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Jocelyn Baldrige  
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AN INVESTIGATION OF THE USE OF DISCIPLINARY TEXTS  
AND ACHIEVEMENT ON END-OF-COURSE EXAMINATIONS  
IN HIGH SCHOOL U.S. HISTORY COURSES

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Doctor of Education  
in the School of Teaching, Learning, and Leadership  
in the College of Education and Human Performance  
at the University of Central Florida  
Orlando, Florida

Fall Term  
2014

Major Professor: Karri Williams

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## ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to examine whether a disparity exists between teacher expectations of honors and non-honors U. S. History students and if students who read more for U. S. History perform better on the U. S. History End-of-Course (EOC) examination. To generate answers to the research questions, both teachers and students in U. S. History courses were surveyed as to how much time was spent reading for U. S. History content both during class and for homework.

The student surveys were matched to the U. S. History EOC Developmental Scale Scores to determine if students who responded as reading more for the course had higher achievement on the EOC examination. Five teacher surveys were completed, and 144 student surveys were analyzed, and comparisons were made using U. S. History EOC Developmental Scale Scores.

Teachers surveyed did not appear to vary their expectations of student whether the students were in an honors or non-honors course. Approximately 71% of non-honors and 73% of honors students in this study were reading U. S. History homework content on a regular basis. Though not statistically significant, results did indicate a positive trend between students who read more for U. S. History content and achievement on the EOC examination. This study revealed the implementation of a standardized EOC examination may account for equally rigorous teacher expectations of both honors and non-honors students. All students have the same final evaluation and expectation of passing the EOC; therefore, all students are expected to learn the content.

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, James and Kay Baldrige, who taught all of their daughters to value education and family; it is my deepest regret that neither one is here now to see me finally achieve this goal. It is also dedicated to my wonderful children, Chelsea and Kinsey, who have put up with all of my stress over the years and have loved me nonetheless. Finally, it is dedicated to my sisters, who have encouraged me to overcome all of the obstacles thrown my way, and have always been on my side to pull me through.

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## CHAPTER 1 PROBLEM OF PRACTICE

### Introduction

The facts reveal that Asia is graduating 60 percent of its college majors in science and engineering fields while the U.S. is graduating only 5 percent in these areas. Not to mention, in the last five years, the U.S. has experienced a 12 percent reduction in science and engineering majors. In addition, with exception of the 30 highest performing U.S. high schools, there has been a dramatic decline in CTE programs due to No Child Left Behind (NCLB). This did not have to happen, but it did, since many educators tried to implement NCLB using their 1960s mindset for program delivery. (Daggett, as interviewed by Gaal, 2005, p. 36)

Politics are alive and well in the American educational system. In response to the unintended consequences of the implementation of NCLB (among other factors), the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) called for national standards which were developed and released as Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in June of 2010. The standards articulate what students should know and be able to do in Grades K-12 in the areas of English/language arts and mathematics and defines literacy standards for social studies/history, science, and technical education. By the year 2014-2015, many school systems across the United States of America are expected to implement and assess Common Core State Standards (CCSS). One significant change with CCSS is the inclusion of additional English/Language Arts (ELA) literacy standards for history/social

studies, science, and career and technical education (CTE). Not intended as additional standards for the English teacher, the expectation for implementation for these specific literacy standards is that implementation should occur within social studies, science, and CTE classrooms. CCSS focuses on students learning how to understand the complex texts used in each discipline by the expert teacher in that specific area. For example, history teachers would logically be the best teachers to interpret primary source documents; science teachers would be the best teachers to interpret scientific research. The CCSS Literacy Standards are contained in Appendix A.

In theory, because the CCSS literacy standards are aligned with content taught in discipline specific classrooms, teaching reading and content simultaneously seem ideal. Many researchers have maintained that it is not the fundamental reading skills students lack but the ability to access the complex texts typically used in content area classrooms, (ACT, 2005, 2006; Baldi, Jin, Skemer, Green, & Herget, 2007; Biancarosa & Snow, 2006; Duke, 2000; Duke & Carlisle, 2011; Durkin, 1978; Heller & Greenleaf, 2007, Marsh, 2008; Moje, Stockdill, Kim, & Kim, 2011; O'Brien, Stewart, & Moje, 1995; Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008, Snow, 2002). It would appear easy to increase teacher knowledge in teaching reading while teaching content. Students gain knowledge while learning how to access that knowledge. As Schmoker (2009) noted, "a common curriculum, sound lessons, and authentic literacy" (p. 9) are three simple elements that have had a huge impact on student achievement in schools.

### Historical Context

The development and implementation of CCSS follows an era when a number of political initiatives shifted educational decision making from the state and local levels to more federal oversight through a series of federal mandates. No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation resulted in one of the largest impacts of educational federal policies on state and local school boards. Implementation of the federal Reading First policy focused primarily on low income, low performing students in Grades K-3. Based on the recommendations of the National Reading Panel, requirements for instruction were based on “evidence-based methods” National Institute of Child Health, 2014, para. 12) and tied closely to assessment. NCLB changed the character of educational policy on a federal level. Mandates for school systems included implementing standards-based reading programs, assessing students on high stakes assessments, and ensuring subgroups of students made Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) or faced repercussions with Title One funding, (Coburn, Pearson, Woulfin, & Woulfin, 2011). In Daggett’s (2005) discussion of educators implementing NCLB with antiquated curricular approaches, he observed that too often schools have resorted to over-implementation of reading classes and pull out instruction. This has led to an over-reliance of instruction in phonics and phonemic awareness at the sacrifice of comprehension and a suspension of curriculum in areas such as social studies and science in elementary schools and Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses in high schools, all in the name of providing more reading instruction and improved test scores (Gaal, 2005).

Although NCLB pushed states to implement high stakes assessments, those assessments looked quite different from state to state, and the definitions of meeting AYP varied based on the number of students required to be counted as a sub-group, such as a minority group, or exceptional education students. Schools and districts were penalized and labeled as “failing” based on subgroups of students failing to meet AYP. The quality of some state assessments became suspect. For example, in 2005, several states reported gains from 2003 to 2005 on their state assessments but showed little to no progress on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) (Brown & Rocha, 2005).

Other measures showed similar lack of progress in academic achievement for United States students. The ACT reported that only half of the students who took the ACT were ready for college level reading (ACT, 2006). On an international level, The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), sponsored by the Organization for Economic Cooperation (OECD) consisting of 30 different countries, has been administered in participating countries every three years since 2000. The PISA assesses 15-year-olds’ performance in reading literacy, mathematics literacy, and science literacy. In 2005, American students scored below the OECD average level in science literacy and mathematical literacy (Baldi et al., 2007). Based on the alarm raised by these disparities, both state governors and school officials from across the country called for national standards to address a number of issues: (a) standardized tests across the states which were largely unstandardized; (b) high school students who were unprepared for college or

careers; and (c) American students who were losing ground on international achievement measures.

To address the issue of producing students who graduate from high school college and career ready, the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) were developed by educators, policy makers, and researchers and released in June of 2010. The focus of the CCSS implementation has been on preparing students for college and career readiness. The literacy standards for history/social studies, science and career and technical education (CTE) have been concerned with the reading required in those subject areas, what Moje (2008) has termed “discipline-specific” (p. 97) literacy. These standards include expectations that students will read, analyze, and evaluate primary source documents, scientific research studies, and technical procedural manuals.

At the high school level according to the high school standards, English/language arts courses focus on literature and selected historical primary source documents; history/social studies, science and CTE courses focus on the use of rigorous and relevant informational texts. For example, it is no longer simply enough to place in the hands of students a very complex manual used as a resource in gaining certification in an automotive technician course. Given that certification in the field is often an expectation of many CTE courses in 21st century schools, the CTE teacher is expected to help the student negotiate the very complex task of finding information in that manual. A history teacher will have students analyze various primary source documents around historical events to encounter multiple perspectives. Science teachers help students evaluate the

relevance of scientific studies by analyzing the bias of the researchers. This type of instruction calls on teachers to use different skills from those many learned when taking content area course work as they prepared to teach.

With the CCSS movement, there has been much feedback on the standards from educators and policy makers alike. NCLB was largely viewed and delivered as an unfunded mandate, forcing states to put high stakes tests in place without additional funding. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) funded the federal Race to the Top Grant (RTTT), which in turn funded two consortia: The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and Smarter Balanced. The two consortia were charged with standards implementation and supporting development of assessments and data systems aligned with CCSS (U.S. Department of Education 2009). Timelines and trainings have been developed to help schools and districts in participating states implement the standards (Anderson, Harrison, & Lewis, 2012).

As previously stated, a large body of research has focused on the implementation of content area, or more recently, discipline specific literacy. Research studies have been focused on numerous ways to support implementation of reading strategies across the content area by addressing factors such as pre-service and in-service teacher training, literacy coaching, and classroom texts and text complexity, but many content area teachers still struggle with implementing reading strategies with content area texts Alverman, 2005; Durkin, 1978; Guthrie, Wigfield, Metsala, & Cox, 2004; Heller &



Greenleaf, 2007; Joyce & Showers, 1980; Marsh, 2008; Moje et al., 2011; Monte-Santo, 2011; Moore, Readence, & Rickelman, 1983; O'Brien et al., 1995; Santa, 2008; Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008). Reading professionals might find this baffling, but Linda Darling-Hammond related, “[Curriculum reformers] fail to consider that teachers teach from what they understand and believe about learning, what they know how to do, and what their environments allow” (Allington & McGill-Franzen, 1999, p. 26). Many secondary teachers are “scholar academics,” who subscribe to the theory that the nation’s culture has accumulated important knowledge that has developed into academic disciplines. In their eyes, the sole purpose of education is to transmit that knowledge to children (Schiro, 2008, p. 4).

If researchers have determined what should happen in content area literacy and why that is difficult to achieve, the question remains as to what further research will support implementation of CCSS in social studies/history, science and CTE courses. As Moje et al. (2011) stated,

Recently, Lee and Spratley (2010) analyzed the complex knowledge required for reading academic texts . . . . As useful as that analysis is, the Lee and Spratley piece does not represent empirical work on how teachers use texts in the subject areas or on what teachers expect and students are able to do with those texts. In addition, despite a longstanding tradition of research on adolescent/secondary school literacy and more recent calls for attention to disciplinary learning from

text, the field appears to have only scattered documentation of how texts are used by members of disciplines, (pp. 456-457).

Clearly, more research is needed in how discipline specific texts are used by teachers in the discipline. The researcher's experience with initiatives across the state of Florida indicated that many content area teachers were struggling with using classroom textbooks, auxiliary texts, and supplemental texts. While working with Florida Literacy and Reading Excellence (FLaRE), a professional development grant funded by the state and housed at the University of Central Florida, the researcher provided training and implementation support to elementary and secondary schools determined to be at risk based on state accountability measures. Because this grant co-existed but could not overlap with Reading First, which provided support to K-3 teachers, most of the schools assigned to this researcher were high schools. Many of the districts were provided train-the-trainer instruction in Content Area Reading Professional Development, (CAR-PD), and follow up support for reading coaches charged with implementing training at the school site. Numerous classroom visits to classes in biology, history, chemistry, home economics, and a myriad of other discipline specific courses revealed the challenges teachers face with time and training issues. Teachers related they did not have time to implement reading and cover the content, even after 150 hours of in-service training and coaching. Reading tasks were often few and far between and seen as detracting from rather than enhancing the teaching of the content. The lack of research in the use of texts

currently being used in discipline specific classes along with this researcher's observations provided the impetus for this study.

Many teachers of content are uneasy devoting too much classroom time to reading tasks, believing that students learn content better from other styles of teaching such as lectures, notes and film. Although the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) measures student achievement on reading comprehension, until recently there were no standardized measures of content area/disciplinary learning. Now, a unique opportunity has been provided with the development of the Florida End-of-Course (EOC) U.S. History examination. The U.S. History EOC was field tested in 2012, leveled in 2013, and was fully implemented in 2014. This standardized measure may better assess how well students mastered the content.

If a connection can be made between the reading of content area texts and content area learning, teachers may be more willing to devote valuable classroom time to scaffolding instruction that supports reading strategies. If reading helps students learn the content, teachers may be more willing to assign and support the reading of complex texts. Teachers need to instruct students in reading strategies to navigate the complex demands of discipline specific text. If students do not learn this before or during high school they will not have another opportunity to learn how to learn from content area informational text. This is the core of providing students the tools to be college and career ready.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the use of texts in history classrooms in one suburban school district in Florida and to explore whether students who read more in the discipline have improved scores on the U.S. History End-of-Course examination. To know how to support teachers in implementing CCSS literacy standards, a baseline must be established for current instructional practices. The desired outcome of the study was to inform students, teachers, parents, administrators and other stakeholders that reading more in the content area increases content knowledge.

Ideally, delving into social studies, science and CTE classrooms would provide a broad perspective of how students use texts across the school day, but for the purposes of this study the decision was made to isolate the research to U.S. History classrooms. The reason was two-fold. First, though the texts for science and CTE courses can be very technical, the U.S. History textbook is more accessible for students. Second, the Florida U.S. History EOC has been normed and provides an outcome measure for content area learning in U.S. History that can be standardized across classrooms and schools. In this study, the results delineated by honors and non-honors U.S. History classes were investigated to analyze whether there is a difference between the teacher expectations of honors and non-honors students.

One aspect of this study is the Matthew Effect that became prevalent as a result of unintended outcomes of NCLB implementation (Stanovich, 1986). In an example of the Matthew Effect, students who read well early on in school are typically exposed to more

content in early grades. Good readers have time for instruction in social studies and science content. Poor readers, however, receive more reading instruction, limiting their exposure to science and social studies content throughout elementary, and sometimes into middle school. Thus, in terms of content knowledge, the rich get richer, and the poor get poorer. In high school, these students are divided into two tracks, honors and non-honors. In the researcher's experience, honors students read at or above grade level and non-honors students at or below grade level. Also, in the researcher's experience, many teachers assume that this means students in non-honors tracks are illiterate, when often they are aliterate. Most non-honors students can read, but prefer not to, especially when the teacher reads the text for the students, summarizes the information in a power point, and creates a situation of learned helplessness.

### Statement of the Problem

To date there is little research that investigates how much reading occurs in relation to U.S. History coursework, how texts are used in history classrooms, and how discipline specific reading varies in honors and non-honors situations. By examining EOC examination results, there may be an indication of the impact of reading on content knowledge.

### Research Questions and Hypotheses

The problem addressed in this study related to the extent to which students engaged in or avoided reading in history classrooms. Especially in non-honors

classrooms, many high school students can read, but are aliterate, choosing to do anything to avoid reading. The following four research questions and null hypotheses were designed to investigate the discrepancies which may have existed between assigned and actual reading that occurred in history classrooms and between students in honors and non-honors classrooms and to determine whether there were any relationships between the amount of reading that occurred and student achievement on the U.S. History EOC examination.

1. What difference, if any, occurs in teacher expectations of the amount of time spent reading discipline specific texts during class between an honors and a non-honors classroom?

$H_{01}$ : There is no difference in teacher expectations of the amount of time spent reading discipline specific texts during class time between honors and non-honors classes.

2. What difference, if any, occurs in teacher expectations of the amount of reading expected for homework in an honors and a non-honors classroom?

$H_{02}$ : There is no difference in teacher expectations of the amount of time spent reading for homework between honors and non-honors classes.

3. What difference, if any, occurs in how much time spent reading homework as reported by students between honors and non-honors U.S. History classrooms?

H<sub>03</sub>: There is no difference in the amount of time students report reading homework between honors and non-honors classes.

4. What are the effects, if any, of performance on the End-of-Course (EOC) assessments in U.S. History between students who report reading more in class and at home and students who report reading less?

H<sub>04</sub>: There is no effect in performance on the EOC assessment between students who report reading more and students who report reading less.

#### Delimitations

This study was delimited to two public high schools in one suburban school district in the state of Florida. The schools participated on a voluntary basis. This study was delimited by the following assumptions and expectations:

1. The participating teachers held valid certification for their content area.
2. The participating teachers had at least one year of experience teaching US History at the secondary school level.

#### Limitations

One limitation of the study lies in how accurately the students reported how much they read. The data depended on the self-reports of students. Knowing the importance of this, students were told to report truthfully about how much they read for class. The researcher assured the students there were no consequences for their honest responses.

### Definition of Terms

1. Common Core State Standards (CCSS)--a set of standards in English/Language arts and mathematics, with English/Language arts standards for history/social studies, science and CTE, developed nationally, and adopted by 46 of the 50 states (Common Core Standards Initiative, 2010).
2. Content Area Reading Professional Development (CAR-PD)--developed by the Just Read! Florida office. CAR-PD is a 60-hour course to instruct teachers in content area reading strategies when combined with FOR-PD and a 30-hour practicum.
3. CRISS--represents Creating Independence through Student-owned Strategies, a content area professional development, developed by a team of teachers lead by Dr. Carol Santa in Kalispell, Montana, and implemented in districts in Florida since 1995 (Santa, Havens & Valdes, 2008).
4. Discipline Specific Literacy--the skills and strategies needed to traverse the literacy requirements of a particular subject, e.g., being able to read complex charts in a scientific report.
5. Discipline Specific Text--any text that supports learning in the specific content. The text may be paper based or digital, including charts, graphs, pictures, speeches, and other various media associated with learning the content.



6. Document-Based Questions--an approach in social studies where students use primary and secondary source documents and answer questions based on these texts as opposed to using textbooks exclusively (Bain, 2005).
7. Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) 2.0--standards-based reading comprehension assessment implemented in the state of Florida originally designed to assess schools and instruction. Florida students must currently achieve a level three on FCAT in 10th grade, or by the end of 12<sup>th</sup> grade, to graduate with a high school diploma.
8. Florida Online Reading Professional Development (FOR-PD)--an online course based at the University of Central Florida which met Competency Two of the Florida Reading Endorsement, and provided reading strategy instruction to thousands of teachers across the state of Florida.
9. End of Course assessment (EOC)--assessments developed for high school courses at the state level in Florida. Students currently have to pass the EOC examination for Algebra 1 to earn credit in the course and meet graduation requirements. The US History, Geometry, and Biology EOC examination currently count as 30% of the student grade.
10. Literacy/Reading Coach--a peer teacher based at the school site, whose focus is to help teachers incorporate literacy practices in their classrooms.
11. Literacy practices--classroom activities that incorporate reading strategies and writing to understand text while learning discipline specific content.

12. Reading Endorsement--a determined set of information and skills (Florida Reading Competencies) developed into a sequence of five 60-hour inservice courses in order to meet the highly qualified teacher requirement for No Child Left Behind. Teachers must successfully complete all 300 hours to add reading endorsement to their teaching certificates.
13. Text--textbooks and ancillary items such as primary source and secondary source historical documents, workbooks, trade books, and web based materials that are read in class or for class assignments. Part of this study is to determine what types of texts are used in U.S. History classrooms.

### Conceptual Framework

The main underpinning of this study is that language is the fundamental means of how knowledge is transmitted, and to be literate in any discipline means having the skills necessary to understand the texts used in that discipline (Lee & Spratley, 2010; Vygotsky, 1978). Though reading in the discipline should support learning that discipline, there is a struggle between the process of learning and coverage of content. Cognitive psychologists such as Piaget and Vygotsky suggested that scaffolding and interaction with a more learned other is crucial, and Bandura suggested explicit modeling and practice is needed to impact learning (Tudge & Winterhoff, 1993; Vygotsky, 1978). There is a body of research to define the textual demands of each specific discipline and a push by literacy professionals to have students read more in discipline specific classrooms (Heller & Greenleaf, 2007; Lee & Spratley, 2010; Shannahan & Shannahan,

2008). The person best able to support learning with the historical text is the teacher of history.

### Methodology

This was a descriptive study to examine how much reading occurred and whether the extent of reading occurring had an impact on EOC examination outcomes. Statistical analyses were conducted using matching data from both teacher and student surveys and U.S. History EOC examination achievement results. Quantitative measures include EOC examination scores and ordinal survey results. The Student Survey in the present study (Appendix B) was modeled in part after questions from the international PISA study. The Teacher Survey (Appendix C) was created by the researcher. The surveys were designed to reveal teachers' and students' perceptions of how much reading occurs both within and beyond the classroom in relation to class required reading. Table 1 displays the research questions and the sources of data used to respond to each question.

Table 1

*Research Questions and Sources of Data*

Research Question	Sources of Data
1. What differences if any occur in teacher expectations between the amounts of time spent reading discipline specific texts during class in an honors and a non-honors classroom?	Teacher survey (Question 2)
2. What difference if any occurs in teacher expectations between the amount of reading expected for homework in an honors and a non-honors classroom?	Teacher Survey (Question 4)
3. What difference if any occurs in how much time for reading homework as reported by students between honors and non-honors U.S. History classrooms?	Student Survey (Question 2)
4. What are the effects of performance on the End-of-Course (EOC) assessments in U.S. History between students who report reading more in class and at home and students who report reading less?	Student Survey (Questions 1 and 2) U.S. History EOC scale scores

Population

The population for the study included U.S. History students in both honors and non-honors classes and the teachers of these students. Two high schools in a suburban district provided access to at least two classrooms in each school. The school sample included both honors U.S. History and non-honors U.S. History classes. Based on current class size restrictions in the state of Florida, the researcher expected no more than 25 students for each classroom. A total of 144 students participated in the entire study.

### Data Collection and Analysis

Students and teachers were requested to complete surveys in May for the study period. Students used a code for their surveys, and that code was matched to EOC examination data to match survey data with test data. Only the researcher and the school had the codes. The identifiers were the classroom code, H designation for honors and N for non-honors, and school code.

Survey results were quantified with the amount of time the student reported spending reading both in class and for homework. This was then matched to scale scores on the EOC assessments and analyzed statistically to determine if students who reported reading more for U.S. History coursework had higher scale scores than students who reported reading less. As school based assessment data were used in the study, a request was made and approved by both the school district (Appendix D) and the University of Central Florida Institutional Review Board (Appendix E) based on the rules for research involving collection of data.

### Summary

With full implementation of Common Core State Standards (CCSS), literacy standards exist for social studies, science, and career and technical education courses. Although many courses and trainings exist to support content area reading, there is a lack of research on the amount and type of reading that is currently being implemented in secondary content area classrooms. This study may provide a baseline of how reading in

the content area may impact content knowledge in U.S. History classrooms in one suburban district.

### Organization of the Study

This chapter has introduced the study. Included were a statement of the problem, research questions and their related hypotheses, the delimitations and limitations of the study, a definition of key terms, the theoretical framework for the study, and an overview of the research methodology that will be used during the study. Chapter 2 provides a review of literature and research related to discipline specific literacy. The methodology used for the study is explained in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 contains a discussion of the results based on the statistical tests and analyses. The study concludes in Chapter 5 with a presentation of the overall research findings. This final chapter also includes implications of the research along with recommendations for further research on the topic.

## CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

### Introduction

Implementation of Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in history/social studies, science and career and technical education courses require knowledge about whether there is a connection between the use of disciplinary texts and student knowledge of content. As stated in Chapter 1 of this dissertation, the problem driving this study was a lack of extensive research on how teachers were using disciplinary texts when not involved in specific research studies and if reading more for the content increased achievement on the End-of- Course examination (Moje, 2011).

The purpose of this study was to establish baseline data for how texts were being used in content area classrooms to support implementation of CCSS literacy standards in U.S. History classrooms. First, because much of the key research in this area was first implemented in elementary schools, this literature review begins with the use of informational texts in elementary environments. Next, the literature surrounding the shift in the research from generalized content area knowledge to the focus on disciplinary specific literacy is explored. This body of literature helps to define discipline specific literacy and the relevance of the CCSS literacy standards to the present study. Finally, the review focuses on studies on the use of texts in secondary school social studies classrooms.

### Classroom Observations on the Use of Informational Text in Elementary Schools

How students are taught to access informational text has concerned literacy professionals for many years. Durkin (1978) observed reading during social studies instruction in fourth-grade classrooms based on assumptions she had about what might be observed. These assumptions included the expectation that students might be presented different levels of text to support struggling readers and that social studies instruction would be combined with literacy instruction to support the learning of how to access expository materials. Her study was extensive, including visits to multiple classrooms on three successive days. She determined that “All the observed teachers saw the social studies period as a time to cover content--as a time to have children ‘master the facts.’ . . . no teacher saw the social studies period as a time to help with reading” (Durkin, 1978, p. 502). Although students were expected to read the text, most of the instructional time was attributed to “assignment, helps with” (p. 503) by the observers. Teachers helped students understand the instructions, and perhaps how to locate the questions, but did not instruct them in how to comprehend the assigned text. Durkin discovered a lack of instruction on the part of the teachers in helping students understand social studies textbooks and materials.

In a more recent study, Duke (2000) investigated the use of informational texts in first-grade classrooms. A total of 20 first-grade classrooms across 10 school districts were observed at least four full days each over the course of a year. The researcher collected data about print on the classroom walls, classroom library, and any other print



used. Text was coded for type or genre. The results revealed that first-grade students were exposed to minimal doses of informational text, even though some first graders prefer informational text. Although Duke had suspected students did not have much exposure to informational text, this study confirmed the dearth of informational text exposure for first-grade students. Duke found an acute disparity, especially among low SES schools, partially because there were fewer classroom books in the first place, but the proportion of informational text was also lower. Her three conclusions were that (a) the call for more informational texts in the early grades had not been heeded, (b) teachers were placing emphasis on narrative text in primary instruction, and (c) content area instruction at this level did not include use of informational text. This study confirmed what the present researcher has observed at a multitude of struggling elementary schools. In the name of reading, phonics, and fluency skills, actual text reading occurred seldom, if ever, and only fiction was addressed instructionally.

Two landmark studies conducted by Cipielewski and Stanovich (1992) and Elley (1994) have shown that there is a lack of instruction in how to understand informational text in elementary grades, both during reading time in primary, and during content instruction in intermediate grades. Researchers in elementary settings have, however, found positive correlations between increased amount of time spent reading and student achievement on reading assessments. Reading about history or science may increase knowledge in that area. In fact, Stanovich & Cunningham (1993) found that the amount of student reading influences students' world knowledge. Since reading about history or

science may increase student knowledge, and research shows that students are not often explicitly taught how to read content area texts in elementary, a question remains regarding when students are taught how to navigate, analyze, and interpret content area texts (Durkin, 1978; Duke, 2000). If students are not taught to navigate content area texts in elementary grades, instruction would have to occur in secondary schools. The next step is to explore the research in how students are taught to access content area text in secondary classes.

#### The Shift From Content Area Literacy to Discipline Specific Literacy

For years, secondary schools have focused on content area literacy and strategies such as K-W-L, GIST, literature and inquiry circles, REAP, reciprocal teaching, and QAR that support content area literacy in secondary classrooms, (Carr & Ogle, 1987; Daniels, 2006; Eanet & Manzo, 1976; Frey, Fisher, & Hernandez, 2003; Oczkus, 2003; Palincsar & Brown, 1984; Raphael & Au, 2005). The body of research supported content area literacy as a collection of strategies that would support understanding of informational text. Many researchers deemed content area literacy to be crucial. In fact, Heller and Greenleaf (2007) explored the importance of content area literacy in 21st century secondary schools, reasoning the more literate adults are the more likely they are to effectively carry out the demands of citizenship such as voting and volunteering. Most contemporary occupations demand higher levels of literacy for students to compete, but for most students, unless they need some form of remediation, instruction in reading ends around the sixth grade (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004; O'Brien et al., 1995; Vacca, 2002.)

With the undeniable demands for literate citizenship, teaching students how to navigate between the varied texts in different content areas is left to content area teachers, who most often deliver information the way they were taught--via teacher and textbook (Alverman, 2005; Hynd & Stahl, 1998; O'Brien et al., 1995; Wigfield, Guthrie, Tonks, & Perencevich, 2004).

Researchers began to call for a shift in thinking from general content area literacy to the new term "discipline specific literacy" (Moje, 2008, p. 97). Disciplinary learning is a form of critical literacy because it builds an understanding of how knowledge is produced in the disciplines rather than just building knowledge in the disciplines (Moje, 2008). Moje called for a different approach to what, in the past, had been called content area literacy: "I suggest it may be most productive to build disciplinary literacy instructional programs, rather than to merely encourage content teachers to employ literacy teaching practices and strategies" (Moje, 2008, p. 96).

There are a number of researchers who have identified issues related to underlying discipline specific literacy. Paxton (1999) found historical textbooks to be extremely boring and poorly written. Many high school teachers consider themselves "scholar academics" (Schiro, 2008, p. 4) who subscribe to the theory that the national culture has accumulated important knowledge that has developed into academic disciplines. In their eyes, the purpose of education is to transmit that knowledge to children. These teachers are on a mission to impart knowledge to students, to pass down the sage wisdom of the ages. Moje (2008) found that "pre- and in-service teachers often

argue that the (literacy) strategies are time consuming, especially given the pressure they feel to cover content information and concepts” (p. 97). In calling for discipline specific literacy, Moje addressed this concern by asking the literacy field to study what students need to know in each discipline.

Shanahan and Shanahan (2008) advanced the study of literacy further when, in cooperation with the Carnegie Corporation, they researched how experts in disciplinary fields addressed the discipline specific texts they encountered. Instead of literacy professionals telling discipline teachers what strategies to use, the literacy researchers asked the experts to analyze the literacy demands of the texts they encountered in their fields. This was a much more difficult task than it would appear. Wiggins and McTighe (2005) referred to the “Expert Blind Spot” (p. 42) because the expert (teacher) confuses coverage of the topic with deeper student understanding of the topic. Because the teacher has an understanding of the topic, the teacher may have a difficult time breaking the process in steps. Researchers asked the experts to be conscious of an unconscious effort and explain their processes. “There are differences in how the disciplines create, disseminate, and evaluate knowledge, and these differences are instantiated in their use of language,” (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008, p. 48).

Shanahan and Shanahan (2008) found some concrete elements from the various disciplinary experts. Mathematicians emphasized rereading, close reading, and function words as being important. Chemists were “visualizing, writing down formulas, or, if a diagram or a chart were on the page, going back and forth between the graph and the

chart” (p. 49). Historians paid attention to the author or source when reading any text, and “they were keenly aware that they were reading an interpretation of historical events and not ‘Truth’” (pp. 49-50).

When implementing literacy across the school day, knowing how literacy looks in different disciplines can be extremely helpful. Just having insight into the demands of decidedly different approaches to diverse texts can help support students to approach competency in reading the diverse texts of multiple disciplines. Lee & Spratley (2010) focused on the types of reading adolescents must be able to negotiate in high school subject areas and how instruction can be adapted to promote strategic literacy practices to support understanding with discipline specific texts. The researchers delved in the areas of science, history, mathematics, and literature. They analyzed texts and the varieties of structures, ways of knowing, and how understanding is assessed in those contexts. For example, mathematical literacy is a prerequisite for understanding certain types of scientific text. The use of primary source text was considered along with the sensitive nature of primary source documents and the partial nature of these texts. When reading literature, it is important for students to be exposed to differing text genres. “They should be able to recognize genres such as magical realism, science fiction, allegory, fable, myth, mystery” (Lee & Spratley, 2010, p. 10). The authors discussed how to support students who are struggling with these texts and types, not in the context of just remedial courses, but actually pairing content knowledge and reading strategies. Lee and Spratley (2010) also reviewed some promising interventions that support the needs of adolescents.

Intervention pull-out classes such as Read 180 had minimal results, but schools that applied school wide literacy strategies such as Reading Apprenticeship had more extensive increases in reading achievement on state assessments. For students, skills were not the issue as much as learning how to understand the complex texts they encountered at the high school level. The study indicated that all students, and those struggling most of all, need instruction in how to deepen understanding of discipline specific texts.

In summary, the focus of literature and research has shifted from general content area reading strategies to discipline specific literacies of each subject. As literacy demands have been identified in the field, literacy professionals have increasingly been concerned with how to support specific teachers in various disciplines to increase both literacy and discipline specific knowledge. Instead of teaching all content area teachers how to present a K-W-L strategy, it has become more important to work with a social studies/history teacher on how to teach the complex task of analyzing and answering a document based question. In order to know how to support teachers and students, there must be a baseline of what is currently occurring in discipline specific classrooms.

### Literacy Practices in Social Studies Classrooms

This change in focus to how to best support teachers in the specific disciplines becomes a much more complex task. It is relatively easy to pull all teachers into a generic content area professional development and teach an assortment of strategies. In a professional development training, teachers learn to use reading skills when working with

a group of teachers, but as the teachers return to the classroom, they may be reluctant or unable to implement the reading strategies with their content text. Teacher implementation of reading and writing strategies during actual classroom instruction becomes a much more demanding task. A few studies have looked more closely at how to support teachers implementing reading and writing strategies in social studies classrooms.

The study, *Supporting Literacy in the Sunshine State*, commissioned by the Carnegie Corporation, addressed the implementation of reading coaches in middle schools in Florida (Marsh, 2008). Marsh surveyed principals, reading coaches, and teachers in eight large Florida school districts, following up with focus groups, documents, and interviews with state officials and coach coordinators in all study districts. In summarizing her research, she noted that the majority of reading and social studies teachers reported that the reading coach had influenced the changes made to their instruction over the course of the year. A total of 47% of reading teachers and 40% of social studies teachers characterized this influence as “moderate to great” (p. 10) in magnitude. Approximately two-thirds of reading and social studies teachers who had interacted with the coach believed these interactions helped them be more confident in their ability to teach reading to students and helped them better plan and organize instruction.

A school-based reading/literacy coach can help teachers problem solve how to implement literacy skills. Without the reading/literacy coach in place, there are

numerous barriers to improvement in disciplinary literacy skills in secondary social studies classrooms. Durkin (1978) found scant evidence that teachers in Grades 4 and 5 provided comprehension instruction with social studies texts. Bain (2005), in his research on teaching high school history, suggested that much of the issue in secondary classrooms lay within the context of curricular demands determined by testing, textbooks and politics. “History, then, arrives at the classroom door as lists of things students must learn and, thus, teachers must teach--missing the problems and questions that make the content coherent, significant, and even fascinating” (p. 183) and that to provide curriculum that is coherent and cohesive, teachers should “organize the curriculum around history’s key concepts, big ideas, and central questions” (p. 183). Bain analyzed the impact of problem based inquiry and primary source documents on the students he teaches. He supported bringing in primary source documents to counter the dull, fact-based textbooks that do little to allow students insight into historical figures’ way of life. Bain presents key reasons why texts are often disregarded in social studies classrooms: too long; too many facts; incoherent and poorly organized; and summarizations instead of primary source documents.

How teachers do implement text in social studies classrooms has been researched through the case study approach. Newell and Winograd (1995) studied two different 11th-grade U.S. History classrooms with the same teacher, one class considered “academic,” and another class “general.” The purpose was to study, for both groups of students, responses to study questions, writing an analytic essay, and the impact on



learning the content. The researchers chose a well-qualified teacher and implemented case studies with three students from each of the classes. The teacher expressed the differences between the classes as college readiness and basic skills. “If we consider the opportunities to connect reading and writing that Adams provided, the academic students' writing tasks were based largely on reading assignments, while the general students' writing tasks required less independent reading and more frequent teacher presentations” (Newell & Winograd, 1995, p. 141). Findings indicated an increase in content knowledge and retention with students at both levels of courses when they used analytic writing as a tool for learning the content.

While research shows that reading and writing supports learning social studies content, another study shows the impact of teaching students reading strategies and social studies content in tandem. A quasi-experimental study described by Reisman (2012) used primary source document-based lessons as both historical curriculum and reading intervention. The Reading Like a Historian (RLH) curriculum was developed to move student learning away from textbooks and into primary source documents over multiple texts with explicit instruction. The data analysis showed significant main effects both in content learning and reading comprehension growth. Lessons were prepared with three to five primary source documents and explicit strategy instruction including sourcing, contextualization, close reading, and corroboration. Students were engaged with reading daily. The importance of replicating this methodology was discussed in the implications of the study; however, it should be noted that lessons were prepared for the teachers

involved in the study by university professionals. Many teachers do not have time or resources to pull away from the textbook and identify more engaging, and more complex, primary source documents for student use.

Another challenge is how to engage content area teachers with successful implementation of reading strategies in classrooms. Alverman and Hayes (1989) worked with content area teachers to implement discussion strategies around content area texts. The teachers taught a cross section of disciplines, including American literature, health, human development, and English electives, and science. The teachers volunteered to participate with the researchers. The texts used were the textbooks and study guides normally used in the courses. The researchers met with the teachers before the classroom sessions, videotaped the discussion sessions, debriefed on the discussions held in class, and planned with the teachers for the next sessions to be held to improve classroom practice. The purpose was to see if the intervention with the university researchers could support, through classroom discussion, higher order reading skills. Alverman and Hayes (1989) found that teachers were willing to participate with them in their research. They discovered that, in attempting to change the discussion patterns in the classroom, teachers did not implement the strategies the way the researchers expected. The researchers also did not take into account the importance of the diversity of classroom cultures, which may account for why they coded some discussions a failure when in reality perhaps learning had occurred.

In summary, most observations in secondary classrooms have mainly focused on isolated literacy strategies and their impact, but few studies have been focused on what occurs in discipline specific classrooms. O'Brien et al. (1995) stated, "the majority of studies published in RRQ [*Reading Research Quarterly*] during the last 20 years that address secondary content reading have been experimental studies in which a variety of reader or text variables were studied and controlled" (p. 442). Moje et al. (2011) commented on a lack of progress in this area: "Researchers have attended to the features of different genres of text that might shape people's comprehension (e.g., Graesser, McNamara, & Louwrese, 2011) but we know less, as a field, about how texts are actually used in different domains," (p. 453).

### Summary

This review of the literature and research has revealed a number of issues with the teaching of discipline specific text. These issues include the dearth of informational text taught in the early grades, the lack of reading instruction in content area texts in intermediate grades, the lack of interesting textbooks available in high school, and an unwillingness on the part of social studies teachers to devote classroom time to reading when there is a need to cover content. Although the use of reading coaches has shown promise, social studies teachers must be willing to invite reading coaches into their classroom and make time to work with them. Also, as the Alverman and Hayes (1989) study showed, some of the research may show the bias of the researchers themselves. The field of reading research has begun to move from a collection of generic content area

reading strategies to more specific demands of text that align with the curricular demands of the texts used in specific coursework. As Moje et al. (2011) observed, there is room in the field of research to discover how teachers are using texts in classrooms.

The implementation of CCSS literacy standards provides a unique opportunity for determining a baseline of what literacy currently looks like in discipline specific classrooms. Although researchers and writers have defined what should be in place in discipline specific classrooms, there exists a gap in knowledge of what actually occurs in a natural setting where no specific intervention is occurring. At the end of the day, when teachers are responsible to provide instruction in history, it is unclear how texts are used, and in what ways they are used. As Common Core State Standards are implemented, questions remain as to how difficult (or easy) the implementation of literacy standards may be for U.S. History teachers and students.

A primary goal of this study is to determine, in the context of two suburban high schools, how much reading is occurring in relation to U.S. History coursework, and if students who report reading more in the discipline have higher achievement on the End-of-Course U.S. History examination. If teachers find that reading in the discipline increases students' knowledge of the discipline, they may be more willing to incorporate discipline specific texts, which may lead to an overall increase in literacy behaviors, content area knowledge, and an increase in students who are college and career ready.

## CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

### Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology used in this study. This is a descriptive, quantitative study using surveys and U.S. History End of Course (EOC) scale score data to determine whether the amount of reading reported by students in U.S. History discipline specific texts is related to the achievement on the U.S. History End-of-Course examination.

### Problem

To date there is little research that investigates how much reading occurs in relation to U.S. History coursework, how texts are used in history classrooms, and how discipline specific reading varies in honors and non-honors situations. By examining EOC examination results, there may be an indication of the impact of reading on content knowledge.

### Purpose

The purpose of the study was to identify the amount of assigned and accomplished discipline specific text reading that occurred in selected high school U.S. History classrooms and to detect if there were any relationships between the amount of reading that occurred and student achievement on the U.S. History EOC examination.

## Research Questions

The specific research questions include:

1. What difference, if any, occurs in teacher expectations of the amount of time spent reading discipline specific texts during class between an honors and a non-honors classroom?

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no difference in teacher expectations of the amount of time spent reading discipline specific texts during class time between honors and non-honors classes.

2. What difference, if any, occurs in teacher expectations of the amount of reading expected for homework in an honors and a non-honors classroom?

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no difference in teacher expectations of the amount of time spent reading for homework between honors and non-honors classes.

3. What difference, if any, occurs in how much time is spent on reading homework as reported by students between honors and non-honors U.S. History classrooms?

H<sub>03</sub>: There is no difference in the amount of time students report reading homework between honors and non-honors classes.

4. What are the effects, if any, of performance on the End-of-Course (EOC) assessments in U.S. History between students who report reading more in class and at home and students who report reading less?

H<sub>04</sub>: There is no effect in performance on the EOC assessment between students who report reading more and students who report reading less.

### Research Design

Although researchers have shown a strong relationship between reading amount and reading achievement, there is limited research showing a relationship between time spent reading discipline specific texts and achievement on subject area tests. This study sought to explore the relationship between discipline specific texts and content knowledge attainment. In order to determine how much reading occurred in relation to a U.S. History classroom, a two-fold approach was designed.

The first step was to survey the four U.S. History teachers who participated in the study. The teachers were asked to complete a Teacher Survey (Appendix C) for each type of class they taught. If teachers taught both honors and non-honors courses, they were asked to complete two separate surveys, one in reference to the U.S. History honors classes they taught, and a second in reference to the U.S. History non-honors classes. This gave insight into how much reading was assigned and how much reading the teachers believed was actually accomplished.

The next step was to survey the students. Using the Student Survey (Appendix B), students were asked to report how much reading they accomplished when learning content for their U.S. History class. Student surveys were coded so they could be connected to the outcome scores on the U.S. History EOC examination. This enabled the

researcher to determine whether a connection could be made between students who reported reading more and increased achievement on the U.S. History EOC examination.

The third step consisted of analyzing the Teacher Survey data, analyzing the Student Survey data, and then connecting the Student Survey data to U. S. History End of Course Developmental Scale Scores to provide insight into how much reading occurred in honors and non-honors U.S. History classrooms and if the amount of reading had a relationship to achievement on the U.S. History EOC examination.

A fourth step had been planned to include classroom observations of what text was being read in social studies classrooms, how the text was presented, and who was doing the reading (in pairs, teacher reading, silent reading). Because of the spring testing season, the reading coaches were unable to schedule enough observations to create a reliable sample.

### Sample

This study was conducted in two different high schools in a suburban public school district. Each school and teacher participated on a voluntary basis. The four teachers were asked to participate because of the high scores their students achieved on the 2013 U.S. History EOC examination. In her study, Durkin (1978) had asked for principals to identify the best teachers in the school to see best practices occurring. For this study, it was important to ensure that classroom observations were focused on positive classroom practice, and issues of negative classroom management and behavior were reduced. Because many students do not like to read, it was important that teachers



involved in the study had positive classroom environments that were conducive to engaged learning. The schools were on a traditional seven-period day. Both of the schools were suburban, with school populations ranging from 1,500 to 1,700. Table 2 provides a comparison of the schools. Though there were differences in the schools' poverty and minority rates, the assumption was that classroom practices would be similar regardless of socioeconomic factors.

Table 2

*Demographic and Achievement Data for District, State, and Participating Schools*

Descriptors	Means (%)		Schools (%)	
	District	State	1	2
Free and Reduced Lunch Percentage 2013			42	25
Minority Percentage 2013			25	24
FCAT Reading Level 3 or above (2012)			65	69
U.S. History EOC Examinations (2013)				
Mean Scores	53	49	56	54
Percentage Scoring in Highest Third of Test-takers	45	36	55	52
Percentage Scoring in Middle Third of Test-takers	32	32	31	31

*Note.* FCAT = Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test; EOC = End-of-Course.

### Participants

Prior to finalizing the participants in the study, district permission (Appendix D) to conduct the study was sought and received. Further approval to conduct the study was granted by the University of Central Florida's Institutional Research Board (Appendix E).

In each school, two teachers who taught at least two U.S. history classes were identified and requested to participate in the study. This provided the opportunity to observe both honors and non-honors classes at the two school locations. Teachers were identified based on results of the 2013 U.S. History EOC examination. In discussion with the District Social Studies Resource Teacher, the determination was made to mirror Durkin's (1978) study. When Durkin selected teachers for her study who were highly recommended by the principals, it eliminated arguments that these were just examples of poor teachers. In the current study, it was important to use highly recommended teachers to minimize any factors, e.g., poor classroom management skills, that might reduce teachers' willingness to assign reading tasks. Durkin observed fourth-grade teachers who

were teaching both reading and social studies. In the Durkin study, administrators were asked to identify the best teachers in the identified grade level, and teachers were told beforehand when they would be observed.

In the current study, teachers were identified based on administrative perceptions and results on the 2013 U.S. History EOC examination. Each of the participating teachers completed the Teacher Survey (Appendix C) to determine their perceptions as to the amount of assigned and completed reading by their students.

Student participants were members of the U.S. History classrooms of the selected teachers who completed the Student Survey (Appendix B). All students, typically 10th graders, were informed through the use of a pre-constructed script that their participation was voluntary. District student numbers were used in lieu of student names so that the student survey could be linked to EOC examination scores. This information remained secure in a locked file accessible only to the researcher. The students were identified by their student numbers for the survey and the U.S. History EOC test scores, thus enabling the researcher to make connections between the amount of reading that occurred as self-reported on surveys and U.S. History EOC examination achievement scores without identifying student names.

Initially in the design of the study, three schools agreed to participate, and in each school the individual teacher participants would have taught both honors and non-honors U.S. History classes. However, the reality of high school master schedules did not provide for many teachers who matched the selection criteria (previously taught U.S.

History, average or above average scores, perceived teacher quality). Spring testing schedules limited the participation to only two schools.

### Instrumentation

Two surveys were developed for this study by the researcher. The Teacher Survey (Appendix C) was developed after discussions with several students about experiences in social studies classrooms, observations by the researcher of practices in social studies classrooms, reviewing the PISA student survey questions, and feedback from the district social studies resource teacher. The teachers completed a Teacher Survey for each type of class they taught. One teacher who taught both honors and non-honors classes completed a survey for each type of class. Teachers were requested to answer the following three questions:

1. How often are your students involved in the following reading activities during class? For this study, reading for U.S. History includes but not limited to: textbook, primary source documents, online materials from textbook company, political cartoons, newspaper or journal articles, charts, graphs and maps.
2. About how much time do you estimate your students usually spend reading for school during school hours? (Including both paper-based and internet based text, see list at the beginning of the survey)
3. How often do you assign reading for homework from a textbook or other paper-based texts? (Including research)

The Student Survey (Appendix B) was designed by the researcher after reviewing and adapting questions from the PISA survey administered to students in 2010. Because the honesty of the student responses was extremely important to the study, students were informed of the purpose of the Student Survey, per the script required from the Institutional Review Board. The pencil and paper survey was administered to students during the last two weeks of school. Students were requested to respond to the following two survey questions:

1. About how much time do you usually spend reading for U.S. History class during school hours? For this study, reading for U.S. History includes but not limited to: textbook, primary source documents, online materials from textbook company, political cartoons, newspaper or journal articles, charts, graphs and maps. Including both paper-based and internet based text.
2. About how much time do you usually spend reading for U.S. History Class after school hours? (Including both paper-based and internet based text *see list above*)

Both surveys asked how much text-based reading was assigned in conjunction with social studies course work and how much reading was actually achieved.

The U. S. History End-of-Course Examination is the standardized measure developed in the State of Florida to assess student learning of U. S. History course content. This assessment was field tested in 2012, and developmental scale scores were set in spring of 2014. Passing scale score is 397, which is a Level 3. The scale scores

are grouped into five levels. Level 1 is described as an inadequate level of success with mastery of the content, and Level 2 is below satisfactory. Level 3 is considered satisfactory mastery of the content, Level 4 is above satisfactory, and Level 5 is considered mastery of the most challenging content of the U. S. History Sunshine State Standards (U. S. History End-of-Course Assessment Standard Setting, 2013, p. 3). Level 4 starts at 417, and Level 5 starts at 432. The test is delivered as a computer based test (CBT) unless students have a specific accommodation for paper-based assessments. There is a maximum of 60 multiple choice items based on charts, maps, political cartoons and short primary source passages. Students must sit for at least 80 minutes and have up to 160 minutes to complete the test. Current legislation requires that the U. S. History EOC count as 30% of the student's total grade for the year (Florida Department of Education, 2014, p. 3, para. 1).

#### Data Analysis Procedures

Once all teachers were identified and recruited, a report was run from the school district data system and downloaded to an Excel spreadsheet. This spreadsheet correlated student scores to Student Survey results and class codes, which identified teachers and whether the class was honors or non-honors. Student names were replaced with numbers to ensure anonymity. From this report, matched data were identified, and any student scores without a corresponding U.S. History EOC examination score and survey results were eliminated.

The student survey results were matched to the U.S. History EOC scale scores. This data set was compared to the observations and the use of text based on those observations. Student surveys were coded by student, and the surveys were correlated to the scale score on the U.S. History EOC examination earned by that student in order to match an ordinal of how much the student reported reading for U.S. History to achievement on the U.S. History EOC examination. Teacher surveys were coded and connected to coded classrooms. Classrooms were coded by teacher, school, and as H for honors or N for non-honors.

To respond to Research Question 1 Teacher Survey Question Number 2 was analyzed with a Mann-Whitney-U test and a t-test for Equality of Means. To respond to Research Question 2, Teacher Survey Question 4 was analyzed by running a Mann-Whitney U test. To respond to Research Question 3, a Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test was run on Student Survey Question 2. According to Green and Shalkind (2008), the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test is applied to data to analyze studies of matched subjects. This design evaluates whether the pairs of participants differ significantly. To respond to Research Question 4, an ANOVA, an Equality of Means, and a Tukey test were run on Student Survey questions 1 and 2. An ANOVA analyzes variances to test differences in means for groups or variables for statistical significance, and the Tukey is a post hoc test which can be used for determining the significant differences between group means in an analysis of variance setting (Green and Shalkind, 2008). Table 3 presents the research questions, the sources of data, and the statistical methods used in the analysis of the data.

Table 3

*Research Questions, Sources of Data, and Methods of Analysis*

Research Question	Sources of Data	Analysis of Data
1. What differences if any occur in teacher expectations between the amounts of time spent reading discipline specific texts during class in an honors and a non-honors classroom?	Teacher survey (Question 2)	Mann-Whitney U test, t-test for Equality of Means.
2. What difference if any occurs in teacher expectations between the amount of reading expected for homework in an honors and a non-honors classroom?	Teacher Survey (Question 4)	Mann-Whitney U test.
3. What difference if any occurs in how much time for reading homework as reported by students between honors and non-honors U.S. History classrooms?	Student Survey (Question 2)	Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test.
4. What are the effects of performance on the End-of-Course (EOC) assessments in U.S. History between students who report reading more in class and at home and students who report reading less?	Student Survey (Questions 1 and 2) U.S. History EOC scale scores	ANOVA, Equality of Means, Tukey test

Summary

The methodology used in this descriptive study has been explained in this chapter. An introduction, statement of the problem, purpose, research questions and related null hypotheses were described along with the research design. The research design detailed the sample, participants, the instruments, the data collection, and data analysis



procedures. The research design discussion included specific information on how the data were collected, including the use of teacher surveys, student surveys, and scale scores on the U.S. History EOC examination.

## CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS

### Introduction

This purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between the amount of reading accomplished, as perceived by teachers and students, in connection to U.S. History coursework and results on the 2014 U.S. History EOC exam. Additionally, the researcher sought to determine if there was a difference between the amount of reading that occurred in relation to U.S. History coursework between honors and non-honors courses. Chapter Four presents the findings related to the research questions.

The data sources analyzed were the scale scores on the Florida End of Course U.S. History examination and answers to the instruments “Teacher Survey: Classroom Reading Activities” and “Student Survey” (Appendix A). These surveys were developed by the researcher to determine both teacher and student perceptions of how much reading occurs in connection to U.S. History coursework. The surveys were completed by four teachers in two schools, and 144 students in the participating teachers’ U.S. History classes. Table 4 presents the research questions and hypotheses used to guide the study along with the statistical measures used in the data analysis.

Table 4

*Research Questions, Hypotheses, and Related Statistical Analyses*

Research Question	Hypothesis	Related Statistic
1. What differences if any occur in teacher expectations between the amounts of time spent reading discipline specific texts during class in an honors and a non-honors classroom?	H <sub>01</sub> : There is no difference in teacher expectations of the amount of time spent reading discipline specific texts during class time between honors and non-honors classes.	Analysis of Teacher Survey question 2 using a Mann-Whitney U test and a t-test for Equality of Means.
2. What difference if any occurs in teacher expectations between the amount of reading expected for homework in an honors and a non-honors classroom?	H <sub>02</sub> : There is no difference in teacher expectations of the amount of time spent reading for homework between honors and non-honors classes.	Analysis of Teacher Survey question 4 using a Mann-Whitney U test.
3. What difference if any occurs in how much time for reading homework as reported by students between honors and non-honors U.S. History classrooms?	H <sub>03</sub> : There is no difference in the amount of time for reading homework students report between honors and non-honors classes.	Analysis of Student Survey question 2 using a Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test.
4. What are the effects of performance on the End of Course (EOC) assessments in U.S. History between students who report reading more in class and at home and students who report reading less?	H <sub>04</sub> : There is no effect in performance on the EOC assessment between students who report reading more and students who report reading less.	Analysis of Student Survey questions 1 and 2, matched to EOC US History scale scores using ANOVA and Tukey tests.

Research Question 1

What difference, if any, occurs in teacher expectations of the amount of time spent reading discipline specific texts during class between an honors and a non-honors classroom?

In order to answer this question, Teacher Survey responses were coded as either honors or non-honors. A Mann-Whitney U was used to relate honors and non-honors designations to teacher expectations of the amount of reading occurring, based on Teacher Survey question 2, “About how much time do you estimate your students usually spend reading for school during school hours?” Teachers’ estimates are shown in Table 5.

Table 5

*Teachers’ Estimates of Students’ Time Spent Reading During School Hours (N=5)*

Reading Time In School	Class Type	Teacher Responses
They do not read at school		
30 minutes or less a day	Non-Honors	2
	Honors	2
More than 30 minutes to less than 60 minutes a day	Honors	1
1 to 2 hours a day		
More than 2 hours a day		

No statistical significance was noted between teachers’ estimates of reading occurring in relation to honors and non-honors classes,  $U=2.000$ ,  $n=3$  honors, 2 non-honors,  $p=.414$ . Therefore the null hypothesis,  $H_{01}$ , was accepted. There was no difference in teacher estimates of the amount of time spent reading discipline specific texts during class time between honors and non-honors classes.

## Research Question 2

What difference, if any, occurs in teacher expectations of the amount of reading expected for homework in an honors and a non-honors classroom?

Teacher Survey responses were used to determine teacher expectations regarding the amount of reading expected for homework in honors and non-honors classrooms. Of the five surveys completed, the two non-honors teachers reported assigning reading for homework often or almost always, equaling the responses of two of the three honors class teachers. One honors class teacher, however, reported assigning less reading for homework (sometimes). These results are displayed in Table 6.

Table 6

*Teacher Expectations: Reading Assigned for Homework (N=5)*

Class type	Amount of reading assigned
Non-honors	Often (every week)
Non-honors	Almost always (three or more times a week)
Honors	Sometimes (a couple of times a month)
Honors	Often (every week)
Honors	Almost always (three or more times a week)

A Mann-Whitney U test was performed on the Teacher Survey question 4. No statistical significance was noted between teacher expectations of reading occurring in

relation to honors and non-honors classes,  $U=1.000$ ,  $n=5$ ,  $p=.182$ . Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted: There was no difference in teacher expectations as to the amount of time spent in reading for homework between honors and non-honors classes. Again, the limited number of teacher surveys ( $N=5$ ), restricted the ability to run further tests of statistical significance for this question.

This information aligns with a shift in teaching practices the researcher noted since the implementation of the U. S. History EOC over the past two years. Prior to the EOC implementation, the researcher observed that several U. S. History teachers allowed very little instructional time to address historical events that occurred post World War II. Many U. S. History teachers admitted to spending several days on specific points of interest such as the John F. Kennedy assassination, while neglecting many other events that had occurred over the past seventy years. With the implementation of the U. S. History EOC examination, several social studies teachers related that they had to readjust their curriculum to spend less time on favored topics in order to cover content that would be assessed by the EOC examination. Because there is only one examination taken by both honors and non-honors students which counts as 30 percent of the student's course grade, teachers may now be focusing more on the content students must know at the end of the course instead of the teacher's favorite moments in history.

As the U. S. History EOC examination is a standardized assessment, teachers cannot adapt the test based on what content was covered in class, or curve the test if a specific class of students does not perform well. The participating school district requires

different weighting of the U. S. EOC examination for honors and non-honors students when factoring the EOC for 30 percent of the total U. S. History grade. An honors student must earn a higher scale score on the test than a non-honors student to receive an A grade on the EOC. However, the content of the test is not differentiated, and all students must know the same information. This factor may explain why teacher expectations for honors and non-honors student are more similar now than in the past.

Several limitations for research questions one and two exist. The survey was limited to teachers whose students were participating in the study. Therefore, the number of teachers (N=4) and surveys completed (N=5) was very small. There may have been a difference if all participating teachers taught both honors and non-honors U.S. history classes, and completed surveys for each individual course, as was the case of only one teacher in this study. A wider range of teachers studied would increase the reliability of results for questions 1 and 2. The teachers came from only two schools in a suburban district, so a larger sample from multiple schools and districts would strengthen these findings.

Another factor may be the lack of random selection of teachers. The teachers who completed the survey were pre-identified for participation in this study due to identification as effective teachers, based on previous EOC scores, and observations by the social studies resource teacher and administrators. The purpose of using effective teachers was to mirror, in part, the Durkin (1978) study to observe teachers who did not have classroom management issues, thus enabling a better analysis of best practices used

by teachers. To analyze in depth the question of teacher expectations as to how much reading occurs during class and for homework, and whether there is disparity between teacher expectations of honors and non-honors students, a much broader cross section of teachers should be surveyed.

The teacher survey did, however, provide additional information that may be helpful in providing further insight on teacher beliefs and expectations. Teacher responses to questions 3, 5, 6, 8, and 10 on the Teacher Survey are reported in Table 7.



Table 7

*Teacher Survey Responses to Questions 3, 5, 6, 8, and 10*

Question #	Teacher Survey Questions and Response Options	Response Frequency
3	About how much time do you believe students usually spend reading for homework for your class after school hours?	
	I do not assign reading for homework	0
	30 minutes or less a day	4
	More than 30 minutes to less than 60 minutes a day	1
5	How often do you assign reading for homework from a textbook or other paper-based texts?	
	Never or almost never	0
	Sometimes (a couple of times a month)	1
	Often (every week)	2
	Almost always (three or more times a week)	2
6	How often do you believe students complete reading assigned for homework from a textbook or other paper-based texts?	
	Never or almost never	1
	Sometimes (a couple of times a month)	2
	Often (every week)	1
	Almost always (three or more times a week)	1
7	How often do you assign reading for homework from computer-based texts?	
	Never or almost never	2
	Sometimes (a couple of times a month)	2
	Often (every week)	1
	Almost always (three or more times a week)	0
8	How often do you believe students complete reading assigned for homework from computer-based texts?	
	Never or almost never	2
	Sometimes (a couple of times a month)	3
	Often (every week)	0
	Almost always (three or more times a week)	0
10	How important do you think text-based reading is for your students to learn your content?	
	Not important	0
	Somewhat important	0
	Important	0
	Very important	4
	No response	1

*Note.* All respondents were told that for this study, reading for U.S. History was included but was not limited to: textbook, primary source documents, online materials from textbook company, political cartoons, newspaper or journal articles, charts, graphs and maps.

Two of the teachers assigned reading for homework every week, and two assigned reading three or more times a week, while just one reported assigning reading for homework a couple of times a month. This shows the teachers believed that students should be reading their U. S. History texts. However, when teachers were asked how often they believed students completed the assigned reading, one said never, two said a couple of times a month, and one said almost always. This may, however, be related to expectations. The teacher who believed that students almost always completed the reading assigned for homework included the following statement on the survey: “My students are assigned reading every night--I am attempting to prep them for college where they will be responsible for acquiring the majority of the course material they will be responsible for on their own outside of the classroom.”

Although the social studies text included online materials, survey results show that two teachers never assigned homework reading from online texts, two teachers assign reading from online texts a couple of times a month, and one assigns the reading from the online texts every week. For the teachers who assign online text reading, all three believe their students accomplish this reading only a couple of times a month, showing teachers’ low expectations of students completing the assigned online reading. Lack of online reading may have effects later as more text requirements are moved to online formats.

When asked about how important text-based reading was to learning U. S. History content, four teachers responded “very important”. Teachers believe that students should be reading and learning from U.S. History texts, but they may be leaning too heavily on the textbook. Bain (2005) found social studies textbooks in general incoherent, unorganized, and packed with facts instead of historical concepts. This lack of interesting text may be a factor in why students avoid reading the textbook.

### Research Question 3

What difference, if any, occurs in how much time is spent on reading homework as reported by students between honors and non-honors U.S. History classrooms?

To answer Research Question 3, U.S. History honors students (N=93) and non-honors students (N=51) responded to Student Survey question 2 as to the amount of time they spent reading for homework for U.S. History. The five categories within the question were as follows: (a) I do not read outside of school, (b) 30 minutes or less a day, (c) More than 30 minutes but less than 60 minutes per day, (d) 1 to 2 hours a day, and (e) More than 2 hours a day. Based on the low number of student responses in the fourth and fifth categories (n=6 for honors, n=2 for non-honors), the responses were collapsed into the following four categories: (a) I do not read outside of school, (b) 30 minutes or less a day; (c) More than 30 minutes but less than 60 minutes per day, and (d) 1 to 2 hours a day. The frequencies and percentages of responses for honors students and Non-honors students are displayed in Table 8.

Table 8

*Honors (N=93) and Non-Honors (N=51) Students' Reports of Reading for U.S. History Homework*

Students' Reports of Reading for U.S. History Homework	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Honors Students</b>		
I do not read outside of school	25	26.9
30 minutes or less a day	48	51.6
More than 30, less than 60 minutes a day	14	15.1
1 to 2 hours a day	6	6.5
Total	93	100.0
<b>Non-honors Students</b>		
I do not read outside of school	15	29.4
30 minutes or less a day	29	56.9
More than 30, less than 60 minutes a day	5	9.8
1 to 2 hours a day	2	3.9
Total	51	100.0

A Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test for independent samples evaluated the mean difference between the reported time spent reading for homework between honors and non-honors U.S. History students. The Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test is designed to test a hypothesis about the location (median) of a population distribution (Green & Salkind, 2008). A p-value of .05 was used to determine if a relationship existed. For a sample size greater than 30, the Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks statistic follows the z distribution. The results indicated no significant difference,  $P = -0.842$ ,  $p < .05$ . Based on the p-value results from the Wilcoxon-Signed Ranks test, the null hypothesis was not rejected. There was no significant difference between the amount of reading for homework between honors and non-honors students.

Of interest to the researcher was the number of students who reported not reading at all for homework. While 29% of non-honors students reported not reading at all for homework, 27% of honors students also reported not reading for homework. In the researcher's experience, honors students often tend to be more motivated to do assigned tasks, but here there appears to be little difference between homework completion of honors and non-honors students. All of the teachers reported assigning reading for homework, one reported assigning reading for homework a couple of times a month, two reported assigning reading for homework at least once a week, and two reported assigning reading for homework two to three times a week. The teachers did predict that students read 30 minutes or less, and the teacher survey did not give the option of "students do not read for homework." Teachers have made this observation verbally to the researcher in the past. Teachers do express having a difficult time holding students accountable for reading.

By assigning reading for homework, 71% of non-honors and 73% of honors students in this study were reading U. S. History homework content, which is a much higher percentage than the researcher expected based on comments made by both teachers and students in the past. Some of the teachers had verbally expressed that students do not read at all for homework, and while that may be the case for some, it is not the case for the majority of the students, both in honors and non-honors classes. While the reading may not be for sustained for long periods of time, the majority of students who participated in this study reported reading for content knowledge.

#### Research Question 4

What are the effects, if any, of performance on the End-of-Course (EOC) assessments in U.S. History between students who report reading more in class and at home and students who report reading less?

To answer this question, Student Survey question 1 (How much time do you spend reading at school for U.S. History?) and question 2 (How much time do you spend reading for homework for U.S. History?) were matched and correlated to the student U.S. History EOC scale score using an ANOVA. An additional Tukey test was also run.

Table 9 displays the mean differences when student responses to time spent reading for U.S. History in school and for homework were compared to developmental scale score means on the U.S. History End-of-Course examination.

Table 9

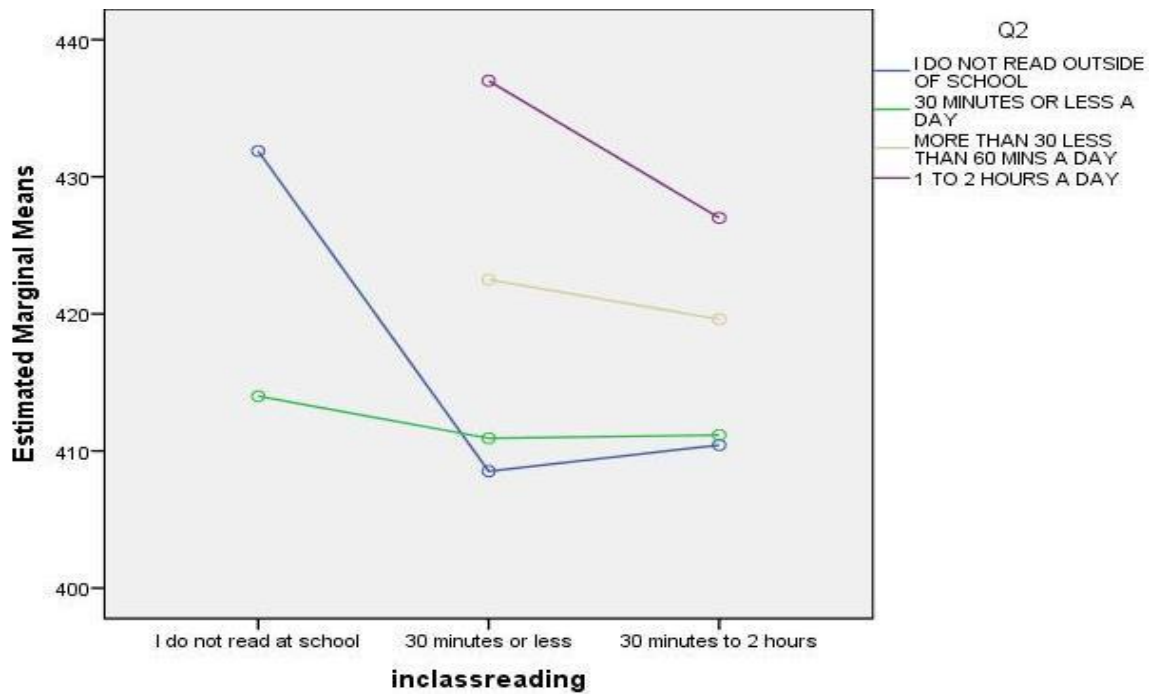
*ANOVA Results Comparing Time Spent Reading in School and For Homework to Developmental Scale Score Means on U.S. History End-of-Course Examination*

Q1: Reading in school	Q2: Reading for Homework	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
I do not read at school	I do not read outside of school	431.88	19.975	8
	30 minutes or less a day	414.00	9.899	2
	Total	428.30	19.443	10
30 minutes or less	I do not read outside of school	408.52	17.814	25
	30 minutes or less a day	410.93	32.283	42
	More than 30, less than 60 minutes a day	422.50	28.219	8
	1 to 2 hours a day	437.00	24.042	2
	Total	412.03	27.858	77
30 minutes to 2 hours	I do not read outside of school	410.43	18.447	7
	30 minutes or less a day	411.16	26.763	31
	More than 30, less than 60 minutes a day	419.60	24.469	10
	1 to 2 hours a day	427.00	24.827	6
	Total	414.39	25.201	54
Total	I do not read outside of school	413.53	20.152	40
	30 minutes or less a day	411.11	29.485	75
	More than 30, less than 60 minutes a day	420.89	25.437	18
	1 to 2 hours a day	429.50	23.330	8
	Total	414.09	26.511	141

Because the test of homogenous groups showed variances among numbers of the groups, the determination was made to perform a Tukey test. A profile plot from the

estimated marginal means is displayed in Figure 1. The profile plot depicts the effect size of in-class and homework reading on U.S. History Developmental Scale Scores.





Note. Non-estimable means were not plotted.

## Question 2

I do not read outside of school (blue)

30 minutes or less a day (green)

More than 30 less than 60 minutes a day (gray)

1 to 2 hours a day (purple)

Figure 1. Estimated Marginal Means of End-of-Course Examination Developmental Scale Scores (EOCDSS)

Though Figure 1 shows a variance on both ends of the scale, it may be misleading as the numbers of students in the particular category are not shown. The students who do well

while reporting not reading either in school or at home may be more auditory learners who learn from listening to teacher lecture or may have more prior knowledge about the subject. The total number in this category was eight of 141 student surveys. After that anomaly, there did appear to be an impact on students who read more for U. S. History and achievement on the U. S. History EOC examination. It could be that having the expectation of students reading for homework supports learning of the content.

### Discussion

The first two research questions addressed teacher perceptions of student reading for U.S. History class. These research questions were as follows:

1. What difference, if any, occurs in teacher expectations of the amount of time spent reading discipline specific texts during class between an honors and a non-honors classroom?
2. What difference, if any, occurs in teacher expectations of the amount of reading expected for homework in an honors and a non-honors classroom?

Based on the data collected in relation to Research Questions 1 and 2, there did not appear to be a large disparity between honors and non-honors teacher expectations. Four of five teachers stated that students spent 30 minutes or less a day reading for school during school time. This question may have been somewhat misleading, as it did not explicitly state reading for U.S. History. Realistically, no class period in either of the schools exceeded 47 minutes, so it would not be possible for teachers to respond to

categories defined as more than one but less than two hours or two hours or more a day unless the teacher was considering the entire school day.

If there had been a large disparity between honors and non-honors classes, however, the disparity would have become more apparent in teacher expectations of homework assigned. Again, the data showed parallel responses among both honors and non-honors teachers, with one non-honors and one honors teacher responding that reading for homework was assigned often, at least once a week, one non-honors and one honors teacher responding that reading for homework was assigned almost always, three or more times a week. One honors teacher responded sometimes, meaning a couple of times a week. It appears that teacher expectations were not very different across honors and non-honors courses for the amount of reading to be accomplished in class.

The third question addressed student perceptions about how much reading the students accomplished for U. S. History class, and the fourth research question connected the student perceptions to the student scale scores on the U. S. History EOC examination. These research questions were as follows:

3. What difference, if any, occurs in how much time spent reading homework as reported by students between honors and non-honors U.S. History classrooms?
4. What are the effects, if any, of performance on the End-of-Course (EOC) assessments in U.S. History between students who report reading more in class and at home and students who report reading less?

Because of the larger sample size of the students completing surveys, more data were available for analysis than for the small number of teachers; however, the student results mirrored the teacher results. There did not appear to be a significant difference between honors and non-honors students based on the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test on the time students spent reading for homework. Among honors U.S. History students (N=93), 26.9% reported that they did not read for U.S. History homework after school, and 51.6% report reading 30 minutes or less. For non-honors U.S. History students (N=51), 29.4% did not read for U.S. History homework after school, and 56.9% reported reading 30 minutes or less. Only 21.6% of honors students, and 13.4 % of non-honors students report reading more than 30 minutes for U.S. History homework per day. The researcher theorizes that some of the non-honors students who report reading more than 30 minutes may be exceptional education students who read slowly or English language learners who also read English slowly, often with the help of a heritage language to English dictionary.

This variance did appear when connecting U.S. History EOC developmental scale scores (DSS) with how much students read both within and outside of class. There were eight students who reported not reading at all within or outside of school for U.S. History with a mean average DSS of 431. Past that data point, there appeared to be a positive trend with students who read more than 30 minutes a day for homework achieving higher mean scores on the EOC, regardless of how much time was spent reading in class.

## Summary

The data showed that there was very little disparity in the amount of reading assigned and accomplished by honors and non-honors U.S. History students. The two non-honors classes listed assigning reading for homework often or almost always, while the three honors showed assigning reading for homework sometimes, often or almost always. In classroom reading, four of five surveys listed reading for 30 minutes or less and one honors class listed reading for more than 30 minutes a day. Since class time is an average of 47 minutes, this seems to be consistent among the honors and non-honors classes.

Although statistical tests did not indicate significance, there appeared to be positive trends among students who reported reading more for homework, and achievement on the U.S. History End-of-Course assessment. There was a small group who reported not reading at school or at home (n=8), who had a high scale score on the U. S. History EOC. Possible explanations may include students who have background knowledge of history and are able to understand the content without much outside effort. In the researcher's experience speaking with students, students who learn mainly from lecture or have spent time watching the History Channel and historical films easily make connections with the content because of their schematic knowledge of U. S. history.

In the category of reading at school for 30 minutes or less a day, the amount of reading students performed for homework appeared to have some positive relation to achievement. Students who reported not reading for homework (n=25) had a mean scale

score of 408.52. Students who read for homework 30 minutes or less a day (n=42) had a mean scale score of 410.93. Students who reported reading for homework more than 30 minutes but less than 60 minutes a day (n=8) had a mean scale score of 422.50. There was a limited number (n=8) of students who reported reading for homework 1 to 2 hours a day who achieved a mean scale score of 429. Although six of those students were honors students, two were non-honors.

This trend continues with the category of students who reported reading for classwork 30 minutes to 2 hours a day; although realistically class only lasts for an average of 47 minutes so that would be the longest students could read for class. Of this category of students, those who reported not reading for homework (n=7) had a mean scale score of 410.43, those who reported reading for homework 30 minutes or less a day (n=31) had a mean scale score of 411.16, and those who reported reading for homework more than 30 but less than 60 minutes a day (n=10) had a mean scale score of 419.6, which is a marked increase. The students who reported reading for homework 1 to 2 hours a day (n=6) had a mean scale score of 427.

When analyzing only the reading that students reported doing for homework, students who reported not reading for homework (n=40) had a mean scale score of 413.53, students who reported reading for homework 30 minutes or less a day (n=75) had a mean scale score of 411.11. Students who reported reading for homework more than 30 but less than 60 minutes a day (n=18) had a mean scale score of 420.89, and students who read for homework 1 to 2 hours a day (n=8) had a mean scale score of 429.50.

While not statistically significant, results seem to indicate a positive trend that relates reading more for homework in U. S. History and understanding the content as measured by the U. S. History EOC examination. Reading more for U. S. History does appear to help students understand U. S. History when understanding is measured by the End-of-Course examination.

## CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Introduction

This chapter presents the overall research findings of this study. The summary of the study contains a restatement of the problem, purpose of the study, and summary of the literature reviewed, noting its relevance to the study. Included is a description of the research design used to conduct the study. The summary is followed by a discussion of the findings for each of the four research questions. Implications for practice along with recommendations for further research on the topic are also offered.

### Summary of the Study

#### *Problem*

To date there is little research that investigates how much reading occurs in relation to U.S. History coursework, how texts are used in history classrooms, and how discipline specific reading varies in honors and non-honors situations. By examining End-Of-Course examination results, there may be an indication of the impact of reading on content knowledge.

#### *Purpose*

The purpose of the study was to identify the amount of assigned and accomplished discipline-specific text reading that occurred in selected high school U.S.



History honors and non-honors classrooms and to detect if there were any relationships between the amount of reading that occurred and student achievement on the U.S.

History End-Of-Course examination.

### Research Questions

The specific research questions include:

1. What difference, if any, occurs in teacher expectations of the amount of time spent reading discipline specific texts during class between an honors and a non-honors classroom?

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no difference in teacher expectations of the amount of time spent reading discipline specific texts during class time between honors and non-honors classes.

2. What difference, if any, occurs in teacher expectations of the amount of reading expected for homework in an honors and a non-honors classroom?

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no difference in teacher expectations of the amount of time spent reading for homework between honors and non-honors classes.

3. What difference, if any, occurs in how much time is spent on reading homework as reported by students between honors and non-honors U.S. History classrooms?

H<sub>03</sub>: There is no difference in the amount of time students report reading homework between honors and non-honors classes.

4. What are the effects, if any, of performance on the End-of-Course (EOC) assessments in U.S. History between students who report reading more in class and at home and students who report reading less?

H<sub>04</sub>: There is no effect in performance on the EOC assessment between students who report reading more and students who report reading less.

### Literature Review

With the implementation of Common Core State Standards (CCSS), social studies, science and Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses have literacy standards related specifically to their respective content. A review of the existing research showed that the responsibility for and implementation of teaching students how to understand informational text has been neglected to some degree in past practice. Durkin (1978) discovered that teachers in fourth- and fifth-grade classrooms neglected to support students with reading instruction of social studies texts. Researchers have shown that there is a lack of instruction in how to understand informational text in elementary grades, during reading time in primary grades and content instruction in intermediate grades (Cipielewski & Stanovich, 1992; Duke, 2000; Elley, 1994).

Once students leave elementary school, any instruction in the use of informational texts would presumably fall on teachers of content areas as most students, unless they have been placed in a remedial reading class, no longer have a reading course (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004; O'Brien et al., 1995; Vacca, 2002). For years, secondary

schools have focused on content area literacy and strategies (Carr & Ogle, 1987; Daniels, 2006; Eanet & Manzo, 1976; Frey et al., 2003; Oczkus, 2003; Palincsar & Brown, 1984; Raphael & Au, 2005). Teachers of content have sometimes found it difficult to implement these strategies and most often deliver information the way they were taught, with teacher lecture and textbooks, (Alverman, 2005; Hynd & Stahl, 1998; O'Brien et al., 1995; Wigfield et al., 2006).

Bain (2005), in his research on teaching high school history, suggested that much of the issue in secondary classrooms lay within the context of curricular demands determined by testing, textbooks, and politics. Paxton (1999) found historical textbooks to be extremely boring and poorly written. A quasi-experimental study described by Reisman (2012) used primary source document-based lessons as both historical curriculum and reading interventions. Although the data showed growth in both reading and content knowledge, the lessons would be hard to replicate without support of university professionals

In summary, most observations in secondary classrooms have mainly focused on isolated literacy strategies and their impact, but few studies have been focused on what occurs in discipline specific classrooms in relation to reading discipline specific texts. As Moje et al. (2011) observed, there is room in the field of research to discover how teachers are currently using texts in classrooms.

### *Research Design*

Although researchers have shown a strong relationship between reading amount and reading achievement (Guthrie et al., 2004; Stanovich & Cunningham (1993), there is limited research showing a relationship between time spent reading discipline specific texts and achievement on subject area tests (Moje, 2011). This study was conducted to explore the relationship between discipline specific texts and content knowledge attainment. In order to determine how much reading occurs in relation to a U.S. History classroom, a two-sided approach was designed. The researcher surveyed both teachers and students to measure their perceptions of how much students read U. S. History discipline specific texts. Student surveys were matched with U. S. End-Of-Course examination scores to determine if there was a relationship between reading and End-Of-Course achievement.

Four U.S. History teachers and 144 U.S. History students participated in the study. The teachers were asked to complete a Teacher Survey (Appendix C) for each type of class they taught. If teachers taught both honors and non-honors courses, they were asked to complete two separate surveys, one in reference to the U.S. History honors classes they taught and a second in reference to the U.S. History non-honors classes. One teacher taught both honors and non-honors classes; therefore five surveys were completed.

The four research questions directed the focus of this study. Each research question and the results of the analysis are discussed in this chapter along with limitations

and recommendations for further study. Educational significance will be addressed in addition to the statistical significance found.

The Teacher Survey addressed Research Questions 1 and 2. Research Question 1 asked, “What difference, if any, occurs in teacher expectations of the amount of time spent reading discipline specific texts during class between an honors and a non-honors classroom?” In order to answer this question, the teacher surveys were coded as either 1 = teaching honors U.S. History or 2 = teaching non-honors U.S. History. To answer Research Question 2, “What difference, if any, occurs in teacher expectations of the amount of reading expected for homework in an honors and a non-honors classroom?” the same coding was in place (1 = teaching honors U.S. History or 2 = teaching non-honors U.S. History).

The next step was to survey students in order to answer Research Questions 3 and 4. Using the Student Survey (Appendix B), students were asked to report how much reading they averaged per day when learning content for their U.S. History class. Student surveys were coded so they could be connected to the outcome scores on the U.S. History EOC examination. This enabled the researcher to determine whether a connection could be made between students who reported reading more and increased achievement on the U.S. History EOC examination.

U.S. History End-of-Course developmental scale scores were matched to the ordinal data on the student surveys in the following manner. For question one of the Student Survey (How time do you spend reading in class for U.S. History?), the

categories were: (a) I do not read in school, (b) 30 minutes or less a day, (c) More than 30 minutes but less than 60 minutes per day, (d) 1 to 2 hours a day, and (e) More than 2 hours a day. For question two of the Student Survey (How much time do you spend reading for homework for U.S. History?), the same categories were used with the exception of the first category which was modified to (a) I do not read outside of school. Research Question 3 asked, “What difference, if any, occurs in how much time is spent on reading homework as reported by students between honors and non-honors U.S. History classrooms?” Research Question 4 asked, “What are the effects, if any, of performance on the End-of-Course (EOC) assessments in U.S. History between students who report reading more in class and at home and students who report reading less?”

### Summary and Discussion of Findings

The data for the research was gathered using two instruments and the U.S. History End-of-Course developmental scale scores. The source of data to answer Research Questions 1 and 2 was the Teacher Survey. The Student Survey question 2 was the source of data to answer Research Question 3. Research Question 4 called for the analysis of data obtained from Student Survey questions 1 and 2 and Developmental Scale Scores (DSS) of the U.S. History EOC. The following summary and discussion of the findings have been organized to address each of the four research questions which guided the study.

### *Research Question 1*

*What difference, if any, occurs in teacher expectations of the amount of time spent reading discipline specific texts during class between an honors and a non-honors classroom?*

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no difference in teacher expectations of the amount of time spent reading discipline specific texts during class time between honors and non-honors classes.

In order to answer this question, the teacher surveys were coded as either honors or non-honors. A Mann-Whitney U test was used to relate honors and non-honors designation to teacher expectations of the amount of reading the teachers believed to be occurring, based on their responses to Teacher Survey question 2.

No statistical significance was noted between teacher expectations of reading occurring in relation to honors and non-honors classes,  $U=2.000$ ,  $n=5$ ,  $p=.414$ . Therefore, the null hypothesis, H<sub>01</sub>, was accepted. Based on the data gathered in this study, there was no difference in teacher expectations of the amount of time spent reading discipline specific texts during class time between honors and non-honors classes.

### *Research Question 2*

*What difference, if any, occurs in teacher expectations of the amount of reading expected for homework in an honors and a non-honors classroom?*

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no difference in teacher expectations of the amount of time spent reading for homework between honors and non-honors classes.

Of the five surveys, the two non-honors classes reported assigning reading for homework at least as much as two of the three honors classes, with one of the honors classes reporting assigning homework less than the two non-honors classes.

A Mann-Whitney U test was performed on Teacher Survey question 4. No statistical significance was noted between teacher expectations of reading occurring in relation to honors and non-honors classes,  $U=1.000$ ,  $n=5$ ,  $p=.182$ . Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted: Based on the information gathered in this study, there was no difference in teacher expectations of the amount of time spent reading for homework between honors and non-honors classes.

It must be noted that the Teacher Survey was completed by teachers whose students were participating in the study; therefore, the number of teachers ( $N=4$ ) and surveys completed ( $N=5$ ) was very small. There may have been a difference in the results if all participating teachers taught both honors and non-honors U.S. history classes and answered surveys for each level course, but this was the case for only one teacher in this study. A wider study of teachers would help to give these two research questions and results more reliability. The teachers came from only two schools in one suburban district, and a larger sample from multiple schools and districts could strengthen these findings. A random selection of teachers may also lend more reliability to the study.

The teachers who completed the survey were pre-identified for participation in this study due to identification as effective teachers, based on previous EOC scores and observations by the social studies resource teacher and administrators. This was



intentional in order to look for effective practices. That, in itself, may have explained the lack of disparity between the honors and non-honors classes; the teachers may have had high expectations for all students. The added pressure of the EOC examination may have required more emphasis on preparing non-honors students to be successful on the test.

### *Research Question 3*

*What difference, if any, occurs in how much time is spent on reading homework as reported by students between honors and non-honors U.S. History classrooms?*

H<sub>03</sub>: There is no difference in the amount of time students report spending on reading homework between honors and non-honors classes.

A Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test for independent samples was used to evaluate the mean difference between the reported time spent reading for homework between honors and non-honors U.S. History students based on Student Survey question 2. The results indicated no significant difference,  $P = -0.842$ ,  $p < .05$ . The p-value results from the Wilcoxon-Signed Ranks test indicated that the null hypothesis was accepted and that there was no significant difference between the amount of reading for homework between honors and non-honors students.

### *Research Question 4*

*What are the effects, if any, of performance on the End-of-Course (EOC) assessments in U.S. History between students who report reading more in class and at home and students who report reading less?*

H<sub>04</sub>: There is no effect in performance on the EOC assessment between students who report reading more and students who report reading less.

To answer this question, ordinal data from Student Survey questions 1 and 2 were matched to developmental scale scores and several ordinal categories then analyzed in an ANOVA. As the data set failed to meet the test for homogenous groups, a Tukey test was also run to analyze statistical significance between and among the ordinal groups. Although the data did not show clear statistical significance, there was a positive trend among the EOC Developmental Scale Scores. Reading in class did not seem to be a factor. Though not statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ), homework reading of more than 30 minutes a day did show positive trends for increased achievement on the EOC as determined by higher scale scores. Interestingly, reading 30 minutes or less a day appeared to have less positive impact than not reading outside of school at all.

The accepted hypothesis of Research Question 3, that there was no difference in the amount of homework reading accomplished by honors and non-honors students, intentionally mirrors the response to Research Question 2, in which the null hypothesis was also accepted, that there was no difference in teacher expectations of the amount of time spent in reading for homework between honors and non-honors classes. These two questions were designed to investigate any disparity in teacher expectations of reading and accomplishment of reading between honors and non-honors students. The researcher had perceived discrepancies in the past in teachers' expectations between honors and non-honors students, but this study did not show this to be a factor. The researcher has

several theories for the difference between previous perceptions and the outcomes of this study.

First, and entirely possible, the researcher may have incorrectly perceived the inequity between the two types of classes. In the past, having observed students as an English teacher, a district resource teacher, and as a parent, it appeared that honors level students had higher demands placed on them in terms of independent homework and classwork. As a literacy professional who worked with struggling schools, the researcher made observations of many teachers who had lowered expectations for student independent work and achievement, similar to the Matthew Effect (Stanovich, 1986). The Matthew Effect creates a situation where capable students get further instruction and less capable students receive remediation but lose out on grade level content knowledge.

A second factor may be the difference between high performing schools and struggling schools that continuously earn school grades of D or F. The researcher had previously worked closely with struggling schools and interacted with some teachers who had lowered expectations of their students. The two schools and participating teachers in this study were considered high achieving, as identified by school grades and achievement on the U.S. History EOC. During the study year, both high schools were either “A” or “B” schools, and the mean scale score of the U.S. History EOC for both schools was well above average. Therefore, no disparity may have been perceived because little to no disparity exists, explaining in part why the students, teachers, and

schools in this study were high achieving. Teachers in the study expected both honors and non honors student to pass the U.S. History End-Of-Course examination.

A third factor may have more to do with the U.S. History EOC examination itself. The U.S. History EOC examination is a statewide, standardized test which counts for 30% of students' final grades. In the past, teachers had the ability to write their own final examination for their courses and were able to write two different tests for honors and non-honors students. Teachers also had freedom to curve final grades. These practices are no longer an option. There is one test that all students, regardless of honors or non-honors course designation, must take. Teachers are required to cover a set amount of information with all students over the course of the year to prepare students for the EOC. As teacher performance is slated to be tied to EOC assessments, teachers may be less cognizant of honors and non-honors course designations and more focused on the standards and content students should learn by the time they participate in the EOC assessment.

The fact that all students take the same assessment may lend more importance to Research Question 4, which sought to identify a possible connection between reading more and higher achievement on the U.S. History EOC. Although studies between reading amount and reading achievement have indicated positive correlations, (Guthrie et al., 2004), it is yet to be determined if reading more for U.S. History increases achievement on the U.S. EOC examination. History teachers use a multitude of instructional strategies including lecture, lecture notes/power point presentations, film

and video clips, multi-media presentations, and research strategies. It is difficult to tie any one instructional strategy to achievement on one assessment, but there did appear to be a positive trend among the means of U.S. History End-of-Course developmental scale scores and students who spent more than 30 minutes reading U.S. History for homework.

### Limitations

One limitation of the study was a lack of observation of what was occurring in classrooms. An observation rubric was designed for this study; however implementation was not feasible because of the demands of the spring testing window. Reading/literacy coaches were required to proctor testing, and classrooms were devoted to reviewing and test preparation. Triangulating classroom observations with the observation rubric earlier in the school year, matching those observations to teacher and student surveys, then matching U.S. History EOC data to student surveys would give more information about effective and ineffective instructional practices. Another limitation of the study was related to Student Survey question 1 which asked how much time was given to reading in class. Because the two schools were traditional high schools, class time does not exceed, and is often less than, 50 minutes.

Further limitations exist in the low numbers of participating teachers, (n=4) and teacher surveys completed (n=5). Ideally there should have been at least three schools, and three to four teachers at each school, each teaching both honors and non-honors U. S. History classes. Master schedules and time constraints prohibited inclusion of more schools and teachers. To extend this research, several U. S. History teachers across a

diverse section of the state should be surveyed to determine if results are similar among more diverse groups.

The differing numbers between the honors and non-honors groups (n=93 for honors; n=51 for non-honors) also may have skewed the findings. Ideally the numbers between the groups should have been more closely matched.

Although the self-reporting on the amount of reading may be a limitation, students were close to the end of the school year. All of the students' work was completed, and the U. S. History EOC examination was finished. It is the belief of the researcher that students were very open in their responses, because their teachers would not know how the individual students answered the survey questions.

#### Future Research and Implications for Practice

Based on the information in this study, further research should be conducted specifically in regard to what occurs in the classroom. Classroom observations and interviews with teachers and students would lead to triangulation of data that would give more insight into the reading that occurs in the classroom. Research with the triangulated research approach should be conducted in different disciplines such as science or Career and Technical Education (CTE) classes implementing the Common Core State Standards to observe the way those courses use texts and the amount of reading required and accomplished. The biology courses would be ideal as the Biology EOC examination has parallel construction to the U. S. History EOC examination. Both the U. S. History and the Biology EOC will remain in place in the current school year and foreseeable future.

Career and Technical Education courses have industry certification tests that could be used to measure student achievement. This research would support both discipline specific teachers and literacy professionals such as reading coaches, reading coordinators, and university reading professors. Descriptive studies analyzing what is occurring in realistic settings will help design supportive discipline specific literacy strategies for content area teachers.

Implications from this study, while not statistically significant, showed positive trends which lend support to more reading in the discipline, thereby supporting learning of the content in that discipline. However, just assigning reading for homework may not be the best, or only, answer. Exceptional education students (ESE) and English Language Learners (ELL) often struggle with reading, especially reading for homework. In the researcher's experience, unless scaffolded and leveled materials are provided, ESE and ELL students either spend an inordinate amount of time reading or are frustrated and do no reading at all. ELL students often have to read English text with the use of a heritage dictionary. Classroom reading enables the teacher to provide more support and scaffolding for struggling students.

Another implication of this study is the effective use of reading/literacy coaches. According to Marsh (2008), reading coaches may be instrumental in helping social studies, science and CTE teachers implement literacy standards. Coaches can help teachers understand the various reading levels of their students and can support teachers in scaffolding the discipline specific reading assignments. By providing job-embedded

support, coaches can problem solve with teachers about the students they teach. Helping teachers provide the ESE and ELL students with material they can read in a reasonable amount of time is an effective use of reading/literacy coaches.

A final implication of this study may lend support for standardized final assessments. It may be that the standardized assessment has increased expectations for all students, and this expectation may have led to increased student achievement in this area. At present, districts across the state of Florida are scrambling to write End-of-Course examinations for all subjects, in order to assess the performance of teachers in the subjects they teach. Perhaps, if the emphasis were on student achievement and not on perceived teacher quality or lack of teacher quality, and if time were spent to carefully develop valid and reliable assessments in the various disciplines, then all stakeholders would view assessment as a tool for growth and not merely a source of stress for teachers, students, and parents. . .

### Conclusions

Even though the results were not statistically significant the positive trend indicates increased achievement for students who spent more time reading in the content. Literacy professionals who are focused on discipline specific literacy may gain more traction with teachers by helping teachers create accessible, meaningful, and accountable homework assignments. This does not mean that reading in the classroom should not occur, but classroom time could be used to model how to access primary sources and text features in textbooks and other ancillary materials such as political cartoons, maps,



graphs, and various other types of documents that are specific to the discipline of U. S. History. Because of limited class time, practice should be encouraged as homework, and students should be held accountable.

This research has also changed some of the conclusions of this researcher on the impact of standardized testing on both teachers and students. As a testing coordinator, the researcher is very clear about how much time is devoted to standardized testing and the disruptions that may occur in instructional time. There appeared to be no disparity between the expectations of teachers of honors and non-honors classes. Survey results indicated that teachers believe that all students must read to learn and achieve. While it is not the intent of this researcher to champion the cause of standardized testing by any means, raising the standards for all students appears to have increased both expectations and student achievement, at least in the area of U. S. History.

As observed by Daggett (2008) in his discussion of high performing schools, It is important to note that the model schools did not waiver from their primary goal of raising the academic achievement of students or back away from improving performance on standardized tests in the process of increasing the relevancy of the curriculum and creating a culture of strong relationships and mutual support. Their academic content steadfastly reflects high expectations for all students, is non-negotiable, and is based on the knowledge and skills students will need to demonstrate in their lives after graduation (p. 13).

High achieving schools, teachers, and students have high expectations. In the experience of this researcher, schools that raise expectations of their teachers and students, and provide appropriate support for teachers and scaffolds for learners, have increased student achievement and classrooms where students become college and career ready. Based on the research in this study, teachers in these two high achieving schools have similar high expectations of both honors and non-honors students, and students who read more for U, S. History perform well on the U. S. History End-Of-Course examination.

APPENDIX A  
CCSS LITERACY STANDARDS

Common Core State Standards: Literacy Standards in History

Grades 9-10 students:	Grades 11-12 students:
Key ideas and details	
<p>1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.</p>	<p>1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.</p>
<p>2. Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.</p>	<p>2. Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationship among the key details and ideas.</p>
<p>3. Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them.</p>	<p>3. Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.</p>
Craft and structure	
<p>4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social studies.</p>	<p>4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines <i>faction</i> in <i>Federalist</i> No. 10).</p>
<p>5. Analyze how a text uses structure to emphasize key points or advance an explanation or analysis.</p>	<p>5. Analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole.</p>
<p>6. Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same</p>	<p>6. Evaluate authors differing points of view on the same historical event or</p>

or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.	issue by assessing the author’s claims, reasoning, and evidence.
<b>Integration of knowledge and ideas</b>	
7. Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.	7. Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.
8. Assess the extent to which the reasoning and evidence in a text support the author’s claims.	8. Evaluate an author’s premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.
9. Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.	9. Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.
<b>Range of reading and level of complexity</b>	
10. By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 9-10 text complexity band independently and proficiently.	By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 11-CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.

*Source.* Common Core Standards for English language arts in history/social studies, science, and technical education. (2010). *Common Core Standards Initiative*. Retrieved from <http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/>

APPENDIX B  
STUDENT SURVEY

**STUDENT SURVEY**

Please answer these questions as truthfully as possible

<b>Student Code Number</b> _____ <b>Mark one:</b> _____ <b>Honors</b> _____ <b>Non-Honors</b> <b>Teacher code</b> _____				
1. About how much time do you usually spend reading for <b>U.S. History class</b> during school hours? <b>For this study, reading for U.S. History includes but not limited to: textbook, primary source documents, online materials from textbook company, political cartoons, newspaper or journal articles, charts, graphs and maps.</b> Including both paper-based and internet based text. <i>(Please check only one box)</i>				
A. I do not read at school				
B. 30 minutes or less a day				
C. More than 30 minutes to less than 60 minutes a day				
D. 1 to 2 hours a day				
E. More than 2 hours a day				
2. About how much time do you usually spend reading for <b>U.S. History Class</b> after school hours? (Including both paper-based and internet based text <i>see list above</i> ) <i>(Please check only one box)</i>				
F. I do read not outside of school				
G. 30 minutes or less a day				
H. More than 30 minutes to less than 60 minutes a day				
I. 1 to 2 hours a day				
J. More than 2 hours a day				
3. About how much time do you usually spend reading by choice for your own purposes? <i>(Please check only one box)</i>				
I do not read by choice				
30 minutes or less a day				
More than 30 minutes to less than 60 minutes a day				
1 to 2 hours a day				
More than 2 hours a day				
4. How much do you agree or disagree with these statements about reading? <i>(Please check only one box in each row)</i>				
	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
a) I read only if I have to				
b) Reading is one of my favorite hobbies				
c) I like talking about what I have read with other people				
d) I find it hard to finish books and articles				
e) For me, reading is a waste of time				
f) I read only to get information that I need				
g) I cannot sit still and read for more than a few minutes				





APPENDIX C  
TEACHER SURVEY

**TEACHER SURVEY: CLASSROOM READING ACTIVITIES**  
*(Please complete different surveys for honors and non-honors classes)*

School Code \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher Code \_\_\_\_\_ Class Type (Circle One): Honors  
 Regular

1. How often are your students involved in the following reading activities during class?  
**For this study, reading for U.S. History includes but not limited to: textbook, primary source documents, online materials from textbook company, political cartoons, newspaper or journal articles, charts, graphs and maps.** *(Please check only one box in each row)*

	<i>Never or almost never</i>	<i>Several times a month</i>	<i>Once or twice a week</i>	<i>Several times a week</i>
Paired reading				
Reading silently				
Taking turns reading (popcorn)				
Doing internet research				
Taking notes from lectures (PowerPoint)				
Other types of reading				

2. About how much time do you estimate your students usually spend reading for school during school hours? (Including both paper-based and internet based text, see list at the beginning of the survey) *(Please check only one box)*

They do not read at school	
30 minutes or less a day	
More than 30 minutes to less than 60 minutes a day	
1 to 2 hours a day	
More than 2 hours a day	

3. About how much time do you estimate students usually spend on computers during school hours? *(Please check only one box)*

Seldom or never	
30 minutes or less a day	
More than 30 minutes to less than 60 minutes a day	
1 to 2 hours a day	
More than 2 hours a day	

4. About how much time do you believe students usually spend reading for homework for your class after school hours? (Including both paper-based and internet based text, see list at the beginning of the survey) *(Please check only one box)*

.I do not assign reading for homework	
30 minutes or less a day	
More than 30 minutes to less than 60 minutes a day	
1 to 2 hours a day	

More than 2 hours a day	
5. How often do you assign reading for homework from a textbook or other paper-based texts? (Including research) <b>For this study, reading for U.S. History includes but not limited to: textbook, primary source documents, online materials from textbook company, political cartoons, newspaper or journal articles, charts, graphs and maps.</b> (Please check only one box)	
.Never or almost never	
Sometimes (a couple of times a month)	
Often (every week)	
Almost always (three or more times a week)	
6. How often do you believe students complete reading assigned for homework from a textbook or other paper-based texts? <b>For this study, reading for U.S. History includes but not limited to: textbook, primary source documents, online materials from textbook company, political cartoons, newspaper or journal articles, charts, graphs and maps.</b> (Please check only one box)	
.Never or almost never	
Sometimes (a couple of times a month)	
Often (every week)	
Almost always (three or more times a week)	
7. How often do you assign reading for homework from computer-based texts? (Including research) (Please check only one box)	
.Never or almost never	
Sometimes (a couple of times a month)	
Often (every week)	
Almost always (three or more times a week)	
8. How often do you believe students complete reading assigned for homework from computer-based texts? (Including research) (Please check only one box)	
.Never or almost never	
Sometimes (a couple of times a month)	
Often (every week)	
Almost always (three or more times a week)	
10. How important do you think text-based reading is for your students to learn your content? <b>For this study, reading for U.S. History includes but not limited to: textbook, primary source documents, online materials from textbook company, political cartoons, newspaper or journal articles, charts, graphs and maps.</b> (Please check only one box)	
.Not important	
Somewhat important	
Important	
Very Important	

APPENDIX D  
SCHOOL DISTRICT APPROVAL OF RESEARCH

**School Board of Brevard County**  
2700 Judge Fran Jamieson Way Viera, FL 32940-6699  
Dr. Brian Binggeli, Superintendent



January 15, 2014

Dear Ms. Baldrige,

Thank you for your application to conduct research in the Brevard Public Schools. This letter is official verification that your application has been accepted and approved through the Office of Accountability, Testing, & Evaluation. However, approval from this office does not obligate the principal of the schools you have selected to participate in the proposed research. Please contact the principals of the impacted schools in order to obtain their approval. Upon the completion of your research, submit your findings to our office. If we can be of further assistance, do not hesitate to contact our office.

Sincerely,

*Vickie B. Hickey*

Vickie B. Hickey, Resource Teacher  
Office of Accountability, Testing, and Evaluation

Office of Accountability, Testing & Evaluation  
Phone: (321) 633-1000 FAX: (321) 633-3465

APPENDIX E  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL



University of Central Florida Institutional Review Board  
 Office of Research & Commercialization  
 12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501  
 Orlando, Florida 32826-3246  
 Telephone: 407-823-2901 or 407-882-2276  
[www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html](http://www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html)

**Approval of Exempt Human Research**

**From: UCF Institutional Review Board #1  
 FWA00000351, IRB00001138**  
**To: Jocelyn Downs**  
**Date: April 09, 2014**

Dear Researcher:

On 4/9/2014, the IRB approved the following activity as human participant research that is exempt from regulation:

Type of Review:	Exempt Determination
Project Title:	AN INVESTIGATION ON THE USE OF DISCIPLINARY TEXTS AND ACHIEVEMENT ON END OF COURSE EXAMS IN HIGH SCHOOL HISTORY COURSES
Investigator:	Jocelyn Downs
IRB Number:	SBE-14-10235
Funding Agency:	
Grant Title:	
Research ID:	N/A

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made and there are questions about whether these changes affect the exempt status of the human research, please contact the IRB. When you have completed your research, please submit a Study Closure request in iRIS so that IRB records will be accurate.

In the conduct of this research, you are responsible to follow the requirements of the Investigator Manual.

On behalf of Sophia Dziegielewski, Ph.D., L.C.S.W., UCF IRB Chair, this letter is signed by:

Signature applied by Joanne Muratori on 04/09/2014 02:30:25 PM EDT

IRB Coordinator

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