Reading History: Moving from Memorizing Facts to Critical Thinking

Dixie D. Massey

Abstract The task of reading and studying history in the K-12 setting has long been a memory task—knowing dates, places, and events. In contrast, historians use disciplinary-specific heuristics of sourcing, corroboration, and contextualization to understand not just what the text says, but when the text was written, who wrote it, and what may be missing from the text. "Doing history" is largely dependent on reading and studying texts (VanSledright, Read Res Q 39:342–346, 2004b) and it is the texts themselves, as well as the thinking about those texts that distinguishes history from other disciplines. This chapter explores what makes text in history different from texts in other disciplines. Identifying what makes historical texts unique suggests specific instruction that is needed to move students from novice readers to readers with growing levels of expertise in disciplinary reading.

Keywords History • Disciplinary literacy • Social studies

1 Introduction

Even before disciplinary literacy was popular, researchers were considering what is unique about reading history texts. Historians and history educators are at least partially responsible for the shift away from a content-area reading approach towards a discipline-specific oriented approach to reading instruction. Thanks to the work of Wineburg (1991), VanSledright (1995), and others (e.g., Afflerbach & VanSledright, 2001; Hynd-Shanahan, Holschuh, & Hubbard, 2004), we have work that considers how historians read as well as how novices read history—from elementary students all the way through graduate students. This foundational work has long provided a contrast to other approaches to reading, both general strategies and in other disciplines.

This chapter will give a broad overview of reading in history in relation to the current research on effective reading instruction. Historians know the importance

D.D. Massey (✉)
Curriculum and Instruction, University of Washington, Seattle, WA, USA
e-mail: ddmassey@uw.edu

of contextualizing information; thus, the chapter begins with a survey of reading history to trace the lineage of the disciplinary reading approach. Next, the chapter considers what makes text in history unique. This will then be compared to reading knowledge when considered as a developmental continuum. Based on the presented research, the chapter examines what kind of instruction is needed to develop students who are able to handle history texts thoughtfully and with at least some level of expertise. Finally, the chapter will conclude with a focus on ongoing issues that researchers and practitioners must address.

2   Contextualizing: Reading Instruction Then and Now

What counts as successful reading? The answer to that question has evolved over centuries of instruction in the United States. In the early 1800s, the focus of reading was on oral recitation and memorization (Mraz, Rickelman, & Vacca, 2009). Although this approach persisted into the twentieth century, some scholars began highlighting the importance of understanding and thinking about the meaning of text (e.g. Huey, 1908/1968; Thorndike, 1917).

Early reading instruction focused on young readers. The advent of World War I highlighted the problem of illiteracy among the soldiers in a way that raised the general public's awareness and focused attention on older readers. During the same time, child labor laws were implemented and children stayed in school longer. With more children continuing their education, more and more junior high schools were created. The result was a growing awareness of the need for different types of reading instruction for adolescents and in specific contents (Sears, n.d.; Tyack & Cuban, 1995).

William S. Gray, the editor of the popular *Dick and Jane* series, studied 250 teachers of fourth through sixth graders to better understand subject area instruction (as cited in Vacca, 2002). This is considered one of the first studies in what we now recognize as content area reading. Though researchers continued to look more closely at adolescent readers and reading in specific contents, it wasn't until the 1970s that content reading began to receive more scholarly and practitioner attention (Mraz et al., 2009). This paralleled Deloris Durkin's (1978/1979) monumental study highlighting the lack of comprehension instruction during classroom reading instruction. The result was a focus on helping students in content area courses learn a set of general reading strategies that could be applied to multiple content areas (Tierney, Readence, & Dishner, 1985), with an emphasis on what was similar, not unique, in the disciplines (Leinhardt, Stainton, & Virgi, 1994). Such strategy instruction was meant to "teach students how to approach content-area learning in a deliberate and critical manner" (Mraz et al., p. 83).

In recent decades, the content area reading approach that focuses on general strategies to be applied across disciplines has come under criticism (Conley, 2008; Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008). Shanahan and Shanahan wrote that general strategies become less generalizable as one moves into the complexities and specific nature

of disciplinary knowledge. Star, Strickland, and Hawkins (2008) went so far as to suggest that general strategies do not help students apply reading strategies to discipline-specific text.

Current reviews of adolescent literacy push researchers to look more deeply at the specificity of reading within each discipline and less at generalizable strategies (Conley, Freidhoff, Gritter, & Van Duinen, 2008; Moje, Stockdill, Kim, & Kim, 2011; Shanahan, 2009). Here it should be noted that discipline, as most commonly used in the literature reviewed for this chapter, refers to a broad subject area (Rouet, Favart, Britt, & Perfetti, 1997; Shanahan, 2009; Shanahan, Shanahan, & Misischia, 2011; Wineburg, 1998). History and mathematics are disciplines. Within the disciplines, most experts have an area of particular focus, typically referred to as domain-expertise. For example, a historian has studied within the discipline of history but might have domain-expertise in World War I.

A disciplinary emphasis suggests questions and patterns of focus. Howard Gardner (2000) wrote in *The Disciplined Mind,* "At any given moment the disciplines represent the most well-honed efforts of human beings to approach questions and concerns of importance in a systematic and reliable way" (p. 146). Chapman, Counsell, McConnell, and Woolley (2007) echoed Gardner's focus by noting that the disciplines push us to consider questions, evidence, causes, and issues of significance in patterns of thinking that are specific rather than general. Reading is the most common form of pursuing those questions. Shanahan (2009) wrote, "Reading in the disciplines requires disciplinary knowledge—knowledge of the way information is created, shared, and evaluated for quality" (p. 241). Specifically, history text, whether textbook or primary sources, is complex and differs from other disciplinary texts.

Although historians have been considering this for several decades (Wineburg, 1991), focus on the complexity and the specificity of disciplinary texts, such as history texts, is a relatively new focus of reading researchers. For example, the *Handbook of Reading Research, Vol. III,* (Kamil, Mosenthal, Pearson, & Barr, 2000) referred to integrated curriculum (Gavalek, Raphael, Biondo, & Wang, 2000) that wove subject areas together. Bean (2000) wrote a chapter in that volume on reading in the content areas where he observed that research had shifted from a cognitive approach focused on which strategies are most effective and generalizable across contents to a socially constructed focus. No mention was made of discipline-specific reading or text. This changed with the *Handbook of Reading Research, Vol. IV* (Kamil, Pearson, Moje, & Afflerbach, 2011) where specific needs of adolescents in disciplinary literacy were addressed (Alexander & Fox, 2011; Moje et al., 2011).

Much of the research reported in the present chapter considers how to close the divide between history at the university level and history as a subject in the K-12 setting. Here it should be specified that the bulk of research available focuses on reading in history, as opposed to reading in the other areas of social studies such as civics or economics. This chapter will continue that focus on history, while at the same time echoing Conley's and colleagues' et al., observations that we need to examine multiple sub-disciplines in depth in order to understand the complexities of the reading required in each discipline (Conley, 2008, 2009; Conley et al., 2008).

3   What's So Unique About History Text?

Early research in the discipline of history (e.g., Wineburg, 1991, 1998) focused on what historians do—the questions that guided their thinking, the actions taken when they read, and the stance that they took toward information: "History as practiced in the contemporary academy is suspicious, secular, public, qualified, and, to use Sir Karl Popper's lapidary term, 'falsifiable.' Unlike religion, in which faith cements belief, history requires evidence—tangible, verifiable, and open to scrutiny" (Wineburg, 2007, p. 7).

Historians' actions and inquiry methods have been in sharp contrast to K-12 practices when studying history. The task of reading and studying history in the K-12 setting has been a memory task—knowing dates, places, and events. Bain (2008/2009) described the dichotomy as follows:

> History at the university was a discipline, a unique way of knowing the world that professionals shared. In the high school, history was a subject students took and teachers taught, differing from other subjects only in the facts covered. Students claimed that they did in history exactly what they did in other courses—used texts, memorized facts, did homework, and took tests. In the minds of adolescents, there is little unique about history (p. 159).

Historians and educators currently argue that there is much unique about historical content. "Doing history" is largely dependent on reading and studying texts (VanSledright, 2004b) and it is the texts themselves, as well as the thinking about those texts that distinguish history from other disciplines.

3.1   What Counts as Text

The task of reading history is one of inquiry and interpretation (Bain, 2006; Shanahan, 2009; Wineburg, 1991, 2001). Simply deciding what counts as readable text is one of the first elements complicating the discussion of reading in history. For decades, the history textbook was the authoritative source that presented all of the history that students needed to know (Moje et al., 2011). More recently, the history textbook has come under increasing scrutiny and criticism for a variety of reasons. First, the textbook is problematic because students often perceive it as authoritative (Bain, 2006; Juel, Hebard, Haubner, & Moran, 2010; Moje et al., 2011; Paxton, 1999; Shanahan, 2009). Shanahan posited,

> The invisible author provides the typical reader with the perception that the causes are, indeed real. That is, because the author does not share his or her sources of information, analytic procedures, and determinations of reliability and validity, the cause and effect statements are not "checkable."(p. 251)

Further, treating the textbook as authoritative interferes with the process of examining multiple sources to create a plausible and coherent interpretation; that is, historical inquiry. Bain (2006) noted that if textbooks are accepted as authoritative,

then the act of "doing history" or inquiry is never really started because there is no question or problem to explore. Although historians do refer to secondary and tertiary sources, historians "do not accord [the textbooks] the authority given the textbook in a classroom" (Moje et al., 2011, p. 465).

Additionally, the organization of the textbook is ambiguous, with embedded texts and multiple text structures. The typical structure of history texts is narrative and descriptive. The persuasive structures that historians frequently notice (Wineburg, 1991) are embedded within the narrative structure and, thereby, are often hidden from students (Shanahan, 2009).

The response of history educators has been the inclusion of primary sources as text along with, and sometimes instead of, the traditional textbook (Bain, 2006; Wineburg, 1999, 2010; Wineburg & Martin, 1994; Wineburg, Smith, & Breakstone, 2012). Morgan and Rasinski (2012) noted, "Primary sources help students develop immediacy to the time period or event and allow for a natural compare–contrast that deepens understanding of the past as well as the present" (p. 585). However, the use of primary source text instead of, or in addition to, a textbook presents a set of unique challenges to readers, including a variety of genres and text structures, multiple points of view, historical references, specialized vocabulary, and the specificity of language, as described in the following sections.

3.2   Variety of Genres and Text Structures

One of the significant challenges students face when reading primary text or textbooks with excerpts from primary sources is the variety of genres presented in each text (Ogle, 2010). Wyman (2005) listed five broad categories of primary sources:

- Written documents (e.g., letter, diaries, manuscripts)
- Government Documents (e.g., census records, government reports, birth certificates)
- Printed documents (e.g., newspaper articles, books, magazine articles)
- Visual Artifacts (e.g., maps, photographs, drawings, posters)
- Oral Artifacts (e.g., audio files)

Each genre might contain multiple text structures. For example, written documents might contain descriptive text structures as well as cause-effect text structures. Diaries and letters might contain more narrative text structures. Visual artifacts might be part of a printed document, requiring interpretation of both printed and visual text.

Lack of experience reading a variety of genres and text structures contributes to students' novice reading of history texts (Afflerbach & VanSledright, 2001; Perfetti, Britt, & Georgi, 1995; Wineburg, 1991). Although textbooks frequently include both embedded primary source quotes as well as references to additional primary sources, there is little research that guides how even embedded work might be used to further

students' understanding of genre and text structure (Afflerbach and VanSledright 1998). Afflerbach and VanSledright (2001) noted that although students enjoyed the information presented in the primary source excerpts, they were unable to evaluate it and use it to deepen their understanding.

Understanding multiple genres and text structures comes only from purposeful instruction using a variety of texts. Though students as young as primary grades have experienced success reading primary documents when carefully scaffolded (Morgan & Rasinski, 2012; VanSledright, 2004a), it is much more typical for primary sources to be completely neglected in the elementary grades (Morgan & Rasinski, 2012). By the time students enter middle and high school where entire courses are devoted to the study of history are required, typically students have limited background with the numerous genres and text structures they will be required to read.

3.3 Multiple Points of View

Although a single textbook may represent multiple authors, it generally presents a shared point of view. However, collections of primary sources can represent multiple points of view: rich or poor, opposing political parties, expert or novice. Researchers and practitioners currently argue that in order to understand history, students need to do historical inquiry, which requires them to examine multiple sources. These sources help students evaluate the credibility and reliability of the information (Shanahan, 2009; Wyman, 2005). However, multiple sources about a topic typically present conflicting information. Although this is beneficial in gaining deeper understanding about an issue, it can also present a challenge to students.

Discrepancies in texts are frequently overlooked by students without careful instruction from teachers (Dutt-Doner, Cook-Cottone, & Allen, 2007; Foster & Yeager, 1999; Lee & Ashby, 2000; Shanahan, 2009; VanSledright & Kelly, 1998). Instead of noticing the differences in points of view and evaluating accordingly, students frequently take a more passive view, approaching each text as a set of facts to be remembered (Paxton, 1999; VanSledright, 2002b; VanSledright & Kelly, 1998). Hynd-Shanahan et al. (2004) noted that when students were asked to read multiple documents they used mostly general reading strategies such as memorizing dates. Just as with the textbook, students frequently assign authority to the source and fail to consider the reliability of the author (Moje et al., 2011; Wineburg, 2001). Instead, students may use primary sources to support a previously held idea rather than develop deeper historical understanding.

3.4 Historical References

A typical text in history frequently requires the reader to have extensive background knowledge (Buehl, 2011; Moje et al., 2011). The simple use of proper names presents the reader with multiple components: decoding words, understanding the

meaning of the words in isolation as well as within a phrase, and identifying references. For example, a text about the United States' treatment of Native Americans may only reference the Sand Creek Massacre one time, but understanding the reference requires understanding that Sand Creek implies a location, knowing the meaning of massacre, and realizing that together the words refer to a specific killing of Native Americans. Or consider a single paragraph describing Israeli-Palestinian relations. A single paragraph from a newspaper account might require knowledge of historical and current geography, historical and current political systems, regional culture, and the religions of Islam and Judaism as well as an understanding of the role World War II played in the creation of Israel (Buehl, 2011). Students need the context to understand the significance and interpretation of historical references, while at the same time they need a basic understanding of historical reference to understand the context.

3.5   Specialized Vocabulary

Every discipline requires specialized vocabulary. Social studies has been referred to as an overloaded content (Bailey, 2007; Ogle, Klemp, & McBride, 2007) that is actually a composite of multiple subdisciplines. Bailey posited that students encounter more than 600 discipline-specific words in a single secondary social studies course. To further complicate the issue, many of those words may be antiquated and used in ways that are presently obsolete (Moje et al., 2011). For example, Bryson (1990) offered examples of words that have evolved to mean the opposite of what they originally meant:

> *Counterfeit* once meant a legitimate copy. *Brave* once implied cowardice—as indeed *bravado* still does. *Crafty*, now a disparaging term, originally was a word of praise, while *enthusiasm* which is now a word of praise, was once a term of mild abuse. *Zeal* has lost its original pejorative sense, but *zealot* curiously has not (pp. 77–78).

These few examples emphasize the complexity of the vocabulary present, particularly in primary sources. Present-day meanings may not be the same meanings intended when the source was written, even if students recognize the word.

Academic vocabulary is required not only to understand the texts, but also to communicate effectively (Heafner & Massey, 2012). Knowing specialized vocabulary opens doors for students to become insiders (Moore, Readence, & Rickelman, 1989). Researchers have documented two clear benefits of vocabulary knowledge:

1. There is a positive relationship between vocabulary knowledge and comprehension (Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2013; Elleman, Lindo, Morphy, & Compton, 2009; Graham, 2013; Graves, 2009). Stahl and Nagy (2006) noted that possessing larger vocabulary makes students better readers.
2. Vocabulary knowledge is cumulative and generative (Flanigan, Templeton, & Hayes, 2012; Stahl & Nagy, 2006). The more words students know, the better they are able to approximate a definition of new words and assimilate new

meanings. This frequently occurs because of the knowledge of base words and the multiple forms they take with the addition of affixes as well as an understanding of Latin and Greek roots.

Traditional means of learning vocabulary in history classes have included lengthy lists of words that students memorized (VanSledright, 2011). Yet what we know about vocabulary learning has shown the ineffectiveness of this method. Heafner and Massey (2012) wrote,

> Comprehension derived from a rich vocabulary base requires more than definitional learning or phonetic usage; it demands understanding of discipline-specific word meanings in authentic reading and visual context. Proficient use of, and control over, the academic language of social studies becomes central to student learning (p. 7).

This level of knowledge requires multiple exposures to the words. Stahl and Nagy (2006) estimated that it takes anywhere from 4 to 12 exposures in order to truly understand the meaning of a word. This exposure to words cannot occur as merely references or memory reviews but, instead, should accompany focused reading of content texts and instruction that supports comprehension of the text (Beck et al., 2013; Blachowicz, Ogle, Fisher, & Watts-Taffe, 2013; Graham, 2013; Heafner & Massey, 2012; Stahl & Nagy, 2006).

3.6   Specificity of Language

In addition to specific vocabulary, texts in the social studies are written using specific patterns of language. These patterns of language differ from conversational language and from the patterns of other disciplines (Fang & Schleppegrell, 2010; Scheleppegrell 2004; Schleppegrell, Greer, & Taylor, 2008). Three common patterns specific to history texts are abstraction, interaction of time and cause, and interpretation (Schleppegree & de Oliveira, 2006). Consider just one of those patterns—abstraction. History texts typically use nominalizations to describe events. Nominalizations are nouns which are derived from verbs or adjectives. The result is an increasingly abstract text that both differs significantly from the typically patterns of conversation, as well as makes it difficult to understand who or about what the authors of the text are writing.

History texts further use abstraction to give a sense of authority. For example, most textbooks are written in the third person. A phrase might state that the army was "hopelessly inadequate." The authors do not state that "they believe the army was hopelessly inadequate" or that their interpretation of primary sources leads them to conclude that the army was hopelessly inadequate. Without careful instruction, students frequently accept textbooks as authoritative, in part because of the patterns of language in which they are written.

4 Reading and Thinking About Text

Research has focused not only on what is unique about the history text, but also what the reader must do as they read the history text. Some work refers to reading like a historian (Wineburg, Martin, & Monte-Sana, 2011), while other refers to thinking like a historian (James & McVay, 2009; VanSledright, 2002b; Wineburg, 1999), and still other work references both reading and thinking like a historian (VanSledright, 2004b). It must be emphasized that reading and thinking are not separate. In the contexts of the research, reading is not merely identifying words; reading must be accompanied by thinking.

Historians read and think about the text in certain ways. Historians view history as an account that differs from other accounts (Bain, 2006) and take an inquiry approach to the texts that asks complex questions about why and how (Wineburg, 1991). Conversely, history in school has been viewed as a chronology of events to be learned from a "truthful and unexamined master" (Lee & Spratley, 2010, p. 7). Theories presented in the following sections emphasize how to make the inquiry processes used by historians explicit and useable for K-12 teachers and students.

4.1 Heuristics for Reading

Reading and thinking like a historian is sometimes described as being able to think critically, guided by discipline-specific processes (Afflerbach & VanSledright, 2001; Sandwell, 2005; Wineburg et al., 2012). Expert-reader studies suggest that disciplinary experts have a protocol of decisions that they make when reading (Wineburg, 1991, 1998). Wineburg (1991, 1998) identified three history-specific reading/thinking processes that he labeled heuristics: sourcing, corroboration, and contextualization. These heuristics guide the decisions that experts use to examine history.

4.1.1 Sourcing

Sourcing is the process of identifying where texts came from, who wrote them, and evaluating how reliable the authors are. This can be as simple as noting and making evaluations about texts based on if the story appears in *Time* magazine, a popular blog, or the opinion page of a newspaper. If the author is known, the reader may also evaluate the text based on the author's reputation or his position. Martin and Wineburg (2008) emphasized the importance of sourcing: "Sourcing is key to understanding how knowledge is made in many disciplines, but it is especially important in history" (p. 305).

4.1.2 Contextualizing

Contextualizing is the process of identifying other events that may have influenced the author of the text such as particular policies, institutions, and circumstances (Reisman & Wineburg, 2008). Wineburg (1998) emphasized, "The creation of context lies at the heart of historical expertise, forming the foundation upon which sound historical readings must rest" (p. 337). For example, some of Abraham Lincoln's words can be viewed as racist when it comes to issues of slavery. Wineburg explained, "Modern readers tend to view Lincoln's statements as contradictory and inconsistent, or worse—hypocritical and self-serving" (p. 330). However, experts who are able to contextualize his comments understand the mid-nineteenth century views on racism and the institution of slavery. Words that now appear racist were then a liberal position based in the context. Teaching activities that support contextual knowledge include providing background knowledge, asking guiding questions, and explicitly modeling contextualized thinking (Reisman & Wineburg, 2008).

4.1.3 Corroboration

Wineburg (1991) described corroboration as "check[ing] important details against each other before accepting them as plausible or likely" (p. 77). In other words, using one document to check and verify the accounts offered in other documents helps historians judge authority and reliability. Additionally, corroboration requires intertextual reading which further complicates the reading process (Hynd-Shanahan et al., 2004; Wineburg, 1991). When corroborating evidence, the reader might notice discrepancies between accounts or a lack of details in accounts, and judge the plausibility of accounts based on the presented information (Wineburg, 1991).

4.2 Habits of Mind

Effective use of sourcing, contextualizing, and corroboration are only part of historical thinking. The College Board's (2011) recent publication titled *Historical Thinking Skills* noted, "The redefined historical thinking skills and their components provide an essential framework for developing historical habits of mind" (p. 3). The authors listed the following historical thinking skills:

1. Crafting Historical Arguments from Historical Evidence: "Historical thinking involves the ability to define and frame a question about the past and to address that question by constructing an argument" (College Board, 2011, p. 1).
2. Chronological Reasoning: This skill is comprised of three components: evaluating historical causation, patterns of continuity and change over time, and periodization.

3. Comparison and Contextualization: This skill requires being able to compare and contextualize "developments across or between different societies, and in various chronological and geographical contexts" (College Board, 2011, p. 2).
4. Historical Interpretation and Synthesis: The final skill emphasizes the ability to create diverse interpretations in contrast to a single answer.

These historical habits of mind emphasize the specific nature of reading, writing, and thinking within a particular discipline. The focus of the habits of mind is to move students away from passivity and towards critical thinking by showing them what questions to ask (Martin & Wineburg, 2008; Paxton, 1999; Wineburg et al., 2012). What neither the heuristics nor the habits of mind indicate is the developmental nature of such thinking.

5 Development of Reading

Not everyone approaches historical text with the same level of expertise. The novice-expert continuum is a well-used paradigm when examining reading from a developmental perspective (See Shanahan et al., 2011, for a more detailed review of the novice-expert paradigm specific for literacy). Accompanying the focus of disciplinary literacy is research that suggests expertness is a function of the discipline; that is, expert readers of history differ from expert readers in mathematics or poetry (Massey & Riley, 2013; Shanahan et al., 2011).

5.1 Expert Readers

To better understand what occurs in an expert reading of history text, researchers have studied historians' reading of historical text (Rouet et al., 1997; Wineburg, 1991, 1994, 1998). Historians read across sources as they practice sourcing, contextualizing, and corroborating. They ask questions and make interpretations, but then continue to question their interpretations. They monitor their own confusion and doubt their own decisions (Wineburg, 1991, 1994, 1998). Wineburg (1998) noted that a historian with expertise in U.S. history, specifically with Abraham Lincoln, and a second historian with expertise in a separate historical era, differed in their reading of documents pertaining to Abraham Lincoln's stance on slavery. When asked to step outside of his specialization, the historian not specializing in U.S. history relied more on general problem solving strategies. Because of expertise in the discipline of history, the historian was able to "think like a historian" and to leverage his knowledge in such a way as to "develop new knowledge even when lacking many of the requisite tools to do so" (Wineburg, 1998, p. 336). Although this historian distrusted his own sense-making abilities, Wineburg wrote:

His distrust in his own sense-making abilities may be thought of as a domain-specific form of metacognition, an imperative to read history differently from how we read ordinary

expository or narrative text ... It was what he didn't know that came to the fore: his way
of asking questions, of reserving judgment, of monitoring affective responses and revisiting
earlier assessments, his ability to stick with confusion long enough to let an interpretation
emerge. It was how he responded in the face of what he didn't know that allowed him, in
short, to learn something new. (pp. 338, 340)

Many things influence expertise. Rouet et al. (1997) noted that although graduate
students in psychology demonstrated complex reading strategies because they
were used to reading within their discipline, they still read historical documents
differently than graduate students in history. In this study as well as others
(Wineburg, 1991, 1998), general reading strategies that are common across disci-
plines (e.g., rereading, summarizing, asking questions) are demonstrated, although
more nuanced strategies associated with background in the discipline as well as
prior knowledge of specific topics contributed to differences in what was labeled
expert reading.

5.2   *Novice and Developing Readers*

The level of expertise required to think like a historian and leverage knowledge from
one context into another requires a high degree of sophistication and metacognition.
A historian less knowledgeable in a particular domain was able to leverage his
knowledge to create understanding in a different domain. However, K-12 students
do not possess this same level of expertise, experience with text, or contextual
knowledge. Instead, they are novice and developing readers.

Novice readers in general, and novice readers of history specifically, are unaware
of many of the features of the text and the discipline. VanSledright (2004b) specified
that even though they are novices in the sense that they lack awareness, they are
already partially educated because "when they enter school, they already possess a
variety of collective memories regarding their own personal history and that of their
country" (p. 344). Instead:

The novices are novices because they are yet unaware of the unique applications of the
heuristics that characterize expertise ... Many of them are reasonably good readers ...
However, they know little about the structure of the domain, lack strategies for reading
intertextually, and have little experience reading subtexts .... . Perhaps most notably, their
epistemology of text is often diametrically opposed to that of the experts. In other words,
they believe that the meaning is in the text, it is unmediated by the author, and that it is their
job to extract it correctly (VanSledright, 2004b, p. 344).

Not only are adolescent novices and developing readers unaware of discipline-
specific strategies, they are also impacted by tremendous physiological and biolog-
ical changes. Alexander and Fox (2011) described these changes:

Inundated with discussions of high-stakes assessment, reading standards, or curricular
innovations, reading researchers and practitioners can sometimes forget that adolescents
face dramatic biological and physiological changes in their transition to adulthood. Those

changes can relate directly to what adolescents choose to read, why they read, and how they read, as well as how they apply what is learned through their encounters with text. (p. 170)

The novice-expert paradigm offers a method for addressing such changes and inexperience. Unlike the physiological changes that will happen because of genetics, knowledge of reading history must be a focus of explicit instruction in order to develop.

5.3   Reading Development in History

A variety of research specific to history supports this developmental perspective (Dutt-Doner et al., 2007; Lee & Ashby, 2000; VanSledright, 2004b). Specifically, researchers mention two related processes that seem to develop over time with explicit instruction: the ability to read across sources and the ability to reconcile conflicting information (Dutt-Doner et al., 2007; Lee & Ashby, 2000; Martin & Wineburg, 2008). When presented with conflicting information, novice readers tend to disregard the new information that conflicts with what they already think. Martin and Wineburg referred to this approach as "solving the problem" of conflicting sources (p. 315), which is usually accomplished by ignoring some of the information. When conflicting information is ignored, novice readers typically make quick interpretations that they do not question (VanSledright, 2004b; Wineburg, 1991, 1994). Lee and Ashby (2000) found that not until sixth grade were students able to attribute differences in historical accounts to problems with sources (e.g., transmission, errors, or biases) or interpretations. Dutt-Doner et al. (2007) compared fifth graders and seventh graders as they read and analyzed primary source documents. They found that the seventh grade students were significantly stronger than fifth grade students in background knowledge, background use, and image analysis skills, resulting in an increased total document composite score for the seventh graders compared to the fifth graders. Fifth graders had little understanding of the analytic process and were much more likely to experience frustration when reading the primary source documents. Dutt-Doner and colleagues concluded that although both fifth and seventh graders struggled to understand conflicting information, "The middle school years may be the platform for this developmental shift in ability or a time of coming of age for independent historical reasoning with primary source documents" (p. 4). Additionally, they posited, "Fifth and seventh graders were different in many areas, and there may be a developmental trajectory of historical thinking. The middle school years, uniquely, may be a critical period for the development of independent, historical thought" (p. 14).

Shanahan and Shanahan (2008) proposed a developmental model of literacy progression, starting with *basic literacy skills*, followed by *intermediate literacy skills*, and eventually developing to more sophisticated *disciplinary literacy skills*. Basic literacy skills include decoding and knowledge of high frequency words. Intermediate literacy skills consist of things like generic comprehension skills

and general vocabulary knowledge. Disciplinary literacy skills are made up of specialized skills that may vary among specific disciplines. Important to this model is the well-researched notion that literacy progression is developmental. That is, one must progress from recognizing sight words and decoding text and applying general comprehension strategies before becoming adept with more sophisticated disciplinary literacy skills.

It is important to recognize that even though the emphasis of reading in history may involve specific strategies, what Wineburg referred to as heuristics, there is still benefit to teaching general strategies—what Shanahan and Shanahan (2008) referred to as intermediate literacy skills. These generic strategies should not be just the responsibility of language arts teachers or elementary teachers. Instead, Heller and Greenleaf (2007) emphasized:

> Research suggest that the teaching of generic reading comprehension strategies does have merit, and that students can learn a number of routines that can help them comprehend many different kinds of written documents ... Moreover, numerous studies over the past few decades have demonstrated that it is most effective to teach comprehension strategies, text structures, and word-level strategies while students are engaged in reading challenging, content-rich texts. Such skills don't stick when practiced for their own sakes (p. 8).

Heller and Greenleaf (2007) suggested that these general strategies should include broad categories of pre-reading activities (e.g., reviewing vocabulary, making predictions, and identifying text features), during reading strategies (e.g., drawing visual representation, identifying arguments, asking questions), and post reading strategies (e.g., summarizing, comparison). However, they cautioned that exclusive emphasis on generic skills may lead students to conclude that all texts are basically the same. This is why practice of the intermediate skills is so important within particular disciplinary texts.

6 Instruction in History: Developing Expertise

Bain (2008/2009) expressed the question that we must answer:

> How can we help students move from surface or scholastic understanding to "deep" understanding? How do students learn to contextualize, corroborate, hear voice in text, and assess significance? To put it bluntly, does any of this research, theory, or scholarship really matter when a teacher teaches history? (p. 160)

We have a great deal of research about what experts do as they read history (Shanahan et al., 2011; Wineburg, 1991, 1998). We also have research about what grade school through high school novices do as they read (Afflerbach & VanSledright, 2001; Dutt-Doner et al., 2007; Lee & Ashby, 2000; VanSledright, 1995; VanSledright & Kelly, 1998; Wineburg, 1992). However, the work that exists could hardly be considered robust. Bruce VanSledright (2004a), one of the major contributors to what we know about novices reading history, was not responding directly to Bain's question but addressed the same issue when he wrote:

> To put it simply, we do not know exactly what it takes or what it looks like precisely to obtain shifts in epistemologies of text, shifts of the sort that appear crucial to development of historical thinking and understanding. At this point, as near as I can tell, we have a set of theories or ideas about producing such changes. But we need more research work, work done across disciplines (p. 345).

With that context in mind, the research that we do have offers foundational principles for effective instruction.

6.1 Knowing the Students

Knowing the students' capabilities, background knowledge, and literacy skills is a key component of effective practice (e.g., Afflerbach & Cho, 2009; Cunningham & Allington, 2007; Leslie & Caldwell, 2009). Knowing the students involves gathering data through informal and formal assessments; inventories; and observations about students' abilities, interests, and interactions. It includes knowing students' preconceptions of history as well as their reading abilities.

Reading research has shown that knowing students also should include understanding students' out-of-school literacies and discourses because out-of-school practices influence in-school reading and communicating. Some students' out-of-school literacy practices may position them to learn disciplinary literacy skills based on the home discourse or family background and experience more easily than others (Lemke, 1990; Lesh, 2011). Moje (2008) wrote that we need responsive literacy pedagogy in which teachers examine the texts and literacy practices of students beyond school "and then connect those texts and practices to the texts and literacy practices of the disciplines" (p. 60), elevating what students know and know how to do above the content to be covered.

Knowing the students allows the teacher to decide what is developmentally appropriate for the students. This also includes understanding students' current level of performance in the developmental progression of basic literacy skills, intermediate literacy skills, and discipline-specific skills (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008). If students lack basic and intermediate literacy skills, starting points of instruction will be different than starting points for students who lack only discipline-specific literacy skills. VanSledright (2004a) described the process:

> The historians can serve as a benchmark in relationship to which we can understand what the less sophistical historical thinkers do. However, we must not unfairly hold novices to the standard set by the experts. The academic developmental distance between novices and experts is a gap that history teachers—through history education—can strive to close." (p. 230)

This developmental perspective focuses on starting instruction where the students are and moving them towards expertise without holding them to impossible standards.

6.2   Setting Clear Goals

Perhaps the most important goal is to understand that the overarching purpose of reading in the discipline of history at the K-12 level is not to develop historians; rather, the purpose is to develop critical thinkers (Afflerbach & VanSledright, 2001; Sandwell, 2005; VanSledright, 2002a, 2004a, 2004b; Wineburg, 1998). Afflerbach and VanSledright summarized, "Getting good at reading history may significantly contribute to students' general ability to read critically" (p. 697). This should help students sort through contradictory information to reach logical conclusions (Wineburg, 1998). VanSledright (2004b) reflected on his return to the K-12 classroom to teach after several years at the university. He wrote,

> Here I want to point out that my interest in teaching forms of expert reading in history has very little to do with raising the next generation of historians. On the contrary, I would maintain that reading expertise required in history needs to be prized for its critical literacy components (e.g., reading for subtext, corroborating accounts before drawing conclusions, developing a healthy skepticism about what texts claim), those that, in an information-dominated culture, become more necessary every day (p. 345).

Although developing historians who are expert readers may not be practical as a goal for the K-12 spectrum, VanSledright (2004b) argues that proficiency in reading as an attainable goal.

Common to most discussions about relevant and attainable goals for middle school and high school students are identifying arguments, evaluating source authority, understanding historical context and its bearing on the text, and identifying multiple interpretations. By specifying these objectives and teaching students to ask what historians would do, initial research suggests that students' read with increased metacognition (Hynd-Shanahan et al., 2004). Without the teacher setting and communicating clear goals, students do not typically understand that the task of reading history is "that of deciding what to believe" (Shanahan, 2009, p. 252).

These goals must be clearly separated from test-preparation goals. Barton and Levstik (2003) emphasized:

> In order for teachers to present history as an investigative, interpretive undertaking, they must have a purpose that cannot be served by focusing on coverage and control; their goal must be one that can be met only by having students work with primary sources, consider multiple perspectives, and so on (p. 359).

Further, these goals must be contextualized as discipline-specific, meaning that the goals and the reading required to satisfy the goals are both similar and different from other disciplines. For example, students need to understand how the purposes for reading in history vary from the purposes for reading in math and science. The desired outcome for reading in history is to ask questions of the text and arrive at multiple interpretations (The College Board, 2011; Lesh, 2011). In contrast, the purpose of reading in math and science texts is

frequently to find a single solution to questions already posed by the text (Lesh, 2011). However, there are still shared literacy components of reading in different disciplines. One of the cautions of discipline-specific literacy is the false division that can be created between subject areas as well as between intermediate and discipline-specific reading (Massey & Riley, 2013). Although expert readers across the social sciences, physical sciences, and mathematics do use unique strategies, they also use similar general reading strategies such as monitoring comprehension, rereading, and asking questions (Massey & Riley, 2013; Shanahan et al., 2011). At times, they apply these general strategies in ways that are unique to the discipline (Massey & Riley, 2013; Wineburg, 1991). For example, a historian asks questions—a general strategy that many other experts use—but then asks particular questions at particular points such as questions about the authority of the author and the context of writing. Instruction that allows students to compare and contrast the processes of reading in each discipline can help students develop metacognition about reading in general and disciplines specifically.

6.3 Modeling Explicit Thinking

In order to help students accomplish instructional goals, students must be given a clear model of how to meet those goals (Bain, 2008/2009; Buehl, 2011; Lesh, 2011; Martin & Wineburg, 2008).

Lesh (2011) observed,

> History and social studies are the only disciplines in which students are not explicitly taught the tools necessary to understand how knowledge is created … Instead of making the study of history's tools, vocabulary, and processes apparent to students, we present our discipline as one whose sole goal is to provide volumes of information (p. 11).

Think alouds are emphasized as one of the most important teaching activities in order to offer the explicit instruction needed to provide students with the tools of historical reading and thinking (Martin & Wineburg, 2008; Reisman & Wineburg, 2008). Think alouds make the experts' thinking audible and perhaps visible for students. Martin and Wineburg wrote:

> Our previous research led us to believe that simply presenting novice readers with powerful examples and expecting them to have some utility is the pedagogical equivalent of magical thinking. Just as the untutored eye looks at a Van Gogh and sees not a swirl of pulsating color and energy, but a simple tree, grass, and sun, so the novice watches Natalia and wonders "What's the big deal?" Novices not only need to "see thinking"—they also need to see it and then be guided in understanding what they saw (p. 310).

Thus, even when using think alouds, the teacher must be aware that students may be mimicking what the teacher is doing rather than truly understanding the process.

6.4 Teaching Word and Language Patterns

In every discipline, vocabulary is critical to understanding. Background knowledge is typically evidenced as vocabulary knowledge (Johnson, 1982). In other words, "The more words we have … the more background knowledge we have" (Marzano, 2004, p. 33). The words serve as labels for a person's schema, or categories of knowledge.

Multiple texts offer practical ideas for teaching vocabulary, even vocabulary specific to history (e.g., Heafner & Massey, 2012; Marzano & Pickering, 2005; Stahl & Nagy, 2006; Tompkins & Blanchfield, 2004). Although the various activities and games vary, several shared elements are repeated in almost all vocabulary instruction. First, teachers need to acknowledge that not all words can be taught directly. Identifying which words should be taught explicitly and which words can be taught through more general exposure calls for a great deal of instructional expertise. Second, vocabulary instruction should be generative; that is, an emphasis should be given to words and word parts that will help students understand more words than just the words that are being taught. For example, instruction in Greek and Latin roots will typically generate knowledge about other words. Third, students need multiple exposures to words before they will be able to achieve the deepest levels of understanding.

In the same way, patterns of language are also important for helping students understand text. Knowledge of authorial choices in language and the patterns used in kinds of texts help students both understand and evaluate textual arguments and authority. Schleppegrell and de Oliveira (2006) described four key processes that are most useful for teachers to learn and then to use with students:

> Teachers have found it useful to ask students to identify the grammatical processes, participants, and circumstances, to see the meanings in time markers and connectors, to unpack complex nominal groups, and to link cohesive devices (referrers and synonyms) to their referents (p. 263).

The focus on language is applicable to written or spoken language, an important tool as more and more audio and video clips are being used as primary sources. Fang and Schleppegrell (2010) emphasized that all language "can be analyzed for to what it says about the world (the experiential meaning), for the social relationship it enacts (the interpersonal meaning), and for the way it weaves meanings into a coherent message (the textual meaning)" (p. 592). Teaching students to use language analysis processes helps them recognize patterns and be able to break down dense text into meaningful ways.

6.5 Providing Time and Texts They Can Read

Numerous reports on adolescent literacy portray a grim picture of adolescents' reading. Biancarosa and Snow (2006) noted: "Comparing the most recent NAEP results for all three grade levels (i.e., 4, 8, and 12) to those from 1992, the percentage

of students scoring proficient has significantly improved among fourth graders, but not among eighth and twelfth graders" (pp. 7–8). International comparisons are equally disturbing. Comparisons with adolescents in other countries through such assessments as the Program in International Student Assessment (PISA) have consistently ranked students from the United States much lower than their counterparts from other countries for multiple comparison years (Darling-Hammond & McCloskey, 2008; OECD 2008, 2012). These comparisons led authors such as Alexander and Fox (2011) to label adolescents as "endangered readers and thus, endangered learners" (p. 157).

Research on reading in general contexts supports the idea that students' reading improves when they spend the bulk of their time reading texts that are at their independent and instructional levels (see Allington, 2006, for a summary of research). Thoughtful planning can result in a collection of sources that offer not only different perspectives, but that are also written at different reading levels. The inclusion of audio and video clips as well as documents (such as political cartoons, which are heavy on visual information and light on actual text) can help struggling readers participate with the content.

An additional option is to modify primary sources. Wineburg and Martin (2009) recommended this approach for struggling readers as a way to provide them with text they can read but that offers access to multiple voices. They offered three principles for simplifying texts:

- Focusing the text: making it shorter to highlight most important components.
- Simplification: standardizing spelling, using simpler language
- Presentation: modifying font and size of print, providing ample white space to make text more visually appealing and easier to read

At a time when more and more focus will be given to complex text, Wineburg and Martin (2009) offered a final caution: "To deprive students of [complicated primary sources], regardless of income or skill, limits their horizons. It diminishes their chances to become fluent readers and thinkers, and ultimately informed citizens— which may be the greatest loss of all" (p. 216).

Modifying texts is not without criticism. Schleppegrell et al. (2008) believed that texts should not be simplified for students because doing so circumvents students' ability to learn complex concepts. Ultimately, we will need more research to better understand the outcome of modified compared to unmodified history texts for students.

6.6   Expecting Pushback

Teachers who have successfully implemented the aforementioned principles face an additional barrier in the form of students' attitudes (Barton, 1997; Sandwell, 2005). For example, Sandwell presented high school students with primary sources and a mystery. Students were asked to read a series of documents and make their own

interpretation about a murder. Instead of demonstrating excitement over the task, students were frustrated and requested something they could answer simply and specifically.

Numerous authors have noted decreasing motivation to read beginning in middle school (e.g., Biancorsa & Snow, 2004; Guthrie, 2008; Wigfield, 2004). Although some might dismiss this as simply a hallmark of teenagers, decreasing motivation is a problem for all teachers. When Guthrie, Schafer, and Huang (2001) conducted a detailed analysis of motivation and PISA reading scores, they found that student engagement had the largest correlation with achievement in literacy and that reading interest predicted reading comprehension in every country. Reading engagement was more important than students' family background, consisting of parents' education and income. Further, students with high reading engagement, but lower parental education and income, had higher reading achievement than students with lower reading engagement and the same background characteristics.

Although there is no easy fix for students' resistance, researchers offer concrete suggestions for countering students' decreasing motivation. Guthrie (2008) summarized what students need in order to engage with and stay engaged with content and text:

- Students need to be able to make choices. They need to have some control as opposed to full teacher control. This includes choice in assignments and choice in texts.
- Students need to be able to show competence with texts.
- Students need to believe they have the ability to understand and learn from the texts that they encounter.
- Students need to be socially engaged with text and with others.

Applied to the reading of history text, these principles suggest that even the most carefully crafted collection of primary documents may not be motivating for students if they do not know what they are supposed to do—and thus are unable to show competence. Additionally, if they are given no choice in what documents or texts to read and are asked to complete the work alone and present rationales only for the teacher, they are likely to not engage in the task of reading. Sandwell (2005) observed, "The problem is not simply that the skills need to be taught, but that even when students have learned how to engage with the materials, they still demonstrate a marked reluctance to do so" (p. 13).

6.7   The Criticality of the Teacher

In the discussion of effective instruction, the criticality of the teacher cannot be overlooked. Teachers must possess deep understanding of both historical interpretation and historical inquiry before they can engage their students in historical thinking (Bain, 2008/2009; Hover, Hicks, & Irwin, 2007). They must understand basic, intermediate, and disciplinary literacy skills as well as understand how to assess

students' knowledge of reading and knowledge of content. Unfortunately, this level of understanding is not always evident. Although pre-service and novice teachers can often articulate many ideas crucial to effective instruction in history, they do not yet possess a deep understanding of how to implement such instruction (Hover et al., 2007; Monte-Sano & Cochran, 2009). Hover et al. studied seven beginning teachers who struggled to translate what they could describe into actual instruction:

> The findings indicated that, when asked to talk about history and historical thinking, the seven beginning teachers elucidated rich and interesting conceptions congruent with much of the literature. However, when asked to talk beyond simple definitions—when asked to discuss their objectives for their history class, to describe their conception of best history practice, or to describe their typical instructional approach—historical thinking did not enter teachers' conversations in explicit ways (p. 108).

One common response to a lack of confidence or understanding is to revert to using the textbook exclusively. Teachers may cling to the authority of the textbook or continue to use the textbook exclusively because of testing pressure, textbook adoptions patterns, or other reasons outside disciplinary knowledge (Barton & Levstik, 2003; Paxton, 1999; VanSledright, 2004a). Barton and Levstik noted that even when teachers know how to conduct historical investigations, they do not always choose to engage their students in the process because the primary goals of instruction—as supported by administration and state and federal testing—is frequently content coverage.

As important as teachers' own content knowledge is, their ability to help broker students' understanding of text is also essential (Afflerbach & VanSledright, 2001; Bain, 2008/2009; Dutt-Doner et al., 2007). Without drawing students' attention to the goals, the text, and the thinking required, students may express enjoyment of the text (Afflerbach & VanSledright, 2001) but miss both content and process (Dutt-Doner et al., 2007). Bain (2008/2009) described:

> Engaging students in some legitimate disciplinary activity without restructuring the social interaction or challenging students' presuppositions may yield only ritualistic understanding. The problem for practitioners is to design activities that engage students in historical cognition without yielding to the tempting assumption that disciplinary tasks mechanically develop students' higher functions (p. 160).

Thus, the role of the teacher must not be glossed over or downplayed. If we want to develop knowledgeable readers of history, then we must also emphasize developing expert practitioners, or what Wineburg and Wilson (1988) referred to as *wise practitioners*.

7   Ongoing Issues

Even though we have more research about reading in history than we do about reading in other disciplines, it should be noted that we still have much to consider and learn about reading in history and the broader social studies. Among the many issues researchers and practitioners continue to grapple with are teaching methods and assessment.

7.1 More than One Method

There is some dissonance about the ways to teach a discipline. Promoting disciplinary understanding through students' historical inquiry or document analysis is the approach most frequently used and promoted by historians and other educators (Barton & Levstik, 2003; VanSledright, 2011; Wineburg et al., 2012). However, Peter Seixas (2000) described three ways of teaching history.

- A story approach with the object being to tell the "best story" about how something occurred in order to form group identity and group cohesion.
- A disciplinary approach through the examination of documents and sources in order to determine which account offers the most accurate interpretation.
- A postmodern approach, which examines how different groups use rhetoric and narrative to serve present purposes.

  Gutek (2006) described the disciplinary approach as a search for truth.

  In the disciplinary-documentary approach, history, construed as disciplined knowledge, claims to be universal in that no one group has an exclusive claim to particular narratives or to the truth. Its truth claims rest on historical method and the historical method through (p. 414).

  In contrast, the postmodern approach seeks to understand not truth but a relationship between power and history. Postmodernists hold all historical accounts, primary documents or otherwise, as politicized artifacts. Thus, the postmodernist also seeks to focus on the motives used to create the documents.

  Again, it may be that we need to exercise the most caution in avoiding an either/or approach and instead focus on commonalities. The position of language and text in all three methods of teaching is of utmost importance. Additionally, being able to read critically is central to at least the disciplinary and postmodern approaches and, therefore, emphasizes the need to develop strong literacy skills.

7.2 What We Assess

The assessment of historical content is in flux and without clear ways of assessing the instruction given in ways that are understood by all of the stakeholders, history educators risk losing credibility at the state and national levels. Testing is certainly not a new issue, nor is testing in history specifically a challenging topic, considering what researchers have been saying for over 30 years. Howard and Mendenhall (1982) referenced the problem of "sacrific[ing] comprehension for coverage" (p. 52) in order to test knowledge, calling it a deadly sin. VanSledright (2002b) wrote, "The standard textbooks, combined with lectures delivered by teachers, are considered definitive. Tests measure the results. The obsession appears to be with the products of historical study, not with the practice of doing it" (p. 1091). Wineburg et al. (2012)

noted that such testing encourages memorization of isolated facts instead of helping students think more critically and form interpretations.

The Stanford History Education Group (n.d.) created a new assessment designed to assess not isolated facts, but the inquiry and thinking processes required to analyze documents. The History Assessments of Thinking (HATs) are formative assessments designed to help teachers assess what students can and cannot do through document analysis followed by short answer responses (Wineburg et al., 2012). The Stanford History Education Group wrote, "We need *formative* assessments in the history classroom—assessments that allow us to make daily changes in our instruction—not just end-of-course tests. What good are assessments if they don't help us become better teachers" (para. 4). Although this approach offers options for formative assessment for classroom teachers, whether such an option will be acceptable to state and federal stakeholders remains unclear.

8 Conclusion

The increased focus on disciplinary literacy allows us to focus on the specificity of language, texts, and tasks in each discipline. It also promotes a developmental approach where we must recognize that in order to be successful in a discipline, readers must have a foundation of basic and intermediate literacy skills that form a scaffold for more specific skills of disciplinary literacy (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008). Generic (or intermediate) strategies, such as summarization and question asking, seem to be useful in multiple subject areas. We must help students build on these commonalities that function across disciplines and create nuanced, discipline-specific reading habits for thinking critically. Although searching for a "best" approach may be tempting, we must be careful not to set up false dichotomies. Further, disciplinary literacy underscores the idea that reading should not be separate from thinking and that experts in every field are able think critically about their discipline.

With an increased focus on disciplinary literacy comes a deeper need for historians, teacher educators, reading researchers, and practitioners to collaborate on effective practices for translating theory into practice for teachers and their students. Research in reading and research in teaching history inform each other. One area in need of more research is how the teachers read the texts that they use. The research that we have compares students of varying ages when reading primary sources (Afflerbach & VanSledright, 2001; Shanahan et al., 2011; VanSledright, 1995, 2002a) as well as examining the reading done by historians (Wineburg, 1991, 1998). However, teachers stand as mediators between practice and theory. It is up to them to provide explicit models, navigate learning purposes, and motivate students. Unfortunately, we know very little about how teachers of history read the texts that they ask students to read. This directly relates to what they are able to model, and

in turn, to what students are able to learn about the processes of reading. In sum, we have much more to learn about disciplinary literacy, expert reading, and best practices for translating experts' actions and thinking into teachable practices.

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