For Hope, acquiring insights into students' thinking and building her understanding of a topic were necessary parts of planning. Another aspect of

planning, the writing of lesson plans, let her mentally play out the lesson. She wrote, “I was able to visualize many of the potential problems/situations that might arise” (R2, 36-38).

As evident in the Role of the Teacher sub-category, important planning tools for Hope were the connections between subject areas and the links she could find to students’ interests and experiences (I1, 422-425; FG 683). In one case she observed how the topics in many books did not relate to her students’ backgrounds and language, and she saw the need to bring in texts more germane to students’ experiences (I2, 23-26). In the focus group, Hope saw relevance as a common element in the lessons that each participant had planned for their students, “Whether it was drawing the poster and having a famous person or Twitter technology or living in Oregon. It was something that was relevant to them. It was something they had interest in because it mattered to them” (FG 653-656).

Hope said that, rather than having a “chunk of social studies time,” it should be “interlaced” with the writing, reading and hands-on outside activities (I1, 502-506). To illustrate, she gave the example of her sixth grade PE class where students played games that children played in other countries. At the end of her full-time student teaching Hope reiterated this idea, “Social studies is not always at a set time. I’ve pulled social studies into every single topic –curriculum out there. It makes it much more interesting” (FG 748-749).

Hope noted that each of the lessons shared in the focus group included a way for students to apply what they had learned. She said, “That’s what I love about social

studies. You don't really have kids as much saying 'When am I going to use this?' Because if you teach the lesson in the right way, it is how they're going to use it" (FG, 658-661).

Laurel. Laurel wrote that teachers needed to know what they would be teaching and then develop plans for the lessons (R2, 15-17). Through planning, teachers could ensure that standards would be taught, and be prepared for students' questions (R2, 17-18). Laurel wrote that teachers could tailor lessons and expand on students' understanding when they were aware of students' prior knowledge (R3, 28-34). In a later chapter reflection Laurel again commented on content standards and planning, "Starting with the standards is better than finding a neat activity and then trying to squeeze it into a standard. The standards seem to be a pretty good benchmark of where our students should be" (R4, 12-15).

During the focus group, participants talked about the social studies resources at their schools and the expectations regarding their use. Laurel was familiar with the students' textbook for social studies, but was not aware of expectations for its use.

We have no set curriculum. We have something called *Geography!*... because fourth grade is regions and states and state capitals. Fifth graders have revolution and the colonies and they have a book with that stuff, but there's no set curriculum for it. (FG, 975-979)

Laurel discussed the concept of curriculum integration at both interviews. In her first interview after her part-time student teaching, she said she had seen teachers integrate reading with social studies and science. She described lessons in which the teacher used the book, *The Master's Dog*, a story about the Lewis and Clark expedition told from the dog's perspective. In these lessons there was time for

students to do some writing and learn about the geography and history represented in the book (I1, 45-51). Also during this time, Laurel was finding examples of quality children's literature that included social studies topics (I1, 69-73). When asked how she learned about integrating curriculum, Laurel said it was through her course on differentiation (I1, 54). In the lesson observation during her full-time student teaching, Laurel led her students through a reading and discussion of a *Time for Kids* news article on the Egyptian revolution. The issue was dated eleven weeks earlier and had not been used when it was received. Laurel chose to use it months later because it related to a current unit of study. During Laurel's lesson she asked questions that helped students link the Egyptian revolution to the American revolution. In the interview that followed she explained, "I was trying to do some integration and make them tie it to other things, because it seems to be effective" (I2, 112-113).

Laurel expressed that it was difficult to integrate content and encourage investigation of a topic because of the numerous standards and the need to adhere to the set schedule at her school. Regarding the short amount of time allocated for the *Time for Kids* discussion, she said, "It never seems like we have enough time for some things like this, because this is really in-depth. The kids could have spent probably an hour talking about this" (I2, 121-123). When asked if she would be able to go back to the *Time for Kids* issue she said, "Probably not, there is just so much we have to squeeze into a day" (I2, 125). She explained

We have to have certain things at certain times. We have to have writing in the morning because that's when the writing aides are available. We have to have reading at a certain time because that's when the whole school is supposed to be reading. We have to be flexible in the afternoon where

we try to fit in [everything]. There's just a lot of standards to touch on.
(I2, 129-134)

Marcus. Marcus viewed the construction of the work sample and its collection of lessons as a useful tool for organization at this point in his teaching (I1, 401-402). He acknowledged that the curriculum for his district had to be followed (I1, 615-617). Marcus used his knowledge of students, their interests, experiences, and learning along with his familiarity of subject matter to find entry points into the curriculum and other topics he felt were important (I1, 51-58; I1, 235-239; I1, 535-539). Marcus emphasized the importance of providing context or grounding for what was to be learned, and of finding the relevance for students (R8&9, 2-4; I1, 426-427). For example, when the PlayStations Network was down due to hacking, Marcus used that as an entry point to share the rationale for students learning how to use books and hard resources when they do research (FG, 618-622). Regarding the planning of successful social studies lessons, he said, "We made the connections. We were the linkers. I certainly didn't create a lot of content, but I sort of stood in the middle and said, 'Here's where you are and here's what's happening'" (FG, 676-678).

Marcus said it was important to integrate topics because the world is integrated (I1, 320-321). In the culminating lesson of his media literacy unit Marcus used a recent interview with an Egyptian activist, an issue of *Time for Kids*, and a textbook account of Paul Revere and the American revolution to help his students understand how media can shape the public perception of events (I1, 51-61; FG 17-25). Marcus

continued to develop plans for the school garden that would utilize math and science concepts, and result in a service learning experience for students (I1, 574-597).

Planning included finding places in the school day for lessons, discussions, and reviews. Marcus described how when several students left for reading intervention or reading challenge groups, he made use of the time in class by reading and discussing *Time for Kids* with the remaining students. In this way students developed reading skills related to informative text, and developed map skills and a familiarity with social studies topics (I1, 434-442). He noticed students' questions about articles in *Time for Kids* and tried to capitalize on that interest.

Those are the moments to catch them, especially the more reluctant learners who don't react like that often....I want to be able to say, "Here's an entry way or here's how we're going to talk about it even if it's only twenty minutes before school starts." Just to keep them interested in learning – even if it's not learning what we're doing. (I1, 457-463)

Transition times in class were used for short reviews of lessons such as the composition and role of branches of government (O, 34-45). Marcus also took advantage of the times when students finished testing early by engaging them in conversation about their interests and venues for further investigation (FG, 727-731).

Summary. The findings in this sub-category reflect the participants' perception of what teachers need to know about content, students, academic content standards, and school expectations as they organize their lessons for teaching social studies. Each of the participants recognized how planning for lessons helped them to organize their thinking and actions and to anticipate students' questions and responses.

Both Laurel and Marcus acknowledged that their plans needed to address content standards. Laurel, however, felt there was no direction provided to meet the curriculum goals for social studies other than the students' textbook.

An awareness and knowledge of students' interests, experiences, and prior knowledge played a role in each participant's planning. Hope and Marcus used their knowledge to find entry points and make connections between students and subject area, thereby building context and making their lessons relevant to students. Laurel saw how teachers, when they were aware of students' knowledge, could tailor lessons to expand students' understanding.

The integration of social studies in the curriculum was addressed by each participant; however, their implementation of the approach differed, suggesting a dissimilar understanding. For Hope, the integration of curriculum involved the inclusion of information or activities in order to build interest or meaningful context in a topic. Laurel's examples of integration showed the inclusion of history and geography content in order to enhance literacy learning and the linking of historical events to build understanding of vocabulary terms. She focused on the integration of social studies with reading, noting its effectiveness with students. Laurel found it difficult to plan for integration, however, because of her school's schedule. Marcus brought together content from various subjects in order to create more meaningful lessons and to help students build concepts that transcended a single subject area. In Marcus's lessons and interactions with students he retained the integration that he found to exist already in the world.

Pedagogical strategies and approaches that support student learning.

Pedagogical strategies are teaching activities that link students to subject matter and result in students learning. These are strategies to deliver instruction, to group students for instruction, to organize the learning environment, and to question students. Pedagogical approaches are a “general direction or trajectory for instruction” (Reigeluth & Keller, 2009). The findings in this sub-category are organized around the participants’ comments regarding pedagogical strategies and approaches presented in their textbook, the conditions necessary for students’ learning, strategies that support students’ learning, and what the participants consider to be outcomes for students’ learning. The participants’ lessons for their work sample follow a format that draws on the work of Madeline Hunter. This is the direct instruction model described in *Visualizing Elementary Social Studies Methods* (Lee, 2008). Findings are drawn from chapter reflections (R), interviews (I), classroom observations (O), and the focus group discussion (FG).

Hope. Hope began a chapter reflection by noting conflicting messages about teaching strategies. She wrote, “I have to admit that I have been learning so much about hands-on interactive learning at [the university] and then in the classroom I have only been seeing direct teaching that I have been confused with the ‘proper’ way to teach social studies” (R8&9, 4-9). Hope saw the direct teaching approach presented in the text as pragmatic, sensible, and sometimes necessary when there was much to learn and time was limited (R8&9, 10-14). According to Hope, direct teaching required the teacher to be prepared, interesting, and to have a personal understanding

of the topic. Hope viewed interactive teaching as requiring even more teacher preparation, because classrooms had many types of learners and all students had to be engaged and actively learning (R8&9, 40-46). Active learning, according to Hope, solidifies knowledge and “helps students connect to the information and makes it real” (R10&11, 28-29). She understood that hands-on activities required a great deal of work on the teacher’s part (R10&11, 35-37).

Hope expressed that students’ learning depended on having prerequisite knowledge and skills, being engaged in a variety of experiences, and working in a safe and well managed learning environment (R14, 19-23, 31-35; I1, 139-146, 193-197). In one example, she described a group of third grade students who were unfamiliar with fractions. Before she could teach her lessons the students needed to see how fractions were used in everyday activity. Hope brought in tools and measuring cups for the students to explore. She said, “When [they] can’t apply something abstract like a number to a concrete item, there’s no way they’re going to understand how to manipulate those numbers” (I1, 486-488). In another example, Hope described how movement in the outdoor environment helped children learn concepts of distance and direction (R6, 26-41). As referred to previously in section one, Hope recognized the necessity of creating an emotionally and physically safe learning environment for students. She also recognized that students had different learning styles and that effective classroom management was essential when planning for active learning and engagement (R8&9, 40-47). Hope incorporated a variety of active learning strategies in the geography lesson that was observed for this study. Hope used whole group,

partner, and individual configurations for students during the lesson that followed a direct instruction format. She read a children's book and led a discussion, provided guided practice through the use of a Smart Board, and closed the lesson with singing and movement. Students referred to an atlas as they completed their own maps that she used for assessment. When she began the lesson, Hope reminded students of the expectations regarding behavior and she reinforced the expectations during the lesson. She shared with the students the lesson's objectives and ensured that each student participated in the practice with the Smart Board (O, 2-89).

For Hope, books and reading were a primary form of learning. "Hands on is great, but the reality is, students need to know how to gain knowledge from books....This skill helps students become lifelong learners" (R10&11, 15-21). Prior to her part-time student teaching, Hope worked on a social studies reading assignment with a student who struggled because of text content that was unfamiliar. Hope found that the student's comprehension of the text improved when unfamiliar vocabulary was explained in terms she could understand (R8&9, 22-25). Hope then applied this understanding about the relationship between comprehension and vocabulary knowledge to her own teaching. In the lesson observed for this study, Hope identified vocabulary that might be problematic for students. She included student-friendly definitions for new or unusual vocabulary to support her students, especially the English language learners (I2, 19-21). Hope included children's literature in her geography lessons for her second work sample. In these lessons the book's pictures and text helped build a context for the geography content and concepts. In an effort

to build students' interest in books, especially for research, Hope took them on a field trip to the public library.

They were looking at these books and trying to find information and I could see their excitement of books. It wasn't the boring books with no pictures. They were great books that they could really get into. Maybe they hadn't had that experience of going to the library or having books in their home. (FG, 592-596)

Hope spoke of two processes that supported students as they worked to understand new information and their experiences. The first process was discussion, which could happen at home or at school. She used the example of her son and the ways in which conversations at home have helped him to pull together events and places, to see both the big picture and the fine details, and to develop a base knowledge (RF, 64-67; I1, 427-430). "We talk about so much stuff at home. We're always talking about topics so he has that core understanding. When he goes to read something that is too difficult for him he already has some knowledge of that topic so he can fudge a little bit if he doesn't know all the words" (I1, 533-536). Hope also described her small-group reading discussion around a story about the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II. She related this discussion to the inquiry process, and noted that the conversation helped them explore why the injustice had occurred (R3, 16-31. The second process Hope discussed involved hands-on tasks such as "cutting and pasting." Hope had initially observed students engaged in this type of activity in math lessons (I1, 414-421). She later applied the process to her geography lessons. In one lesson, students used travel brochures from a local visitor center and state maps to create a collage illustrating a travel adventure. Through this

activity, students connected place names and map locations to visual images.

Observing students engaged in these types of tasks demonstrated to Hope the value of students spending time on a project and manipulating materials (FG, 522-527).

Hope saw positive outcomes for the varied learning experiences. In an early chapter reflection she addressed the importance of background knowledge for students' reading comprehension and participation in learning activities. In the reading group discussion about Japanese Americans' internment during World War II, Hope observed how developing knowledge in that topic helped students participate in the discussion and maintain their interest. Hope concluded that students who had broader background knowledge were able to participate more successfully in learning activities. This broad background knowledge also provided support for students as they completed their required standardized tests (I1, 494-500).

Laurel. In her chapter reflections Laurel considered some of the instructional strategies and approaches presented in the textbook and commented on how they might be implemented in a classroom. She wrote that she liked three approaches to social studies teaching that were presented in the text: storytelling, investigating, and deliberating, and she thought they could be used together. She added that the approaches "should include plenty of visual aids because of the nature of the subject" (R1, 37-43). She later wrote that her ideal way to teach history would involve these three approaches. "Thus they get some of my view, and get to explore their own views on events" (R5, 36-38). Laurel said that through deliberation, students could come to understand the difference historical and contemporary figures have made in

our lives (R7, 26-34). She noted that by combining these approaches, social studies was more interesting and it appealed to multiple learning styles (R5, 51-52). Another approach Laurel considered was the four step inquiry process in which students use real world resources to investigate authentic and meaningful problems. She saw it as a useful tool and she liked that it asked students to think. Laurel also noted that some steps in the process could be time consuming (R3, 15-26). In reflecting on the chapter on civic competence, Laurel wrote that letting students vote on various topics in class could be a good way to show them how powerful their vote can be (R7, 23-25). Also in that reflection, Laurel wrote that teachers could work on “a little bit of civics everyday” (R7, 36) by talking about respecting authority figures and having short discussions at the beginning or end of the school day on the parts of government and the effects on our lives (R7, 35-44).

Laurel addressed the conditions that support or hinder students’ learning. In her reflection paper on the chapter addressing standards, curriculum, and testing, Laurel expressed frustration with teaching math lessons for calculating area. These lessons were a challenge, she said, because students did not have the practical experience and prerequisite skill with measurement necessary for the area problems (R4, 35-40). In contrast, she observed that, when lessons built on or related to each other, students were able to make connections and apply the information they were learning. She thought her *Time for Kids* lesson was successful because students could relate elements in the text and discussion to their previous vocabulary work (I2, 167-168). Laurel observed how a personal connection to a topic could foster students’

learning. She attributed students' engagement in an Oregon Trail unit to their ability to pursue topics of personal interest, such as hunting on the trail or the role of women. Laurel said, "The girls, they were [angry], 'That's not fair! That's not allowed! They can't do that!' That was just amazing, watching them transform and get passionate about this, rather than just sit there and go, 'Oh great, we're talking about the Oregon Trail again'" (FG, 904-908). Her states poster project also included a component that allowed students to incorporate a famous person whom they found interesting (FG, 434).

Laurel used a variety of instructional strategies and approaches in her teaching: visual aids, project work, and teacher-centered discussion. She found that by using visual aids in lessons she could capture students' attention and provide them with additional support. She observed that when she used Google Earth to find the schools' image for a math lesson on area, all students were focused on the lesson (R14, 21). When Laurel taught the lesson using *Time for Kids* she began by asking students to examine the cover photo showing Egyptian protesters and to describe what was happening (O, 9-10). She noted that the images supported students as they read the assigned article (I2, 118). The states poster project that Laurel shared during the focus group included multiple steps and a variety of ways for students to interact with content. She determined the required components of the poster and asked student to use books and the internet to research or gather information. Students, worked individually, wrote descriptions, drew pictures of state symbols, and organized the images and text on their boards. Laurel provided students with a rubric that enabled

them to monitor their work. Students presented their posters to classmates and shared what they had learned. While the project was teacher-directed, it allowed for student interest and choice (FG, 433-435). Laurel commented that students were more likely to remember the information because they had spent time putting together a poster (FG, 432-433). Laurel used teacher-centered discussions in her full-time placement. In the lesson observed for this study, teacher-centered whole group reading and discussion were the instructional strategies for working with a magazine article. During the discussion, Laurel asked students to draw on their knowledge of the American revolution, the Bill of Rights, and the vocabulary work from the previous day. In another discussion of a story about the Tories and rebels during the American revolution, Laurel focused students' attention on the literary strategies and structures of inference, and cause and effect.

It was interesting to see the kids' view on why he might do that. Some of the kids said things like "Well, what if he was a spy, a Tory spy in the rebels and he was just going to tell the Tories what was going on?" Yeah, maybe. It took a while to get to "He used to be a friend and even if he's on the other side, he doesn't want to hurt his friends." That's what it's supposed to be. (I2, 196-201)

Laurel also saw how a teacher-centered discussion could expand to allow for students' emerging interests, as in the discussion with her students about gender roles on the Oregon Trail (FG, 895-904).

Laurel envisioned positive outcomes for students when the learning conditions and instructional strategies were supportive. She placed a high value on literacy and books. She thought students were more likely to remember information when they were able to read from a book and expend effort on a task using that information (FG,

417-420). She thought that by using rubrics students would be able to see the criteria for a project and then monitor their work. In the process, they would develop a sense of personal responsibility. It was Laurel's hope that her students would meet the standards set for learning and performance established by the state. She wrote that when students met standards, they would have "a more productive and positive education experience" (R4, 29-30).

Marcus. Marcus commented on some of the ideas, strategies, and approaches presented in the textbook. In his first chapter reflection he wrote that social studies teachers, rather than simply delivering information, should know how to synthesize ideas from different fields and create connections for students that bridge topics (R1, 4-12). In a later chapter reflection Marcus wrote that because social studies concerned big ideas it offered many entry points for inquiry techniques. He saw inquiry as a powerful approach that could be effective with groups or with individuals working on their own, and as having the potential to provide a setting in which students guide discussions (R3&4, 2-3, 9-12). Marcus viewed interactive instruction as an appropriate approach for addressing the wide range of social studies topics. With interactive instruction teachers could "create free-form instruction, tailoring a wide range of information to best fit their students' needs while also offering up challenges to their students' critical thinking skills" (R8&9, 33-36). Regarding direct instruction, a more scripted approach, Marcus wrote that it was imperative to contextualize information for students (R8&9, 3-4). He provided the example of learning concepts

by using regional geography as the setting, rather than using physical features of other regions that are unfamiliar to students (R3&4, 33-40).

Marcus recognized that his students had different learning needs. He said that while he believed in the theory of social reconstructivism, he also knew “that there’s some kids, that if you create that environment, they won’t react. They need more structure and guiding” (I1, 545-546). Marcus said that his students were more likely to be engaged with the content when there was a real and immediate context for their learning. He gave examples of how the application of math and science concepts to the school garden, and the application of media literacy skills and civics concepts to students’ internet and social networking activity, resulted in higher engagement and increased learning (I1, 567-572; FG 35-39). After planned civics lessons had to be set aside because of students lack of background knowledge, Marcus observed that when teachers assessed students prior to planning, lessons could appropriately build on prior knowledge, and teachers could find entry points for engaging students (R7, 3-12; I1, 53-57).

Marcus discussed situations in which he used various strategies in his teacher-centered instruction. In reflection papers, interviews, and the focus group, Marcus commented on the difficulties for students when they were presented with new and perhaps conflicting ideas. In these cases, he used demonstration and graphic representation accompanied by explanation and discussion. He described a lesson in which he claimed students’ property in the name of various monarchs. After about twenty minutes one of his students said, “Wait! I get it. This is what Columbus did.

He discovered things that already belonged to someone else” (R5, 21-23). Marcus said after his demonstration and discussion, students were beginning to consider the meaning of the term “discovery” with regard to European exploration. Marcus thought these strategies were effective because he saw that some students were later able to see similarities between Columbus claiming land and the discoveries and land claims of Lewis and Clark. Marcus said that students could be “rigid” in their thinking and he provided another description of a discussion with his students over the question of who discovered America. His students persisted in saying that Columbus discovered America even when Marcus provided an explanation and drew a timeline that showed the Vikings were present in North America before 1492. He commented

They were so wedded to the idea. They knew it didn’t make sense. They could point to it and say. ‘This doesn’t make sense. He got here way later than these other people.’ But they just couldn’t let go of that, ‘But Columbus did it.’ I was like, ‘No’” (FG, 274-277).

In teacher-directed lessons, Marcus used *Time for Kids*, the student weekly publication, as a way to examine the structure of informational text, practice reading skills, and explore social studies topics (I1, 438-442). This work occurred during a block of time when some students in the class left for enrichment work. Teacher-directed instruction was the approach used in Marcus’s media literacy unit that was completed during his part-time student teaching. In this unit students viewed video clips, participated in large and small group discussions, and wrote in response to questions or prompts as they examined the purposes of media in public life. The unit

included the lesson that Marcus shared with the focus group on the Egyptian revolution, social media, and the American revolution.

Marcus described many of his students as lacking in motivation (R1, 32-37) and as disenfranchised (I1, 67-69). He identified two related outcomes for student learning based, in part, on this assessment. The first outcome concerned the skills and knowledge that would support students' ability to pursue their personal interests and prepare them for future education (I1, 298-307). The second outcome was the development of research and thinking skills that would enable students to critically analyze media and to seek out and analyze information necessary for participation in a democracy (I1, 89-92, 326-328). To these ends Marcus wrote

I'm hopeful that by providing my students this tool kit, which will let them take apart messages, learn how to use persuasive techniques, where to find reputable information, how to double-check sources and then how to synthesize all of that into an argument, whether that argument is in favor of a new skate park or immigration reform, I will be able to help instill a sense of civic pride in them. (R7, 46-54)

Summary. The participants considered the ideas, strategies, and approaches presented in their text and commented on their possible use for fostering learning and engagement, and the implications for teachers. They saw the potential of inquiry and interactive approaches for addressing the wide array of social studies topics and concepts. These approaches could appeal to a range of learning styles and engage students who were often uninvolved in classwork. The participants also noted that interactive and inquiry approaches would require more teacher preparation and knowledge than other strategies. Hope and Marcus commented on direct teaching and instruction, noting that it was a useful approach when time was limited, and that when

using direct instruction, it was important to provide to students a context for the lessons' content.

The three participants identified conditions that supported or hindered students' learning. They each recognized situations in which the lack of prerequisite skills or knowledge affected their students' ability to learn new skills and concepts. Laurel and Marcus saw how students were supported when the lesson content was relevant, allowing them to connect to and build upon previous work, or providing for meaningful application of new skills and concepts. Additionally, Hope observed that students' learning of social studies subject matter was supported when the vocabulary being used was explained in student friendly terms. Hope and Marcus identified aspects of the classroom environment that could affect students' learning. They both noted that some students required more structure, guidance, and support. Hope further recognized that good classroom management was necessary for lessons that encouraged active learning.

The participants shared the instructional strategies and approaches they were able to put into practice in their classrooms. Each participant used discussion as a strategy to help students clarify information and to construct a more complex understanding of a topic. The three participants related the reading process to social studies. Laurel and Marcus used historical fiction and social studies themed non-fiction texts to help students develop reading skills. Additionally, Marcus used these texts to explore the social studies topics. Hope incorporated children's literature into her lessons to help her students build a context for the concepts she was teaching. She

also focused on supporting students' comprehension by identifying potentially difficult vocabulary and building student-friendly definitions into her lessons. Hope and Marcus taught social studies lessons using a direct instruction approach. Within these lessons they incorporated a variety of strategies to actively engage their students. Hope and Laurel also used approaches in which their students created posters or collages to demonstrate what their understanding of the topic being studied. While there were guidelines for these products, their students exercised choice and control in what was represented. They both thought that active manipulation of materials and extended time for construction aided their students' understanding of the content. Laurel found the inclusion of visual aids as a useful instructional strategy for capturing students' attention and for building a meaningful context in her lessons.

Three related themes were evident in participants' envisioned outcomes for students' learning: academic success, individual agency and responsibility, and participation in a democratic society. Hope and Laurel spoke of the relationship between literacy and academic success. Hope contended that background knowledge, built through experience and discussion, was central to reading comprehension. Students' new understandings made it possible for them to participate more fully in school activities and to achieve success on standardized tests. Laurel maintained that students were more likely to remember information when it was read from a book and then applied to new situations. For Laurel, literacy was central to academic success and meeting content standards. Marcus spoke more generally about students developing the skills and knowledge that would support their future education. Laurel

and Marcus saw outcomes related to individual agency and responsibility. For both of these participants, following one's interests depended on the development of academic skills and knowledge, and the ability to monitor and evaluate one's own actions and work. Lastly, an outcome for Marcus was the students' participation in a democratic society. To achieve this outcome, students needed to develop skills for research, analysis, synthesis, and argument so they would be able to advocate for their own interest and well being.

Technology. The three participants considered the role of technology in education and its influence on students. They paid particular attention to the internet and social media. They reflected on the chapter in *Visualizing Elementary Social Studies Methods* (Lee, 2008) that addresses technology in social studies (R) and they commented on technology during interviews (I) and in the focus group (FG).

Hope. Hope began her chapter reflection by expressing concern about the impact of technology on the classroom and students. She saw that students were constantly exposed to technology and were often bored or unimpressed when it was not used in the classroom. As a result of this exposure, she felt some necessity to entertain students to maintain their attention. Hope wrote that teachers should use technology in the classroom because that is how students see the world (R14, 4-15). She saw that technology, including video clips, movies, and the internet, could help students learn about the world around them (R14, 36-43; I1, 410-413).

In later comments Hope observed that students were more skilled in the use of technology than most adults. She said, "Kids love technology and a lot of classrooms

don't have technology, but they're surrounded by it. It's almost as if they're placed in archaic classrooms sometimes" (FG, 48-50). Hope later added that it was important to teach students about technology, how to use it appropriately, and make it be part of their lives (FG, 181-183). In the focus group discussion concerning successful social studies lessons, she said of Marcus's lesson, "It's as if they can become part of history through Twitter and Facebooking. Kids are just drawn to technology" (FG, 62-64).

In the geography lesson that was observed for this study Hope incorporated technology by using an interactive white board. Names of the continents were displayed on the board and continent shapes were shown. By tapping the words on the board, students matched the names of continents to their outlines. The program gave immediate feedback on the students' choice. Hope also used an educational website as a resource for her lesson.

Laurel. In the focus group Laurel said, "A lot of times I feel that technology in the classroom is detrimental, in some ways because we live in such an instant gratification society right now" (FG, 115-117). Although her own classroom did not have computers, she found technology distracting. She explained that her school had some very strict rules about cell phones that her students followed, but she noted that students probably had their portable game consoles hidden somewhere in the classroom (FG, 131-136).

She observed that her students preferred to work on computers because they thought it was faster. Laurel acknowledged that computers were faster for some students, but not all. She described one student who spent twenty minutes writing and

rewriting a sentence because she did not know how to edit on the computer (FG, 442-448).

Laurel expressed concerns about the impact of technology on students' learning. She said that her students complained and did not understand why they could not simply look things up on the internet. She found it difficult to provide a counter argument. Laurel said that her students had "no idea how to look up information" in sources like encyclopedias in the classroom (FG, 128-130). It was difficult, she said to get them to put any effort into their research related work if it did not include internet use (FG, 437-438). Laurel said her students preferred the internet to encyclopedia or books when finding information, and they preferred to copy images from the internet rather than draw pictures. She was concerned that the students would not retain the information if they quickly found it online or simply printed images from the computer (FG, 580-584). She said, "I don't know why I have that concern. I feel that maybe the information is easier, one, and maybe looked at as not as important, because you don't have to look as hard to get it? I don't know why I'm getting that" (FG, 418-421).

Later in the focus group, Laurel described a writing project in which her students used the internet for research. She said that it was important for students to know how to do research on the internet because of the way "everything is advancing" (FG, 603). She explained that she was not against internet use; instead she felt that students needed to know how to use both internet and hard copy resources. She said that the internet was especially important with social studies "because the internet is

basically one giant petri dish. You've got all the really weird things that happen on the internet, all the higher ed stuff that happens, and all the in-between" (FG, 663-636).

Laurel used a document camera in the lesson that was observed for this study. She was able to display images from the *Time for Kids* publication on the front white board and then focus students' attention on images (O, 8-10). She also used images from Google Earth to enhance a math lesson and used an educational website to find lesson ideas and teaching models during her part-time student teaching (R14, 19-21, 41-44). In commenting on the lesson that Marcus shared about social media and the Egyptian revolution, she found his use of technology in the lesson to be positive and constructive (FG, 175-176).

Marcus. When he reflected on the text chapter that addressed technology, Marcus wrote that he was shocked at how little either social studies or technology there were in his fifth grade classroom (R14, 3-4). He saw that students rarely "get to engage with technology in any meaningful way" (R14, 23-24) other than a typing game or writing up an essay in the computer lab. The previous year many of these same students had copied and pasted from websites like Wikipedia when they did their research. As a result, the teacher now provided materials for the students to use for their research (R14, 27-31).

Marcus wrote that it was important to provide students an opportunity to learn how to use their technology (R14, 32-33). He later stated, "Denying students to use Wikipedia is just insuring that they're going to use it poorly" (FG, 155-156). He

encouraged his students to use the references at the bottom of Wikipedia articles as starting points in their research.

As part of his media literacy unit, Marcus taught a lesson in which he demonstrated how websites could be misleading. He described his advice to students:

You can't blindly trust anything on the internet. You don't have to be paranoid, but be skeptical. Be willing to question it, be willing to turn on that part of your brain and ask, "Who's putting this out there?" ... Does their research make sense? Do they back it up? Or are they saying, "Here's what I believe and now I'm going to make up facts until you believe me." (FG, 195-202)

Through his media literacy unit, Marcus knew that 80% of his students were on Facebook and over half were on Twitter (FG, 34-35). Many of his students spent time at home unsupervised, in online chat rooms and forums (FG, 150). In the final lesson of the unit Marcus focused on the use of social media in the Egyptian revolution, building on students' experience and knowledge (FG, 23-26). He incorporated video clips of interviews in this lesson. In other unit lessons he included video clips of advertisements. In addition to using the internet as a resource in his media literacy lessons, Marcus accessed online sources for news and his own professional development (I1, 354).

Summary. The participants observed that their classrooms for student teaching were limited in their use of technology. While their students were often very familiar with the internet and social media, those students' opportunities to use technology in class were often confined to word processing and typing games. The students lacked

skills to evaluate sources, and when they were allowed to use the internet for research they preferred to copy and paste information.

Concern was expressed by each participant about the impact of technology on students' learning. Hope noted that students were bored when technology was not used in lessons. Laurel saw students unwilling to invest time in writing or drawing because copying and pasting internet material was easier and quicker. Marcus was aware of students' unsupervised use of social media and was concerned about their lack of skills in evaluation of media and resources. Because of the prevalence of technology in students' lives, the participants saw the importance of teaching students how to use technology appropriately.

Technology was used by the participants in various ways. Hope and Laurel accessed educational websites for lesson ideas, worksheets, and models for teaching. Marcus used online sources for news and professional development. Hope and Laurel utilized classroom presentation technology to enhance their lessons, while Marcus incorporated downloaded video clips and interviews into his lessons.

External factors that impact teaching. Over the course of this study the participants discussed the role and impact of external factors, including educational policy, on their students, their teaching, and the schools in which they were placed. Educational policies produced by schools and governance agencies concern the allocation of values and resources (Wirt & Kirst, 2001). The participants' part-time student teaching was completed during January, February, and March, a time when most districts were preparing for or administering standardized tests to their students.

These findings are drawn from chapter reflections (R), interviews (I), and the focus group (FG).

Hope. Hope's experience providing assistance to students during standardized testing gave her a rare opportunity to observe the type of knowledge that was either assessed or beneficial to students as they answered questions. Much of this beneficial knowledge concerned social studies subject matter (RF, 20-25). Hope also noted how the content of the tests reflected a cultural bias, and that many students, especially those whose first language was not English, would be at a disadvantage when they took tests. These tests for math and reading assumed foundational knowledge that some students in fact lacked, which Hope attributed to their economic conditions or their language background. She said that the responsibility to make up the difference in background knowledge fell on teachers (I1, 575-580).

Hope did not have the opportunity to observe or teach social studies lessons during her part-time student teaching because of the preparation for testing. She commented that it had been a "very tight, regimented time period" (I1, 409). In one chapter reflection she noted that, because of the limited time available for teaching social studies and the amount of subject matter to be learned, direct teaching strategies were sometimes the only solution (R8&9, 10-13).

The school for Hope's part-time student teaching was in a small rural area with a high level of poverty. Resources at the school were limited, and the classroom teachers provided instruction in P.E. and music for their students. Hope noted that the elementary teachers did not have a preparation time during the instructional day (I1,

101-105). Students attended school four days a week. An after-school program provided care, including meals for many of the students. The district also provided care for students on the fifth day of the week when they did not attend class (I1, 148-153). After her full-time student teaching, Hope commented that, despite the need to teach students to use technology appropriately, classrooms were lacking in computers. (FG, 49, 181).

Laurel. Laurel wrote that content standards were a good benchmark of where students should be academically (R4, 14-15). Regarding science, social studies, and art she wrote, “We have standards for those subjects as well, but they are set aside because of the emphasis of testing our kids are required to go through” (R4, 23-26). During her full-time student teaching, Laurel was aware of some content standards for social studies for her grade level, but she was not familiar with standards that related to students’ understanding current events, the focus of one of her lessons (I2, 223-225). She knew of the social studies textbooks for her grade levels but not of any set curriculum. “It’s sort of, ‘Here are the standards.’ I mean so far as I can tell there hasn’t been any set curriculum. It’s not like math where it’s ‘You must use the *Investigations*’” (FG, 979-982).

Laurel was aware of the emphasis placed on standardized tests in schools and the ways in which that emphasis compromised students’ learning. In one instance, Laurel was expected to teach a math procedure to students who lacked prerequisite skills (R4, 33-40). The preparation for standardized tests precluded conceptual understanding.

During her part-time student teaching experience, Laurel wrote that the focus of instruction in her classroom was reading, writing, and math (R4, 20-22). She observed how science and social studies were primarily taught through reading groups (I1, 44-45). In her full-time student teaching, Laurel used historical fiction and social studies related non-fiction texts to meet Language Arts objectives. Also, during her full-time student teaching, Laurel reported that a few weeks of lessons in science alternated with a few weeks of lessons in social studies. Laurel said that this schedule was easier than alternating days during the week (I2, 135-141). She also noted that integration of subjects was difficult because of the required organization of the instructional day and the aides' schedule (I2, 128-133).

Marcus. In an early chapter reflection Marcus wrote that, while he believed that national content standards helped ensure that all students were able to learn the basics, he thought state and local curricula were needed to reflect local knowledge (R3&4, 30-33). Marcus wrote that students should have general geographic knowledge of the United States, but knowledge of local geography and resources would provide students a useful context for other subjects (R3, 33-40).

Marcus was placed in the same classroom for both his part-time and full-time student teaching. He explained that instruction in his class alternated between science and social studies blocks. "When we're getting a lot of one, we're getting very little or none of the other" (I1, 667-668). The daily schedule in which students were pulled out for reading intervention provided opportunities for Marcus to work with smaller groups of students. He reported having some leeway in his choice of reading materials

and so was able to include social studies related texts. Social studies lessons he had planned during his full-time student teaching had to be set aside in order to focus intensively on math interventions (O, 3-4).

Marcus also addressed the discrepancies he saw between pedagogy that was advocated by educational institutions and practices implemented by educational institutions. He spoke of his students needing opportunities to find relevance and practical application for their learning. "They always talk about contextualizing information and then [the district] gives you a textbook and says, 'Here, teach from this textbook'" (I1, 561-562). He similarly noted a discrepancy at the university level between the models that were advocated for teaching and the requirements of university classes. "You're doing your work as individual units and you're all coming across the same problems and you're coming at it from different places. Rather than let you collaborate, you're getting loaded down with rote work that you're getting told not to do" (I1, 379-382).

Summary. From their position as preservice teachers, the participants looked at the allocation of values and resources in education. They understood that the content standards reflected goals for learning and established what students should know and be able to do as a result of instruction. The participants observed that while there were standards for social studies, the prioritized subjects were reading, writing, and math, because they were the focus of standardized testing. Hope observed that, even while social studies was not a focus of testing, familiarity with social studies

topics was beneficial to students as they took tests. She also noted that some test material reflected cultural bias.

Each of the participants observed the allocation of instructional time and the priority given to reading, writing, and math during their student teaching. Hope and Laurel reported that very little time was provided for social studies instruction during their part-time student teaching. Marcus noted that math interventions were given priority during his full-time student teaching. Both Laurel and Marcus reported that social studies and science instruction alternated, resulting in weeks with only one of the two subjects being taught.

During their student teaching, Laurel and Marcus reported using either historical fiction or social studies related non-fiction in their reading groups, with the focus on the development of reading skills. Hope noted that, because of limited instructional time, teacher-directed instruction was often necessary, as opposed to more student-centered strategies. While these practices were not educational policy, they were an accommodation to the limited instructional time determined by policy.

Laurel and Marcus both commented on discrepancies between espoused values and curricular guidance, and the implementation of instruction. Laurel was asked to “teach to the test” and to teach concepts for which students had little foundation. Marcus said that he was presented with models for teaching that either were not practiced or were not supported by resources and instructional time.

The allocation of resources to meet basic needs was observed by Hope in her part-time student teaching placement. Her school was in an area of high poverty and

students attended class only four days each week. As a result of this structure, classroom teachers worked longer days and provided P.E. and music instruction, but they did not have preparation time during the instructional day.

Summary: Making decisions about social studies teaching. Over the course of this study, the participants' conception of social studies subject matter and purposes evolved. Their lessons addressed the subject matter set forth in the content standards and district adopted textbooks. The participants developed their knowledge of topics in order to teach their lessons and, in some instances, they brought in additional materials to enhance students' learning. The purposes for social studies also evolved as the participants became more knowledgeable about students' interests and experiences, considered ideas presented in their own textbook, and engaged in discussion with their peers. Common to all, was a goal of increasing student understanding of the world. Other purposes for social studies included the building of foundational knowledge, expanding historical and cultural understanding, and developing skills for participation in a democratic society.

The participants understood that content standards establish goals in all subject areas for students' learning and performance. The standardized tests and assessments of elementary students emphasized reading, writing, and mathematics. As a result, social studies was taught infrequently in some classrooms and alternated with science instruction in others. This limitation on social studies instruction was most evident during the participants' part-time student-teaching experience.

The integration of social studies with other subject areas was implemented differently by the participants. In some cases, integration was viewed as a means to add meaningful context to units and lessons. Literature was brought into social studies lessons to provide examples of the topic, or social studies topics provided a real world example for concepts being studied. In other cases, participants included social studies related informational texts and historical fiction in their reading lessons, with a focus on the development of reading skills. For one participant, integrating social studies and other subject areas was a struggle because of the school's scheduling restrictions.

The process of writing lesson plans and compiling a work sample helped the participants to organize their thinking and actions, and to address curriculum standards. The process also helped prepare them for possible questions and responses from their students. As they planned lessons and units, the participants used their growing knowledge of students and subject matter to tailor their lessons to students' interests and needs. They worked to build on students' previous learning in order to help students connect their own experiences and knowledge to the new lesson topic. While the participants saw potential in the inquiry process and interactive teaching strategies for engaging students and meeting a range of learning styles, they recognized that those approaches required a high level of teacher preparation. The lessons taught by the participants were teacher directed.

One of the challenges for the participants was the role that technology, particularly the internet, played in their students' lives. They often saw technology as

interfering with students' learning. They were aware of the discrepancy between their students' familiarity with technology and the opportunities in their schools for students to use technology as a tool for learning. One of the participants addressed some aspects of technology through his media literacy unit.

The participants considered and discussed the common aspects of their successful social studies lessons. These lessons effectively engaged students with subject matter and required that they, as teachers, have some awareness of their students' interests and prior knowledge, as well as an understanding of the content being taught. In these lessons the participants found ways to make the topic relevant to students, provided an opportunity for students to apply what they were learning, and allowed room for students to share their expertise. Additionally, the participants felt that their own interest in the topics provided their students a positive model for learning.

Reflecting on Social Studies Teaching

As the participants constructed an understanding of the teaching of social studies and made decisions regarding their lessons, they also considered their planning and teaching and its impact on their students. Shulman (1987) sets reflection as one component of the process of pedagogical reasoning. Reflection includes "reviewing, reconstructing, reenacting, and critically analyzing one's own and the class's performance and grounds explanation in evidence" (p. 15). Jay and Johnson (2002) describe a model for reflection that recognizes a process, both individual and

collaborative, where “one reaches newfound clarity, on which one bases changes in action or disposition” (p, 76). They describe a typology for reflective thought that draws of the work of Schon, Dewey, and others. The first dimension in this typology is descriptive reflection that sets the problem or describes it. The second dimension is comparative reflection in which the matter for reflection is reframed in light of alternative views and research. In the third dimension, critical reflection, one makes “a judgment or choice among actions, or simply integrates what one has discovered into a new and better understanding of the problem” (p. 70). This dimension can involve consideration of the broader socio-political and historical context of schooling, and can position the teacher as an agent of social change. These dimensions are not mutually exclusive; rather, “they become intimately intertwined to compose a composite concept” (p. 80).

The participants encountered the process of reflection in two of their course texts. In *Visualizing Social Studies Methods* (Lee, 2008) the author states that reflection “allows teachers to adapt to changing educative conditions and account for new ideas and unforeseen circumstances” (p. 32). Also drawing on the work of Schon, Lee explains that reflection can be “in action” as teachers respond to new conditions while teaching, or can be “on action” as teachers consider how a lesson unfolded and what students learned. He describes a reflective teaching cycle that includes “developing subject matter knowledge, planning to teach, teaching, and reconsidering what was taught” (p. 52). The text that participants used for their student teaching seminar, *Writing a Work Sample* (Cohen et al., 2004), explains

reflection as a process in which the teacher thinks about the different aspects of a lesson that has been taught and then makes decisions aimed to improve future lessons. It states, “In general, a lesson reflection addresses what you **liked, disliked, and would change** if you were to teach the lesson again. It focuses on how successful students were in meeting your objective” (p. 179). This text also describes a formal reflection that asks service teachers to think more deeply about their planning process, classroom management, pedagogy, assessment of students’ progress, and professional conduct.

At the beginning of their “Strategies for Teaching Language Arts and Social Studies” course the participants responded to the prompt, “To be an effective Social Studies teacher I will need to learn...” They added to their responses at the end of the study. Each participant was observed while teaching in their classroom. During the interview following the lesson observation, participants were asked questions about their lesson, including what went well and what they would do differently. The protocol for the focus group asked participants to describe a successful social studies lesson and comment on why it was successful. In addition, the participants were asked to discuss their insights into factors or elements that contribute to a successful social studies lesson. The findings in this section are presented using terms of the three lesson reflection questions, Lee’s reflective teaching cycle, and the dimensions of reflection described by Jay and Johnson. Findings for this sub-category are drawn from the prompt responses (P), chapter reflections (R), interviews (I), lesson observation (O), and the focus group (FG). Some of the findings in this section have

been presented in other sections. Their inclusion here will help show patterns of thinking and acting on the part of the participants.

Hope. Hope's thinking about teaching evolved as she reflected on the types of experiences and knowledge that support students' ability to learn new information. This section includes examples of reflection from her part-time student teaching that led to changes in instructional strategy. It also includes Hope's reflections from the observed lesson and the lesson shared in the focus group.

An illustration of Hope's reflection in action was an observation she made while helping a student read a passage about the revolutionary war in America. The student's task was to read the passage and then reword it. Hope noted that the student struggled to understand the passage. However, when Hope explained some of the vocabulary words in terms the student could understand, the student was able to complete the task (R8, 15-25). Hope's observation during the lesson and brief analysis resulted in a modification to the instructional strategy that she was using.

Hope made another observation about the types of activities that foster students' thinking and memory. She spoke about students and their physical manipulation of materials.

I also learned those apparently menial tasks of cutting and pasting projects are really empowering to kids. That's one thing I really learned from last term. You may think this is such mundane stuff, cutting timelines. This different cutting and pasting things are really considered hands-on and kids really do learn from [them]. I think there's something about being able to physically glue things to a spot. I think it glues it to their brain. It was amazing to watch. (I1, 413-419)

This reflection on action reconsidered how students' interactions with materials affected their learning of new information. As a result, Hope incorporated new strategies in some lessons that encouraged the manipulation and reorganization of materials, an example of the planning to teach component of the reflective teaching cycle.

In her chapter reflections and first interview Hope stressed the importance of helping students make connections between prior knowledge and experiences and new information (R3, 43-44; R10&11, 28-29; I1, 422-425, 441-442). At the same time she stressed the importance of developing the skills that enable one to learn from books (R10&11, 15-21). As Hope taught social studies lessons in her full-time student teaching, she wove in strategies that indicated her developing ideas concerning teaching and learning. The strategies were intended to help students learn new vocabulary words, build background knowledge, make personal connections to subject matter, and use print material as a source of information.

The two lessons discussed in this section are from Hope's second work sample that focused on geography. In the lesson observed for this study, Hope used a children's picture book to introduce the subject of geography and the vocabulary associated with continents and oceans. During her reading she engaged students in discussion, helped students make connections between their experiences and those of the main character, and worked with students to define difficult or new terms. She also focused on the author's use of language and asked questions about the story requiring students to draw conclusions. Hope used a variety of strategies to teach

students the names and locations of continents and oceans. After the lesson she commented on her inclusion of student-friendly definitions during her reading.

The reason I do that so much is because I have so many ELLs. So I really try hard to pick out those vocabulary words that they may not know....The interesting thing when I was reading that book, I saw the eyes perk up in the few students who are native Spanish speakers when I talked about mangoes and papayas. It made me realize I really do need to bring in some Latino kind of stories that they can really relate to, because a lot of times the topics, they don't relate so well. So it was kind of a personal insight I had today. (I2, 19-26)

Hope's comment demonstrate a reflection on action as she observed students' response during the lesson, considered the source of the response, and noted a need regarding future materials for students.

When asked how she thought the lesson went, Hope said that she thought the lesson was successful; students knew there were seven continents and five oceans. "They need to have an understanding of it... to know how to spell them and know exactly where they are is a little higher end for the curriculum standards. I really enjoyed it. I thought the kids really engaged well and enjoyed it" (I2, 9-11). This response was descriptive, briefly touching on the lesson's objective and the students' positive affective response.

Classroom management was a concern for Hope. In a chapter reflection she wrote that when she used interactive instruction she tried to make sure that all students were actively learning and engaged. She recognized that this was difficult because there were so many types of learners in her class. She noted that with interactive instruction the main key was classroom management (R8, 40-47).

At the outset of her observed lesson, Hope addressed the management of facilitating student participation, reminding students of the class goal, not yelling out comments. She directed their attention to tally marks on the board that showed the number of “blurting out” comments that day (O, 10-11). She provided opportunities throughout the lesson for students to appropriately make comments. Students could raise their hands and comment when called on, respond when their name was called, talk with a partner, and talk with their table group. In this lesson there were very few comments called out by students. Hope moved about the classroom while students were completing their worksheet, looking at students’ work. At one point in the lesson Hope used a globe to show the hemispheres and she asked the students, “If you cut the sphere in half, exactly, do you think it’s hot or cold at the equator?” After a student blurted out an answer several times, Hope rephrased her question, beginning with “Who thinks...” In the interview, Hope explained her rewording, “It’s the phrasing of – instead of saying ‘Who can tell me?’ saying ‘Who can tell the class?’ And I’d forgotten that. It’s such a powerful shifting of words to empower the student. They’re not talking to me; they’re talking to the whole class” (I2, 36-39). Hope’s comments indicate her reflection in action.

Near the end of the lesson, Hope taught the students a song to help them remember the name of the continents. The words were displayed on the Smart board and each time the students said the name of a continent they stood up and then sat back down. After the song, Hope introduced a component of the lesson in which students colored the continents on a world map. She commented on this shift in the

lesson activity saying, “I was amazed with the singing, that they didn’t go crazy. I think they really enjoyed it and they were able to pull it back and not get wild” (I2, 52-54). She did not attribute the students’ ability to refocus their attention to her actions.

When asked what she would change in the lesson, she answered that she would manage transitions within the lesson more efficiently, perhaps sending one group at a time for supplies. She said, “I felt I did better with classroom management than I did in my past lesson. It’s kind of a learning curve, getting there. More little nuances rather than the content of the lesson” (I2, 14-16). Hope later added that effective classroom management and good lesson planning are both necessary for successful instruction (I2, 57-59). Her response indicates reflection on action, noting a specific aspect of her classroom management, and a particular action to take in a future lesson.

During the focus group Hope shared a social studies lesson in which students learned about their home state while locating features and cities on a map. She explained that her students had limited exposure to places in the state and she saw this lesson as a way to teach them about their surroundings and its importance. Hope described her lesson.

I had a map of the state that each of them could have at their desks with dots premade on the map. As we read the book we would talk about the different places and then put on the map where that was in Oregon. So they were able to see a picture of it, see it on the map, and then physically, they put it on the map. (FG, 295-299)

Again, she used a children’s picture book, *B is for Beaver* (M. Smith & R. Smith, 2003), to pique students’ interest and to impart information. Hope’s strategies in this lesson helped students learn vocabulary related to a topic, build broad geographical

knowledge, and organize information through physical action. In describing why she thought the lesson was successful, Hope said, "It was something they could relate to because they lived here. It was relevant.... The all paid attention because potentially, these were places that they could go see" (FG, 307-310). Her reflection here was at the descriptive level, attributing students' attention to the relevance of the subject matter. Hope's attention to her students' prior experiences and knowledge, the use of instructional strategies suited to the students' developmental levels, and the careful selection of resources material indicate reflection in planning.

The protocol for the focus group discussion asked participants to consider the elements common to each of their successful lessons. A common element Hope saw was the relevance of the lessons to students' lives (FG, 652-656). A second element was the teachers' passion for the topic. She said, "We all want to make something that's interesting and relevant and get to know the kids; make it so it's applicable. I think the passion we have about what we're teaching is absorbed by them" (FG, 673-675). Hope also agreed with Marcus's comment that the lessons empowered students by providing them opportunities to be the expert (FG, 708-711).

In her response to the prompt asking what she needed to learn to be an effective social studies teacher, Hope wrote, "How to relay my knowledge in a way that is interesting and applicable in their lives" (P1, 11-12). In the focus group she added to that response, "Express my passion so they can find their passion" (P2, 4).

Hope reported that her initial approach to instruction was to "treat them like college students, just dump the information into them. They'll get more information"

(FG, 520-522). Hope used reflection in action and on action, and identified instructional strategies and resources to improve her teaching. She used descriptive reflection to note salient features of her lessons and her students' responses. Through her reflection, her teaching became more focused on resources and strategies to improve students' performance.

Laurel. As Laurel taught social studies related lessons she considered students' responses to strategies for instruction and assessment. She began to acknowledge students' perspectives as she analyzed situations in her classroom. This section focuses on Laurel's reflections on two lessons.

In early chapter reflections, Laurel wrote about the importance of progression in lesson planning. "While thinking about what is coming it is important to think about what came before the lesson you are planning on teaching" (R2, 20-22). In her next chapter reflection she noted that when teachers were aware of students' knowledge they could expand on that knowledge rather than simply repeat what had been previously learned (R3, 27-33). Laurel also wrote that, because of the nature of the subject, social studies should include "plenty of visual aids" (R1, 42).

In the lesson observed for this study, Laurel led students through a discussion of a *Time for Kids* article about the Egyptian revolution. Prior to distributing the article to students, Laurel used the document camera to show the cover photo of Egyptian protesters, and she asked the students to look at the photo and then describe what they thought was happening. After their comments, Laurel engaged the students

in discussion about their knowledge of the protests, expanding on their comments, and helping them make connections to their previous lessons on the American revolution.

Laurel: You might have been hearing about Egypt.

Student: And Libya?

Laurel: Yes, Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia.

Student: Their ruler or president is crazy.

Laurel: There's some discussion about whether he's a good president.

Student: He's a ruler for life.

Laurel: A lot of Middle Eastern countries have rulers who are leaders for life. They don't have the benefit of our system of government.

Do you know what it's called? (pause) The United States has a document that protects our rights as people. Anyone know what that document is called?

Student: Bill of Rights?

Laurel: Right! It protects things like freedom of speech and the right to vote. (Students began reading article.)

Laurel: Who's heard of Twitter or Facebook or Myspace?

(Most students raised their hands)

Laurel: Imagine we didn't have those things and you wanted to get everyone together. Think back to the American revolution.

Student: You'd have to go door to door. The British are coming!

Laurel: Do you imagine that number was larger [in Egypt] because of how we communicate?

Students: Yes – 100%

Laurel: Think back to the vocabulary from yesterday. What might you call these people?

Student: Rebels.

(O, 14-25, 33-41, 51-53)

In the interview following the lesson, Laurel was asked about the use of *Time for Kids* in the classroom. She answered that the magazines were delivered weekly; however, because of time constraints some were still on the shelf. The issue for her lesson was dated two months earlier. Laurel said that she chose this particular issue because "it ties into the revolutionary war which is what they're starting to get into and ties into some of their vocabulary words, like rebel" (I2, 106-108). She said that

Time for Kids was a good resource for teaching vocabulary. Laurel's comments about her selection of material and focus on vocabulary connections for this lesson indicate that she used her prior knowledge of students' social studies and vocabulary work to plan for instruction. She had sufficient understanding of the *Time for Kids* article that she could guide discussion. This is an example of reflection prior to instruction and planning to teach. It should be noted that earlier in an education class, Marcus had discussed his use of this article with his students. This prior discussion possibly presented Laurel with ideas regarding the integration of content that she used to enhance her lesson. The *Time for Kids* article made no mention of the use of social media in the Egyptian revolution.

When Laurel was asked about what she thought went well in the lesson, she responded, "I think the kids were really excited to see the pictures. I think the visual aids were really great. I wanted to talk about some of these things down here but we just didn't have time" (I2, 118-120). She referred to a chronology of key events in Egypt's history at the bottom of the *Time for Kids* article and said, "The kids could have probably spent an hour talking about this" (II2, 123). She added later that she thought the students were very interested in the lesson, "especially because there were some things that tied in with the vocabulary they were working on yesterday" (I2, 167-168). Laurels' comments indicate a reflection on action at a descriptive level. She noted students' engagement during the lesson and attributed it to the quality of the visual aids and the connection of terms in the article to the students' previous vocabulary work.

Regarding changes she would make in the lesson, Laurel said

The amount of time. More time would be good. Maybe not calling on C. a couple of times. We're really working on getting the kids not to speak out, because it takes up so much time. I'll call on a kid that had his hand raised, but then the kids who's calling out makes it so I can't hear the kid who took the time to raise his hand. So I have to waste time saying, "Stop, what did you say again?" It's only 30 seconds or so, but those really add up throughout the whole day. (I2, 151-157)

In these comments Laurel identifies specific student behaviors and her response to those behaviors that result in diminished instructional time. She speaks about one student, but also refers to more students with disruptive behavior. She does not speak of a plan for changing her facilitation of discussion or classroom management.

Laurel's comments show reflection on action at a descriptive level.

During the focus group Laurel shared a successful social studies lesson for her fourth grade students. In this lesson, each student used books and the internet to find information about a state and about a person of personal interest. The students then created a poster showing the information. As Laurel discussed this lesson she addressed two areas: students and technology, and the development of personal responsibility. (This lesson is described more fully in the sub-category concerning pedagogical strategies. Laurel's comments and concerns regarding technology are presented in greater depth in the technology sub-category.)

In a chapter reflection Laurel expressed both concern with technology in the classroom and recognition of the potential for technology as a support for instruction.

It could be really easy to allow technology to completely take over the classroom. It is an important tool which should be utilized, both

for gaining student attention, [and] for familiarizing them with technology that they can and will be using in the future. (R14, 12-17)

Laurel used the internet as a resource for her teaching ideas and she used a document camera in the classroom to display images from a student magazine for students. However, Laurel found students' use of technology to be problematic. The focus group gave Laurel a setting in which to define and discuss with others her concerns regarding her students' interaction with technology. As part of the protocol for the focus group, Marcus shared his lesson about social media and the Egyptian revolution. In his lesson the internet and social media were regarded as tools for communication, rather than simply research tools. Laurel responded to Marcus's description of his lesson saying, "It was really positive and constructive about technology usage" (FG, 176). During the ensuing discussion Laurel stated that technology in the classroom could be detrimental and distracting, in part because "we live in such an instant gratification society" (FG, 117). Laurel described her students as overly dependent on the internet and unable to use books and encyclopedia as a resource. She said that her students argued that anything they needed to know could be found online, a point she had difficulty countering. When Laurel shared her social studies lesson, she again expressed her unease about students' dependence on the internet for research and she added her concern that students would not value information that was easy to come by. Marcus acknowledged Laurel's concerns and questions regarding students' use of the internet for research, and he stated that students would likely be required to produce both hard and online resources in their future school work. As this discussion drew to an end, Laurel stated, "They're going

to need to know how to research things on the internet. I feel technology is so important, especially with the way everything is advancing” (FG, 601-603).

Laurel’s comments relate to the lesson she shared with the group and to a general perception of her students’ relationship with technology. Through this description she was beginning to define and make sense of a problem. Marcus’s example of technology as a tool for communication provided Laurel a different perspective from which to examine her students’ relationship with technology and possibilities for instruction. Laurel was reflecting on action at a descriptive level. The dialogue with Marcus validated some of her concerns and presented her with a way to reframe her problem.

The second area affecting Laurel’s social studies teaching related to assessment and the development of personal responsibility. Laurel initially viewed rubrics as a tool for teachers, as they allowed “a quick checking off of student knowledge and can give more insight into what and how the student is thinking about whatever is being learned in the classroom” (R3, 34-39). In the focus group Laurel described how, through the use of a rubric, students learned to assess their own work and in the process became more responsible for their actions. She said that one of her struggles had been assessment of student work like the posters, and that her university observer had suggested an assessment format called CRANE in which each letter represented part of the grading criteria (FG, 449-451). Laurel wrote CRANE and the questions related to each part on the board for students to see.

Every time they come up to me and asked “Is this good?” I’d go,
“Yeah, that’s pretty good. Do you think it fits all these things?”

And I'd point to the list of questions and they'd look up at the questions and go "Hmmm." And half the time, or over half the time they go back to their desk and do more work on it... For some of the kids it's got them to put a lot more "umph" into what they're doing. (FG, 469-475)

Laurel further explained that self assessment was an important skill to learn, and the process she used made students ask themselves questions about their own work. She also noted that one of the students she referred to as "challenging" checked the displayed criteria a few times and put more effort into completing his poster (FG, 508-511). In the discussion about Laurel's lesson, Hope commented on the value of self-assessment and Marcus suggested that the rubric would remind students working at home that they were working to meet the teacher's expectations. Laurel responded with, "I want them to have that intrinsic value of 'I'm doing this for myself as well as I'm doing it for the teacher'" (FG, 489-491). Laurel's comments show reflection on action. She described how she made her grading criteria public and the students' response to the criteria. Laurel had struggled with assessment and implemented a strategy to improve her practice. As she reflected on the effectiveness of the strategy, she began to consider the situation from her students' perspective, indicative of reflection that had potential to move into the comparative dimension.

When the participants were asked about common elements of their successful social studies lessons, Laurel said that the lessons provided ways to address students' interests, they included ways to use technology, and that the information in the lessons was personal, rather than abstract (FG, 644, 657).

Laurel responded to the first prompt response that asked what she needed to learn to be an effective social studies teacher by writing “everything I want my students to learn” (P1, 10). In her later prompt response Laurel wrote “how to interest my students in the topics/subjects of social studies” (P2, 2). The first response states the need for subject matter knowledge, while the second response indicates awareness that instructional strategies and knowledge of students play an important role in the teaching of social studies.

Laurel used reflection on action primarily at the descriptive level to consider students’ response to instructional strategies and the effectiveness of classroom management. Laurel’s reflection showed some characteristics of the comparative level as she considered students’ perspective of assessment and alternate conceptions of technology use.

Marcus. Months before Marcus began his student teaching, he had an opportunity to work with children at his school. This summer school teaching experience provided setting in which to examine the relationship between his teaching intentions, his actions, and students’ behavior. He wrote

I had intended to expose students to some aspects of science they may not have a lot of exposure to (anthropology, astronomy, cartography) all of which were topics that had intrigued me.... It became quickly clear that my initial approach was not going to work. (R2, 5-12)

He recognized that the students’ misbehavior was a result of his own planning, and he took steps to rework his lessons and focus on students’ interests. Marcus described this experience as his “crash course in the reflective teaching cycle” (R2, 2-3).

Marcus's thinking about this process of observation, critique, and action continued to develop as he taught lessons during his student teaching. This section focuses on Marcus's reflection on one lesson, and on his reflection on his encounters with students around their thinking about history.

The topic of Marcus's first work sample was media literacy. The unit was developed in response to Marcus's observations of his students' exposure to and understanding of media. He was aware that many of students spent a great amount of time interacting with media in an unsupervised context, and he was concerned with their inability to "deconstruct the messages aimed at them" (R14, 8). He wrote, "This generation has more access to information than any other in history but there has not been a corresponding increase in education [for]students in how to parse a solid source from a shaky one" (R14, 14-17). Later, when explaining his thinking about the unit he said, "We tell kids not to use Wikipedia, but we don't tell them why" (I1, 114-115). In addition to addressing an observed student need, Marcus's media literacy unit was designed to meet two content standards: recognizing how media influences opinion, and recognizing the purposes of media.

In the final lesson of his media literacy work sample students compared how communication was used during the American revolution and the Egyptian revolution of 2011, focusing on the role of social media. Marcus discussed this lesson during the first interview and also shared it during the focus group. He explained that he had initially planned to have students create posters and then present them to classmates. The new lesson was

A totally happy mistake.... Somehow just watching the coverage of Egypt I came across that 60 Minutes piece and thought, you know, this is relevant to them. You talk about Paul Revere and they're not going to go riding on a horse and knocking on doors. (I1, 47-53)

Marcus saw current civil protests in Egypt as an entry point for the study of how social media affects people. He built on his students' knowledge of Paul Revere and the American revolution. Marcus incorporated an issue of *Time for Kids* that featured an article on the Egyptian protesters, but he viewed that article as sparse because it did not mention social media. He brought in resources, including an interview with Wael Ghonim, an Egyptian Google executive, who talked about social media and the uprising (FG, 18-26).

Marcus described beginning his lesson by shaking a box and announcing, "This is the most powerful weapon in the Egyptian revolution" (FG, 69-70). After his students asked if it was a bomb or grenade, he showed the students his new Smartphone. He explained that his phone had Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and MySpace, and that was why it was the most important weapon in the Egyptian revolution. Marcus described the progression of the class's discussion, looking at the role of communication in revolution, and making comparisons between the two revolutions. Marcus described the lesson as successful.

Getting to talk about non-school stuff was something that was exciting and fun....What made it successful was that it was relevant and it let them see themselves as having some power. You don't have to be a good writer to hop on Twitter and reach millions of people quickly. To see communication as a tool was my big accomplishment....Kids understood that you can use these in a very specific way and these can be influential enough to bring down a big governmental regime,

then maybe there's a reason why Pepsi hires people to go on Twitter and talk about how great Pepsi is. (FG, 35-46)

Marcus's comments about this lesson demonstrate his reflection on action. He reconsidered what had been taught previously in his media literacy unit, and he was also aware of his students' understanding of Paul Revere's actions during the American revolution. Marcus attributed his decision to bring together the American revolution, the Egyptian revolution, and his students' experiences with social media to "dumb luck and timing" (FG, 17). However, his knowledge of each of these areas enabled him to make a connection between them. His thinking represents comparative reflection, as Marcus reframed the role of communication, looking at it from the perspective of students, teachers, and activists. Marcus's comments also indicate critical reflection. He situated his unit and lesson in an historical and socio-political context. He made decisions about the subject matter to contextualize big ideas about power and control in media for his students. He selected instructional strategies that helped his students to critically analyze messages and resources, and to develop skills for communication.

In chapter reflections and during the focus group, Marcus discussed his efforts to present his students with new perspectives regarding historical events, particularly related to the concept of discovery. (This example is also presented in the sub-category for pedagogical strategies and the sub-category for purposes for social studies.) In a social studies lesson about European explorers, Marcus helped his students understand the term "discovery" by claiming the students' property in the name of various monarchs and countries. Marcus reported that after about 20 minutes,

students were beginning to understand the point of the demonstration (R5, 23). In a subsequent lesson, Marcus and his students watched a video and then discussed the Lewis and Clark expedition. He stated that his students were surprised at how the American explorers claimed land inhabited by people who were helping them. Marcus wrote about the difficulty his students experienced as they tried to understand events and actors in history.

My students tend to want to hear a definitive answer on whether something is good or bad. "Was Columbus a bad guy?" Well... how to answer that. No? Cultural relativism tells me that he was a product of his time. But at the same time, that sort of principle needs to be applied now. Criminals and drug dealers need to be contextualized and I think while that is a jump for fifth graders, laying that kind of framework down now could potentially bear fruit in their educational future. (R5, 30-40)

During the focus group, Marcus responded to Laurel's description of one of her student's perception of historical resources by saying, "It's funny how rigid they can get into stuff like that" (FG, 253). He went on to tell of a discussion with his own students in which they persisted in saying that Columbus discovered America. He described explaining that Columbus arrived 500 years after the Vikings, who had found Native Americans already living here. Marcus drew a timeline for his students to illustrate his chronology, but his students continued to say that Columbus discovered America.

This example of Marcus's instruction in social studies shows a reflection on action in the descriptive, comparative, and critical dimensions. Marcus described both his teaching actions and his students' response. He reconsidered the response to his

instruction, developed new subject matter, and planned subsequent lessons. These actions indicate that Marcus used the reflective teaching cycle. His comments about students remained descriptive, as he did not reflect on the students' perspective as they tried to make sense of new information or different viewpoints. Marcus's reflection is also indicative of the comparative dimension. He took into account the historical context and perspectives of both European explorers and indigenous people as he selected subject matter. His reflection was critical as he took a broader view, thinking about the implications for his students if he were to introduce cultural relativism as a concept.

When asked about the common elements in the successful social studies lessons, Marcus said that knowing students was a big part of the success, and then making the connections between students and the subject matter (FG, 645, 676). He also said the lessons empowered students by providing ways for them to become experts by shaping and creating their reality (FG, 699-701).

In his response to the prompt asking what he needed to learn to be an effective social studies teacher, Marcus initially wrote, "How to best aid my students in their understanding of topics related to social studies, beyond memorizing where the Pacific is, to understanding how and why the Pacific Ocean is important across time and cultures" (P1, 12-16). In the focus group he added to that response, "The history and context of my new home state, the contexts and situations of each unique group of students, how to stay in the loop technologically and culturally, and where the interests of students lie, how to reach and expand the borders" (P2, 5-8). The first statement

signals Marcus's integrative and conceptual approach to the teaching of social studies. His second statement indicates the particular knowledge he needs to develop in order to contextualize social studies topics for his students.

Marcus demonstrated reflection on action as he worked through the reflective teaching cycle. His reflections on students' learning were both descriptive and comparative. He considered multiple perspectives as he planned lessons and selected resources to help his students develop skills for analysis and communication. Marcus situated his lessons in socio-political and historical contexts and addressed issues of power and control, demonstrating critical reflection.

Summary. Through their chapter reflections, the interviews, and the focus group discussion, the participants shared their thoughts on teaching, student learning, lesson purpose, and instructional materials. In their chapter reflections, the participants had an opportunity to discuss their teaching and make connections to ideas presented in the text. In the interviews after the lesson observations, participants were asked about what went well in the lesson and what would they change if the lesson were to be taught again. Throughout the focus group, the participants discussed their lessons in depth, identifying and explaining the successful aspects, and presenting concerns and difficulties. The findings in this section are presented in terms of their temporal occurrence: in action or on action; the place in the reflective teaching cycle: developing subject matter knowledge, planning to teach, teaching and reconsidering what was taught; and the dimension of reflective thought: descriptive, comparative, or critical.

The reflections after the lesson, in which the participants reconsidered what had been taught, were primarily descriptive. In most cases, they noted that students met the objectives of the lesson. They commented on the students' excitement and engagement, and attributed the lesson's success to the relevance of the subject matter to students' interests and to connections to previous classwork. The participants discussed some difficulties they observed in the lessons. In two examples, Hope proposed a new action as a result of reflection. After thinking about congestion in the classroom, she suggested a way to better facilitate the students' access to materials. Her observation of students' response to a children's book resulted in her decision to bring in books that were culturally relevant to her students. Laurel described students' behavior and comments that negatively affected her lessons; however, she did not explore possible reasons for the students' actions. Interestingly, when transitions and discussions in lessons flowed smoothly, the participants did not examine their own teaching behaviors that contributed to the lesson's success.

Some of the comments and discussion after the participants' lessons indicated that their reflection was moving toward or was within the comparative and critical dimensions. For example, Laurel's observations regarding her students' relationship with technology were descriptive. However, the focus group provided a setting in which she defined her concerns, and through discussion with others, she considered another way to frame the relationship. In a second example, Laurel explained how her struggle with assessment resulted in a strategy that provided useful criteria for students. Through the focus group discussion, she related two perspectives on the

effectiveness of rubrics. Again, she was moving toward comparative reflection. While she did not explore these relationships further in the discussion, she became aware of different perspectives. Also during the focus group, Marcus demonstrated reflection that was comparative in considering how his lesson successfully addressed his students' perspective on communication and technology. His reflection became critical as he situated his lesson in historical and socio-political contexts, and he considered the implications for his students as they came to understand the multiple purposes of social media. The only example of reflection in action was provided by Hope, when she explained how she rephrased a question during her lesson. Her decision shifted the focus in the class from the teacher as the arbiter of knowledge to the student as a source of knowledge.

The participants reflected on their planning for instruction and described the factors taken into account as they clarified the purpose of their lesson and shaped it for instruction. They all attended to content standards or curriculum expectations, and they considered their students' prior knowledge and experiences related to the selected topic. For Hope and Laurel, the purpose of their lesson remained within the scope of the standards and expectations. Their reflection was primarily technical and descriptive. In Hope's map lesson, for example, she was aware of students' limited knowledge and first-hand experience in the state, and she used resources and instructional strategies appropriate to their level to expand the background knowledge. In Laurel's *Time for Kids* lesson, she knew of her students' previous social studies lessons and vocabulary work, and she used a discussion around a current event to help

them make a connection to the terminology they had been learning. Marcus's purpose for lessons extended beyond content standards and expectations. His planning indicated both comparative and critical reflection as he considered multiple perspectives on subject matter, the social value of the lesson, and the implications for students as members of society. In his media literacy lesson, he knew of his students' previous social studies lessons and their experiences with social media. As Marcus developed his lesson purpose and strategies, he focused on developing a historical and socio-political context for events and actions so that students could understand how media is used to affect opinion. Marcus's planning indicated both comparative and critical reflection.

Reflection on subject matter focuses on what a teacher knows about what they are teaching, their misunderstandings, and their development of new knowledge. The participants did not share information regarding their subject matter knowledge. However, they did speak of resources they used as they taught their lessons. Hope selected resources from the classroom or library that were appropriate to students' level of development. One of the books that Hope used introduced geography from the perspective of a boy from central Asia, and she invited students to make connections between their experiences and those of the author. A second book provided images and descriptions of people, places, and features of the state. Laurel used resources that were available in the classroom for her article discussion. The juxtaposition of the magazine article and the events of the American revolution suggest that Laurel considered a use of materials to broaden her students'

understanding of terminology related to revolution. As Laurel's students completed their state posters, they used resources that were available in the classroom and on the internet. The inclusion of a famous person selected by the students was intended to meet students' interests, rather than deepen their understanding of a place. For both Hope and Laurel, lesson objectives were met through the use of classroom and library resources and approved websites. Familiarity with those resources enabled them to successfully teach the lessons. For his media literacy lesson, Marcus utilized resources available in the classroom and brought in additional material that enabled him to include new perspectives and to build historical and socio-political context. He drew on knowledge that he was developing at the time and selected material with the potential to illustrate the ideas and concepts of his lesson. Marcus then translated the knowledge and resources into a form suitable for instructional purposes.

During the course of this study the participants showed interest and concern for certain aspects of their teaching and students' learning, and that thinking was incorporated in their reflections on planning for instruction, their development of subject matter knowledge, and their analyses of students' learning. Hope's early observations regarding the types of knowledge that had value and the kinds of activity that supported students' learning, of information became incorporated into her later lessons. Laurel's belief that effective instruction required attention to the sequence of lessons and to students' prior knowledge helped her select subject matter and instructional strategies. Marcus's early analysis of the relationship between his lesson objectives and students' behavior led him to focus his attention on their needs and

interests. Each of these experiences and beliefs helped shape how the participants reflected on their teaching, and also what they perceived as necessary for their own professional growth as social studies teachers. Hope expressed that she needed to find ways to model her love of learning. Laurel recognized that she needed to learn more about instructional strategies and students' interests. Marcus saw that he needed to learn about his students and the complex interconnected world in which they live.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine the decision-making behaviors of preservice teachers as they planned for social studies in elementary classrooms. The findings are drawn from the participants' course assignments, interviews, classroom observations, and a focus group discussion. In this chapter, the findings are organized around the three research questions. There are more extensive summaries at the end of each chapter section.

The participants' understanding of the teaching of social studies was shaped by five intersecting factors: academic background, process of learning, beliefs and attitudes about education, conception of the teacher's role, and coursework. The participants had, or were earning, another degree in addition to a degree in education. Two of the participants had academic experience in the social sciences. The third participant was earning a degree in language arts. This work in another field provided the participants with background knowledge, as well as a perspective through which to view social studies subject matter. The participants' preferred ways of learning influenced the experiences they sought out and benefitted from as they learned about

social studies instruction. In general, the most beneficial experiences were those in which they could develop an understanding of context, apply ideas and strategies, and make personal connections to content and people. The participants held that, through education, students would develop the capacity to make choices, pursue personal interests, and participate in society. They accepted established content standards as an acceptable guide for what should be learned, as well as a measure for student learning. There were, however, concerns expressed about cultural bias in curriculum and assessment. For the participants, the role of the teacher involved planning lessons that addressed content standards, built on students' previous learning, and considered students' needs and interests. The participants articulated additional roles for the teacher that reflected their beliefs about education and their experiences in classrooms. The class discussions were a valuable component of coursework, as these situations allowed the participants to hear the opinions and experiences of others, make personal connections, and often develop new ways to think about topics.

As the participants made decisions about social studies instruction, they considered the purposes for social studies, their understanding of content standards and subject matter, their skills in organizing lessons and selection of instructional strategies, and their knowledge of students. They worked within the schedules and priorities established by individual schools and the school district. This resulted in limited opportunities to teach social studies, especially during their part-time student teaching. With regard to purposes for social studies, the participants expressed the goal of increasing students' understanding of the world. Other purposes for social

studies developed over the course of the study and reflected the participants' academic background, beliefs about education, and experiences with students. The participants created lessons that addressed content standards. They demonstrated an understanding of the subject matter and used the resources available in classrooms and school library. At times, they expanded upon the standards, creating lessons or adding elements that were relevant to their students' interests. In these cases, they sought out additional resources. Literature was integrated with social studies subject matter by each participant. In some cases, children's literature added meaningful context to a lesson. In other cases, the social studies related text was used as a means to address reading skills. The participants recognized that students were supported in their learning when lessons established a meaningful context and connected prior knowledge to new information. The lessons taught by the participants followed a direct instruction format. They saw the potential of the inquiry process and interactive teaching strategies for meeting the needs of a diverse group of students; however, they saw that these approaches required a high level of preparation. The participants all noted the discrepancy between their students' familiarity with technology and the opportunities for their students to use technology as a learning tool. Although each participant used technology for their personal learning, only one developed plans to help students understand its usefulness and risks.

Throughout the study, the participants shared their thoughts on teaching, student learning, lesson purpose, and instructional materials with regard to social studies instruction. Their reflection was analyzed using a typology that depicts three

dimensions of reflective thought: descriptive reflection that describes or sets a problem, comparative reflection that considers multiple viewpoints, and critical reflection that considers socio-political and historical contexts. The reflection after lessons were taught was primarily descriptive, with participants commenting on the flow of the activity, and how students met objectives and were engaged in the lesson. In some cases, the reflection considered the viewpoints of students and the implications for their future learning, indicating comparative and critical dimensions. The reflection during planning showed that the participants attended to content standards and curriculum expectations, and considered students' prior knowledge. Much of this reflection was descriptive. However, some lessons expanded beyond the content standards, with a focus on developing social and political contexts for topics. In these cases, the reflection indicated comparative and critical dimensions. The participants selected instructional materials to meet their lesson objectives and many of these materials could be found in the classroom or school library. Familiarity with these materials and the lesson's subject matter enabled the participants to successfully teach the lesson. When the lesson objectives expanded beyond the content standards or transcended a single subject area, the participants sought out additional resources that provided additional viewpoints or contexts. Reflection in these cases was in the comparative and critical dimensions. The participants' reflection on their teaching gradually shaped their practice. Their observations and analysis influenced how they organized lessons, decided upon instructional strategies, and selected resources. Because the participants adjusted their lessons to their school's priorities and

schedules, their opportunities to revise lessons varied. They were aware of the areas in which they needed to continue to learning order to teach social studies.

These findings are further synthesized through the lens of the research questions in chapter five.

Chapter Five: Conclusions and Discussions

Introduction

This study was undertaken in order to understand how preservice teachers learn to teach elementary social studies in an educational climate where the subject matter is de-emphasized in coursework and in classrooms. What did preservice teachers bring to and take away from their college and practicum experiences that enabled them to make decisions about social studies instruction that supports *their* students' learning? In this chapter I will review the study and present the key findings related to the research questions. I will then discuss the findings, the implications for the research, and the limitations of the study.

Summary of Research Questions and Methodology

This qualitative study took place over two ten-week college terms. The three preservice teachers, Hope, Laurel, and Marcus, who volunteered to participate in the study were enrolled in the undergraduate Double Degree preservice teacher education program at a northwestern university. During this period of time, the participants were enrolled in courses and completed their part-time and full-time student teaching requirements in intermediate grade classrooms at local elementary schools. I developed three questions to guide this study: 1) How do preservice elementary teachers construct an understanding of the teachings of social studies? 2) What knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes do preservice teachers draw upon as they make decisions about social studies teaching? and 3) How do preservice teachers reflect

upon and revise their own teaching of social studies? The research questions guided my selection of data sources. The four sources were student-produced texts, interviews, observation, and focus group discussion. These sources were useful in addressing the research questions, allowing participants to view the questions from their different positions in the education program and across a five month time period. Researcher memos captured my thinking during the process.

I used a multiple case study structure for the study, analyzing each participant as a single case, and then analyzing across the cases. I looked for patterns that were common to the three cases, but I also kept in mind the participants' individual experiences and perspectives. For this study, I used an inductive approach, drawing on Charmaz's *Constructing Grounded Theory* (2010), in which theories are constructed "through our past and present involvements and interactions with people, perspectives, and research practices" (p. 10), and also on the situational analysis process, developed by Clarke (2005), in which situational maps are created "as a means of opening up and analyzing data cartographically, emphasizing relationality and positionality" (p. 292).

Key Findings Related to the Research Questions

The research questions provided a lens through which to view the behaviors of preservice teachers as they made decisions with regard to social studies instruction. While each question focuses on an aspect of teaching, there was overlap in that the answer to one question often sheds light on certain aspects of another research questions.

How do preservice elementary teachers construct an understanding of the teachings of social studies? At the beginning of this study the participants were enrolled in a two credit course, “Strategies for Language Arts and Social Studies,” with a social studies component that comprised approximately half the course. At best, this resulted in ten hours of contact time plus course assignments for instruction and discussion regarding social studies content, pedagogy, resources, and elementary students’ learning. The participants reported that there was minimal teaching of social studies in their placement classes during their part-time student teaching, and attributed this to preparation for standardized testing. Two described a few weeks of social studies instruction alternating with science instruction during their full-time student teaching. Against this backdrop, the participants constructed an understanding of social studies teaching. There were five factors that intersected for each participant as they constructed this understanding: academic background, learning preferences, beliefs and attitudes regarding education, a conception of the teacher’s role, and college coursework in education. Because the factors were shaped by the participants’ experiences and values, their intersection resulted in different understandings of the teaching of social studies.

The participants had either acquired or were earning a second degree in addition to their degree in education. This background in another field provided the participants with knowledge, themes and concepts, and skills of analysis particular to that field. The academic background was also reflected in the participants’ approaches to teaching social studies in their classrooms. Two of the participants had or were

earning degrees in anthropology, with additional courses in Spanish or social sciences. Both of these participants viewed social studies as a way for students to broaden perspectives and to develop an understanding of the social and historical contexts in which they live, a view consistent with anthropology. The third participant was earning a second degree in English. She viewed social studies as a way for students to broaden their awareness of how people live and to develop understanding of the effects of historical events. This participant saw that social studies topics could be addressed through literature; however, this approach reflected a language arts perspective, focusing more on reading skills than social studies concepts.

In describing their own learning experiences, the participants' learning preferences became apparent. These preferences influenced the models and experiences that they sought out as they developed their understanding of teaching and learning. The participants benefitted from situations in which they could apply ideas and strategies, make personal connections to people and subject matter, and develop an understanding of both historical and contemporary context.

The participants held beliefs and attitudes about the purposes of education, the nature of knowledge, and their students and how they learn, and these beliefs shaped how they approached instruction in social studies. Common to each participant was the belief that, through education, students could find success in life and develop the skills for learning and participation in society. While the participants held some beliefs in common, other beliefs about the selection of content and learning

experiences differed. These more individual beliefs were consistent with the participants' own learning preferences and academic background.

The participants identified various roles and responsibilities of the teacher as social studies instructor. Central for each participant was the responsibility to plan lessons that were relevant to students' needs and interests, and to help students make connections to lesson content. More specific roles for the teacher, associated with students' development of academic and social skills related to civic participation, and with building relationships with families, were evident when the participants had an academic background in the social sciences.

The participants found the discussion portions of their college coursework to be meaningful situations in which they could share ideas and perspectives regarding social studies instruction. Through discussion with classmates, they were able to guide their learning and find personal ways to relate to a topic. The participants viewed their peers as both people to learn from and to learn with.

Discussion: For these preservice teachers, social studies as a subject was de-emphasized in both their elementary practicum classrooms and in their course work. The participants constructed an understanding of social studies instruction by drawing on their academic backgrounds, personal learning preferences and experiences, and their beliefs about education and students. These three components formed a foundation for a conception of the teacher's role with regard to social studies. For the two participants with a strong foundation in the social sciences, the conception of the teacher's role was more complex and there was greater congruence between the

participant's beliefs and the teacher's role. There was less congruence for the third participant, suggesting that without a deeper understanding of the concepts and structure of the subject matter, it was more difficult to envision how to put beliefs into practice.

Lortie (1975) asserts that students coming into education base their understanding of teaching on an "apprenticeship of observation" (p. 61) that is "intuitive and imitative, rather than explicit and analytical" (p. 62). For the participants in this study, the understanding of social studies instruction was informed by their experience as students, but not simply as students who observed the teacher. Rather, they were able to consider their own learning experiences as they shaped their ideas of effective instruction. This understanding, coupled with their academic background and beliefs about education, led to a conception of the teacher's role.

An aspect of these findings that was particularly meaningful was the role of discussion in the construction of knowledge. The de-emphasis of social studies instruction meant that there were few opportunities for participants to observe social studies instruction in classrooms and little time in course work for an instructor to address social studies curriculum. The participants used discussions as a setting for examining ideas and broadening their perspectives. Sleeter's (2009) research on the epistemological development of one novice teacher also pointed to the value of discussion groups as a space where individuals can express uncertainty, offer support, and respectfully disagree.

The research of Granott (1993) provides a useful theoretical model which suggests two dimensions for analyzing interactions between participants: the degree of collaboration between participants, and the relative knowledge or expertise of the participants. Granott describes nine configurations for interactions. Three of the configurations in the model, imitation, apprenticeship, and scaffolding, entail a high degree of asymmetrical expertise. These configurations reflect the relationship between the study participants and their cooperating teachers, university supervisors, and instructors. Two other configurations in the model, symmetric counterpoint and parallel activity, reflect the relationships found in discussions, and are characterized by similar expertise and a low or moderate level of collaboration. In these configurations, the participants engage in mostly independent activities, but exchange information and observations in a way that “nourishes and stimulates one another’s activity” (p. 189). I believe the discussions were valuable because they provided a non-evaluative setting in which the participants could raise questions and address issues of personal concern, and through that process, construct understanding.

What knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes do preservice teachers draw upon as they make decisions about social studies teaching? Over the course of this study the participants made decisions about social studies teaching based upon beliefs about the purposes for social studies instruction, their knowledge of subject matter and pedagogy, and their beliefs about and knowledge of students. They also considered external factors that impact teaching.

The participants' conceptions of social studies purposes and subject matter evolved over the two terms of the study. Initially, the participants each articulated a goal of increasing students' understanding of the world. This was expressed as gaining contextual understanding, seeing real world perspectives, or being open to the diversity of the world. As they taught lessons and interacted with students in their practicum, other purposes emerged related to the needs of their particular students in school and community settings. These new purposes concerned the development of social and academic skills that foster participation in society, and were part of a broader belief that students would find success in life through education. The participants accepted that content standards established goals in all subject areas for students' learning and performance. Their lessons addressed the subject matter set forth in the standards and in district adopted textbooks. The participants modified or enhanced their social studies lessons by drawing on the subject matter or perspectives related to their academic backgrounds.

Lesson planning was viewed by the participants as a means for organizing their thinking and actions, and as a way to prepare for students' questions and responses. While they each saw a need to integrate social studies content with other subject matter, particularly children's literature and informational texts, their implementations of integration differed, suggesting dissimilar understandings of the concept or differing purposes for integration. During their part-time student teaching, their planning for social studies was constrained by the focus on standardized testing and the subsequent emphasis on reading and math instruction.

The participants considered the new instructional strategies they encountered in their course text. They saw the potential of inquiry and interactive approaches for addressing an array of social studies topics, and they understood how these approaches could appeal to a range of students' learning styles and behaviors. The social studies lessons actually taught by the participants used a direct instruction format, and within this structure they included interactive elements. Discussion, or talking with students, were used as strategies to help students clarify information or to construct a more complex understanding of a topic.

Participants' knowledge and beliefs about students fell into three categories: demographic background, students as learners, and students' relationship with technology. They knew of their students' socio-economic status, the home language spoken by students, and their special learning needs. They had a general awareness of the level of family participation at school, for example, volunteering in classrooms and attending conferences, and family involvement in the students' time outside of school, such as level of supervision and academic support. The participants were aware that factors related to socio-economic status and home life affected learning and behavior. Their response was to create environments that were safe, and to encourage students to take responsibility for their actions and learning. The participants held that students were more likely to learn new subject matter and be engaged with social studies lessons when the information related to their interests and prior learning, was presented in a meaningful context, and included an opportunity to apply what had been learned. The participants commented on their students' incorrect answers and

difficulties in learning new concepts, especially with regard to historical events and people. These were attributed to the students' rigidity in thinking, inadequate background knowledge, and behavior issues, and resulted in either the presentation of more background information or further discussion to explain concepts. Each participant expressed concern regarding the impact of technology on students' learning. They saw that students were knowledgeable about the internet, and yet classrooms lacked computers and students had limited opportunities to use technology in their work. The participants did not all understand how to include technology instruction on in their lessons; consequently, strategies for incorporating technology were not consistent.

Discussion: The participants' decisions regarding social studies instruction were shaped by both the situations in which they were learning and teaching and their knowledge base. Educational policy involves the allocation of values and resources (Wirt & Kirst, 2001). Policies at the national and state levels determine the content that is valued, and student performance related to that content is measured through standardized tests. At a school level, decisions are made about the allocation of instructional time and teacher expertise. The three study participants completed their part-time student teaching when their schools were either preparing for or taking standardized tests in math and reading. Time to observe social studies instruction was limited, and the participants missed opportunities in which to try out and reflect upon the content specific strategies and materials from their coursework.

Throughout this study, the participants wrote and spoke of how students were more engaged in learning when lessons were relevant to their interests. Other than technology applications such as social media, internet, and video games, the participants provided few examples of students' interests. The participants were aware of socio-economic data regarding their students; however the conditions suggested by that data were approached as obstacles to overcome. The participants' knowledge of their students was fairly limited in its scope. Villegas and Lucas (2002) stress that teachers' knowledge of students' lives outside of school is vital to building bridges between home and school. Moll (2001) describes how "The everyday concepts that students develop outside of school, "provide the 'conceptual fabric' for developing school concepts" (p. 114). The experiences and understandings students brought to school had the potential to support the learning of social studies, but at this time that resource was poorly accessed. This gap between the participants' beliefs about learning and their knowledge base is similar to the dissonance observed by Matthews and Dilworth ((2008) which concerned the difficulty preservice teachers had implementing the transformative pedagogy they espoused due to their inadequate understanding of content and instructional strategies.

Also related to students' learning were the participants' comments regarding their students' difficulty understanding some historical information and concepts. They approached the subject matter of social studies as new information to be learned, but did not appear to understand the conceptual foundations necessary for some of the ideas or subject matter. The focus for participants was more on what their students

learned than on how their students came to understand. This finding was similar to that reported by Borko and Putnam (1995) where novice teachers had insufficient understanding of their students' knowledge, resulting in their difficulty predicting where students were likely to experience problems with some content.

Participants' knowledge of students' interests and experiences, and their awareness of their students' conceptual foundations relate to their pedagogical content knowledge. According to Munby, Russell, and Martin (2001), this includes "knowledge of students' interest and motivation to learn particular topics within a discipline and understanding about students' perceptions that can interrupt or derail their learning" (p. 880). Darling-Hammond (1996) emphasizes how teachers are able to interpret learner's statements and actions when they have knowledge of child and adolescent development and an understanding of the differences that may arise due to family, culture, experiences, and approaches to learning. The participants in this study speak of the importance of making lessons relevant to students, however at the present time and with regard to some subject matter, their knowledge of students and of strategies to incorporate developmentally appropriate and culturally relevant content is incomplete.

How do preservice teachers reflect upon and revise their own teaching of social studies? The findings related to the third research question concern the reflective behaviors of preservice teachers and draw upon a conception of reflective thought expressed by Shulman (1987) that sets it as one component of the process of pedagogical reasoning, and includes "reviewing, reconstructing, reenacting, and

critically analyzing one's own and the class's performance and grounds explanation in evidence" (p. 15). The data were analyzed using a typology for reflective thought described by Jay and Johnson (2002). The first dimension in this typology is descriptive reflection that sets the problem or describes it. The second dimension is comparative reflection in which the matter for reflection is reframed in light of alternative views and research, and seeks to "understand other points of view, which may be incongruent with one's own" (p. 78). In the third dimension, critical reflection, one makes "a judgment or choice among actions, or simply integrates what one has discovered into a new and better understanding of the problem" (p. 80) and

can involve consideration of the broader socio-political and historical context of schooling, and can position the teachers as an agent of social change. The dimensions are not mutually exclusive; rather, they become intimately intertwined to compose a composite concept. (p. 80)

The data were also considered in terms of its occurrence during the reflective teaching cycle: developing subject matter knowledge, planning to teach, teaching and reconsidering what was taught (Lee, 2008). Some of the lessons that the participants discussed were part of their work sample.

The most common examples of the participants' reflection were those made after teaching a lesson, and were primarily descriptive. In most cases, the participants noted that their students met the objectives of the lesson. They commented on the students' excitement and engagement, and attributed the success of a lesson to the relevance of the subject matter to student interest and connections to previous classwork.

Some of the comments and discussion following the participants' lessons indicated reflection within the comparative and critical dimensions. This type of reflection occurred as the participants considered their students' perspective on the subject matter, situated lessons in historical and socio-political contexts, and took into account the implications of lessons for students as their understanding became more complex. There were some examples of descriptive reflection that began to move toward comparative reflection. In those instances, the reflection began to change as a result of discussion with each other in the focus group, as this setting allowed the participant to define a problem, express concerns, and hear different ways to frame the situation.

The participants discussed or wrote about their planning for instruction and described the factors taken into account as they clarified the purpose of their lesson and shaped it for instruction. Their planning for instruction and their subject matter knowledge were linked. They attended to content standards or curriculum expectations, and they considered their students' prior knowledge and experiences related to the topic, indicating a descriptive level of reflection. When their lessons remained within the scope of the content standards, the subject matter resources were met within the classroom, school library, or through the school approved internet sites. Reflection on these lessons was in the descriptive dimension, focusing primarily on student success in meeting objectives, and the efficient execution of management tasks. When the lessons expanded upon the content standards or when the lessons focused on ideas that transcended a single subject area, the participants were required

to obtain resources that provided additional viewpoints and different social and historical contexts. These resources sometimes required the participants to translate the resources into a form that was accessible to students. Reflection in these lessons indicated the comparative and critical dimensions.

Over the course of the study the participants' reflections on their teaching and student learning were incorporated into their planning, development of subject matter, and analyses of students' learning. Most common was the evidence that reflection affected the participants' selection of subject matter and instructional strategies as they sought to meet their students' needs and interests.

Discussion: The research question concerning reflection was the most difficult of the questions to answer. Reflection on the effectiveness of one's lesson is an expectation of preservice teachers. It is included in their work sample and a common feature of conferences with supervisors. In this study, I stressed that my purpose was not to evaluate, but rather to learn. I was interested in how the participants thought about their lessons, not how they responded to an assignment. I tried to open the door for conversation and discussion.

Reflection is viewed as a cyclical process, in which a teacher continually revises and refines lessons. Unlike some subject areas, social studies instruction is not a daily occurrence in many classrooms; consequently, reflection on social studies lessons was not always part of a continuous process. At times, the implementation of an instructional strategy was the result of insight that occurred months earlier. At

other times, the opportunity to adjust a lesson plan or modify questioning around a topic did not happen at all.

The typology of reflection described by Jay and Johnson (2002) provided a useful framework for examining participants' comments and questions about their teaching. All of the participants demonstrated reflection in the descriptive dimension. Their comments showed an awareness of the technical aspects of their lessons, e.g., the effectiveness of transitions, the achievement of objectives, and the connection to students' prior knowledge. Descriptive reflection is an expectation for beginning teachers.

In this study, the reflections of the participants on lessons that were part of a work sample included the comparative and critical dimensions in addition to descriptive reflection. The structure of the work sample requires preservice teachers to create a set of lessons that build toward a common goal. The expectations of the work sample invite preservice teachers to look more closely at the interactions between students and subject matter, and then to refine and revise the strategies and subject matter. When preservice teachers create multiple lessons around a topic, they are more likely to develop an understanding of how their students build knowledge and of the challenges that students face in learning some subject matter.

Also in this study, the reflection that indicated comparative and critical dimensions came from the participants with social sciences background. I think their strong foundation in the content, both facts and organizing structures, provided them with alternative ways to approach subject matter when planning instruction and

subsequently reflecting upon their teaching. As discussed in an earlier section of this chapter, when the participants had a strong foundation in the social sciences, their conception of the teacher's role with regard to social studies instruction was more complex. These participants saw a value for social studies that transcended meeting content standards.

Hollingsworth (1989) and Ladson-Billings (2001) discussed the role that a teacher's knowledge and cooperating teachers, supervisors, and faculty played in the support of beginning teachers as they analyzed and revised their teaching. In their studies, the supporting teachers, supervisors, and faculty were focused on instruction in targeted curriculum areas. In Ladson-Billings' study preservice teachers had extensive opportunity to build their background knowledge. Similar to the findings in the Hollingsworth study, this study showed that new understandings about student learning occurred when preservice teachers experienced disequilibrium regarding instruction and then adjusted their teaching strategies, drawing upon the support of more experienced teachers. Similar to both Hollingsworth and Ladson-Billings was the finding that the participants' analysis of students' learning and subsequent revisions were dependent upon the preservice teachers' knowledge of how students learned and their knowledge of subject matter. In this study, however, knowledge of subject matter played a greater role in the participants' analysis than their knowledge of how students learned.

Recommendations for Practice

This study has implications for preservice teacher education in both coursework and practicum settings. As evidenced in the study, the instructional time for social studies education in elementary classrooms has decreased over the past decade, and pedagogy has become less child-centered. Classroom teachers are called upon to make decisions about subject matter and pedagogy in order to meet student needs and to address their district's goals. Given the limited time in some courses and in many classrooms, it is incumbent upon those of us involved in teacher education to be thoughtful and strategic in our decisions regarding social studies instruction. The following recommendations for teacher education are made with this in mind.

There are many discussions within the social studies community and among its critics around the purposes, foundations, strategies, and outcomes for social studies education. For preservice teachers, the array of purposes, strategies, and resources may lack coherence. Because preservice teachers are in the process of constructing an epistemology for practice, they need guidance and support in thinking in complex ways about approaches to social studies. *The first recommendation is investigation of and discussion about different approaches to social studies during courses dealing with social studies instruction.* I would also recommend that the instructors for courses select approaches to social studies instruction that are congruent with the mission of the college, and to make transparent the ways in which those approaches affect the selection of course assignments and resources. This will provide preservice

teachers a conceptual lens with which to interpret their experiences in classrooms and to frame their instructional planning.

The participants in this study benefitted from situations in which they could apply and discuss ideas and strategies, but found few opportunities to do this in their part-time student teaching placement, a time when they were enrolled in the social studies course. In their practicum, models for social studies instruction varied. College programs and their students are guests in public schools and to a great extent work with teachers and programs that have their own schedules. *The second recommendation is for course instructors and faculty to differentiate instruction for preservice teachers by providing alternative settings in which to learn.* Micro-teaching and video-taped lessons are two options that would enable the preservice teachers to observe and discuss content pedagogy and student learning. The preservice teachers' models for instruction would increase, as would their opportunity to raise questions and to share observations and hypotheses.

Teachers need an understanding of child and adolescence development, and an appreciation of the knowledge and ways of learning that children derive from their personal, cultural, and community experiences in order to create environments and instruction that are appropriate, interesting, and effective. Tasks that support preservice teachers as they build this understanding of students should be a component of teacher education. Structured assignments can move preservice teachers into the community to investigate the aspects of social, economic, and cultural life that influence the school and shape students' knowledge of human and environment

interaction. Preservice teachers also need to observe and interact with students as they encounter social studies subject matter, and they often need someone to help them interpret what they are seeing with regard to students' development. *A third recommendation is the inclusion of assignments such as community and child observations that help preservice teachers construct more specific knowledge of their students with regard to their development and to the social contexts in which they live.* Course instructors, supervisors, and cooperating teachers play an active role by providing guidance to preservice teachers as they translate their knowledge of students into developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive teaching.

The integration of subject matter occurs in elementary classrooms because of limits on instructional time, and because teachers see value in pulling together subject matter to foster a more complex understanding of a topic or concept. The preservice teachers in the Double Degree program and in similar programs at other universities bring academic backgrounds that inform and shape how they construct understandings of social studies practice, and consequently, how social studies is integrated with other subject matter. *A fourth recommendation is to examine models for subject integration in the social studies course, and to structure exercises in which students create lessons that purposefully integrate knowledge, perspectives, and methods of inquiry from other subject areas in order to construct a deeper understanding of an idea, event, or person.* This discussion and work should also provide an opportunity for preservice teachers to consider how the knowledge and tools of their academic area can be used to enhance the study of social studies. This focus on purposeful integration begins in

coursework, but it continues throughout student teaching as preservice teachers create and enact lessons in classrooms.

Reflective teaching involves attending to a variety of factors related to students, instructional strategies, lesson content, assessment, and the selection of resources. In this study, more complex reflection on social studies lessons occurred when the participants' academic background related to the topic of the lesson, and when there were multiple lessons on the topic, as in a work sample collection. Preservice teachers have differing academic backgrounds and may not choose to complete work samples in social studies; however, their thinking about lessons can move beyond a superficial level. Questions concerning what went well, what did not go well, and what could be changed are more likely to address issues of efficiency and effectiveness in lessons, and may skirt issues of relevance and appropriateness. *A final recommendation is for cooperating teachers and university support teachers to actively work with preservice teachers as they think about alternative ways to frame problems and situations of teaching.* These mentors have the ability and opportunities to pose questions that guide preservice teachers to an awareness of the perspectives and experiences of their students, and those of the people and communities represented in lessons. They can also lead preservice teachers to consider the value of lessons in broader social and historical contexts. Expanding reflective behaviors can require preservice teachers to draw upon their knowledge of students and subject matter, and also encourage them to build their knowledge in those areas.

Teacher education involves multiple settings in which preservice teachers encounter, make sense of, and act upon new information and theories. Cooperating teachers and teacher educators must provide multiple and varied opportunities for preservice teachers to interact with others, as they construct their understanding of subject matter, pedagogy, and students.

Limitations of the Study

The findings of this study offer insights into how preservice teachers' experiences, knowledge, and beliefs interact as they come to understand, make decisions for, and enact the instruction of social studies. A multiple case study was a particularly suitable structure for this study because it enabled me to examine this process with a small number of participants, and in some depth. The participants' positive attitude toward social studies instruction was part of their motivation for volunteering for the study. A limitation in this study is the number of participants and their characteristics. With only three participants, the general applicability may be limited. The participants' academic background and positive attitude toward social studies may not be typical of preservice teachers. The participants in this study self-identified as white or Caucasian. A more diverse group of participants might provide additional or different perceptions and understandings. Also, the findings are based on what the participants chose to share in their writings and in the interviews, and some ideas, questions, and concerns may have been withheld. A larger number of participants or another group of participants might provide different results.

A second limitation is the time of year in which the study was conducted. The window for standardized tests in elementary schools is generally February through April. This study was conducted during that period of time, beginning in January and finishing in June. To the participants, it appeared that the emphasis in their schools was on standardized tests, resulting in reduced attention to non-tested subjects. If the study had been conducted during the first half of the school year, the participants may have had more or different opportunities to observe and engage in social studies planning and instruction.

Classroom observations were included as a data source because they enabled me to engage the participant in a conversation around a teaching event. Because I was present when the lesson was taught, we could reference the actions and responses of both the participant and the students. These details might have been neglected if I had depended on the participant's retelling of the lesson. The observation also allowed me to view the participants in action, interacting with both the students and the physical environment. When I planned this study, I was unsure of the opportunities the participants would have to teach social studies lessons in their classrooms, a condition beyond my control. Because of the uncertainty of opportunities to teach, I included only one observation. A third limitation of this study is the small number of observations. Additional observations may have led to a broader picture of preservice teachers' experiences in classrooms.

The conclusions of this study are limited to those drawn from the experiences of three preservice teachers. The findings and conclusions offer insights and provide

points of departure for further questions and investigation. It is for the individual reader to determine the usefulness of this study.

Recommendations for Further Research

The findings of this study offer insights into the experiences of one small group of preservice teachers as they learned to teach social studies in elementary classrooms. Using this research as background, I propose areas for further study.

- A first recommendation is to examine the learning and teaching opportunities related to social studies for preservice teachers that are present at the beginning of the school year. A study at this time could also address the ways in which classroom teachers and preservice teachers learn about their own students' background experience and knowledge, with regard to family and community.
- A second recommendation is to conduct a similar study with a more ethnically or racially diverse group of preservice teachers. Understandings and conceptions regarding teaching, learning, subject matter, and purposes for social studies education are shaped by one's beliefs and experience. A more diverse group of participants might provide additional or different perceptions and understandings of this process.
- A third recommendation is to examine the experiences and understandings of preservice teachers who are enrolled in a two or three credit social studies methods course. In what ways does a deeper immersion in coursework promote an understanding of social studies purposes and instruction?

- A fourth recommendation is to conduct a study of graduate level preservice teachers. There are a variety of programs at the graduate level in which students with a degree in a non-education field can earn an education degree. How does education coursework at a graduate level, combined with academic background and possible work in a field shape one's conception and enactment of social studies instruction?

Closing Thoughts

In developing my research questions, my concerns became the choices that teachers, including preservice teachers, make regarding social studies instruction. With limited time and many demands, they must consider the subject matter, resources, and instructional strategies for the students in their classroom. I was interested in the factors that contribute to the process of decision-making. This research study has helped me to think about the ways in which we support and prepare beginning teachers to become thoughtful, critical, and effective in their decision-making. Teacher educators are also decision-makers who must be clear about purposes, resources, strategies, and learners.

Working with the data, looking for connections, relationships and patterns, I found that each participant formed an understanding of social studies instruction from her or his academic background, learning experiences, and beliefs about education. With limited opportunities to observe, teach, and study, they drew upon their own resources to construct a personal model for teaching and a foundation for learning to enable them to teach social studies. This was a finding that I had not anticipated.

A second surprise came as I saw the different collaborations for the construction of knowledge. Much of the research on teacher education concerns the relationship between preservice teachers and their instructors and cooperating teachers. Researchers ask about the effectiveness of particular courses and strategies in changing preservice teachers' attitudes about students, in classroom management skills, or the complexity of their lesson planning. The learning relationships in those studies tend to be characterized by more knowledgeable teachers modeling, mentoring, and guiding less knowledgeable preservice teachers. In this study, peer relationships contributed to the participants' knowledge construction, as they shared experiences, asked questions, and expressed concerns. The participants worked to make sense of their experiences in supportive non-evaluative relationships.

Both of these surprises in the data led me to the notion of agency, the capacity of a person to act in the world. The participants in this study were students in a program that had guidelines, requirements, and standards and the participants worked within those parameters. They were also members of teaching and learning communities, and they built upon and sought out experiences and information that made it possible for them to construct an increasingly complex understanding of education.

This study was possible because Hope, Laurel, and Marcus were willing to share their thinking, their work, and their time. I am impressed with their love of learning and their awareness that knowledge is empowering. I learned from them. I greatly appreciate the instructor of the language arts and social studies class who met

with me and allowed me to visit her class, and also the cooperating teachers who allowed me into their classrooms for observations.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Course Syllabus

Syllabus

Two Credits – Winter 2011

Strategies for the Teaching of Language Arts and Social Studies

This course adhere to all [university] academic regulations as found in the *Schedule of Classes*. Students with documented disabilities who may need accommodations, who have any emergency medical information the instructor should know of, or who need special arrangements in the event of evacuation, should make an appointment with the instructor as early as possible, no later than the first week of school.

[instructor contact information deleted]

Required Texts:

Culham, Ruth, (2005). 6+1 traits of Writing: The Complete Guide for the Primary Grades. New York: Scholastic. (Choose this text if you are interested in teaching k-2)

OR

Culham, Ruth, (2005). 6+1 traits of Writing: The Complete Guide for Grade Three and Up. New York: Scholastic. (choose this text if you are interested in teaching grades 3-5)

AND

Lee, John. (2008). Visualizing Elementary Social Studies Methods. New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Link to Conceptual Framework, Knowledge Base, and National and State Standards:

This course reflects a social justice framework through its commitment to student voice and agency in writing, the use of writing to address social issues, its examination of connections between writing and children's literature and, in general, the constructive nature of writing development and behavior. This course also follows Oregon State benchmarks and content standards as well as Standards for the English Language Arts of the National Council for the Teachers of English, the International Reading Association and the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) Standards.

(Appendix A continued)

Course Description:

Students will develop an understanding of a balanced language arts and social studies program, including its theory and pedagogy. This course will cover the exploration of language arts and social studies programs through the understanding of developmentally appropriate material, children's literature, and state standards. Focus will be placed on the development of inquiry approaches that reflect interdisciplinary curriculum as well as subject specific pedagogy in the teaching of both social studies and language arts.

Course Outcomes and Standards:

Content Standards:

Demonstrate the ability to write complete and detailed lesson plans with a clear objective using ITIP format.

Demonstrate the knowledge to teach language arts including writing, speaking, and listening.

Demonstrate an understanding of developmental spelling and pedagogy that supports the learning of spelling.

Demonstrate understanding of various writing genre and related pedagogies.

Demonstrate the knowledge to integrate the teaching of language arts and social studies and interdisciplinary teaching.

Demonstrate an understanding of assessment as it pertains to language arts and social studies.

Demonstrate the knowledge of state and national standards and how to use state and national standards in developing long-term curriculum goals, short term goals, and daily lessons.

Demonstrate the knowledge of how to differentiate lessons for student's different learning styles.

Demonstrate the ability to develop curriculum and teaching that is multiculturally sensitive.

Plan and design effective learning environments and experiences supported by technology.

Demonstrate the knowledge to teach social studies using the inquiry approach, including writing to learn in social studies.

Demonstrate the ability to use children's literature as an integral part of the language arts/social studies curriculum.

Demonstrate the knowledge of the six traits of writing through development of lessons and scoring of writing.

Demonstrate the knowledge of the six social sciences that make up social studies.

(Appendix A continued)

TSPC Standards:

Candidates plan instruction that supports student progress in learning and is appropriate for the developmental level. (1)

(Appendix A continued)

Candidates establish a classroom climate conducive to learning. (2)

Candidates engage students in planned learning activities. (3)

Candidates evaluate, act upon, and report student progress in learning. (4)

NCATE Standards:

Pedagogical Content Knowledge (2)

Professional and Pedagogical Knowledge and Skills (3)

Course Schedule of Assignments and Activities (subject to change)**1/4 Week One:**

Syllabus review

Discussion on the reasons for teaching writing to children

Group writing assignment

Standards/Curriculum for Writing and Social Studies assignment

1/11 Week Two:

Reading: 6+1 Traits: Chap. 1&2 (Primary), Intro & 1(3and Up), Social Studies Chap. 1

Chapter reviews due: Be prepared to share important thoughts from the chapters.

Oregon Standards for Writing and Social Studies **DUE**

Social Studies: What is Social Studies

1/18 Week Three:

Reading: 6+1 Traits: Chap. 3 (Primary), Chap. 2 (3and Up), Social Studies Chap. 2

Chapter reviews due: Be prepared to share important thoughts from the chapters.

Assessment of student writing

Student taught lesson: Ideas

Social Studies: Reflective Social Studies Teaching

1/25 Week Four:

Reading: 6+1 Traits: Chap. 4 (Primary), Chap. 3 (3and Up), Social Studies Chap. 3&4

Chapter reviews due: Be prepared to share important thoughts from the chapters.

(Appendix A continued)

Assessment of student writing
 Student taught lesson: Organization
 Social Studies: Inquiry and Standards

2/1 Week Five:

Reading: 6+1 Traits: Chap. 5 (Primary), Chap.4 (3and Up), Social Studies
 Chap. 5
 Midterm Test
 Student taught lesson: Voice
 Social Studies: Bio-Board project

2/8 Week Six:

Reading: 6+1 Traits: Chap. 6 (Primary), Chap.5 (3and Up), Social Studies
 Chap. 14
 Chapter reviews due: Be prepared to share important thoughts from the
 chapters.
 Assessment of student writing
 Student taught lesson: word Choice
 Social Studies: **technology Presentations and assignments due**

2/15 Week Seven:

Reading: 6+1 Traits: Chap. 7 (Primary), Chap.6 (3and Up), Social Studies
 Chap. 6
 Chapter reviews due: Be prepared to share important thoughts from the
 chapters.
 Assessment of student writing
 Student taught lesson: Sentence Fluency
 Social Studies: Geographic Awareness
Social Studies Lesson assignment handout

2/22 Week Eight:

Reading: 6+1 Traits: Chap. 8 (Primary), Chap. 7 (3and Up), Social Studies
 Chap. 7
 Chapter reviews due: Be prepared to share important thoughts from the
 chapters.
 Assessment of student writing
 Student taught lesson: Conventions
 Social Studies: Civic Competence

(Appendix A continued)

3/1 Week Nine:

Reading: 6+1 Traits: Chap. 9 (Primary), Chap. 8 (3and Up), Social Studies Chap. 8&9

Chapter reviews due: Be prepared to share important thoughts from the chapters.

Spelling Development

Student shared lessons: Social Studies/assignments due from presenters

Social Studies: Direct/Interactive Learning

3/8 Week Ten:

Reading: Social Studies: Chap. 10&11

Student Writing Assessment assignment due

Student shared lessons: Social Studies/assignments due from presenters

Social Studies: Literacy/Active Learning

Group writing assignment

Finals Week

Take Home Final – one to two page reflection paper

Lee: Chapter 12 & 13 – response for each chapter

Course requirements, Readings , and Assignments

1. Due on assigned date: Each group will present a 20-minute presentation on the teaching of a writing genre. Information for the presentation should be gleaned from *6+1 Traits*, a picture book chosen, and website www.writingfix.com . Students may also sue other sources. Students will have a lesson plan, that includes ITIP, and summary/handouts (two –four pages). **Have a copy for each student in the class.** The presentation should contain an explanation of the genre, teaching strategies, student activities, and assessment strategies. Students will self-assess their performance based on the following criteris: handouts were distributed; presentation was sustained for 20+ minutes; handouts and oral presentation summarized the key information from materials used in planning the presentation. **Cite [state] standards in lesson.**

2. Due weekly: Students will complete the assigned readings, chapter reading response notes, and participate in classroom discussions, whole class and small group. Students will read the sections of the two textbooks that correspond to the topic addressed in particular classes.

(Appendix A continued)

Writing response: **1 page per chapter, double-spaced and typed.**

–Identify key ideas in the text and your personal reactions to these key ideas.

Sample questions: What good ideas did I get out of this reading? What does the information in the chapters mean to me as a teacher of social studies/language arts? What questions do I have about what I read? (Write and reflect)

3. Due 1/11 Compile the writing and social studies standards for the grade you are interested in teaching through the website www.ode.state.or.us.

4. Due 2/8 Students will identify/locate 10 websites that support teachers and students' use of technology to further students learning of social studies. Choose a variety Social Studies websites that you feel may be helpful to your teacher preparation for the grade level you aspire to teach. Write a short paragraph of personal response/reflection for each one. Select one of the sites for a more in-depth **written and oral** explanation of how you would use it to aid in teaching a lesson and share this information in an oral class presentation.

Explain the curricular-based subject matter focus of the site.

Provide a summary of the site and how you might use it in your classroom or in your professional development.

Direct peers to the most appealing or useful features of the site.

5. Due 3/1 or 3/8: Integrated Social Studies Lesson: On February 15th, a handout will be provided in class to detail this assignment. It will be composed of developing a scope and sequence for a social studies unit that is integrated. You will develop a lesson that includes Gardner's Multiple Intelligences to help children develop the concepts that you set forth in the scope of your unit. It can be in ITIP lesson format or follow Lee's format. A picture book or novel must be included within your lesson. **Cite [state] standards in lesson.**

Point Values for Assignments

1. Attendance and participation – 20
2. Weekly chapter reviews (20) – 100
3. Writing Traits Presentation – 20
4. Assessment of children's writing – 20
5. Integrated Social studies Lesson – 30
6. Bio-Board Assignment - 20
7. Technology Assignment and presentation – 30
8. [State} standards for Writing and Social Studies – 10
9. Midterm – 20
10. Final: Take-home test, Lee's Chapter 12&13 writing response – 30

Total points possible - 300

Appendix B: Letter to Students

Dear TCE 456 Students,

This is an invitation for you to be part of a research study during the Winter and Spring terms of 2011. The research study is designed to help teacher educators better understand the behaviors preservice teachers develop as they make decisions concerning social studies curriculum.

Attached is the consent form which will have details of the study. I will answer any questions at the end of the class session on January 11th.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Basye

Appendix C: Informed Consent Document

Project Title: Decision making behaviors of preservice teachers as they plan for social studies in elementary classrooms

Principal Investigator: Dr. Karen M. Higgins, College of Education

Student Researcher: Cynthia Basye, doctoral student, College of Education

Version Date: December 10, 2010

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS FORM?

This consent form gives you the information you will need to help you decide whether to be in the study or not. Please read the form carefully. You may ask questions about the research, possible risks and benefits, your rights as a volunteer, and anything else that is not clear. When all of your questions have been answered, you can decide if you want to be in this study or not.

WHY IS THIS STUDY BEING DONE?

The purpose of this research study is to better understand the behaviors preservice teachers develop as they make decisions concerning social studies curriculum. This research is conducted as part of the student researcher's dissertation requirement in partial fulfillment of her PhD in Education. Up to four students will be invited to take part in this study.

WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?

You are being invited to take part in this study because you are a preservice teacher enrolled in TCE 456: Strategies for Teaching Language Arts and Social Studies.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH STUDY ?

This study will be conducted during the winter 2011 and spring 2011 course terms. There will be a one page writing assignment in January and in March 2011. This writing is a regular class assignment and will not be graded. Written comments and questions related to participants' social studies textbook assignments will be collected during the winter 2011 term. Allowing the researcher to have access to these class assignments is part of the study. Copies of participants' writing assignment will be made so that originals can be returned to students. There will be a lesson observation and follow-up interview in April or May of 2011. The interview will last 30 to 60 minutes. The interview will be audio-taped and transcribed by the researcher or a professional transcriber. There will be a focus group of all student participants in May 2011. The purpose of the focus group is to collaboratively analyze successful social

(Appendix C continued)

studies lessons. It will last approximately 90 minutes. The focus group will be audio-taped and transcribed by the student researcher or a professional transcriber.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF THIS STUDY? If you choose to participate in this study you will interact with peers during the focus group session. Group members will be expected to keep all conversations confidential, but there is always a risk of a confidentiality breach. The discussion topics are similar to those occurring in other education classes. Considering the nature of the focus group session, this risk is minimal.

RECORDINGS

Audio tapes will be made during the interview and focus group session. The audio tapes will be destroyed after the thesis is complete. . Subjects should not enroll if they do not wish to be recorded.

_____ I agree to be audio recorded.

(initials)

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THIS STUDY? There are no direct benefits from participating in the study. You may benefit from the discussions about teaching and learning. We hope that teacher educators, in the future, will benefit from the study.

WILL I BE PAID FOR BEING IN THE STUDY?

You will not be paid for participating in the study.

WHO WILL SEE THIS INFORMATION I GIVE?

The information you provide during the research study will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law. To help protect your confidentiality, you will be given a pseudonym if your comments are quoted in text or presentations. All documents, transcripts, tapes, and keys to your identity will be kept in a locked cabinet in the College of Education at Oregon State University for three years after completion of the study. After three years this information will be destroyed.

After the study is completed and the dissertation defended, it is the goal to publish the results of the study in journals of education. Confidentiality will be maintained as indicated throughout the research process.

(Appendix C continued)

WHAT CHOICES DO I HAVE IF I DO NOT TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?

If you decide to take part in the study, it should be because you really want to volunteer. You will not lose any benefits or rights you would normally have if you choose not to volunteer. Your decision to participate or not participate will not impact your grade in TCE 456. You can stop your participation at any time during the study. You will not be treated differently if you decide to stop taking part in the study.

WHAT IF I HAVE A QUESTION?

If you have any questions about this research project, please contact the Principal Investigator, Dr. Karen M. Higgins, (541) 737-4201, higginsk@oregonstate.edu or Cynthia Basye, basyec@onid.orst.edu.

If you have questions about your role as a participant, please contact Oregon State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) at (541) 737-8008 or by email at IRB@oregonstate.edu.

Your signature indicates that this research study has been explained to you, that your questions have been answered, and that you agree to take part in this study. You will receive a copy of this form.

Participant's Name (printed):

(Signature of Participant)

(Date)

Appendix D: Interview Questions

Background interview questions:

Describe your background, where you grew up and your schooling.

How do you see your second degree affecting your teaching of SS?

Social studies is often integrated with other subjects. How are you learning to do that?

How do you see yourself as a learner?

Additional questions were based on participant's responses.

Interview questions after classroom observation:

Explain your social studies lesson. What are you and your students working on?

What went well in your lesson?

Why do you think the lesson went well (or not)?

What would you change with the lesson?

Why would you make those changes?

Additional questions were based on participant's responses.

Appendix E: Success Analysis Protocol

The purpose of the Success Analysis Protocol (J. P. McDonald et al., 2003) is to encourage collaborative analysis of why things go right, in this case, a social studies lesson. This protocol is adapted for one group and a social studies lesson.

Introduction plus 60 minutes for protocol.

1. Preparing the case. Each participant is asked to reflect on and write in a note to him or herself, a short case where a social studies lesson taught by the participant went well. Participant should include what they did that may have contributed to the success and what conditions were present that may have contributed. (10 minutes)

2. Sharing. The first person shares orally the successful while others takes notes. (5 minutes)

3. Analysis and discussion. The group reflects on the lesson, offering their own insights into what made the lesson successful. They discuss specifically what they think the presenter may have done to contribute to success, and they also name other factors they take to be involved. The presenter is encouraged to participate. (5 minutes)

4. Repeating the pattern. Repeat Steps 2 and 3 for each member of the group. (40 minutes total for parts 2 and 3)

5. Compilation. The group then compiles a list of successful behaviors and underlying principles that seem characteristic of the cases presented. (5 minutes)

6. Debriefing. In the group, the facilitator asks “How might we apply what we have learned in this protocol to other social studies lessons? (5 minutes)

Appendix F: Initial Codes and Categories

	Hope	Laurel	Marcus
Knowing students			
Behavior		X	
Ethnicity			X
Family		X	X
Geographic location	X		
Language use		X	X
Socio-economic status			X
Students as learners			X
Learning			
Affective	X		
Process			X
Teaching			
Actions	X		X
Knowledge base	X		X
Role			X
Values & characteristics		X	X
Purpose for social studies			
Thinking			X
Values	X	X	
Schools			
Funding		X	

Appendix G: Summary of Codes and Categories

Category and code	H	L	M
Knowledge of Student			
Behavior and learning		X	
Ethnicity			X
Family		X	X
Geographic location	X		
Language use		X	X
School classification			X
Socio-cultural	X		
Socio-economic status	X	X	X
Student as learner			
Characteristics		X	X
Cognitive	X		
Future	X		
Motivation	X		X
Needs			X
Self as learner			
Authentic learning			X
Conception of teaching			X
Considering new ideas		X	
Coursework	X		
Experiential base	X		
Learning about Students			X
Learning process		X	
Models for teaching	X	X	X
Motivation			X
Observing		X	
Own children	X		
Self as teacher			
Attitudes		X	
Beliefs, values	X	X	X
Bias, perspective			X
Challenges	X		

Decision-making		X	
Experiences	X		X
Goals			X
Knowledge base	X	X	X
Opportunities	X		
Roles	X	X	X
Strengths	X	X	X
Teaching	X	X	X
	H	L	M
Purpose of social studies			
Civic competence		X	X
Opening minds to diversity		X	
Thinking			X
World view	X		X
Pedagogy			
Assessment	X	X	X
Classroom management	X	X	X
Lesson objectives	X	X	X
Methods	X	X	X
Planning	X	X	X
Reflection	X	X	X
Resources	X	X	X
Role of teacher	X	X	X
Subject matter	X	X	X
Technology	X	X	X
Education policy			
Constraints	X	X	X
Conundrums	X		
Curriculum		X	X
Funding	X	X	
Purpose of education	X	X	X
Standards	X	X	X
Testing	X	X	X
Socio-political climate			
Discourse			X
Self as citizen		X	

Appendix H: Relationship between Beliefs and Attitudes

	Hope	Laurel	Marcus
Purpose	Improve the quality of one's life, find success	Understanding of how actions affect present and future leading to responsibility. (self assessment)	Academic skills, analysis skills leading to action & decision making
What	Foundational information/knowledge that leads to academic success age appropriate	Curriculum Standards as measure of learning & guide for teachers	Curriculum Standards as measure and position from which to ask questions and discuss controversial issues
How	Active engagement, projects, discussion, teacher as model for learning	Active engagement, projects, address learning styles Discussion> exchange of ideas, steer direction	Address learning styles, personal context, interests
Students and Families	Parents play a role A-Many low SES parents can't provide discussions, background knowledge	Students have different lives now, more things, less unstructured time A- Concerned about school, emphasis on testing, Restricted time A- Students show low Effort/ interest	Students disenfranchised w/ limited goals for future, w/ few models for academic success A- students have potential to be powerful generation
	"A" refers to attitude		

