

Chapter **2**

Models of Instruction: Varying Teaching to Support Learners During Inquiry

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Figure 1. *The Thanksgiving Turkey*



Note. Campbell, A. S. (ca. 1900) *The Thanksgiving turkey* / Alfcamp, Elizabeth, N.J. [Photograph]. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/90710727/>

For a moment imagine yourself teaching. Visualize some of the details of the setting. What are you doing? What are students doing? How is the classroom arranged? You may see yourself standing in the front of a classroom delivering a lecture. You might see yourself helping an individual student. Or maybe you visualize students working in groups with you moving around the room giving help. The reality is that all of these scenarios might be appropriate at different times to achieve different objectives in inquiry-centered classrooms—classrooms where students are given support and space to answer questions they ask or to engage with questions asked by others. The purpose of this chapter is to help you gain a broad vision of teaching, both what you, the teacher, might do and, more importantly, how the students might spend their time when engaged in inquiry. When you have finished studying this chapter you should be able to imagine yourself developing and conducting cooperative learning activities, arranging the experiences associated with taking informed action, monitoring a class discussion, supporting students in their independent research, and engaging in a variety of what some educational researchers have called *high-leverage practices* because of their effectiveness (Ball & Forzani, 2009). (For a list of high-leverage practices see <https://www.teachingworks.org/high-leverage-practices/>). You should picture students in more active roles in the class, talking about concepts with each other, making presentations to their peers, writing ideas that they have developed independently (rather than merely taking notes on your ideas), and immersed in the primary source evidence available through the Library of Congress and shared throughout the chapters of this book.

Specifically, in this chapter I discuss six *models of instruction*—overarching instructional approaches or ways of thinking about the instructional activities a teacher designs. These models of instruction should be viewed as metaphorical tools in a toolbox, each suitable for different teaching objectives and contexts. These models can provide variety to the class in a way that increases students’ engagement. Each calls for different classroom management structures and assessments, as the teacher and students adopt different roles in the learning process. You should be able to explain how all these models of instruction can be used to enhance student inquiry. I first describe *inquiry*, a model of instruction central to the NCSS’s C3 Framework (NCSS, 2013), during which students develop and investigate authentic social studies questions that are relevant to their civic lives. I then describe five other instructional models that can be used in concert to enhance inquiry. I consider *cooperative learning*, contending that students arranged in well-designed cooperative learning activities can support each other throughout the inquiry process. Next, I consider *direct instruction*, noting its role in efficiently preparing students for inquiry and in nurturing students’ skills. I then outline the *discussion* model of instruction, showing that effectively structured class discussions are an essential element of the inquiry cycle. Next, I review *experiential learning*, focusing on the learning that occurs as students take informed action. I conclude by explaining the *cognitive apprenticeship* model, an instructional approach that draws from

the other models and is especially effective for nurturing the disciplinary skills essential in inquiry. Admittedly, this is not a comprehensive list of all models of instruction, nor is there space in this chapter to explore many of the instructional activities that fit into each model of instruction. A basic understanding of these models presents you as a new teacher with an assortment of tools that you can continue to add to throughout your career.

In the first part of this chapter, I introduce each model, highlighting the advantages and some disadvantages of each. I provide practical ideas for activities that reflect each model associated with an inquiry lesson related to diverse views of the Thanksgiving holiday and focused on the following questions: “How has the Thanksgiving celebration changed through the years and how has it stayed the same?” “Why do different people and groups think differently about the Thanksgiving holiday?” and “How might we use this day to promote social justice?” Because there is so much more to learn about each model of instruction than I include in this chapter, I suggest additional readings in [Appendix A](#), chosen from a vast body of research because they are ground-breaking, comprehensive in their descriptions, current, associated with Library of Congress publications, directly related to social studies, or seem especially appropriate for you, a new teacher. In the last part of the chapter, I share resources and ideas for conducting an inquiry using historical documents related to the Thanksgiving holiday. In these examples I show how learning activities from the various models of instruction can be used together to enhance students’ inquiry.

Models of Instruction

Inquiry

The inquiry instructional model is driven by authentic questions or problems that have relevance for children. Students learn content, skills, and dispositions as they seek answers to questions and as they apply their learning to take informed action. Pioneered by Dewey (1938), *inquiry* is an attempt to make classroom experiences feel more like the authentic, curiosity-driven experiences that motivate learning outside of school. The most effective inquiries are (a) related to required social studies standards, (b) relevant to students’ lives, and (c) connected to opportunities for civic engagement (Swan et al., 2014). The National Council for Social Studies’ C3 Framework highlights the importance of inquiry (NCSS, 2013), a form of instruction used infrequently in social studies classrooms (Foster & Padgett, 1999; Saye, 2017) in spite of its potential rigor and effectiveness in promoting learning (Dewey, 1938; Swan et al., 2014).

The C3 Framework outlines four dimensions or stages of inquiry (NCSS, 2013). First, students develop questions and plan inquiries. Whether occurring in a history, geography, economics, or civics lessons, questions are structured in ways that meet disciplinary

standards and for which valued evidence is available to construct answers. Second, students apply disciplinary concepts and tools to seek answers to their questions. Students must understand conceptual frameworks and apply skills associated with the discipline in order to conduct investigations in rational ways. Third, students evaluate sources and use evidence as historians, geographers, economists, or political scientists would. To do so, students use the reading, thinking, and writing skills of the particular discipline at developmentally appropriate levels. Primary sources are central to any social studies investigation (Stripling, 2009). Fourth, students communicate their conclusions and take informed action. Inquiry-oriented learning often includes opportunities for students to produce an evidence-based argument. Teachers assume a supportive role in each step of this process (see, for example, [inquirED.org](https://www.inquirED.org); Swan 2014). In its purest form, inquiry flows naturally in a cyclical manner, with new learning spontaneously raising new questions, inspiring further inquiry, promoting additional action, and resulting in ongoing learning (Stripling, 2009).

One of the challenges of creating inquiry-focused social studies classrooms that are driven by students' questions is that teachers are generally expected to follow a standards-based curriculum that includes content that might be of only superficial interest to students, content for which students feel no curiosity because they see little relevance (Rosenzweig & Thelen, 1998; van Straaten et al., 2018). As teachers design inquiry lessons, they must seek topics that blend engaging content, students' interests, and real-world applications. Lessons during which students explore social studies concepts in the pursuit of social justice can hold particular relevance for young people (Martell & Stevens, 2020). Inquiry is culturally responsive when students pursue their own interests and integrate evidence from multiple perspectives, especially from those voices that are silenced in traditional instruction.

How does a teacher start to design an inquiry lesson? First, they must choose a topic that is tied to curricular standards, is relevant to students' lives, and provides opportunities for civic engagement. For example, the interaction between Indigenous Americans and European colonizers is a basic part of the curriculum in many educational settings. And the Thanksgiving celebration, as it is often remembered and taught, has its roots in this interaction. Today, young people from diverse backgrounds experience the Thanksgiving holiday differently. Since 1970, the [United American Indians of New England](#) have recognized the fourth Thursday of each November as a National Day of Mourning. American Indians on the West Coast of the United States gather on Alcatraz Island to celebrate Un-Thanksgiving Day, [commemorating the American Indian seizure of Alcatraz during a protest in 1969](#). Many Americans gather with their extended families to enjoy a large meal. Some attend religious services where they express gratitude to God through prayer and worship. As diverse as commemorations and traditions are today, they represent but a small sample of the many, varied ways that different groups and individuals within the United States have marked Thanksgiving through the years.

Yet, the teaching of Thanksgiving in elementary schools often fails to acknowledge the diverse meanings of this day, sometimes perpetuating racially insensitive stereotypical images and detailed stories of a legendary “first Thanksgiving” for which little historical evidence exists (Sabzalian, 2019). By considering how Thanksgiving celebrations have changed or stayed the same and how different groups celebrate Thanksgiving, students are in a position to challenge the traditional narrative in a way that recognizes the plurality of cultures in the United States. An inquiry on evolving Thanksgiving traditions in diverse settings provides students with rich content that is related to their lives and includes opportunities to take informed action. Such an inquiry might start with questions such as “How has the Thanksgiving celebration changed through the years, and how has it stayed the same?” “Why do different people and groups think differently about the Thanksgiving holiday?” and “How might we use this day to promote social justice?” Most examples given in this chapter focus on these questions. Resources for conducting this inquiry are included as examples throughout this chapter, and lesson objectives, procedures, and additional resources are provided at the end of the chapter.

The other chapters of this book provide numerous other examples of inquiry lessons, designed to meet curricular standards, relate to students’ lives, and provide opportunities for young people to take informed action. Once you enter your classroom, my hope is that you will not only teach these inquiry lessons but also use them as models to design inquiry lessons that are suited to the students you teach.

Designing an inquiry requires a great deal more than coming up with an engaging topic. Saye (2017) contends that “ungoverned explorations are likely to result in the construction of shallow, naïve understandings” (p. 336). So how can teachers “govern” students’ inquiries while still allowing students to explore? How can teachers deepen students’ understandings and sharpen their skills as they investigate authentic questions? And how can teachers support students as they ask authentic questions, seek evidence, evaluate sources, and share their interpretations? One of the keys to maximizing students’ learning during inquiry is to effectively employ a range of instructional activities drawn from various models of instruction. The next section of this chapter explains and provides examples of how a teacher might draw from the following five models of instruction to support students during inquiry: cooperative learning, direct instruction, discussion, experiential learning, and cognitive apprenticeships. In addition, [Appendix A](#) provides a list of articles, book chapters, and websites that give more ideas for using these models of instruction to enhance inquiry.

Cooperative Learning

When engaged in inquiry, a students’ analysis of evidence can often be enhanced when they work with their peers in *cooperative learning*. In cooperative learning, students learn by interacting face-to-face in small groups during structured activities that require positive

interdependence. Pioneers of cooperative learning designed activities during which the success of each student was correlated positively with the success of their peers (Slavin, 1978). Applying the concept of scaffolding (Vygotsky, 1986), students in small groups support one another's learning during tasks that could not be accomplished alone. Teachers generally organize students in small groups of between two and four to increase students' participation. Cooperative learning is based upon the idea that peers can motivate and support learning in ways that a teacher might not be able to do. For example, students might explain complex concepts to each other in simple, comprehensible ways. And a small audience of peers might serve as a safer place to formulate and express an opinion than speaking to a teacher or an entire class, especially for students who are speaking in a second language. Of course, when students are learning from each other there is a risk that misconceptions will be perpetuated, so teachers must monitor and assess students' understandings.

Cooperative learning is always cooperative rather than competitive, with groups of students striving toward a common goal. Each student's success is correlated with the success of other students in their group, and each is accountable for group outcomes. Teachers sometimes have students complete peer reviews to report how much each group member contributed to a collaborative project. Furthermore, projects that are completed online often show which students made which contributions. Sometimes each student within a group has a specific role assigned to them, such as the spokesperson, the scribe, or the group leader. The academic and social benefits of cooperative learning, such as greater academic motivation and improved student relationships, have been known for a long time (Slavin, 1980) and continue to be well-documented across subject areas and age groups (Gillies, 2016).

Cooperative learning is enhanced when teachers have clear expectations for students' interactions and when students understand their roles. For instance, a teacher might project the roles of group members on a screen for them to refer to as they work. Teachers can have standing partners and teams based on seating arrangements so that students immediately know who they will work with if formed into groups of two or four. Teachers enhance learning when they are intentional about the size and make-up of groups. Teachers can consider students' background knowledge, talents, and personalities as they plan groups and arrange seating in a class. As necessary, the teacher might teach social skills for working in groups, such as how to introduce yourself to someone you have not met before.

Cooperative learning is appropriate for students of all ages and can be differentiated for young people with unique needs. For example, a teacher might partner students with different talents (i.e., public speaking, drawing) and encourage them to assume different roles. Students who have demonstrated disciplinary reading skills might be grouped with students who are still learning those reading strategies. Students with richer background knowledge might be teamed with students who are less familiar with the topic. Researchers have found that students remain more open-minded when they work with peers who have

different perspectives (Goldberg, 2013). The purposeful selection of cooperative learning groups can enhance learning. And, indeed, cooperative learning has been found to be effective for students with different learning abilities (Majoka et al, 2011).

Cooperative learning activities can be relatively simple or quite complex. One of the simplest is the *think-pair-share*. In this activity, students are given a question or prompt, *think* (or write) about the prompt briefly, then *pair* up with one other student to compare their ideas. Pairing can be done purposefully or randomly. For example, two students who prefer to speak Spanish might be paired so that they can discuss the prompt in Spanish. After fleshing out their ideas with their partner, students participate in a class discussion, with selected students *sharing* what they talked about with their partner. The think-pair-share activity, which takes only a few minutes to conduct and requires no special preparation on the part of the teacher is an effective way to prepare students for a class discussion (Wilén, 2004a) or to help them think more deeply about material they have viewed in an image, watched in a video clip, or heard in a lecture (Stacy, 2009).

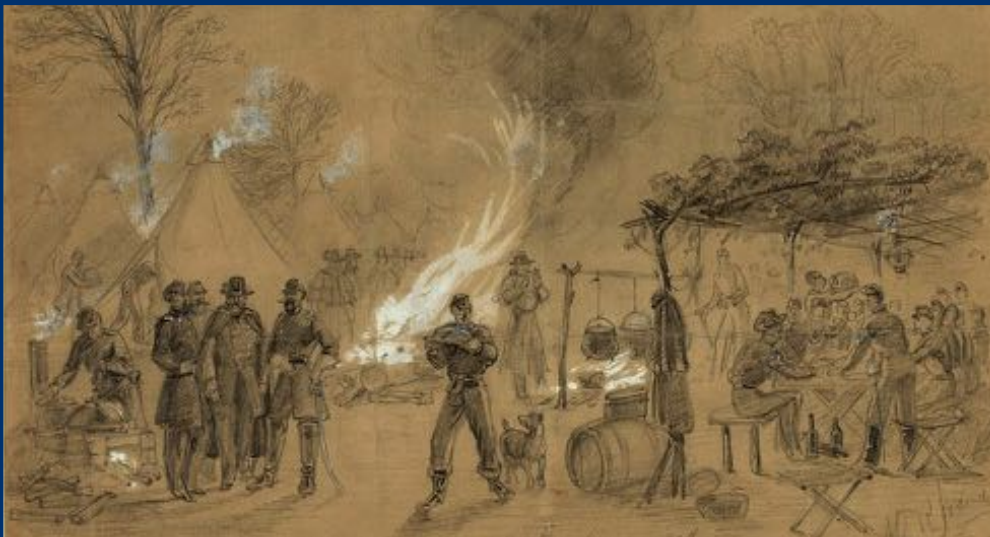
For example, a teacher might introduce the inquiry on Thanksgiving by projecting three images: The 1900 photograph *The Thanksgiving Turkey* (Figure 1), Keppler's 1912 political cartoon *Thanksgiving: A Study in Proportion* (Figure 2), and Alfred Waud's 1861 sketch *Thanksgiving in Camp Sketched November 28th 1861* (Figure 3). Using a See, Think, Wonder graphic organizer (Figure 4), students might choose one of the images and work independently to record what they observe in the "see" column, what they infer in the "think" column, and what questions the image inspires in the "wonder" column (Richards & Anderson, 2003). After students have had a few minutes to work on their own, the teacher asks them to turn to a partner who analyzed a different image and compare what they both have written, trying to identify similarities and differences. When students have had a few minutes to talk, the teacher calls on a few random students to share some of the similarities and differences between the images. During the discussion the teacher might help students notice the years that the different images were created and introduce the first question for their inquiry: "How has the Thanksgiving celebration changed through the years, and how has it stayed the same?" Such a think-pair-share might serve as a springboard into a discussion of how the Thanksgiving celebration has changed or stayed the same through the years, how different groups have celebrated and remembered the day, and how historical evidence might be used to explore what Thanksgiving means to different groups historically and today.

Figure 2. *Thanksgiving: A Study in Proportion*



Note. Keppler, J. (1912, Nov. 20). *Thanksgiving: A Study in Proportion* [Print]. In *Puck Magazine*. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/ppmsca.27895/>

Figure 3. *Thanksgiving in Camp Sketched Thursday November 28th 1861*



Note. Waud, A. R. (1861, Nov. 28). *Thanksgiving in Camp Sketched Thursday November 28th 1861* [Drawing]. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/resource/ppmsca.21210/>

Figure 4. See, Think, Wonder Graphic Organizer

What do you SEE in the image? (observe)	What do you THINK the image shows? (infer)	What do you WONDER? (question)

Note. From Richards & Anderson, 2003.

A more complex format of cooperative learning is the *jigsaw*. In one version of this activity, students work with a small group of peers in *expert groups* to gain expertise on a topic (often by reading together and discussing the same text passage). Each expert group studies a different topic, resulting in students in the class having different expertise. Students subsequently move into *home groups* comprised of four students who were in different expert groups. Each one, possessing different expertise, shares with the others what they learned in their expert group. Students are accountable for learning the material from all the expert groups, counting on their peers to each do their part (Mattingly & VanSickle, 1991).

During an inquiry on diverse Thanksgiving commemorations and traditions, the teacher might have students engage in a jigsaw activity. The teacher forms eight expert groups with about three or four students in each group. Each expert group analyzes one visual representation of Thanksgiving that the teacher chooses from [the many primary sources available at The Library of Congress](#). (The images shown in Figures 1, 2, 3, and 5 might be analyzed by expert groups if this jigsaw activity is used in place of the think-pair-share activity described above.) Teachers might support students' expert group analysis by giving each student in the group a copy of the same image, which has been covered with a clear plastic protective sheet. Students could annotate their image using an erasable marker, circling important things that they observe and writing near each circle the inferences that they make based upon that observation. After taking five to ten minutes in expert groups to collaboratively analyze and annotate the image, students move into home groups consisting of four students who analyzed different images. Each one takes a turn displaying their image and describing what their expert group discovered about it. Through such a jigsaw activity, students can gather evidence from primary sources in a more engaging manner and pace than if they had analyzed each primary source on their own.

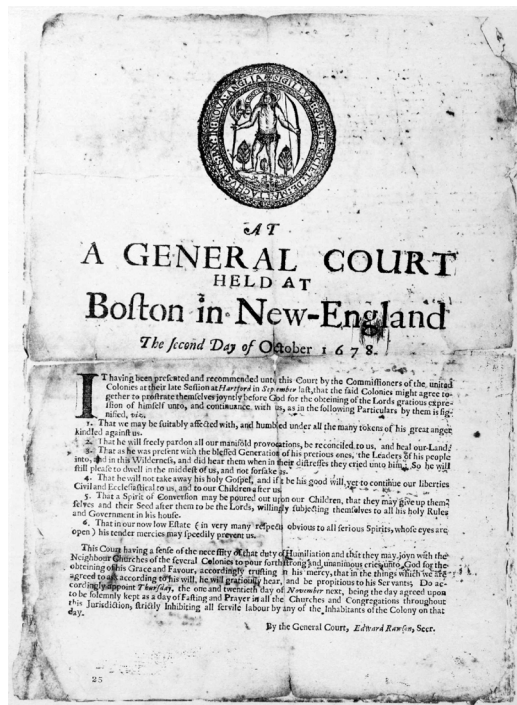
Figure 5. Dr. Mordica Johnson, president of Howard University, serving portions of Thanksgiving turkey to members of his family.



Note. Parks, G. (1942). Washington, D.C. Dr. Mordica i.e. Mordecai Johnson, president of Howard University, serving portions of Thanksgiving turkey to members of his family [Photograph]. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2017840870/>

Cooperative learning structures can be tailored to meet the conditions of inquiry-driven social studies work in other ways. For instance, if a small group of students read the Proclamation of Thanksgiving made by the General Court of Massachusetts shown in Figure 6 (and transcribed and translated into simpler language in Figure 7), one student might serve as the reader, another as the evidence collector, another as the source researcher, and another as the document evaluator. After looking at the source, the *source researcher* conducts an internet search on a classroom computer to see what they can find out about the General Court or Edward Rawson. The *reader* reads out loud, as the *evidence collector* notes in writing each piece of evidence about how residents of Boston viewed Thanksgiving in 1678. The *document evaluator* interrupts the reader occasionally to point out phrases where the author’s bias is evident, when something matches what they have read in a different document, when the text reveals racist ideas, or to otherwise critique the text. Of importance, students help each other in their roles. For instance, the reader makes sure that the evidence recorder does not miss a crucial piece of evidence and helps the document evaluator think critically about the passage. Teachers rotate roles throughout the year to make sure students have a chance to assume each responsibility. Appendix A provides additional articles and resources you can study to learn more about cooperative learning.

Figure 6. A Proclamation for a day of fasting and prayer, November 21, 1678



Note. Massachusetts General Court. (1678). *At a General Court held at Boston in New England the second day of October 1678* [Broadside]. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/rbpe.03301000/>.

Figure 7. Transcription of Figure 6

A GENERAL COURT

HELD AT

Boston in New England

The second day of October 1678

It was suggested to this court by leaders of the united colonies at their last meeting at Hartford last September, that the colonies might agree to kneel down together before God to gain the Lord's kindness and to have him stay with us. The following ideas were decided by them.

1. We want to show that we have changed and are sorry because God has shown us that he is angry with us
2. We want God to forgive all of our many sins, be with us again, and heal our land.
3. We want God to be with us and not leave us, just like he was with the blessed generation of his precious ones [the Pilgrims] who led his people into this wilderness and heard them when they prayed to him when they were in trouble.
4. We do not want God to take away his holy gospel and, if he is willing, to keep our civil and religious liberties for us and for our children after us.
5. We want our children to believe in God, and give themselves and their children to the Lord, willingly obeying all his holy commandments in his church.
6. We hope that in our weakness (which every righteous person can see) God's tender mercies may quickly come.

This court senses our need and duty to humble ourselves and join with other churches in the other colonies to pray with strength and unity to God to gain his grace and favor. We trust in his mercy and believe that if we do the things which we have agreed to do and God wants us to do, God will gently hear and be kind to those who serve him. We appoint Thursday, November 21, the day that we agreed upon, to be firmly kept as a day of fasting and prayer in all the churches of Massachusetts. No one will be allowed to work on that day.

By the General Court, Edward Rawson secretary

Source information: Massachusetts General Court. (1678). *At a General Court held at Boston in New England the second day of October 1678* [Broadside]. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/rbpe.03301000/>.

Note. A decree issued by the General Court of Massachusetts (Figure 6), transcribed and translated into language that many upper elementary students could comprehend.

Direct Instruction

Direct instruction occurs when a teacher provides information “directly” to students. Teachers might lecture to define unfamiliar concepts, share narratives of events, provide explanations of unfamiliar government policies, describe foreign cultures, or otherwise foster deeper content knowledge. The teacher might also talk explicitly about skills or strategies that experts use within a field, nurturing disciplinary practices. A lecture can be an efficient way to build background knowledge or to teach students how to use strategies, but without opportunities to actively apply concepts and strategies, lectures yield little long-term learning (Bransford et al., 2000). This is particularly true for students learning in a non-native language (Mulligan & Kirkpatrick, 2010). In spite of its ineffectiveness in isolation, direct instruction serves an important instructional purpose, and when used in connection with other models of instruction, can enhance learning. Unfortunately, direct instruction is overused in many lessons (Nokes, 2010) in spite of what researchers have learned about its ineffectiveness (Bransford et al., 2000).

With all of the disadvantages of direct instruction, it might surprise you to learn that some direct instruction can enhance students’ inquiry. Giving verbal explanations with examples and representations has been identified as a [high leverage practice](#). Reisman (2015) found that students’ development of historical reading skills, learning of historical content, and general reading comprehension improved when inquiry lessons began with short lectures that introduced students to background information needed to make sense of the primary sources with which they would subsequently work. A number of characteristics can improve such lectures. Short, purposeful lectures are more effective than long lectures that lack clear objectives. Lecturers who admit uncertainty and acknowledge conflicting perspectives prepare students for inquiry by introducing the interpretive role students will assume. Lecturers who defend a thesis using evidence engage students in deeper thinking, promote richer engagement (Stacy, 2009), and model for students the products of inquiry. Lectures that are structured conceptually and according to disciplinary norms, focusing on historical concepts such as causation, change, or continuity, are more effective than lectures that merely present information as a string of facts. And students gain more from lectures when they have specific purposes for listening, such as gathering information that will help them in subsequent inquiry. Quality, brief, discipline-based content lectures serve a vital role in inquiry-driven social studies classrooms by giving students the conceptual framework and the factual knowledge needed to ask appropriate questions, comprehend evidence, and construct understandings. Sadly, direct instruction replaces inquiry and other instructional models during too many social studies lessons (Lee & Weiss, 2007).

It should be noted that during direct instruction the teacher controls most of the content of the conversation. For purposes of efficiency, the flow of information is primarily from the teacher to the students. And some researchers have been highly critical of lecture

and the attempt to impose one's understanding on another (Friere, 2018). Indeed, if done incorrectly, a lecture might give students the impression that all the questions have been answered, all the answers are in the teacher's possession, and that a student's role in learning is merely to remember what the teacher says rather than to question, investigate, construct interpretations, and defend them with evidence. However, if conducted appropriately, direct instruction empowers young people by sharing with them a conceptual framework, background knowledge, and skills that will enhance their practices and maximize their learning during inquiry.

For example, most students are familiar with the holiday of Thanksgiving, including the traditional narrative that dominates America's collective memory in spite of the racist stereotypes and misinformation it perpetuates. However, some students in a class—a recent immigrant, for instance—might have no background knowledge of the holiday. A brief lecture might be useful to help all students in the class approach the inquiry being informed with a foundational awareness. The teacher might present a three-minute lecture on the traditional Thanksgiving story, raising questions about its historical accuracy and concerns about its racist content. The teacher might then present a three-minute lecture on the National Day of Mourning commemorated by Indigenous peoples in New England. Finally, the teacher might remind students of the inquiry questions, "How has the Thanksgiving celebration changed through the years, and how has it stayed the same?" "Why do different people and groups think differently about the Thanksgiving holiday?" and "How might we use this day to promote social justice?" During such instruction, the lecture does not replace inquiry but instead leads logically to the questions that drive inquiry.

In addition to brief lectures on historical content, many researchers have found that providing direct instruction on historical reading strategies, coupled with teacher modeling of these strategies, enhances students' ability to work with evidence and produce argumentative historical writing (Monte-Sane, 2014; Nokes et al., 2007; Reisman, 2012; De La Paz et al., 2012). Effective strategy instruction has several important elements. First, teachers talk openly about the strategy, giving the strategy a name, explaining *how* an individual engages in the strategy, *when* the strategy is effective, *why* the strategy works, and *how it can be applied* both during a lesson and in unique settings outside of school. Second, teachers model for students how to use the strategy. Generally, teachers *think aloud* as they act the part of a disciplinary expert encountering unfamiliar evidence, a role that students will assume when engaged in inquiry. As with content lectures, direct instruction on strategies should be brief and purposeful. Teachers understand that the deep learning that takes place during inquiry happens when students engage with the evidence themselves rather than while listening to the teacher. Still, strategy instruction is an efficient way to prepare students with the skills needed to work wisely with evidence during inquiry.

At an appropriate time during the Thanksgiving inquiry, the teacher might choose to provide explicit strategy instruction to help students use *contextualization*, the historical

thinking skill of considering the context of a document's creation, to better understand it as evidence. The teacher might model contextualization using [a letter that the Downtown Association of Los Angeles sent to President Franklin Roosevelt on October 2, 1933](#) (Figure 8). To start the lesson the teacher talks openly about the strategy and why this strategy is important:

Today, as you work with documents related to Thanksgiving, it is important that you keep in mind the things that were going on at the time and place where the document was produced. Historians call this *contextualization*. Contextualization helps historians understand the content of what they are reading and to know how to use it as evidence.

The teacher also discusses how students should engage in the strategy:

When I think about the context, I think about the place—what was this city or state like at the time? And I think about the social context, like how men and women, how people of different races, and how adults and children interacted. I think about how people's values and priorities might have been different then than they are now. I also think about the historical context and what events were happening at that time. The season of the year or even the time of day might be important.

Next, the teacher talks about how this strategy should be applied during this inquiry:

Contextualization is especially important as you work with the documents associated with Thanksgiving because each one will come from a different context. We will look at some from colonial times and others that are more modern. Contextualization is a strategy that you will use throughout this class whenever you study primary sources that were produced at a different time.

Finally, the teacher explains how the strategy can be applied outside of the classroom:

Contextualization is also important outside this class, like when you hear someone say something about a controversial issue that might seem unreasonable to you. If you take the time to think about the context from which the person is speaking, the statement might make more sense to you. In a community where people come from many different backgrounds, it is important to remember their contexts as we interact civilly with each other.

After talking explicitly about the strategy of contextualization, the teacher models the strategy with a document, such as the letter to President Roosevelt discussed above, a document that might be useful for modeling with older elementary students. The teacher projects the letter from the Downtown Association of Los Angeles on the screen in front of the class and thinks aloud about the context. To begin, the teacher talks about the way that they look around the letter to start to make sense of it:

I notice immediately that this is a letter, and I see the letterhead, so I know that this is an official and formal letter. I see it was written by the Downtown

Association of Los Angeles, which I don't know much about, to President Roosevelt. Now I see that right along the top it says, "organized to protect all business interests of downtown Los Angeles," so this gives me a better sense of what the Downtown Association is. I can see the address of the association, but I don't know how much that is going to help me. Now I notice the date, which I think is important. It was written on October 2, 1933. When I think about the historical context, I remember that the Great Depression started in 1929 and lasted through most of the 1930s. I remember that the first years of the Depression were especially difficult. One of the big problems was that businesses had a hard time selling things. So, I can anticipate that within that context, the businesses of Los Angeles might have wanted the President to do something to help them.

After establishing these contextual factors that might shape the content of the letter, the teacher starts to read the letter out loud to the students, pausing when contents of the letter confirm or challenge their initial thoughts about the context. For example, after the teacher sees that the letter is about the Thanksgiving shopping season, the teacher remembers that it was written at the start of October:

In October, businesses were probably thinking about the upcoming Christmas shopping season and wondering how the Depression might hurt their sales.

Direct instruction does not need to be (and should not be) lengthy in order to improve students' work with evidence during inquiry. Its purpose in connection with inquiry is to efficiently provide students with conceptual frameworks and background information and to introduce skills that will help them be more successful during the inquiry. If you want to learn more about direct instruction you can look at the articles and resources on the chart in [Appendix A](#).

Questioning and Discussion Model

Learning activities that involve an entire class in a single conversation, with students doing the majority of the speaking and responding to one another's ideas, is referred to as the *questioning or discussion model* of teaching. Discussions generally revolve around interesting, open-ended questions that inspire deep thought, opposing points of view, and lively conversation (Hess, 2002). The questions that guide the inquiries throughout the chapters of this book are good examples of open-ended questions, worthy of discussion. During discussions, teachers (a) help students establish ground rules for interacting, (b) initiate the conversation by asking thought-provoking questions, (c) monitor students' interaction, and (d) assess students' participation and learning about the topic being discussed. The questioning model differs from cooperative learning because the whole class is involved in a single conversation, with one student speaking at a time. It differs from direct instruction because students, rather than the teacher, do most of the talking and ideas originate with them. Some class activities blend direct instruction and discussion in interactive lectures.

There are several keys to promoting successful class discussions (Hess, 2002; Hess, 2004; "Let's Talk," 2020; Wilen, 2004a; Wilen, 2004b). Teachers and students should establish ground rules for the discussion, including guidelines for responding to one another's ideas. Teachers should think carefully about discussion topics and questions, choosing interesting issues with relevance to the lives of young people and honoring diverse cultures (the chapters of this book provide examples of appropriate questions). Discussions are richer when students are given a chance to prepare by watching a brief video clip or reading a short article that explains a controversy, by writing their ideas, and by sharing their ideas in small groups before discussing issues as a class. This type of preparation is especially useful for reticent students or students for whom English is not their native language (Wilen, 2004a).

Student participation is discouraged when teachers talk too much. Teachers should dedicate the needed time and grant the intellectual freedom for discussions to run their course.

A teacher can make students accountable for their participation during a discussion and provide feedback using a rubric or other scoring guide with criteria for evaluating such things as students' respectfulness when asking a question or their use of evidence to support their claims. And teachers should ensure that all students have opportunities to voice their ideas. For instance, a class might establish the rule that no student can comment more than three times until everyone has spoken at least once. The teacher might purposefully call on a few students before opening up the discussion for a free-flowing exchange of ideas in order to give reticent students a chance to share first. Additionally, teachers might provide sentence stems or sentence starters (such as "the strongest evidence for my claim is...") for some students in order to help them put their ideas into words. Finally, teachers encourage students to participate in discussions when they establish a climate where every student's opinion is valued and where balancing alternative perspectives is viewed as a way of promoting the common good.

During inquiry lessons, class discussions might involve questions surrounding a single primary source that is analyzed together. For instance, the think-pair-share activity described earlier in this chapter, during which students compare three images, concludes with a class discussion. After the students have analyzed on their own and with a partner (the *think* and *pair* parts of the activity), the teacher might ask students a series of questions to allow them to *share* their ideas and to promote deeper reflection on what they see, think, and wonder. The teacher might start by asking simple, factual questions like, "What do you observe in the images?" to get the discussion started. The discussion might progress into questions that require inferences about the purpose of the photographer or artist who created the image. Finally, the teacher might ask students to consider why some Thanksgiving traditions have continued through the years and why others have come and gone. Throughout this and other discussions, teachers are encouraged to do as little talking as possible, allowing students to share their ideas and respond to their peers' thinking. Ultimately, though, the teacher wants students to consider how diverse groups have viewed Thanksgiving and how the holiday might be used to promote social justice.

At other times during inquiry lessons, class discussions give students opportunities to test with their peers their interpretative answers to compelling questions and to respond to others' ideas. Researchers have found that discussions often have two distinct functions (Reisman, 2015). During *exploratory discussions*, students are encouraged to express ideas and respond to one another's interpretations with little teacher evaluation. Misconceptions that will later be corrected are left open for consideration with the awareness that students will discover their errors independently. Teachers can deepen students' critical thinking during exploratory talk by asking students to justify their interpretations with evidence or by asking students to evaluate a peer's ideas. And certainly, a teacher might need to take corrective action if a student's comments are hostile or insensitive toward other students

("Let's Talk," 2020). In contrast, during *summative discussions*, the teacher takes a more corrective role, overtly pointing out misconceptions and evaluating students' use of evidence and interpretations. Without such teacher involvement a discussion might leave intact or even reinforce students' incorrect views of the past, such as the errors perpetuated in the traditional Thanksgiving narrative.

Students who have analyzed a series of texts during the jigsaw activity described above could share their findings and interpretations in a *debriefing*, a discussion during which students reflect on their experiences during a learning activity. Depending upon students' backgrounds, they may have reached different conclusions. During the first part of a debriefing, the teacher might ask students to share their findings of how different groups have remembered Thanksgiving, and how remembrances have changed over time. During this *exploratory discussion*, students are encouraged to share ideas with little judgment from the teacher. Eventually the teacher might transition to a *summative discussion* by asking how some traditions perpetuate racist stereotypes in the historical narrative. During this phase of the discussion, the teacher might assume a more active role, helping students acknowledge the subtle (and sometimes overt) racism in some of the documents they analyzed. Finally, the discussion might turn to questions of how students might use the Thanksgiving holiday to promote social justice.

Discussions are not only an engaging way to debrief after participating in an inquiry but are also vital in preparing young people for civic engagement. In order for democracy to thrive in a pluralistic and multicultural society, individuals must be able to engage in collaborative and deliberative discussions with people who are different from them (Hess & McAvoy, 2015), seeking solutions that promote the common good (Barton & Levstik, 2004). There is no better place to prepare individuals to do this than in social studies classrooms that foster inquiry. Whole class discussion plays a central role in inquiry-driven history classrooms. As a result, teachers must hone their skills as discussion leaders. In [Appendix A](#), you can find a number of articles and resources about conducting class discussions.

Experiential Learning

As suggested in its name, *experiential learning* occurs when teachers orchestrate instructive experiences for students. Field trips, simulations, opportunities to serve in the community, interacting with classroom guests, games, travel, internships, job shadowing, virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR), civic involvement, and other experiences are examples of experiential learning. Your teacher preparation will probably include field experiences such as student teaching, where you will learn a great deal through your experiences. Experiential learning generally involves two main elements. First, students engage in some type of activity that gives them firsthand experience with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that the teacher wants them to learn. Second, students reflect on that experience. Reflection is often accomplished by writing in a reflective journal, discussing the experience with a group of

peers, debriefing during a class discussion, or engaging in a digital dialog with others who shared similar or different experiences (Dennehy et al., 1998). In effective experiential learning, teachers guide students as they explore the connections between their experiences and target learning outcomes (Dack et al., 2016).

Many teachers use simulations to immerse students in memorable experiences that are analogous to historical contexts. However, some educators have been critical of such simulations, noting that they capture only a small degree of actual experiences and may distort students' thinking by causing them to trivialize past hardships or to project present conditions onto past events (Dack et al., 2016; Fogo, 2015). At their worst, simulations can cause trauma by forcing students to assume painful roles or engage in traumatic activities (Jones, 2020). This is particularly true when simulations are related to the hard histories of enslavement, the Holocaust, Indigenous genocide, or other events that evoke strong emotional associations (Dack et al., 2016; Jones, 2020). Because of the understandable trauma associated with the destruction of Indigenous cultures, Thanksgiving, like other hard histories, may not be an appropriate topic to engage students in a simulation. Yet at other times, when simulations are used with awareness and sensitivity, they provide memorable learning and open students' eyes to alternative perspectives (Wright-Maley, 2015). Primary sources can enhance students' ability to imagine the context of the events being simulated (Nokes, 2018).

Teachers can enhance learning during experiential instruction, whether through simulation, service learning, or when taking informed action, in several ways (Dack et al., 2016). Teachers can make sure that students' experiences and the resulting learning are explicitly connected to course learning objectives. Teachers must be wise to avoid simulated experiences that trivialize traumatic or difficult histories (Jones, 2020). Because experiential learning is dynamic, students might construct misconceptions and factual inaccuracies, reinforced by their experiences. And the excitement of the hands-on experience might draw students away from the intended instructional objectives. For these reasons, teachers should observe and remain apprised of students' experiences, preparing a means to correct misconceptions during debriefing, and, if needed, reteaching using different methods when target learning outcomes are not reached.

Certain elements of experiential learning are central to inquiry. For example, the best inquiries lead students to take informed action. For instance, after studying the Thanksgiving holiday, and the many different ways people and groups remember Thanksgiving, the students might write a brief message to be given during the school announcements. The message might encourage students in the school to remember that different people observe Thanksgiving in different ways and that they should be respectful of others' traditions, especially those Native Americans whose ancestors reached out with kindness toward the European settlers, who suffered as the European population grew and as the nation expanded, and who continue to fight to preserve their languages and culture. Such action

provides authentic experiences that can enhance learning, particularly when experiences are directly related to students' inquiries, when teachers tailor experiences to meet instructional objectives, and when students have opportunities to reflect on their experiences. You can learn more about experiential learning by studying the articles and resources in [Appendix A](#).

Cognitive Apprenticeships

The *cognitive apprenticeship* model of instruction is based upon the traditional apprentice relationship. Historically, an apprentice worked with an experienced craftsman to learn the skills of a trade, such as blacksmithing, shoemaking, or carpentry. The apprentice gradually assumed increasing responsibility for engaging in the craft. At first, the apprentice observed the seasoned craftsman as they worked, merely running errands or participating in the most menial of tasks. Eventually, the skilled craftsman involved the apprentice in simple tasks, providing coaching as the apprentice worked. Over time, the apprentice was trusted with more complex tasks, still being observed, and receiving advice and feedback. Finally, the apprentice took on the craft in its entirety (Fisher & Frey, 2013). The process of growing from apprentice to skilled craftsman could take many years.

In a cognitive apprenticeship, a teacher assumes the role of the expert (i.e., of geography, civics, economics, or history) and helps a classroom of apprentice-students learn the skills associated with the discipline. At first, students watch the teacher model disciplinary thinking. Eventually, the skilled teacher helps students engage in simple tasks, coaching them as they try new activities. Over weeks and months, the teacher gives students increasing responsibility, still providing advice and feedback, and supporting students as needed. Finally, the students assume the full role of the expert (tailored, of course, to their age and developmental abilities).

A cognitive apprenticeship is complicated because instead of involving visible skills, like attaching the sole of a shoe, it primarily involves the invisible act of thinking. Thus, a key element of a cognitive apprenticeship is the teacher *modeling* out loud, talking explicitly about the thought processes they engage in as they read a map, use a GPS instrument, analyze a historical political cartoon, or participate in other disciplinary work. Teachers also provide *coaching*, giving advice and feedback to students as they observe them engage in a task. Additionally, teachers provide *scaffolding*, supporting students as they attempt challenging tasks that they could not do without the support. Finally, teachers use *fading* to remove the scaffolding as students become more capable of working independently. As in the traditional apprentice relationship, the acquisition of disciplinary skills can take a long time—weeks, months, or years—rather than a single lesson. But when given time, the cognitive apprenticeship model has been shown to be one of the most effective ways to build historical reading, thinking, and writing skills (De La Paz et al., 2014, 2021).

Within cognitive apprenticeships, differentiation occurs according to the needs of individual students and their rate of learning. Some students may require more modeling,

when others may be able to perform tasks with coaching or even independently. Teachers adjust the level of scaffolding for each student in the class, releasing at an appropriate rate the responsibility for engaging in disciplinary work as the students are ready to accept more responsibility for the tasks (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983).

The cognitive apprenticeship model has many applications in inquiry-focused social studies classrooms. Many of the examples given throughout this chapter represent modeling, coaching, and scaffolding. The teaching scenario described previously, modeling contextualization using the Downtown Association’s letter, could be part of a cognitive apprenticeship. The use of cooperative learning groups, with students taking on different roles as they read the Thanksgiving Proclamation issued by the Massachusetts General Court, is an example of scaffolding, with peers supporting one another. The teacher providing students with a transcript and a translation of that same text is another example of scaffolding. The inquiry lessons shared in this book provide resources for creating cognitive apprenticeships. During the first inquiries of the school year, the teacher might do a great deal of modeling and provide significant scaffolding. During subsequent inquiries the teacher might do less modeling for the whole class but continue to model strategies for those students who need additional help. At the same time, the teacher might provide coaching for students who can use the strategies relatively independently. By the end of the school year, some students may be able to engage in the inquiries of this book with little teacher support, while other students may still require modeling, coaching, and scaffolding. Resources for learning more about cognitive apprenticeships and a video for watching them in action are included in [Appendix A](#). For an overview of all the models of instruction described in this chapter, with lists of activities that fit into each model, see [Figure 9](#).

Figure 9. Matrix comparing the models of instruction

Model of Instruction	Description	Examples and Common Strategies	Structure and Management	Assessment
Inquiry	Students seek answers to their own questions within parameters the teacher establishes and with teacher support. Or, students engage in an open-ended investigation the teacher has created.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National History Day • i-charts (inquiry charts) • inquiry circles • mini-inquiries • teachers model curiosity 	Teachers establish check points to promote and measure progress, provide individual help, and share or suggest resources. Or, teachers ask questions, provide evidence, and support students as they seek answers.	Formative assessments provide feedback during early stages. Rubrics are used to train students and assess their work. Or, debriefing sessions and students’ writing show their mastery of target skills and content.
Cooperative Learning	Students work with a small group of peers interdependently learning from each other in an activity they could not do alone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • think-pair-share • jigsaw • appointment book • speed learning • pyramid activity 	Small, intentionally formed groups, with students having roles and clearly defined tasks, supporting each other.	Both group and individual accountability through written work or other products, often with peer evaluations.

Direct Instruction	Teacher lectures on content or provides explicit instruction on thinking strategies. Students primarily listen then apply in subsequent activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lecture • PowerPoint presentation • explicit strategy instruction • video clip • guest speaker 	Effective lectures are short and well structured, they give students something to do, such as taking notes. Modeling is best when teachers think aloud.	Assessment is difficult during lecture, but teachers can break up lectures with formative assessments like think-pair-share and guided practice.
Discussion/ Questioning	A whole class engages in a conversation on an engaging topic with students responding to each other. The teacher monitors students' participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • British debate • Socratic seminar • philosophical chairs • fishbowl 	Teacher and students establish guidelines for respectful discussions. The teacher monitors to ensure that all students have an opportunity to share ideas.	Teacher can keep a record of participation and use rubrics to assess students' comments, questions, level of respect, and other standards.
Experiential Learning	Students have some type of experience that provides an opportunity to learn and/or take informed action, and to reflect on that experience through writing or a debriefing session.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • simulation • service learning • travel • guest speaker • virtual reality • field trip 	Teachers ensure that the experiential learning activity is tied to the course objectives, does not trivialize traumatic events. Teachers provide structure for students to reflect.	Students' written reflections or comments during debriefing show whether they learned the intended outcomes from the experience.
Cognitive Apprenticeships	Teachers nurture disciplinary engagement by modeling, coaching, scaffolding, and gradually releasing responsibility to students across the school year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • modeling • coaching • scaffolding with fading 	Teachers provide scaffolding, moving from modeling to coaching to observing (across weeks and months) as students become able to work independently.	Frequent formative assessments help teachers identify the needed level of scaffolding, how to differentiate, and the rate with which to remove support.

Integrating the Models of Instruction During a Thanksgiving Inquiry Lesson

Background for Lesson

The activities in the following lesson are designed for use with upper elementary students. Activities could be modified for younger students by translating the texts into simpler language or for middle or high school students by using the original texts. Increasing or decreasing the level of modeling and support could also allow elements of this lesson to be taught across ages. This inquiry-driven lesson focuses on the questions “How has the Thanksgiving celebration changed through the years and how has it stayed the same?” “Why do different people and groups think differently about the Thanksgiving holiday?” and “How might we use this day to promote social justice?” These questions are intended to promote inquiry within the intersection of the curricular standards, students’ interests, and real-world problems. Throughout the inquiry lesson the teacher integrates cooperative learning, direct instruction, discussion, cognitive apprenticeships, and experiential learning to meet the varying and changing needs of students. Figure 10 makes connections between these lesson ideas and the C3 Framework (NCSS, 2013).

Figure 10.

How Has the Thanksgiving Celebration Changed Through the Years and How Has It Stayed The Same? Why Do Different People and Groups Think Differently About the Thanksgiving Holiday? How might we use this day to promote social justice?		
C3 Disciplinary Focus U.S. history, civics, economics	C3 Inquiry Focus Using evidence to describe change and continuity and contextualization	Content Topic Challenging the traditional narrative of Thanksgiving past and present
C3 Focus Indicators <p>D1: Determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions, taking into consideration the different opinions people have about how to answer the questions. (D1.5.3-5)</p> <p>D2: Generate questions about individuals and groups who have shaped significant historical changes and continuities. (D2.His.3.3-5)</p> <p>D2: Explain why individuals and groups during the same historical period differed in their perspectives. (D2.His.4.3-5.)</p> <p>D2: Explain connections among historical contexts and people’s perspectives at the time. (D2.His.5.3-5.)</p> <p>D3: Identify evidence that draws information from multiple sources in response to compelling questions. (D3.3.3-5.)</p> <p>D4: Construct explanations using reasoning, correct sequence, examples, and details with relevant information and data. (D4.2.3-5.)</p> <p>D4: Use a range of deliberative and democratic procedures to make decisions about and act on civic problems in their classrooms and schools. (D4.8.3-5.)</p>		
Grade Level 3-5	Resources Primary sources available through the Library of Congress as shown in this chapter or found by students	Time Required Two, three, or more 45-minute lessons

Note. Lesson chart following the C3 Framework (Swan & Lee, 2015).

Lesson Objectives

Four objectives guide this lesson:

- Using evolving Thanksgiving traditions, students will explore the historical concepts of *change* and *continuity*, and the skill of *contextualization*.
- Students will critically evaluate a range of primary source evidence to explain how different groups have remembered or celebrated the Thanksgiving holiday.
- Students will describe why some people feel that commemorations of Thanksgiving perpetuate racist stereotypes and promote erroneous historical accounts.
- Students will take informed action associated with the Thanksgiving holiday, writing an announcement to be made at their school before Thanksgiving encouraging students to be respectful of the many different ways that people, particularly Native Americans, remember Thanksgiving.

Lesson Procedures

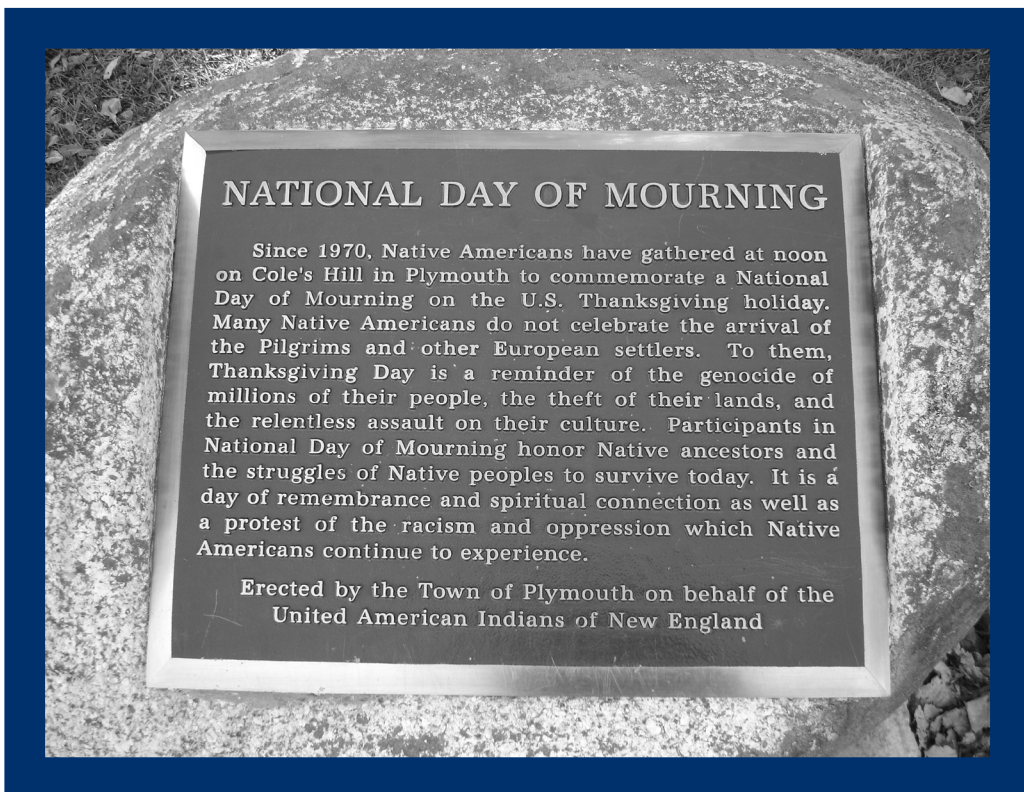
This lesson is designed to cover three or four 45-minute lessons, with teachers adjusting the lesson to meet their context and objectives.

1. When the bell rings to start class, the teacher conducts a *think-pair-share* activity culminating in a *class discussion* related to images shown in Figures 1, 2, and 3. (Alternatively the teacher might introduce the lesson using the jigsaw activity described above using Figures 1, 2, 3, and 5.) The teacher concludes the discussion by introducing the questions identified above that will guide an inquiry. The teacher then creates a timeline on the board in front of the class and attaches the images that students have analyzed on the dates 1861, 1900, 1912 (and 1942 if the jigsaw activity is used).
2. The teacher conducts the *mini-lecture* described above to provide students with the background knowledge needed to comprehend the documents and to think critically about the racism of the traditional “First Thanksgiving” narrative.
3. The teacher informs students that they will use a number of primary sources from the Library of Congress and explains and models the strategy of *contextualization* using the [letter](#) written by the Downtown Association of Los Angeles in Figure 8. After modeling the analysis of this document, the teacher attaches a copy of the document to the timeline at 1933.
4. To introduce an Indigenous perspective, the teacher reads out loud to students the picture book *Giving Thanks: A Native American Good Morning Message* (Swamp, 1997). The teacher asks students to consider how this Thanksgiving message compares to those already analyzed. Alternatively, the teacher might show students [a video of Jake Swamp](#) reading

the book in both his Indigenous language and in English. This book, written by Jake Swamp, a member of the Mohawk nation, describes an ancient Mohawk Thanksgiving message that predates the 1621 “First Thanksgiving.” After presenting the book, the teacher asks a few students to share some ways that Swamp’s perspective compares with the other documents analyzed so far, with students encouraged to respond to one another’s ideas. The class discussion continues with students considering whether a picture of the book’s cover should be placed on the timeline prior to 1621 or at 1997, the year the picture book was published.

5. The teacher ends class by projecting an [image of the National Day of Mourning plaque](#) (Figure 11) located in Plymouth, Massachusetts, near the site where pilgrims settled, and by reading it out loud to students and attaching it to the timeline on 1998. The teacher asks students to write a sentence or two about the context during which the plaque was erected. She encourages them to think about both the location of the memorial and the year when it was created, 1998. The teacher collects students’ writing as exit slips as they leave class. The teacher evaluates them before the following class using the scoring guide shown in Figure 12 in order to decide whether more modeling of contextualization is needed.

Figure 11. National Day of Mourning Plaque



Note. A plaque created in 1998 by the town of Plymouth on behalf of the United American Indians of New England as part of a court settlement. Doroquez, M. (2008, October 14). Flickr. CC BY-SA 2.0.

Figure 12. Scoring guide for students’ exit slip related to contextualization and the National Day of Mourning plaque

Score	Description	Example
0	Student does not complete the exit slip	
1	Student does not consider any historical context	American Indians honored their native ancestors on Thanksgiving.
2	Students’ contextualization focuses on events that happened in 1621	The plaque tells about how American Indians were hurt by the landing of the Pilgrims.
3	Students’ contextualization focuses on 1998, when the plaque was created and modern traditions	The plaque was built in 1998 and shows that American Indian groups were fighting for a change to the way the Thanksgiving story and the genocide of Indigenous peoples is told.
4	Students’ contextualization focuses on both the year the monument was created and the place where it was built, describing why the context is significant	IN ADDITION TO THE 1998 CONTEXT The plaque was placed on a monument in Plymouth, Massachusetts to directly confront racist ideas about the “first” Thanksgiving. It was built by the town of Plymouth, showing that in 1998 some city officials were listening to the American Indians’ perspectives about Thanksgiving, genocide, and ongoing oppression.

The teacher starts the second lesson on the Thanksgiving inquiry with another *think-pair-share* activity. The teacher projects [Figure 6](#), the decree of the General Court of Massachusetts, and then [Figure 7](#), its transcription, and asks students to write two sentences contextualizing the document and two sentences summarizing what it tells about how Thanksgiving was viewed by a certain group at the time it was written. If necessary, students can use a class computer to quickly research the context. Students then turn to a partner and compare what they wrote. As the last part of the think-pair-share, the teacher conducts a *class discussion* by calling on a few students to tell what they wrote and by asking other students to respond or add to their peer’s ideas. The teacher then attaches the document to the timeline on the board at 1678.

Based upon the results of the exit slips from the prior class, the teacher decides to model contextualization with the political cartoon shown in [Figure 2](#), with students listening for the particular strategies the teacher uses. The students analyzed the political cartoon during the previous lesson, and it has been attached to the timeline, but the teacher is going to help them understand it at a deeper level, including the context during which it was created. For a monologue of the teacher’s modeling, see [Figure 13](#).

Figure 13. A monologue showing how the teacher might think aloud while engaged in contextualization with Keppler’s 1912 political cartoon “Thanksgiving: A Study in Proportion.”

I remember that contextualization is thinking about the time and place of a document’s creation and analyzing the document based on the context. Since this cartoon was made in 1912, it is evidence of what was happening then, not of what happened in 1621. I know that sometimes the content of the document can help us understand the historical context. I think that the title and caption on the cartoon “Thanksgiving: A study in proportion” helps me understand what to pay attention to. Ok, I see a large, colorful pile representing Thanksgiving traditions in the front and a disproportionately tiny, dark church in the back. This content is really useful in understanding the values in 1912. I think that Keppler was pointing out the changing Thanksgiving traditions, possibly in urban America. I make this inference because the church building looks more like a city church than a country church. Keppler is saying that entertainment, recreation, and having fun, represented by the huge, colorful pile that includes a football, golf clubs, hunting rifle, cooked turkey, pumpkin, cranberries, and a theatre mask, were pushing religious worship, represented by the dark little church, out of the Thanksgiving picture. So, I think that the social context of 1912 was one during which American values were changing. I make a connection to the proclamation made by the General Court of Boston—in it, Thanksgiving was all about fasting and prayer and thinking about God. The cartoon gives evidence that urban Americans were becoming less religious and more focused on having fun for Thanksgiving. And I infer that Keppler did not like this trend by his creation of this cartoon. And now, when I think about the letter we looked at yesterday from the Downtown Association of LA, it seems like Thanksgiving had a completely financial purpose by 1933.

The teacher organizes students into a *class meeting*, a particular format of a *class discussion*, during which students identify solutions to problems in the classroom or in the community. The teacher starts the class meeting by reminding students about the problems they should be starting to see about the many different ways Thanksgiving has been remembered and especially about how some Native American groups have a different perspective on the holiday. The teacher asks how students might be able to take informed action to help students and teachers at their school have a better understanding of the many ways Thanksgiving is remembered. The teacher suggests to students that the class create an announcement they can make at their school close to the Thanksgiving holiday to help students be more respectful of the different views of Thanksgiving.

For most of the remainder of the lesson, students engage in a pyramid activity, a format of cooperative learning, to write a draft of an announcement. They first work as individuals, brainstorming a list of five ideas they would want to include in their message. They then work with a partner to compare their ideas, eliminating some and creating a combined list of five ideas. They then move with their partner into a group of four, compare their lists and create a new list of five ideas for the announcement. The class then meets as an entire

group where each team presents their five ideas and the class makes a final decision about what to include in the announcement. The teacher writes it as students provide insights on what they should say.

Later, the teacher arranges with the school administration to have two of her students read the message during the school's announcements on a day close to Thanksgiving.

Lesson Extensions

Teachers can extend students' Thanksgiving inquiry by having them analyze photographs of "Thanksgiving maskers" as explained in [Appendix C](#). This activity involves combinations of cooperative learning, direct instruction, and cognitive apprenticeships as students engage in historical inquiry.

Conclusion

The inquiry lesson on Thanksgiving illustrates how the various models of instruction can be used in concert during inquiry-driven social studies lessons. The entire process during the lessons represents *inquiry*, as the class works together seeking answers to interesting questions while using historical thinking strategies and resources valued within the field of history. A wide variety of resources and evidence on Thanksgiving traditions, found in the Library of Congress, could be used to modify these lesson ideas for younger or older readers or to extend the lesson for interested students. The teacher has created a *cognitive apprenticeship* within the classroom, providing authentic tasks, scaffolding, modeling, and coaching. The teacher uses *direct instruction* to efficiently provide information to students about the 1621 Thanksgiving and to talk explicitly about skills like contextualization that students are developing. *Discussions* are used from time to time to analyze documents, to debrief on the processes that they are engaged in as a class, and to write an announcement to make to the school. The lessons culminate with students taking informed action, providing them with an *experiential learning* opportunity. These various models of instruction increase engagement by providing variety to the class. Like tools in a toolbox, the models of instruction are used flexibly based upon the evolving conditions in the classroom. Teachers who understand these and other models of instruction are better able to support students during inquiry.

Again, imagine yourself teaching a social studies lesson, this time visualizing yourself giving advice to a small group of students engaged in a cooperative learning activity. Observe yourself visiting with students as they are browsing a museum exhibit, either in person or virtually. Watch yourself modeling for students how to read a primary source document, as you project the text in front of the class and pretend to be making sense of it for the first time. See yourself consulting with an individual student who has pursued a false lead in their independent inquiry project, while their peers work on projects of their own. Or visualize

yourself sitting in a desk beside students, watching and assessing a small group of students as they report on an inquiry project. Drawing from activities that represent various models of instruction will enhance your teaching, and, more importantly, elevate students' content learning, skill development, and preparation for civic engagement.

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Appendix A

Additional Articles and Resources

Articles And Resources Related to Inquiry	
Foster, S. J., & Padgett, C. S. (1999). Authentic historical inquiry in the social studies classroom. <i>The Clearing House</i> , 72(6), 357–363.	Foster and Padgett give nine practical suggestions for implementing inquiry in history classrooms, such as how to devote the requisite time to inquiry.
Saye, J. W. (2017). Disciplined inquiry in social studies classrooms. In M. M. Manfra & C. M. Bolick (Eds.), <i>The Wiley handbook of social studies research</i> (pp. 336–359). Wiley.	Saye provides a current and comprehensive review of research on inquiry in social studies classrooms including disciplinary inquiry, disciplined civic inquiry, and other types of inquiry.
Swan, K., Lee, J., & Grant, S. G. (2015). The New York State Toolkit and the Inquiry Design Model: Anatomy of an inquiry. <i>Social Education</i> , 79(5), 316–322.	These researchers describe a resource for teachers, <i>The New York State Toolkit</i> , which provides high quality lesson materials for social studies teachers both within and outside of New York.
Swan, K., Lee, J., & Grant, S. G. (2017). <i>Inquiry-based practice in social studies education: Understanding the inquiry design model</i> . Taylor & Francis.	Swan and colleagues apply the principles of inquiry in a practical manner through the “Inquiry Design Model,” a popular approach to implementing inquiry lessons.
www.inquirED.org	This website elaborates on a three-step process in designing inquiry lessons: create a framework, design an investigation, and empower informed action.
www.C3teachers.org	This website provides resources, blogs, and links to a number of inquiry-based lessons developed by a growing network of teachers.
www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/lessons/	This website provides links to scores of inquiry lessons using primary sources available through the Library of Congress
Articles And Resources Related to Cooperative Learning	
Hendrix, J. C. (1999). Connecting cooperative learning and social studies. <i>The Clearing House</i> , 73(1), 57–60.	This article describes the five elements of cooperative learning and gives several specific cooperative learning activities designed for social studies classrooms.
Laal, M., & Ghodsi, S. M. (2012). Benefits of collaborative learning. <i>Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences</i> , 31, 486–490.	Laal and Ghodsi spell out the social, psychological, and academic benefits that come from collaborative learning.

Schul, J. E. (2011). Revisiting an old friend: The practice and promise of cooperative learning for the twenty-first century. <i>The Social Studies</i> , 102(2), 88–93.	Schul describes several popular variations of cooperative learning and discusses its essential role in preparing young people for democratic citizenship including its tendency to increase students’ ability to engage civilly.
Slavin, R. E. (1991). Synthesis of research on cooperative learning. <i>Educational Leadership</i> , 48(5), 71–82.	Slavin, one of the original proponents of cooperative learning, synthesizes the early research on the effectiveness of cooperative learning in this landmark review.
https://teaching.cornell.edu/resource/examples-collaborative-learning-or-group-work-activities	Cornell University’s Center for Teaching Innovation briefly provides seven ideas for cooperative learning
Articles And Resources Related to Direct Instruction	
Bajak, A. (2014). Lectures aren’t just boring, they’re ineffective, too, study finds. <i>Science</i> , 12.	This study reveals the ineffectiveness of lectures when they are not combined with other types of instruction that make students more active.
McDaniel, K. N. (2010). Harry Potter and the ghost teacher: Resurrecting the lost art of lecturing. <i>The History Teacher</i> , 43(2), 289–295.	McDaniel argues for the use of lectures, giving several ideas for making students more active during them.
Nokes, J. D., & Dole, J. A. (2004). Helping adolescent readers through explicit strategy instruction. <i>Adolescent Literacy Research and Practice</i> , 162–182.	Nokes and Dole describe the steps in explicit strategy instruction and contrast it with implicit strategy instruction and other related pedagogies.
Stacy, J. (2009). The guide on the stage: In defense of good lecturing in the history classroom. <i>Social Education</i> , 73(6), 275–278.	Stacy provides several ideas for making lectures more interactive and more effective in history classrooms.
Articles And Resources Related to Discussion	
Freedman, E. B. (2020). When discussions sputter or take flight: Comparing productive disciplinary engagement in two history classes. <i>Journal of the Learning Sciences</i> , 1–45.	Freedman’s cutting-edge research shows that discussions are particularly productive when teachers craft a compelling question, provide textual evidence for students to research to prepare, and allow sufficient time for the discussion to gain momentum.
Hess, D. E. (2002). Discussing controversial public issues in secondary social studies classrooms: Learning from skilled teachers. <i>Theory & Research in Social Education</i> , 30(1), 10–41.	Hess, one of the most respected researchers on teaching through discussion, describes specific instructional strategies used by social studies teachers who are skillful discussion leaders.
Hess, D. E. (2004). Discussion in social studies: Is it worth the trouble? <i>Social Education</i> , 68(2), 151–157.	Hess describes the importance of engaging young people in discussions, both in terms of the benefits for the classroom, and the long-term benefits in preparing young people for civic engagement.
Let’s Talk About It! (2020). <i>Teaching Tolerance</i> , 64 (1), 30–33.	A guide produced by Teaching Tolerance for facilitating class discussions on difficult topics.

Reisman, A. (2015). Entering the historical problem space: Whole-class text-based discussion in history class. <i>Teachers College Record</i> , 117(2), 1–44.	This article explores teaching practices that promote richer class discussions about historical texts
Wilén, W. W. (2004a). Encouraging reticent students' participation in classroom discussions. <i>Social Education</i> , 68(1), 51–56.	Wilén gives several suggestions for encouraging and preparing reticent students to participate in class discussions.
Wilén, W. W. (2004b). Refuting misconceptions about classroom discussion. <i>The Social Studies</i> , 95(1), 33–39.	This article addresses five misconceptions about classroom discussions, such as the idea that students cannot be assessed during discussions. Wilén provides five specific suggestions to improve discussions.
https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/speaking-listening-techniques/	In a blog titled “The big list of class discussion strategies,” Jennifer Gonzalez presents 15 formats for structuring class discussions.
Articles And Resources Related to Experiential Learning	
Bloom, E. A. (2003). Service learning and social studies: a natural fit. <i>Social Education</i> , 67(4), M5–M8.	In this article, Bloom discusses the role of service learning, a type of experiential learning, in social studies classrooms.
Dack, H., van Hover, S., & Hicks, D. (2016). “Try not to giggle if you can help it”: The implementation of experiential instructional techniques in social studies classrooms. <i>The Journal of Social Studies Research</i> , 40(1), 39–52.	This study provides a critical review of the strengths and weaknesses of various experiential learning activities in social studies classrooms.
DiCamillo, L., & Gradwell, J. M. (2012). Using simulations to teach middle grades U.S. history in an age of accountability. <i>RMLE Online</i> , 35(7), 1–16.	DiCamillo and Gradwell provide several suggestions for using simulations in middle school classrooms.
Hu-Au, E., & Lee, J. J. (2017) Virtual reality in education: A tool for learning in the experience age. <i>International Journal of Innovation in Education</i> , 4, 4, 215–226.	Hu-Au and Lee describe the value of virtual reality (VR) for students who are living in what they term the <i>Experience Age</i> .
Jones, S. P. (2020). Ending curriculum violence. <i>Teaching Tolerance</i> , 64, 1, 47–50.	This article shows how some simulations and experiential learning activities can cause trauma for students of color and others.
Wright-Maley, C. (2015). What every social studies teacher should know about simulations. <i>Canadian Social Studies</i> , 48(1), 8–23.	Wright-Maley defines what a simulation is and describes some of the affordances and problems associated with using simulations.
https://artsandculture.google.com/project/expeditions	This website advertises Expeditions, an app created to give students experiences through virtual reality and augmented reality.

Articles And Resources Related to Cognitive Apprenticeships

<p>Collins, A., Brown, J. S., & Holum, A. (1991). Cognitive apprenticeship: Making thinking visible. <i>American Educator</i>, 15(3), 6–11</p>	<p>This landmark article introduced the concept of cognitive apprenticeship for teaching reading, writing, and math. It promotes teachers’ modeling by thinking aloud and the need for situated disciplinary practice.</p>
<p>De La Paz, S., Felton, M., Monte-Sano, C., Croninger, R., Jackson, C., Deogracias, J. S., & Hoffman, B. P. (2014). Developing historical reading and writing with adolescent readers: Effects on student learning. <i>Theory & Research in Social Education</i>, 42(2), 228–274.</p>	<p>De La Paz and colleagues demonstrate in this interventional research the powerful effects of creating cognitive apprenticeships to teach historical reading and writing.</p>
<p>Monte-Sano, C., De La Paz, S., & Felton, M. (2014). Implementing a disciplinary-literacy curriculum for U.S. history: Learning from expert middle school teachers in diverse classrooms. <i>Journal of Curriculum Studies</i>, 46(4), 540–575.</p>	<p>Monte-Sano and colleagues describe specific characteristics of teachers who create effective cognitive apprenticeships in history classrooms.</p>
<p>https://library.teachingworks.org/curriculum-resources/materials/social-studies-explaining-and-modeling-content/</p>	<p>This webpage, produced as part of a series on high-leverage practices in social studies, provides guidance for explaining and modeling strategies in cognitive apprenticeships.</p>
<p>https://www.learner.org/series/the-learning-classroom-theory-into-practice/watch-it-do-it-know-it-cognitive-apprenticeship/</p>	<p>The 28-minute video produced by Annenberg Learning describes cognitive apprenticeships and shows an elementary and a high school classroom that use cognitive apprenticeships</p>

Appendix B

Primary Sources and Other Resources

About Thanksgiving

Primary Sources

FDR Library. The year we had two Thanksgivings. <http://docs.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/thanksg.html#doc>
Collection of 10 documents, mostly letters and telegraphs sent to Franklin Roosevelt related to the economic impact of switching Thanksgiving Day to the third Thursday of November.

Library of Congress, Primary Source Sets, Thanksgiving: <https://www.loc.gov/classroom-materials/thanksgiving/>

A teaching resource with 18 primary source documents of different genres about Thanksgiving during various time periods.

Library of Congress, Thanksgiving: Topics in Chronicling America. <https://guides.loc.gov/chronicling-america-thanksgiving>

A research guide for studying Thanksgiving using the Chronicling America collection.

Library of Congress. Thanksgiving: Traditions, proclamations & primary sources in an updated primary source set. <https://blogs.loc.gov/teachers/2016/11/thanksgiving-traditions-proclamations-primary-sources-in-an-updated-primary-source-set/>

Blog by Anne Savage updating the primary source collection associated with Thanksgiving.

Library of Congress. Unmasking a Thanksgiving tradition through photos and newspapers. <https://blogs.loc.gov/teachers/2015/11/unmasking-a-thanksgiving-tradition-through-photos-and-newspapers/>

Blog written by Tom Bober, the Library of Congress 2015–16 Audio-Visual Teacher in Residence, outlining ideas for students to investigate this forgotten tradition.

National Archives. Congress establishes Thanksgiving. <https://www.archives.gov/legislative/features/thanksgiving>

A joint resolution of the 77TH Congress passed on October 6, 1941, establishing the fourth Thursday of each November as Thanksgiving Day, a national holiday.

National Archives. George Washington's Thanksgiving Day Proclamation. <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/05-04-02-0091>

George Washington's Thanksgiving Day proclamation, given October 3, 1789, to acknowledge the providence of almighty God.

National World War II Museum. <http://www.nww2m.com/tag/thanksgiving/>

A collection of wartime images of Thanksgiving shared on the National World War II Museum website.

Teaching Resources

Library of Congress. Chronicling America. <https://guides.loc.gov/chronicling-america-thanksgiving>
Information about a book in the Library of Congress Student Discovery Set dedicated to the Thanksgiving holiday.

Plimoth Patuxet Museums. You are the historian game. <https://www.plimoth.org/learn/MRL/interact/thanksgiving-interactive-you-are-historian>

Interactive lesson assigning students to role of a detective to find out what really happened at the First Thanksgiving using primary sources.

Learning for Justice. Teaching Thanksgiving in a Socially Responsible Way. <https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/teaching-thanksgiving-in-a-socially-responsible-way>

Article written by Amanda Morris and published November 10, 2015, on a webpage produced by Teaching Tolerance titled “Teaching Thanksgiving in a Socially Responsible Way” with links to additional resources.

Other Articles and Resources

National Museum of the American Indian. American Indian Perspectives on Thanksgiving.

https://americanindian.si.edu/sites/1/files/pdf/education/thanksgiving_poster.pdf

Website produced by the National Museum of the American Indian titled “American Indian Perspectives on Thanksgiving” designed for middle level teachers.

Smithsonian Magazine. What was on the menu at the first Thanksgiving. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/what-was-on-the-menu-at-the-first-thanksgiving-511554/>

Article published by the *Smithsonian Magazine* titled, “What was on the menu at the First Thanksgiving?”

Teaching History. What really happened? Comparing stories of the First Thanksgiving

<https://teachinghistory.org/teaching-materials/lesson-plan-reviews/25034>

Webpage produced by TeachingHistory.org titled “What really happened? Comparing stories of the First Thanksgiving.”

Appendix C

Thanksgiving inquiry extension: *Thanksgiving maskers*

Knowing that visual resources can be used to awaken curiosity and promote questioning, a 5th grade teacher, Ms. Romero, projects an image of Thanksgiving maskers (Figure 14), cropped so that the title “Thanksgiving Maskers” and source information have been removed. She asks students to engage in a *see, think, wonder* activity (Richards & Anderson, 2003), with students making lists of things they *see*, what they *think* is going on, and what they *wonder* after looking at the photograph. She then projects the image again with the title, “Thanksgiving Maskers,” visible and has students add to their lists. Ms. Romero then engages the class in a *discussion* of their analysis of the photograph. She reminds students of the guidelines for class discussions that they have established. She first calls on a few of the more reticent students to read or describe one thing that they wrote in their *see, think, wonder* notes. She then calls on volunteers to contribute to the conversation by responding to their peers’ ideas or by talking about something they wrote.

Figure 14. *Thanksgiving maskers*



Note. *Thanksgiving maskers*. (1910-1915). [Photograph]. George Grantham Bain Collection, Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2014689992/>

Shifting into the *cognitive apprenticeship* model, Ms. Romero asks students to pay attention to what she is doing as she thinks aloud, modeling the process of identifying the source of the photograph. With students watching her projected computer screen, she conducts a reverse image search, which leads her to a National Public Radio (NPR) webpage with a story on Thanksgiving maskers and from there to the [Library of Congress](#), the ultimate source of the photograph. The teacher clicks on the tab “About This Item” and skims through that information, still thinking aloud for the students. She notes that this photograph was taken between 1910 and 1915, a clue that might help them figure out more about Thanksgiving maskers. The teacher then notices the link labeled “Browse neighboring items by call number” and decides to click on that link to see if there might be other related images. Clicking on the link reveals twelve other photographs related to “Thanksgiving maskers” or “Thanksgiving.”

Still thinking aloud about how the class can work together, Ms. Romero decides to have small groups of students spend twenty minutes listing what they collaboratively see, think, and wonder about for at least four of the related photographs. She has established routines for *cooperative learning* and asks students to turn their desks to form their four-member cooperative learning teams. (She has created a seating arrangement to facilitate the quick formation of purposefully selected teams, grouping students whose personalities and abilities complement one another.) Ms. Romero asks each group to have one person serve as the scribe for each photograph. That person will choose the photograph that they will analyze and will list in one column what they see, in a second column what they think, and in a third column what they wonder. The other students will work round-robin style, taking turns listing things they see, think, or wonder. Once they have gone around the table once or twice, she encourages them to have a more natural conversation about the photograph. After every four minutes she will let them know that it is time to switch to another photograph. She asks students to pay particular attention to what the photographs have in common, or other clues about what a “Thanksgiving masker” is. She also reminds them that they can use the “About This Item” link to search for more clues. Finally, she asks students to avoid using the photographs that include sexist or racist costumes that mock certain people. As the students work in their cooperative learning groups, the teacher circulates and observes their conversations.

The social studies lesson for the day ends with a whole class discussion. The teacher asks students who they think “Thanksgiving maskers” were and what evidence from the photographs supports their conclusions. Students talk about the masks, the baskets that most groups carried, a photograph of them knocking on the door of a home, their happy facial expressions, and their scramble for pennies. Students also talk about the background, the rows of homes and apartments, the muddy streets, and the power lines. One of them wonders where the pictures were taken. The teacher responds by remembering that the photographs are from the George Bain Collection. Modeling for the class, the teacher

searches for information about the Bain Collection on the Library of Congress site, discovering that the collection had a “special emphasis on life in New York City.” With the teacher’s modeling and guidance, and with the help of the NPR article that their image search produced, the students reach the conclusion that, in New York City between 1910 and 1915, there was a Thanksgiving tradition of children dressing in costumes and masks and going door-to-door and on the streets collecting money or fruit.