

Equitable Classroom Discussions through Open Education Primary Source Learning Routines

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Library of Congress (loc.gov)

- **The Library of Congress's mission is:**

“to engage, inspire, and inform Congress and the American people with a universal and enduring source of knowledge and creativity”

- Our vision is that all Americans are connected to the Library of Congress ([loc.gov](https://www.loc.gov)).
 - more than 171 million digitized items
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- [51 OER Commons Teaching with Primary Sources Items](#)
- [TPS Consortium Created Materials](#)

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WITH PRIMARY
SOURCES**

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Background

OER USE: The Library of Congress' reported 153 million website visits and 532 million page views over the 2023 year.

TEACHER FOCUS: Since 2006, the Library has awarded Teaching with Primary Sources (TPS) grants to build a nationwide network of organizations that deliver educational programming, and create teaching materials and tools based on the Library's digitized primary sources and other online resources.

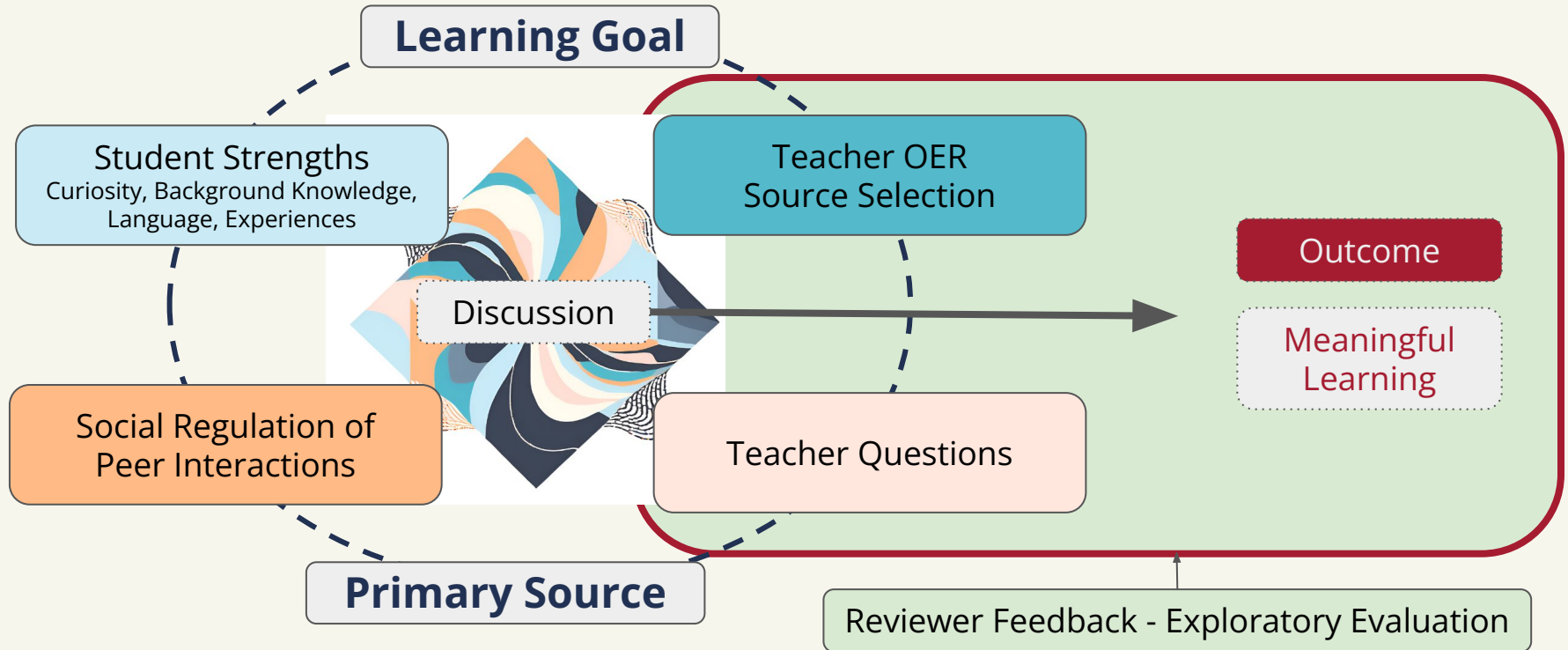
GOAL: The TPS Consortium supports tens of thousands of learners to build knowledge, engagement, and critical thinking skills with items from the Library's collections.

Social Justice Potential Beyond Representation Justice: For example, to disrupt patterns of literacy achievement, teachers must increase knowledge of the historical roots of language and literacy teaching practices and reject deficit perspectives of literacy abilities (Bartolomé, 1994).

PROBLEMS

1. How to capture what students are capable of at different grade levels using different, grade-appropriate primary source documents and analysis tools (Dutt-Doner, 2007).
2. How do teaching methods facilitate effective primary source analysis (Dutt-Doner, 2007)

Academic Discussion Components

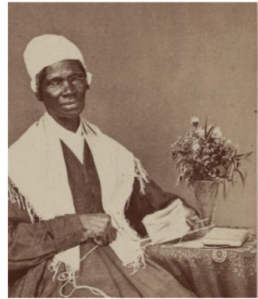


OER - Crop It



Prompt: Crop to the most important object in this photograph.

Think: Why did sojourner truth want this object in her portrait?



Crop 1

Crop 2

Crop 3

Crop 4



1. Crop



Zoom



Notes



2. Save



PDF

Why did sojourner truth want this object in her portrait?

<https://agileteacherlab.org/index.php/our-tools/crop-it/>

OER Data Collected

1

Date



2

3

4

Crop to a clue that tells us the title of this image. What does the title and date of the image tell you?

I don't see a date but the title tells me it's about agriculture.

Crop to a clue that you have a question about. What is your question?

What does 6 per CT. interest mean?

Crop to a fact that this image definitely tells us about the past. How do you know this is a fact?

It includes numbers and prices.

Crop to why this image was important at the time it was created. What else was going on during this time period?

They were trying to get people to move west.

Crop to a place where you would add something to this image. What would you add and why?

I would add native american people because they likely lived here and may have been forced out of their land.

Theoretical Framework - SCOPE

Concept	Definition	Areas of Inquiry Aligned to this Exploratory Program Evaluation
Social justice	A corrective and liberatory practice that acknowledges the history of systems of oppression along with its modern day legacies. This is explicitly addressed through the equitable distribution of resources, opportunities, and attainment of full social, political, economic, and human rights for all.	RQ2. To what extent do teachers and their students to explore issues of justice (e.g. societal structures, power, injustices, or inequities (Muhammad, 2020) through primary source learning that is beyond representational justice of the source selection?
Cost	Losses assumed to be either due to or avoided by open education.	Future <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Time (workshop, class time to implement with students) <input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive load (number of questions) <input type="checkbox"/> Political costs - curriculum requirements & prohibitions
Outcomes	Presumed effects due to open education.	RQ3. How do teaching practices nurture deeper learning through meaningful interactions among questions, primary sources, and student responses?
Perceptions	Impressions and opinions of open education.	Future - How do teachers and students, and teacher education faculty evaluate OER primary sources and Crop It?
Engagement	Fully participating and being actively involved in open education	RQ1. How are people engaged with Crop It?

Theoretical Framework - Historical Responsive Literacy

Definition for Social Justice Outcomes

Muhammad's (2021) Historical Responsive Literacy was used to identify Crop It Activities that explored Social Justice

1. **Identity Development:** Encouraging students to explore and understand their own identities, as well as those of others, fostering a sense of self-awareness and cultural appreciation.
2. **Skill Development:** Focusing on student agency in the development of acquisition of academic skills across disciplines, including reading, writing, and critical thinking, to ensure students meet educational standards.
3. **Intellectual Development:** Promoting deep understanding and knowledge-building by engaging students with complex ideas and encouraging them to think critically about various subjects.
4. **Criticality:** Teaching students to analyze and question societal structures and issues of power, equity, and oppression, enabling them to recognize and challenge injustices and inequities.

Key throughline - **Joy** throughout learning

Methods

For this exploratory program evaluation, two independent coders used priori codes from Muhammad's framework and SCOPE to analyze data analytics from the OER Crop It Tool for Primary Source Analysis.

After initial coding was completed, the coders met to achieve consensus on discrepant codes.

Descriptive statistics were calculated. A coding scheme for teacher use of the question sets was developed (i.e. without editing, re-order, reduce the number, edit the language, combine questions, or create their own).

Exploration results are reported here for three research questions.

Program Information

14 Intro Workshops and Conference Presentations were facilitated

- 151 participants from 8 states: CA, NM, FL, KY, SC, DE, NY, MA
- 102 pre-service teachers created a new Crop-It during sessions
- 8 pre-service teachers shared their Crop-Its for course colleagues to try and provide feedback

RQ1. How are people engaged with Crop It?

334 Crop Its were completed from August 1 2024 to April 14, 2025

- 173 printed during a Pre-Service Teacher Preparation Course Class (120 prints of Sojourner Truth & Jackie Robinson, 53 new Crop Its)

Data Sources

- 159 printed by Internet Users* data analyzed for this evaluation RQ1 & RQ2
Printing saves: Date, Image, Question Set, and Saved Responses

* Note:

- 2 were designed by a TPS Network teacher and posted in online community
- 4 were designed by Agile Teacher Lab staff

Types of Sources

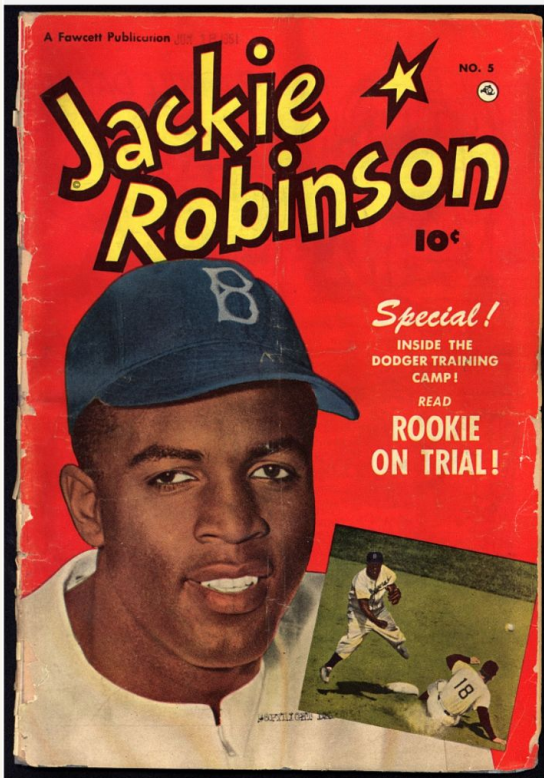
165 included images from the Library of Congress (49%) 169 included images from other websites (51%)

Frequency of Prints	1	2-10	11-20	20-35*	90-100
Source Types					
Ad	3	4	4	1	0
Art	1	0	0	1	0
Cartoon	3	0	0	0	0
Map	1	1	0	1	0
Painting	1	0	0	0	0
Photograph	2	3	2	0	1
Newspaper	0	0	0	1	0

* Possibly used with students, RQ3

Primary Sources + Question Sets

Image students will work with:



Context:

Title: Jackie Robinson

Subject: Social Studies

Grade: 4th

Lesson/Unit: Sports Throughout History

1	Prompt:	Crop to show an engaging beginning.
	Think:	What makes beginnings engaging?
2	Prompt:	Crop to show a high point middle.
	Think:	What makes a story interesting?
3	Prompt:	Crop to show a memorable ending.
	Think:	Why do we remember stories?

Copy Image URL

Copy Crop-It URL

Try this crop-it!

Five Question Sets Are Provided

Reading Historical Photographs

RH1	Crop to to a part of the picture that caught your eye. Describe how shapes and colors make you infer things in the picture.
RH2	Describe how shapes and colors make you infer things in the picture.
RH3	Crop to the most important part of this photograph. Why were the objects placed in this portrait? What is the meaning of each object?
RH4	Crop to a clue that helps us know when this was taken. What helps us identify time?
RH5	Crop to something that sparks questions for you. Write your wondering like this sentence: "I see ___ that makes me wonder___."

Inferring Historical Contexts

IH1	Crop to to a clue that tells us the title of this image.
IH2	Crop to a clue that you have a question about. What is your question?
IH3	Crop to a fact that this image definitively tells us about the past. How do you know this is a fact?
IH4	Crop to why this image was important at the time it was created. What else was going on during this time period?
IH5	Crop to a place where you would add something to this image. What would you add and why?

Use of Question Sets

10					
					Art Expression, Impact of Spanish-American War
					Media Literacy
	5				Media Literacy
		4			Media Literacy
	AS IS		3		Media Literacy
AS IS	AS IS				Media Literacy
AS IS	AS IS	AS IS		1	Media Literacy
5Ws (10)	Historical Context (5)	Reading Historical Photographs (4)	Emotion & Motion (3)	Visual Story (1)	Created Own Questions (7)

RQ2. To what extent do teachers and their students to explore issues of justice (e.g. societal structures, power, injustices, or inequities (Muhammad, 2020) through primary source learning that is beyond representational justice of the source selection?

8 images included a group of people that were legally marginalized or segregated by the government during that time period.

3			
	2	2	
			1
Reduced Questions from 1 Set	Combined Questions from 2 sets	Copied As Is	Edited Questions to focus on Social Justice

Analysis suggests that representation, e.g. the selection of an image depicting historically marginalized people, does not automatically promote criticality for students in analyzing or questioning injustice. The interaction among the selected questions and images supported student considering social justice in their responses (see examples, slides 17-19).

Example: Combined Questions Provoke Criticality



Crop to show what first caught your eye. Why did you notice this part?

I noticed this because I didn't realize there was an entire organization dedicated to opposing women's suffrage.

Crop to show who or what this image is about. Why is this person(s)/thing(s) important?

These men are important because they oppose the rights of women to vote.

Crop to show a tension or a problem. Do you see other problems?

The woman is watching the men congregate in direct defiance to her potential right to vote.

Crop to why this image was important at the time it was created. What else was going on during this time period?

Time of reform movements in the US.

Crop to a clue you have a question about. What is your question?

What are the men actually doing? What is this headquarters for?

Missing Historical Context & Criticality



Unedited question set

Crop to to a part of the picture that caught your eye. Describe how shapes and colors make you infer things in the picture.

The shape of the dog looks healthy which seems odd for the time period. In general, the photo has more colors than many at this time.

Crop to the most important part of this photograph. Why were the objects placed in this portrait? What is the meaning of each object?

To show them bridging a connection between the Native Americans and the pilgrims. Accepting the food creates a relationship where the two groups would help each other.

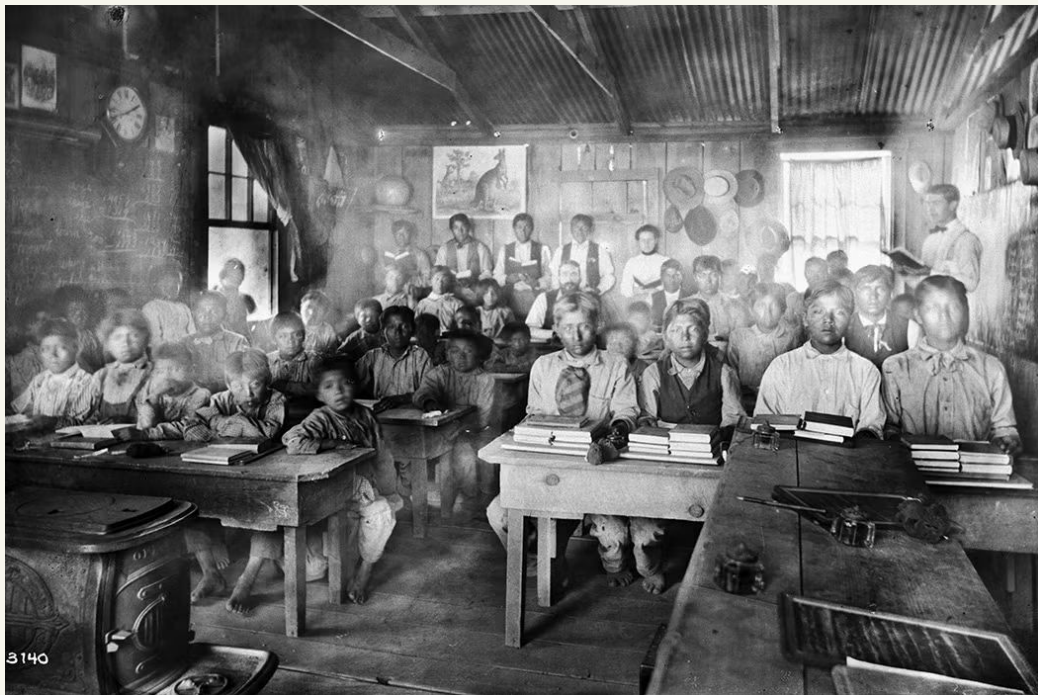
Crop to a clue that helps us know when this was taken. What helps us identify time?

This is a classic image of the clothing that pilgrims wore at this time.

Crop to something that sparks questions for you. Write your wondering like this sentence: "I see ___ that makes me wonder___."

I see no native Americans sitting at the table. This makes me wonder why there were pilgrims at the table but not Native Americans.

Missing Historical Context & Criticality



Crop to show what first caught your eye. Why did you notice this part?

Why is there a kangaroo on the poster?

Crop to show the most important part of the image. Why is this important?

The students are who we should be focusing on.

Crop to a clue that tells us when this is happening. What helps us recognize specific times?

Looks like a teacher (possible white) is teaching this group of Native students.

Crop to a part of the image that shows motion. Are things moving fast or slow? What makes you think that?

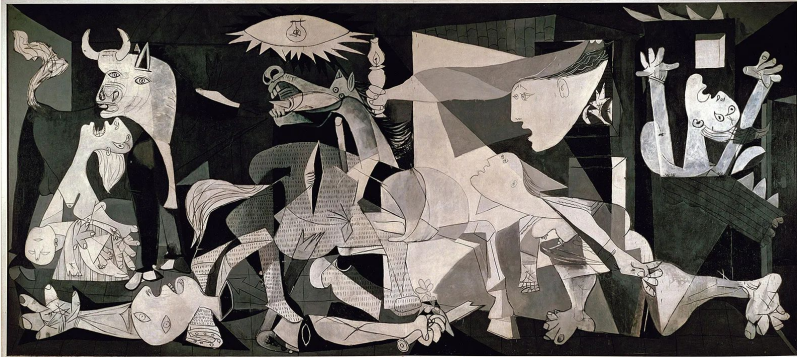
These students are blurry. Are they moving?

Combined question set

RQ3. How do teaching practices nurture outcomes of deeper learning through meaningful interactions among questions, primary sources, and student responses?

- Even when the questions are designed to nurture meaningful interactions with the primary source, student responses vary (see slides 20, 21, 22).

Primary Sources



Picasso, P. (1881-1973). Guernica: 4-Fold.
London: Scala, 2003.

Edited Question Set

- Crop to show what first caught your eye. Why did you notice this part?
- Crop to something that shows the emotion expressed in the image. What emotion(s) do you see?
- Crop to something that looks like an animal. How would you describe the animal?
- Crop to a part of the image where you think the artist is using symbolism. Why did you choose this part?
- Crop to something that shows motion or action. Why did you choose this part?
- Crop to an interesting use of color, line, or shape. What do the colors, lines, or shapes make you feel?



Diversity of Student Responses to Crop-It of *Guernica* by Pablo Picasso

	Crop to show what first caught your eye. Why did you notice this part?	Crop to something that shows the emotion expressed in the image. What emotion(s) do you see?	Crop to something that looks like an animal. How would you describe the animal?	Crop to a part of the image where you think the artist is using symbolism. Why did you choose this part?	Crop to something that shows motion or action. Why did you choose this part?	Crop to an interesting use of color, line, or shape. What do the colors, lines, or shapes make you feel?
Student 1	bc	a lot	big	lol	idk	idk
Student 2	its scary	sad	sad	sad	sad	sad
Student 3	It has more detail than the rest of it.	Pain or sadness	I would think its a bull or some cow	It looks like it symbolizes war or a battle	The light is giving off very little	This white or tan block seems out of place to me
Student 4	The thing looked very unique	Pain, shock	It looks like a horse	person in pain from the war	holding someone who is in pain	lots of abstract lines and light and dark shades mix
Student 5	Someone is being stomped on by multiple people and animals.	This person is scared, fearful.	Hectic, all over the place.	I chose this part because it looks like this person is crying over someones death.	I chose this because I actually don't know the resemblance of this at all.	The colors, lines, and shapes make me feel overwhelmed because I don't understand what this picture means or represents.

Diversity of Student Responses to Crop-It of 9/11 NY Times Cover Page



	Crop to show what first caught your eye. Why did you notice this part?	Crop to show who or what this image is about. Why is this event important?	Crop to a headline or subtitle that you think shows the most emotion. What kind of emotion is being shown in this headline? What type of tone does this set about this event?
Student 1	9/11	The attack	Sad
Student 2	Because it was a bombing.	Because it was the time that the US got attacked terribly.	scared
Student 3	the explosion	Two airplanes crashed into the twin towers.	Is uses the word terror to make feel fear and terrified.
Student 4	The tower is exploding after getting crashed into.	This is important because it was an huge terrorist attack.	The emotion was angry and upset. The tone that was set was the someone had to pay.
Student 5	I noticed this first because of the fire and I know that the buildings are going to fall down	It is important because it was the reason why a lot of peoples lives changed and also changed a lot in the U.S	The president is seeking vengeance and is experiencing anger for the evil that occurred
Student 6	There is a giant building that is smoke and I noticed it first because of that and because it is in the middle of the picture.	The image is about the U.S and how they got attacked and how airplanes hit the Pentagon and World Trade Center.	This shows the most emotion because the U.S is really mad at whoever caused the kamakazie on the towers and wants them to pay.



Diversity of Student Responses to *Dec 1941 Make Him Pay for That Day*

	Crop to show what first caught your eye. Why did you notice this part?	Crop to a clue that tells us when this is happening. What helps us recognize specific times?	Crop to show a tension or a problem. What types of emotions are illustrated in this cartoon?
Student 1	first things I saw	The date	harsh emotions like angry and sadness
Student 2	A knife stabbed inside	A specific date	Blood is showing different emotions such as maybe fear
Student 3	It's a bloody knife	The date of the event	Revenge
Student 4	I saw the knife with blood on it and it carved a 7 on the paper.	It says December 7th 1941 on the paper.	The emotions that are shown are they want revenge and they are still sad and angry to think about what happened on that day.
Student 5	Because the red blood coming from the knife stood out first.	It helps us recognize it because it's on a calendar.	There are many emotions captured in this cartoon, like revenge, frustration, and mad.
Student 6	because this was the day the pearl harbor had happened	it is talking about pearl harbor and I know this because it is talking about that day	there is kind of a dark emotion to this cartoon because of the knife and the blood on it



Missouri Compromise Map

	Crop the area where the issue we have been talking about took place Explain in 3-4 sentences what the issue was	Crop one of the solutions used to fix the problem Explain what the solution you selected was and how it helped to fix the problem	Crop the region that would have supported the Missouri Compromise Explain why this region would have supported what the Missouri Compromise was trying to do	Crop the region that would have been against the Missouri Compromise Explain why this region would have been against what the Missouri Compromise was trying to do	Crop where future problems in the West might occur after the Missouri Compromise *Remember the territories we acquire after this* What might happen when they try to join the US?
Student 1	The south wanted slavery to continue. But the north wanted it to stop	The line was to divide the north and the south. Above the line slavery was not legal. Below the line slavery was legal.	Since the south added a Missouri as a slave state. The north added Maine as a free state. The north did this so one side would hold more power than another side.	The North region did not want slavery to be a thing so they tried to go against the south.	
Student 2	I clicked this because we were talking about there are equal free and slave states and when Missouri wanted to be a slave state but there were 11 slave states already and there were 11 free states it would make it have 12 slave states and 11 free states and the law says they can't cross that line.	I picked this because Missouri is trying to turn into a slave state and it straightened the west so the law told them they could not turn into a slave state.	The way of life would not change.	I marked this because they believed that anything north of 36°30' is not a slave state.	
Student 3	That Missouri wanted to join as a slave state but they had a balance of free and slave states so they had to add one free state for every slave state added	Maine joined the U.S. making a balance between slave and free states	Was made to split slave and free states	This region would have been against the Missouri compromise because they didn't want more slave states	This could be a problem because if they tried to join as a free or slave state they would have to add the opposite in order to make it balanced so they have an equal say.

Significance & Future Evaluations

SCOPE and Muhammad's frameworks support program development and evaluation of OER curricula and digital learning activities aimed examining teaching practices designed to nurture social justice and deeper meaningful student learning.

SCOPE integrated theories of social justice, motivation, cognition, and engagement increasing depth in our exploration of the evaluation data (Wiley, 2021).

Future evaluations may further examine cost and engagement.

Teacher education courses should support teachers in considering the interaction among questions and primary sources to further deeper meaningful learning.

Teacher education course should prepare teachers to respond to diverse student responses.

Students should compare and contrast each other's responses to deepen their analysis of the image and develop awareness of multiple perspectives.

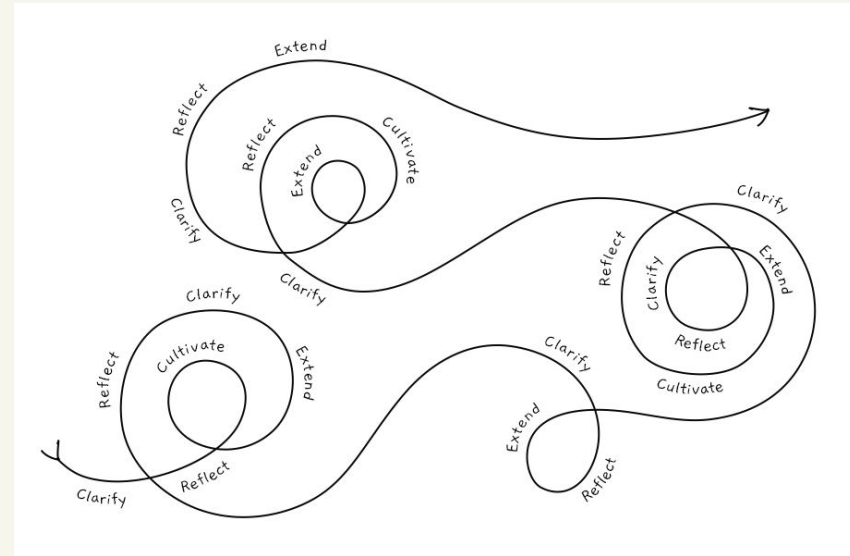
Next Steps: Deeper Learning Loops

Step 1: Understand Student Thinking

- **Clarify:** Understand student responses
- **Reflect:** Share back a thread of meaning expressed through student thinking and/or feeling.

Step 2: Prompt Deeper Learning

- **Cultivate:** Nurture student thinking
- **Extend:** Summarize and use learning then plan next steps



References

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- Muhammad, G. E., Ortiz, N. A., & Neville, M. L. (2021). A historically responsive literacy model for reading and mathematics. *The Reading Teacher*, 75(1), 73-81. doi.org/10.1002/trtr.2035

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We design tools that help teachers
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Highlighted Tools



What We Do

We bridge research and practice to design tools and methodologies that support teachers in their professional development holistically.

[Learn about Our Research](#)



Our Approach

We believe practice is key to strengthening skills. A lot of our tools isolate key interactions in the classroom and create simulated environments for practice.

[Learn about Agile Teaching](#)



Who We Are

Our team is composed of in-service teachers, researchers, teacher education experts, creatives, and programmers who share passion for empowering teachers.

[Learn about us](#)

Bonus Slides



Our Purpose



Jarvis Givens, Associate Professor
Harvard Graduate School of Education

To disrupt patterns of literacy achievement, teachers need more than reading methods and interventions, teachers must increase knowledge of the historical roots of language and literacy teaching practices and reject deficit perspectives of literacy abilities (Bartolomé, 1994).

Teaching Language and Literacy as an Act of Resistance (TLLAR)

1. Examine racial barriers to literacy through the story of Sojourner Truth
2. Disrupt classroom barriers to literacy development through focusing on meaning making with students while teaching with primary sources.

Historical Knowledge



Copyright 1864 by Sojourner Truth
Library of Congress. Gladstone Collection
<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/ppmsca.08978>

Simulated lesson plan



STUDENT OBJECTIVE: USE SPECIFIC EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT YOUR IDEAS

Student Task

How do details in this portrait depict Sojourner Truth's use of literacy in her work?

Must Haves

1. Use specific details from the image and/or quote
2. Explain how multiple details are connected to literacy

Amazing

- A. Use specific vocabulary
- B. Include facts about the time period in the explanation
- C. Explain your thinking process

TPS Teachers Network

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