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Collaboration of the Teacher Librarian and the Classroom Teacher to Incorporate Literature and Information Literacy Skills into a Sixth Grade Social Studies Unit

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COLLABORATION OF THE TEACHER LIBRARIAN AND THE CLASSROOM

TEACHER TO INCORPORATE LITERATURE AND INFORMATION LITERACY

SKILLS INTO A SIXTH GRADE SOCIAL STUDIES UNIT

A Graduate Research Paper

Submitted to the

Division of School Library Studies

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

By

Susan A. Klett
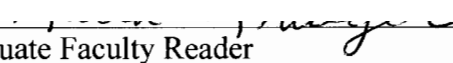
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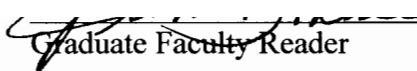
Titled: Collaboration of the Teacher Librarian and the Classroom Teacher to Incorporate

Literature and Information Literacy Skills into a Sixth Grade Social Studies Unit

has been approved as meeting the research requirement for the

Degree of Master of Arts.
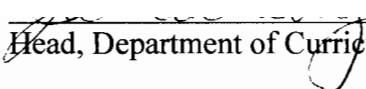
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ABSTRACT

Collaboration between the teacher librarian and classroom teacher is essential to effectively teach information literacy skills and give students a wider view of the world through literature. This action research paper traces the collaboration of the teacher librarian and classroom teacher as they plan and implement a sixth grade social studies unit that incorporates historical fiction, primary sources, and informational text. This paper also analyzes the reaction and learning of the sixth grade students by means of their responses to the SLIM Assessment.

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INTRODUCTION

Literature can breathe a new life of understanding into the dry bones of difficult

concepts. This is true in all of the content areas including social studies. Children's

literature gives students a better grasp of life in otherwise unfamiliar historical periods

and geographical locations (Rycik, 2009). According to Pantaleo (2002), "Literature

entertains, stretches imagination, elicits a wealth of emotions, and develops compassion.

It generates questions and new knowledge, affords vicarious experiences of other worlds

and provides encounters with different beliefs and values" (p. 211).

Not only is children's literature important in bringing life to the social studies

content, collaboration between the teacher librarian and the social studies teacher is

necessary as well. The Iowa School Library Program Guidelines (State Library of Iowa &

Iowa Department of Education, 2007) state that teacher librarians and classroom teachers

should collaborate to develop, teach, and evaluate information literacy learning

experiences. Further, the guidelines encourage teacher librarians to work with classroom

teachers to "design authentic assignments that allow students to create new knowledge

and develop life-long learning skills" (p. 10). As the Starmont teacher librarian (the

researcher in this study) and a middle school social studies teacher collaborate, students

can accomplish the expected outcomes of the Common Core State Standards which

include "expressing ideas in written form, reading reflectively and critically, and

analyzing their own and others opinions on social issues" (Iowa Department of

Education, 2010, para. 3).

Justification

Literature in the Social Studies Classroom

Research has shown that children's literature enhances the social studies curriculum; stories powerfully shape our view of reality and offer familiar narrative context that supports learning (Combs & Beach, 1994). Landt (2007) concurs that "introducing students to an area of the world through images and narratives assists in providing collective background knowledge, developing a schema and stimulating interest in the culture" (p. 9). A literature-enhanced curriculum makes students cognizant of ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity. Interesting characters and vivid descriptions stimulate imagination and maintain interest (Berson, Ouzts, & Walsh, 1999).

The Iowa Department of Education has adopted the Iowa Core State Standards (Iowa Department of Education, 2010) for five social studies content areas: behavioral sciences, economics, geography, history, and political science/civic literacy. Different genres of children's literature--multicultural literature, folktales, historical fiction, nonfiction and biography, and international literature--can help students understand the different social studies content areas. According to Rochman (1993) multicultural books "break down borders. They surprise us—whether they are set close to home or abroad. They change our view of ourselves; they extend that phase 'like me' to include what we thought was foreign and strange" (p. 9). Multicultural literature can help students master the Iowa Core essential skills of describing, comparing and contrasting various types of societies and culture groups. A nation's folktales give students a glimpse into its people--their beliefs, attitudes, behavior and how time and geographic location have shaped them (Perez-Sable, 2005). Historical fiction can give students memorable examples of the

following essential skills: (a) how the location of an area has affected the culture of the people and (b) how and why the expression of differing points of view can lead to compromise and demonstrate that one person's exercise of freedom may conflict with the freedom of others. Norton (1995), in her book *Through the Eyes of a Child*, substantiates the claim that children's literature, particularly historical fiction, enables students to (a) relive the past vicariously; (b) gain an understanding of their own heritage;(c) discover universal truths; (d) judge relationships and (e) realize present and future are linked to the past. Nonfiction books and biographies, according to Turner, Broemmel, and Wooten (2004) "are powerful tools, often highly superior to textbook material for involving students in an interactive way. They make content more accessible, learnable, and interesting" (p. 20). These books can help students as they examine the essential concepts of why governments change, how they change and the role individuals play in bringing about change. Biographies can also help students identify and evaluate the contributions of leaders in various eras and locations and help them identify significant individuals who have impacted history in a positive or negative way. International literature can enable students to "intimately enter the hearts and minds and spirits of other people" (Clark, White, & Bluemel, 2004, p.13).

Collaboration in the Social Studies Classroom

The AASL (2007) *Standards for the 21st Century Learner* assert that collaboration between the teacher librarian and the classroom teacher is important in the content areas. According to the AASL Standards, school librarians should collaborate with others to "provide instruction, learning strategies, and practice in using the essential learning skills

needed in the 21st century" (p. 3). Learners use these skills to inquire, think critically, draw conclusions, and create new knowledge.

Estes and Brady (2005) describe a collaborative effort that, while taking place on the high school level, has ramifications for collaborative efforts between teacher librarians and social studies teachers at the middle school level. Students in Estes's World History class must apply the Machiavellian model of political leadership to another leader in history. After students do some initial textbook research, they go to the library where teacher-librarian Ann Brady leads a two-day lesson on the research steps, covering such techniques as types of resources available, web site evaluation, bibliographies, and proper citation. She also helps students narrow their interest into a usable topic. As students continue, Brady and Estes "tag team the rest of the process" (p. 28). Estes handles organization and format, while Brady continues to help with proper citation and bibliographies. They both assist students with the outlining phase. Estates states,

> In effect, we team teach this project. In addition to helping students locate resources, Ann covers citation and research skills. She even goes so far as to grade components of the project such as the research guide and bibliography. This frees me up to work with the students on organizing their arguments and actually writing their papers. The end result is that two education professionals pooling their talents can often yield four times the results" (p. 29).

Literature and Collaboration Combined in the Social Studies Classroom

Benefits of using literature and collaboration in the social studies curriculum have been documented. Clark, White, and Bluemel (2004) describe a collaborative effort in Colleyville Middle School, Colleyville, TX. As part of a research study of another country and its peoples, students were required to read an international novel or biography. The responsibilities of the teacher librarian based on collaboration with the social studies teacher included introducing print and electronic resources, assisting

students in selecting an international novel or biography and discussing with them details woven into their stories—food, weather, leisure activities, family celebrations, time periods, and cultural roots. Thus the teacher librarian helped with both the literature component and the research component of the unit. The study states that teachers "were delighted to discover that while some students were initially reluctant to read an international novel or biography, many finished the experience with enthusiasm" (p. 14).

These same results can be achieved in sixth grade social studies classes at Starmont through the use of children's literature and collaboration between the teacher librarian and the social studies teacher. The teacher librarian at Starmont can assist social studies teachers in choosing appropriate children's literature for the Iowa Core Social Studies Standards (2009) and teach the information literacy and the research process to help students with the research projects that grow out of their reading.

Deficiencies

Starmont teachers have aligned their social studies units to the Iowa Core State Standards. There are numerous useful bibliographies for teachers and teacher librarians to consult for literature choices to coordinate with social studies units. However, the need for collaboration between teacher librarian and social studies teacher in the instructional use of literature and the research project component of social studies is not as clearly addressed. This research will address the process for collaboration between the teacher librarian and a sixth grade teacher at Starmont Middle School on the choice of books, the implementation of those books into the social studies curriculum, and the research projects that will be based on students' reading.

Significance

Research-based units collaboratively planned to incorporate children's literature and primary sources are specifically aimed at assisting sixth grade teachers at Starmont Middle School. Prior to this research, there was no intentional, purposeful collaboration between the teacher librarian (the researcher) and the social studies teachers at Starmont. In 2008-2009, Starmont changed the full-time teacher librarian position to a part-time one, and in 2010-2011 changed from a fixed schedule to a flexible one, increasing the need for effective collaboration. This action research project will document the collaborative process at the sixth grade level. This research fits a need for a better understanding of collaboration between the teacher librarian and middle school teachers in the content areas and for an increased implementation of collaboration among other teachers and the teacher librarian at Starmont Middle and Elementary Schools. Further, although much research about collaboration has been reported in school library literature, this study will contribute in the area of collaborative action research to inform practice of teacher librarians and classroom teachers wishing to begin the collaboration process.

Problem Statement

The principal at Starmont Middle School has expressed the need for collaboration between the teacher librarian and the classroom teachers in order to integrate children's literature and information literacy skills into their instruction. This collaboration is necessary because information literacy skills are no longer taught as a separate library class, but instead need to be integrated into the existing curriculum. The principal has requested that this collaboration process begin with the teacher librarian and a sixth grade social studies teacher.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of the action research study is to document and analyze the collaboration between the teacher librarian and a sixth grade social studies teacher as they incorporate children's literature and information literacy skills into a unit of sixth grade social studies. This study will identify best practices and provide a model for further collaboration between classroom teachers and the teacher librarian at Starmont Middle School.

Research Questions

1. What strengths of the teacher librarian are useful in the collaborative effort to integrate literature and information literacy instruction into a sixth grade social studies unit?

2. What instruction will the teacher librarian be responsible for in this unit?

3. What strengths of the classroom teacher are useful in the collaborative effort to integrate literature and information literacy instruction into a sixth grade social studies unit?

4. What instruction will the classroom teacher be responsible for in the unit?

5. How do students respond to the literature read and information literary skills taught within the context of a social studies unit?

Assumptions

It is assumed that the teacher librarian at Starmont is able to find resources appropriate for the sixth grade social studies units and to teach information literacy skills. It is also assumed that this sixth teacher at Starmont wants to collaborate with the teacher librarian to develop units that incorporate children's literature and information literacy skills into his or her social studies unit.

Limitations

This research will be done at Starmont Middle School with a sixth grade class. The selection of resources will be based upon Starmont teachers' social studies units, and the time spent in social studies instruction will be based on the instructional schedule at Starmont Middle School.

Definitions

Collaboration as understood in this paper is defined as follows:

Collaboration is a trusting, working relationship between two or more equal participants involved in shared thinking, shared planning and shared creation of integrated instruction. Through a shared vision and shared objectives, student learning opportunities are created that integrate subject content and information literacy by co-planning, co-implementing, and co-evaluating students' progress throughout the instructional process in order to improve student learning in all areas of the curriculum. (Montiel-Overall, 2005, Section A, para. 9)

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this action research study is to analyze and document the collaboration of a sixth grade social studies teacher and the teacher librarian at Starmont Middle School to improve practice. Practices identified will be the selection of relevant children's literature and the design of authentic research projects to teach the steps of the research process within a specific social studies unit. Literature related to this project falls in three areas: the effective use of children's literature in the content areas, the benefits of collaboration between teacher and teacher-librarian in classroom instruction and student achievement, and specific studies of the collaboration of teacher and teacher librarian in the use of primary sources.

Effective Use of Children's Literature in the Content Areas

Galda and Cullinan (2003) stated that millions of dollars are spent each year by parents, teachers, and librarians because they believe "books are good for children" (p. 640). These researchers used a meta-analysis of over 30 research studies from leading research journals such as *Journal of Literacy Research, Journal of Educational Psychology, Harvard Educational Review,* and *Reading Research Quarterly* to ask whether this premise was valid. The studies analyzed the effectiveness of using trade books as an integral part of classroom instruction, and several themes emerged from their analysis. The meta-analysis of Galda and Cullinan indicated that when teachers incorporated tradebooks extensively into their instruction, there were significant gains in reading interest. Several studies concluded that interest level was a determining factor in reading comprehension. In one study analyzed, fifth grade students were tested for

reading comprehension on three passages that corresponded to high level interest topics and three passages that corresponded to low level interest topics. The results showed that all students tested higher in reading comprehension in the high interest topics.

Another theme that emerged from the meta-analysis was the positive relationship between language development and exposure to literature. Galda and Cullinan (2003) analyzed a 1984 study by Nagy, Herman, and Anderson that demonstrated that direct instruction could not account for the more than 3,000 words children in grades 3 through 12 learn each year. This study concluded that, after third grade, children learned most of these words through independent reading. In addition, syntax was positively affected according to the analysis of a 1987 study by Pappas and Brown, a 1988 study by Hade, a 1968 study by Cohen, and a 1988 study by Feitelson. Galda and Cullinan also noted studies that indicated exposure to "narrative patterns through extensive use of trade books increases knowledge about story structure, which in turn improves comprehension of narrative texts" (p. 642).

A third theme that emerged from the Galda and Cullinan (2003) analysis of studies conducted by the National Assessment of Education Progress was that "students who read most read best" (p. 643). Finally, studies analyzed by Galda and Cullinan showed that the use of children's literature in the content areas contributed to writing proficiency. Galda and Cullinan summarized the conclusions of several studies this way: "Contact with literature exposes writers to a variety of lexical and syntactic choices as well as to a variety of narrative patterns that they then may call on in their own production of written text" (p. 643). They also concluded, based on their meta-analysis, that "reading achievement, oral language development, and composition are related to the

amount of reading students do, and this, in turn, depends on the availability of reading materials, most notably trade books" (p. 643).

The problem, according to Galda and Cullinan (2003), was that even though teachers accepted the premise that books are good for children, "many teachers are frustrated in their attempts to incorporate literature into their daily schedule because there is not time. Too often literature is not given its place as a central part of the curriculum" (p. 640).

Ironically, the research studied by Galda and Cullinan (2003) revealed that time— "time to look at books, to think about the experience, to listen to books read aloud, to respond to books, and to read independently" (p. 644) and teachers—teachers who model an enthusiastic response to literature and "create rich classroom contexts, providing children with the opportunities to develop literacy and to deepen aesthetic and literary response(s)" (p. 644) were key to the academic success that resulted from using children's literature in the content areas. Galda and Cullinan concluded that the research "demonstrates the importance of literature in building literacy, and argues for the planned inclusion of trade books in all classrooms" (p. 640).

While Galda and Cullinan (2003) stated that one problem of incorporating literature into the classroom was time, Dunn (2000) studied another hindrance to incorporating literature into the classroom, particularly the social studies classroom: other teachers and principals may not be supportive of instruction that goes beyond the textbook? The problem identified by Dunn's research was that dependence on textbooks, worksheets, and lectures fails to stimulate students' interest and support higher-level thinking. Dunn (2000) interviewed four teachers identified as "practitioners who employ

innovative approaches to social studies instruction" (p. 132). The purpose of this qualitative research was to learn from teachers who successfully implemented alternatives to text-centered social studies instruction. Specific questions about support for non-traditional teaching methods were asked, and teachers also had the opportunity to talk about their teaching experiences in a general way. Interview responses were coded into categories based on social studies reform literature.

The teachers Dunn interviewed used several innovative classroom strategies to stimulate student interest—field trips, guest speakers, panel discussions. Literature, particularly historical fiction and biography, was a significant instructional tool of two of the teachers interviewed. These teachers believed that literature brought to life the emotions and unique perspectives of historical figures.

Dunn found that the teachers interviewed had supportive principals and recommended talking with the principal before implementing a new program to explain goals. Dunn stated, "Teachers should maintain the attitude of a well-informed professional and present a clear rationale for activities" (p. 135). The teachers Dunn interviewed also had good working relationships and support from colleagues primarily because of their willingness to share their expertise and collaborate with other teachers.

Other research focused on what actually happens in a classroom where, despite the hindrances of time and acceptance, literature actually does have a central place in classroom instruction. Roser and Keehn (2002), university-based researchers "served as observers and participants in two fourth-grade classrooms (one urban and one suburban) for approximately two hours per day for six weeks. They were actively involved in each aspect of instruction—planning and lessons and collecting resources, participating in

student book clubs and research groups, and conferring with students. They met daily with teachers to reflect upon, evaluate, and adjust the teaching process. The researchers taped and transcribed book conversations and coded each message unit to generate categories of student talk and identify the types of responses children offered.

The six-week period was divided into three phases. In Phase 1, teachers read aloud, one chapter per day, the biography, *Make Way for Sam Houston* and teachers and students recorded their reflections in a journal. This reflective writing was followed by whole class discussion which ended each day with students deciding what attributes of Sam Houston to record on a wall chart. During Phase 2 students read from historical novels of their choice from that time period. They read for 25 minutes each day and then met in literature circles to discuss the ideas of their book. In Phase 3 students met to share their findings from their group discussions and raised additional questions and issues. Teachers then "formed five inquiry groups around the five major issues raised by the students" (p. 423). Inquiry groups used the textbook, newspapers, the Internet, and library resources to research their questions. They summarized their discoveries and reported to the class.

Results noted by Roser and Keehn (2002) included a "fourfold increase (based on pre-and post-assessments) in children's accurate notions about this period of state history" (p. 424). Student journals revealed thoughtful reflections and they were "willing to work together, to sustain talk, to support ideas with evidence, and to acknowledge and build on others' talk" (p. 424). New skills taught in this unit included comparing information and summarizing multiple sources, and there were setbacks experienced due

to student inexperience with the process. However, both teachers and students expressed "great satisfaction with the literature/social studies link" (p. 425). Teachers also stated:

> The projects are freeing us from a nearly exclusive reliance on social studies and science textbooks. They are helping us stretch times for book clubs outside the scheduled period for language arts, sending us scurrying for supportive texts making us more knowledgeable of resources with which we delve deeper into children's investigations. (p. 425)

Benefits of Collaboration

Just as children's literature in the classroom "energizes and nurtures concept development" (Sandman & Ahern, 2002, p. 15), so collaboration between teacher and teacher-librarian "is, and continues to be, the crucial element in the success children enjoy within and throughout any academic endeavor" (Fredericks, 2007, p. 19). But successful collaboration is based upon many factors, and Brown (2004) contended that "most of us have experienced the professional satisfaction resulting from a successful project, and we've also endured those that were stressful and less productive than anticipated" (p. 13). Brown used the following open-ended questions to gather data: Can you tell me about your most successful collaborative project? Why do you think it was successful? What contributed to the success? These questions were posed in personal interviews to three focus groups: teacher-librarians from urban elementary and secondary schools, grant recipients of a public school/library partnership, and a group of K-12 teacher-librarians attending a professional conference. The same questions were sent via electronic surveys to graduate students enrolled in the Master of Library Science and the Master of Education programs at a large eastern United States university. The same questions were also used in telephone interviews conducted with recipients of a federal grant funded through the Library Services and Technology Act and they were posted to

the electronic discussion forum LM_NET resulting in 24 responses from across the

United States.

Responses to the open-ended questions were collected and analyzed "for recurring

key terms and carefully examined for repeated categories or themes within each success

story. The analysis of all 66 documents and transcripts yielded several basic attributes for

successful collaboration" (p. 14).

Brown (2004) grouped the attributes into two basic categories: environmental

factors and social factors. Environmental factors included scheduled planning meeting,

impromptu discussion, administrative support, flexible scheduling and clearly defined

roles. Scheduled planning meetings were best for establishing goals, defining objectives,

planning activities, and tracking progress, but impromptu discussion also inspired

creativity and sustained motivation and commitment. Administrative support and flexible

scheduling gave teacher librarians more opportunity for collaboration and clearly defined

roles insured that each person's expertise contributed to the outcome.

Social factors that contributed to successful collaboration included a proactive

team leader, shared vision, self-confidence in contribution, open communication, and

trust and mutual respect. Brown concluded that collaboration "is a complex and highly

valued endeavor" and "successful collaboration is *directly related* to quality of

relationships, goals and rewards" (p. 17).

In a similar study, Haycock (2007) also explored the reasons why, despite the

benefits of collaboration—increased creativity among teachers, better and more frequent

communication, educationally sound instructional practices, and more student

involvement—collaboration was not the norm in schools. While Brown's research was

based on data gathered from teachers, Haycock examined collaboration from a broader theoretical perspective. He looked to business and community organizations for models of collaboration and found that these agencies provided a useful framework for determining predictors of success in school environments. Haycock began with 20 factors drawn from the world of business that influence successful collaborations. He clustered them into six areas and applied research from teacher-librarianship to "substantiate and reinforce the factors and provide context for successful collaboration and thus effect on students' learning in schools" (p. 25).

The six clusters identified by Haycock are: factors related to the environment, factors related to membership characteristics, factors related to process and structure, factors related to communication, factors related to purpose, and factors related to resources. For each factor, Haycock provided implication and discussion specifically to teacher and teacher librarian collaboration.

Factors related to the environment included a history of collaboration, the collaborative group seen as a legitimate leader in the community, and a favorable political and social climate. Haycock concluded that where collaboration is expected, collaboration occurs and teachers who collaborate with teacher librarians develop a more positive view of the role of the teacher librarian, continue to collaborate, and welcome closer collaboration.

Factors related to membership characteristics included mutual respect, understanding and trust for members and their respective organizations, an appropriate cross-section of members, members who saw collaboration in their self-interest, and members who had the ability to compromise. According to Haycock, self-interest "might

be seen as improved teaching, improved student learning, or improved confidence in inquiry and the use of learning resources" (p. 28).

Process and structure factors included members who share a stake in process and outcome, multiple layers of participation, flexibility in both structure and methods, the development of clear roles and policy guidelines, the group's ability to sustain itself amid changes and an appropriate pace of development. Haycock summarized: "Clear roles for the partners in collaboration—teacher, teacher librarian, principal—are critical to success. In terms of the teacher librarian, the lack of role clarity, particularly as witnessed by misconceptions and misperceptions, has been a barrier to successful collaboration" (p. 29).

Factors related to communication included open and frequent communication and reliable informal and formal communication links. These factors from outside the educational community indicated that successful collaboration within schools also required a knowledgeable and flexible teacher-librarian with good communication and social skills.

Clear attainable goals and objectives communicated to all and realistically attained, a shared vision, and a unique purpose were factors related to purpose. Factors related to resources included sufficient funds, staff, material, and time and skilled leadership. Haycock (2007) considered both the leadership roles of the principal and teacher-librarian. According to Haycock, "Effective principals assume the roles of decision-setter, facilitator, and communicator; they exemplify vision-building, evolutionary planning, empowerment, resource mobilization and problem-coping/monitoring. They are willing to take risks and provide strong leadership" (p. 32).

Teacher-librarians contribute to successful collaboration when they show similar leadership qualities. Haycock concluded that these while these qualities did not develop automatically, easily, or quickly, effective collaboration had the greatest impact on student achievement.

Although Haycock (2007) analyzed collaboration theory from the world of business and applied that theory to the world of education, Harada (2005) was more practical in her approach. Her research focused on two questions: (a) How do instructional partners effectively facilitate student learning, particularly learning that embeds the information search process? and (b) How do instructional partners refine their craft knowledge? Harada's research summarized four case studies conducted in four elementary schools in Hawaii. These action research projects were guided by Harada and conducted collaboratively by teachers and teacher-librarians. The problems for these action research projects were specific to each school's needs, and though the projects were conducted at various elementary grade levels, each project involved inquiry learning and the information seeking process.

Harada (2005) collected data from each action research project from samples of students' work, reflection logs written by students, lesson plans, informal notes, and anecdotal logs maintained by the teacher and teacher-librarian. Graduate students from the University of Hawaii's Library and Information Science program observed students and Harada conducted unstructured and semistructured interviews each month with participants and made summaries of these interviews available for reaction and reflection.

Several salient themes and issues emerged from this multi-year study. Both instructional partners and students discovered the "power of team thinking." One sixth

grade student wrote, "I had some good ideas but when my team members talked about their ideas, I knew we could come up with something even better if we combined our ideas." Instructors felt the same way and emphasized the need to "reflect privately and exchange ideas publicly as essential elements in constructing knowledge" (pp. 65-66). Collaboratively conducting these action research projects enabled instructional partners to experience inquiry as linear and recursive just as students must. One librarian said:

> Our final unit plan looked very different from our original one. We made so many adjustments to it based on what we observed students doing. . . . We had to be willing to return to the drawing board. This was a lot of work but it was so critical. (p. 66)

Collaboration also led to more student-centered curriculum as instructors discussed how to incorporate more student involvement in the learning process.

> Collaborating teams did face issues of time and leadership. One teacher stated, I won't lie to you. This is a lot of work. It takes a lot of time. But I wasn't satisfied with what I was doing before in terms of research with the kids. Working with my librarian has really opened my eyes. I can see a difference in the quality of what the students are turning in. I didn't realize that she could help with so much of the teaching and conferencing. It's like sharing the workload. (p. 68)

Data collected from these studies indicated that the librarians possessed good collaborative leadership skills. They initiated meeting times, kept records of the sessions and skillfully guided discussions.

Use of Primary Sources

Research by Brown (2004) and Haycock (2007) defined the attributes required for successful collaboration in general, and Harada (2005) presented practical ways teachers and teacher-librarians collaborated to address instructional challenges in different content areas; other studies focused specifically on the use of primary sources. Johnson (2005), a teacher librarian, conducted a case study to record improvements made specifically in

social studies instruction when teacher and teacher-librarian collaborated to get beyond

the limits of PowerPoint presentations in a unit on the Holocaust. As Johnson stated,

bulleted lists which "hardly substituted for serious writing and Google image searches

missed the wealth of images residing in scholarly, focused collections of primary

sources" (p. 22). Johnson and the social studies teacher had a good collaborative

relationship established: creating, disagreeing, experimenting, failing, and improving.

Collaboration in this case study was conducted during quick conversations, not specific

meeting times. Ideas were jotted down to be more fully developed by each partner later.

A lesson plan template was shared, updated, and revised as the unit progressed.

Responsibilities of the librarian included identifying trustworthy websites and teaching

students to link photographs from websites to key words in their essays. The social

studies teacher planned content instruction and reinforced the writing process.

Both instructional partners debriefed at the end of the unit and determined that

they could improve the unit by asking students to "explain, draw, or demonstrate the

relationships between Holocaust subtopics. Likewise, the students can further link their

new understandings to today's world and its continuing humanitarian crises, including

cases of ethnic cleansing" (p. 26).

Whereas Johnson (2005) collaborated with a social studies teacher to teach the

effective use of primary sources, particularly photographs, to illustrate concepts students

wrote about, Brown (2007) researched the effectiveness of using digital primary sources

for teaching information literacy skills. This action research study was conducted in a

rural high school and activities in the project were based on information literacy

standards. Brown had three goals for the students in this project: (a) plan projects using

open-ended research questions requiring more than simple fact gathering and reporting,
(b) investigate scaffolding as an instructional method to be used by the librarian in
collaboration with the classroom teacher, and (c) document the methods that contributed
to successful collaboration between the librarian, classroom teacher, and Brown.

In this project, 12th grade students analyzed primary source documents for
research. These documents focused on life in eastern North Carolina during the 18th and
19th centuries. Primary sources included diaries, letters, maps, and newspaper articles on
topics such as slavery, women's suffrage, and the life of a Civil War soldier. Brown
(2007) established a timeline for the project, assigned responsibilities to the instructional
partners, and planned for evaluation. Throughout the project, they identified areas, such
as framing a research question, keyword searches, and the use of research models, in
which students needed additional instruction. Brown stated, "The guidance of the
librarian for search and selection of appropriate documents was carefully coordinated
with the instructional time needed to help students with their writing style and their
forming valid conclusion statements" (p. 31).

Students were, at first, frustrated with the research process because in the past
they had simply copied and pasted facts, and considered the research paper finished. With
guidance from the teacher and teacher librarian, students learned to refine research
questions, thoughtfully reflect on the content of the documents, and reach valid
conclusions. Students used primary sources to compare several different viewpoints for
one historical event and learned that "differences in region, period, and economic status
affect the reporting of facts in primary documents and they learned that documents were
not always entirely accurate" (p. 31). Finally, students did learn to work cooperatively.

Students worked under pressure and faced glitches in technology but recognized the benefits of shared responsibility.

Brown and her instructional partners learned that planning and sharing expertise are essential to a successful collaborative experience. The librarian in particular guided students in developing sound research strategies that were most effective for their particular topics, helped students focus and evaluate their web searches, and helped with the technology used in presentations. Brown concluded that the outcome of this research "makes a clear case to support earlier research in collaborative practices between the librarian and the classroom teacher and it adds to the evidence that collaboration between teachers and specialists contributes to enhanced learning experiences" (p. 32).

Summary

Galda and Cullinan (2003) in their meta-analysis concluded that "books, time to spend with books, and a supportive, enthusiastic teacher are essential elements in the creation of readers" (p. 644) but noted that teachers are frustrated by the lack or perceived lack of time for children's literature in the classroom. Dunn (2000) interviewed teachers who did implement children's literature in the social studies classroom in addition to the textbook to determine if they experienced negative reactions from other teachers or administrators. Roser and Keehn (2002) conducted an action research project that documented the positive instructional results from the use of children's literature, both historical fiction and biography, in two fourth grade classes.

Brown (2004) analyzed the responses of practicing teacher-librarians and graduate students enrolled in Master of Library Science and the Master of Education programs to determine the attributes of successful collaboration, and Haycock (2007)

used the definition 20 factors of collaboration from organizations and agencies and applied it to classroom collaboration. Harada (2005) documented the results of four successful action research collaboration projects between teachers and teacher-librarians in four elementary schools in Hawaii.

Finally, Johnson (2005) and Brown (2007) presented action research studies of successful collaboration between teachers and teacher librarians specifically concerning the use of primary sources in research projects.

Research has shown that using children's literature related to specific content area objectives increases not only interest and comprehension, but also knowledge of the content area as well (Galda & Cullinan, 2003; Roser & Keehn, 2002). A flexible schedule for teaching information literacy skills requires effective collaboration between the classroom teacher and the teacher librarian. Effective collaboration does not happen automatically, but attributes of effective collaboration have been identified (Brown, 2004; Haycock, 2007) and models of successful collaboration between teachers and teacher librarians have been published (Brown, 2007; Harada, 2005; Johnson, 2005).

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

With the change at Starmont Middle School from a fixed schedule for library instruction to a flexible schedule, collaboration between the classroom teachers and the teacher librarian is crucial in order to ensure that students learn information literacy skills. This action research study was conducted to document and analyze the collaboration process between a sixth grade social studies teacher and the teacher librarian to incorporate children's literature and teach information literacy skills within the context of a social studies unit.

Research Design

According to Creswell (2008), educators use action research to systematically study a local issue in order to improve school practice. In the past at Starmont Middle School, collaboration between classroom teachers and the teacher librarian has not been the common practice, but the current administration has encouraged a team teaching model. The results of this study of the collaboration between a sixth grade classroom teacher and the teacher librarian provided a model for further collaboration between classroom teachers and the teacher librarian at Starmont Middle School. Data in this action research study was collected from planning meetings, from field notes--text recorded by the researcher during observation, and from the School Library Impact Measure (SLIM) Assessment—student responses to information literacy questions thoughts recorded in response to specific prompts (Todd, Kuhlthau, & Heinstrom, 2005). During the study the researcher and the classroom teacher recorded collaboration techniques used and documented the instructional strategies and assessments used in

teaching the unit. The SLIM Assessment provided data that revealed student response to the information literacy skills and literature taught in the unit.

Population

This study occurred from March 25 through May 9, 2013 at Starmont Middle School, part of the Starmont Community School District, a northeast Iowa rural K-12 school with 650 students serving the communities of Strawberry Point, Arlington, and Lamont. This study involved a homogeneous sampling of students as recommended by Creswell (2008). Two classes of 14 and 15 sixth grade students respectively were used for the project and 16 students (approximately half of each class) gave the researcher permission to use their responses.

The teacher librarian (this researcher) has served as the Starmont Community District teacher librarian since the 2008-2009 school year. At that time, the position was changed from a full-time teacher librarian position to a part-time one. The teacher librarian is responsible for two libraries, a K-8 library and a high school library, housed in two separate rooms in one building. The teacher librarian has three periods each day for work in the library and spends one-third of the time in the high school library and two-thirds of the time in the K-8 library. Included in the K-8 library periods are two kindergarten classes which meet three times a week for twenty minutes each six-day cycle and two preschool classes which meet for fifteen minutes once each cycle. The teacher librarian is also responsible for teaching two classes of English 9 and two classes of English 12 in the high school.

The sixth grade classroom teacher was purposefully selected for this study because of her interest in collaboration and her varied experience teaching middle school

students. The sixth grade teacher has taught at Starmont for 13 years and her experience includes 7th and 8th grade social studies; 5th grade Language Arts, reading, and social studies; and 6th grade Language Arts, reading, math, social studies, and technology. The Starmont principal affirmed this research.

Data Gathering Instruments

Data were collected for both the collaboration process and the actual instruction of a sixth grade social studies unit. A pre-planning collaboration guide (Appendix A) was completed separately by both the classroom teacher and the teacher librarian before the first meeting. This guide identified the social and environmental factors needed to make the collaboration venture a success (Brown, 2004). Both the teacher and teacher librarian listed the strengths and expectations they bring to the collaboration effort. This guide was completed by each individual and shared through Google Docs before first meeting.

In addition, a Unit Planning Template (Appendix B) adapted from Dr. Jean Donham's Effective Instruction workshop conducted at the Keystone Area AEA on Wednesday, March 17, 2010 and the researcher's Inquiry Learning course at the University of Northern Iowa, Fall Semester 2011, was used for the initial collaborative meeting. Essential skills and objectives for both content area and library were recorded on this guide. A Unit Schedule (Appendix C) which listed activities, co-teaching strategies, and teacher responsibilities was also constructed.

The School Library Impact Measure (SLIM) assessment (Appendix D) was completed three times by sixth graders to record their progress in information literacy skills. This assessment consisted of five questions responded to at the beginning and

middle of the research project, and six questions at the end. Student responses were coded

according to the SLIM Handbook (Todd, Kuhlthau, & Heinstrom, 2005).

The classroom teacher and teacher librarian recorded observations following

twenty social studies classes. Field notes (Appendix E) documented (a) what was

accomplished during the class, (b) what collaborative and instructional techniques

enabled the lesson to go as smoothly as possible, (c) what positive student activity was

observed, (d) what frustrations or obstacles were faced, and (e) what steps can be taken to

overcome the frustrations or obstacles. The classroom teacher and teacher librarian

communicated primarily through email after each class to assess student progress and

discuss observations about the instructional process.

Procedures

Informed consent forms were obtained from the classroom teacher and from

sixteen participating students and their parents. The classroom teacher and teacher

librarian then collaboratively planned the unit and selected the children's literature to be

used during the unit. Specific roles and responsibilities were assigned to the classroom

teacher and the teacher librarian.

The literature component of this unit included seven articles, six from

Cobblestone, April 1998 and one from *Scholastic Scope*, October 2012. In addition, the

classes read *A Family Apart*, a historical novel about a family of children who rode an

orphan train by Joan Lowry Nixon.

Information literacy skills in this unit included use of The Big6 skills and

Stripling's Model of Inquiry, primary sources, APA citation style, a pathfinder, Gale

Cengage *General OneFile* (a database available from Keystone AEA), close reading,

note taking, paraphrasing, and synthesizing information into a presentation. The teacher librarian was responsible for this instruction. Additional brief meetings times were arranged for on-going collaboration during the unit to evaluate and adapt, and after the unit to analyze and reflect.

According to Creswell (2008), the data in a qualitative action research study can be studied by identifying dominant themes from the data. Data collected is read, coded (text segments are labeled) and from these codes, general themes are established. These themes provide the answers to the research questions. At the end of this study, field notes and SLIM assessments were read and emerging themes noted and summarized.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed to answer the research questions: (a) What strengths of the teacher librarian are useful in the collaboration effort to integrate literature and information literacy instruction into a sixth grade social studies unit? (b) What instruction will the teacher librarian be responsible for in this unit? (c) What strengths of the classroom teacher are useful in the collaborative effort to integrate literature and information literacy into a sixth grade social studies unit? (d) What instruction will the classroom teacher be responsible for in this unit? and (e) How do students respond to the literature read and information literacy skills taught within the context of a social study unit? Themes were identified to determine best practices for collaboration between a classroom teacher and a teacher librarian at Starmont Middle School.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Collaboration, as defined by Montiel-Overall (2005) is a trusting working relationship between two or more equal participants involved in shared thinking, shared planning, and shared creation of integrated instruction. Brown (2004) stressed the importance of scheduled planning meetings to establish goals, define objectives, plan activities, and track progress. In addition to scheduled meetings, impromptu discussions were important to inspire creativity and sustain motivation. Based on this definition and these expectations, the goal of this action research project was to work with a sixth grade classroom teacher to integrate literature, specifically historical fiction, and information literacy skills into a sixth grade social studies unit.

Collaboration

At the beginning of this action research project, the teacher librarian discussed possible topics with the classroom teacher and identified resources available in the library. Both the teacher and the teacher librarian (this researcher) filled out a Pre-Collaboration Preparation Guide (Appendix A) on Google Docs before meeting. The questions were based on the definition of collaboration (Montiel-Overall, 2005) and the social and environmental factors identified in Brown (2004). This collaboration form helped identify the goal of the unit and provided the answers to the first four research questions.

Research Question 1: What strengths of the teacher librarian are useful in the collaborative effort to integrate literature and information literacy instruction into a sixth grade social studies unit.

Both the classroom teacher and teacher librarian considered the teacher librarian strengths to be knowledge of children's literature and a background of teaching information literacy skills. One concern that they both shared was that most of the teacher librarian's teaching experience was at the high school level rather than at the sixth grade level. The teacher librarian and the classroom teacher discussed teaching strategies that would appeal to sixth graders.

Research Question 2: What instruction will the teacher librarian be responsible for in this unit?

The teacher librarian will be responsible for preparing a pathfinder (APPENDIX F); choosing the literature; and teaching the lessons on the research process, analysis of primary sources, database use, and the citation process.

Research Question 3: What strengths of the classroom teacher are useful in the collaborative effort to integrate literature and information literacy instruction into a sixth grade social studies unit?

The classroom teacher brought to the collaborative effort knowledge of the students' particular learning interests, strengths and styles and an understanding of the sixth grade Common Core social studies curriculum. As the sixth grade technology teacher she wanted to incorporate technology into the unit. Starmont Middle School students will have individual Chrome Books next year as Starmont implements their one computer-to-one student initiative; therefore, both the teacher and teacher librarian decided that each class would produce a newspaper set in the time period of the Orphan Train Movement using Google Presentation to work collaboratively to write and publish their newspaper.

Research Question 4: What instruction will the classroom teacher be responsible for in this unit?

The classroom teacher was responsible for all social studies and technology related curriculum. She assigned students to literature circles, grouped students, and assigned roles for the newspaper project.

The classroom teacher and teacher librarian agreed that it was important to have one unhurried planning meeting; they met for three hours to determine the topic, plan the unit, and discuss individual responsibilities. They used Google Docs and email to discuss the preliminary topic, literature, and information literacy ideas. The Orphan Train Movement was chosen as the topic because the students had just finished a unit on the Civil War and this movement started in 1854, a few years before the Civil War and continued until 1929.

These two books were chosen for literature selections: (1) *A Family Apart* by Joan Lowry Nixon for its several references to historical events and people from the Civil War—including the Fugitive Slave Act, the Underground Railroad, and Abraham Lincoln—and (2) *Rodzina* by Karen Cushman because of its Midwest connection. The April1998 issue of *Cobblestone* which featured several articles about The Orphan Train Movement and the biography, *Orphan Train Rider: One boy's True Story* by Andrea Warren were chosen as informational texts.

Information literacy skills that both the classroom teacher and teacher librarian chose to emphasize included analyzing primary sources, using databases, close reading of informational text, note taking and paraphrasing, citation skills, and organizing information into an authentic research project.

The classroom teacher and the teacher librarian planned using the Unit Planning Template (see Figure 1). The plan combines goals and objectives from social studies content and information literacy.

Figure 1

Unit Planning Template for Library Curriculum Integration

Unit: The Orphan Train Movement Conceptual Lens: The Importance of Family Grade/Course: Sixth Grade Social Studies Dates: April 5-May 9, 2013	
Desired Results	
Established Goals *AASL Standards* • AASL Standard 1: Inquire, think critically, and gain knowledge (Skills 1.1.1-1.1.9 and Self-Assessment Strategies 1.4.1-1.4.4 • AASL Standard 2: Draw conclusions, make informed decisions, apply knowledge to new situations, and create new knowledge (Skills 2.1.1-2.1.6 and Self-Assessment Strategies 2.4.1-2.4.4) • AASL Standard 3: Share knowledge and participate ethically an productively as members of our democratic society (Skills 3.1.1-3.1.6 and Self-Assessment Strategies 3.4.1-3.4.2) • AASL Standard 4: Pursue personal and aesthetic growth (Skills 4.1.1-4.1.6 and Self-Assessment Strategy 4.4.3) *Iowa Common Core History Standards* • Understand ways groups, societies, and cultures have met human need and concerns in the past • Understand that specific individuals and the values those individuals held had an impact on history • Understand significant events and people in the major eras of history	
Understandings: • History is made up of individuals responding to human needs • Responses to human needs change over time • History can be discerned through primary sources and secondary sources • Inquiry Learning is a process for information gathering, analysis, synthesis, and communication of ideas to a selected audience	**Essential Questions** • Why was there a need for the orphan trains? • How did individuals respond to the need? • How did the orphan train movement impact the history of our country? • How do I find answers to research questions? • How do I determine the accuracy and relevancy of information? • How do I use the information gathered? • How do I effectively communicate information to an audience?
Students will know... • The terms associated with the orphan train movement: orphanage, street Arabs, "placing out," adoption, placing agent, foster care • The people and associations involved in the orphan train movement: Charles Loring Brace, Children's Aid Society, the New York Founding Hospital	

• The impact of the orphan train movement in U. S. history • The impact of the orphan train movement on individuals **Students will be able to. . .** • Access information from a variety of sources (print, database, internet) • Recognize the literature genre historical fiction • Evaluate information sources • Take effective notes by paraphrasing • Organize and synthesize information from notes • Properly cite sources • Use Google Presentation • Self-assess the inquiry process and the result of their research	

Assessment Evidence	
Performance Tasks: Formative Assessment	**Other Evidence: Summative Assessment**
• Locate resources in the library and online • Learn to use AEA databases • Take notes using proper techniques • Synthesize notes into a news article, interview, opinion piece, advice column, or cartoon • Accurately cite sources • Complete a Newspaper using Google Presentation	• Class participation • Check points • Project rubric

Teaching and Learning
Learning Activities: • Construct Extended KWL Chart • Inquiry Learning—Review the Big6 and The Stripling Model of Inquiry (discuss the integration of the two models) • Practice note taking • Practice the APA style of citation • Practice interview skills • Practice writing skills: news articles, opinion pieces, writing interviews, advice columns, and cartoons

The teacher and teacher librarian used a Unit Schedule Template to schedule

lessons and assign teaching roles (see Figure 2). A rough outline of this schedule was

completed during the original planning session and was then completed by the teacher

librarian before starting the unit.

Figure 2

Orphan Train Unit Schedule

Date/Title/Teacher	Activity
Friday, April 5 Introductory Lesson Co-taught by CT and TL	• Review Big6 (CT leads) • Introduce to Stripling Model of Inquiry and discuss how the two inquiry models can be blended (TL leads) • Tell students the name of the unit—The Orphan Train Movement—and show picture 4. (TL leads) • Invite students to "wonder" and record questions (CT leads) • Give initial SLIM Assessment (TL leads) • Define primary sources and explain the Photo Analysis Worksheet (Appendix G) • Give time for students to record their analysis
Monday, April 8 Questions TL leads; CT records and clarifies as needed	• Compile information from Photo Analysis Worksheets • View YouTube clip • Students generate questions and group them (possible groups of questions: Reasons, Families, Children, Journey) • Read aloud *Orphan Train Rider* Introduction and Chapter 1
Tuesday, April 9 Essential Question and Sources of Information TL leads; CT records and clarifies as needed	• Five minute Journal write: • Introduce KWLS chart (Appendix H) • Review questions and list sources that can be used to find answers (books, internet, people, etc.) • Introduce the basics of citation and discuss why it is necessary (acknowledge the work of others, verify the authenticity and factual integrity of your research, provide sources for others) • Demonstrate the citation of the article "On the Sidewalks of New York" and write on the KWLS chart • Students read "On the Sidewalks of New York" from *Cobblestone* and highlight important information.
Wednesday, April 10 Note-taking and Interview Basics CT leads; TL assists	• CT and TL model how to take notes in your own words by "thinking aloud" and recording their notes from page 1 of "On the Sidewalks of New York" on the KWLS chart. • CT leads students through the process with the remaining pages of the article; TL records information • Discuss DVDs as sources of information and view IPTV segment and show how it would be cited. Add citation to KWLS chart. • View IPTV segment • Add to KWLS chart • Note questions used in the interview (Tell students that this is a skill they will use in their research project.) • Read aloud *Orphan Train Rider* Chapter 2
Thursday, April 11 Pathfinder and Databases TL leads; CT assists	• Introduce Orphan Train Pathfinder (Appendix F) and elicit from students how this could be helpful in research • Define: search terms, key words, and subject headings • Explain how to use AEA databases, specifically Gale Cengage *General OneFile* to access the articles listed on the pathfinder • Time to browse databases and/or other websites listed on pathfinder • Read aloud *Orphan Train Rider* Chapter 3

Friday, April 12 Close Reading articles CT leads; TL assists	• CT introduces concept of "close reading" reviews the modeling done with the "On the Sidewalks of New York" • CT divides students into four groups and gives each group one of the following articles from *Cobblestone*: "Charles Loring Brace: A Man with a Mission," "Placing Out," "The Placing Agents," and "The End of an Era." Students read articles individually and highlight important information. Students then meet in their groups to record most important information to share with the other students in jig-saw activity. Students must correctly cite article on personal KWLS chart. • Read aloud *Orphan Train Rider* Chapters 4-5
Monday, April 15 Jig-Saw Activity CT leads; TL assists	• Groups re-assigned for Jig-Saw Activity—share information from their article with others in the group. Group members record information and citation. • Read aloud *Orphan Train Rider* Chapters 6-7
Tuesday, April 16 Google Lit Trips TL leads; CT assists	• Introduce Google Earth Lit Trip and Graphic Organizer (Go to Google Lit Trips, find *A Family Apart*, and download graphic organizer) • Give students time to work
Wednesday, April 17 Google Lit Trips (con't) TL leads; CT assists	• Students continue to work on Graphic Organizer • As they finish, they can read an additional article: "From New York to Iowa: The Story of Arthur Field Smith" • Read aloud *Orphan Train Rider* Chapters 8-9
Thursday, April 18 and Friday, April 19 Individual Exploration CT leads; TL assists	• Time to explore resources listed on the pathfinder • Time for formative assessment of Graphic Organizers and Individual KWLS charts • Read aloud *Orphan Train Rider* Chapters 10-11
Monday, April 22 Second SLIM Assessment Begin Lit Circles TL leads; CT assists	• Second SLIM Assessment • Introduce historical fiction • Short book talks for *Rodzina* and *A Family Apart*
Tuesday, April 23-Monday, April 29 CT leads	• Literature circles for *Rodzina* and *A Family Apart*
Tuesday, April 30 Introduce Project CT and TL co-teach	• Students examine newspapers and determine the features of a newspaper • Model an interview • Discuss name and date of the newspaper they will produce
Wednesday, May 1 Discuss specific articles CT leads; TL assists	• Look at examples of "Top Story" News articles and discuss possible topics for their newspaper (orphan train arriving in their town, start of the journey in New York or Chicago, incident at one of the stops on the way) • Review interview modeled yesterday and discuss possible interviewees (adoptee, adopter, agent who accompanied the children) • Look at examples of opinion pieces on the editorial page and brainstorm possible topics for opinion pieces • Look at examples of "Dear Abby" and cartoons

Thursday, May 2 Introduce Google Presentation CT leads; TL assists	• Classroom teacher introduces Google Presentation and shows how students can collaborate using this tool
Friday, May 3-Thursday, May 9 Assign roles for putting together the paper CT leads; TL assists	• Classroom teacher assigns the roles of editor (responsible for deadlines, layout, and overall proofreading), and reporters (assigned a particular type of article and a different article to proofread) • Students work to "publish" their paper using Google Presentation

This schedule worked well for the unit but required two changes. The paperback edition of *Rodzina* was out of print, so everyone read *A Family Apart*. Each class was small (14-15 students); therefore, the classroom teacher decided to keep the class together for discussion instead of forming literature circles. The students appeared to enjoy the book, and class discussion was lively with several references to historic events, such as the Fugitive Slave Act. Also, the classroom teacher and teacher librarian made the decision to discontinue reading aloud *Orphan Train Rider* after chapter three. Much of the information was identical to the information contained in the articles the students read. The teacher librarian found an article, "The Story of a Boy Searching for a New Home on a Terrifying Journey Aboard the Orphan Train," by Kim Hill in *Scholastic Scope*, October 22, 2012 that told the story of Lee Nailing and all students were given that article to read along with "From New York to Iowa: The Story of Arthur Field Smith" (see Unit Schedule, Wed., Apr. 17).

Information Literacy Instruction and Literature

The SLIM Assessment (Appendix D) was the primary data collection tool for assessing the effectiveness of the information literacy instruction within the unit. Research Question 5: How do students respond to the literature read and information literacy skills taught within the context of a social studies unit?

Students took the first SLIM Assessment after learning the name of the unit and viewing pictures from the primary sources (Appendix F). The second SLIM Assessment was taken after reading informational text and investigating internet resources and the third SLIM Assessment was taken after students read *A Family Apart* and finished the newspaper project. Question 1 asked students to write what they knew about the topic and the responses were categorized into factual statements (statements that describe processes and actions), explanation statements (statements that describe how and why something happens) and conclusion statements (statements that go beyond explaining and state opinion, position, personal reflection, or evaluation). Table 1 shows the responses to these questions and compares the three assessments.

Table 1

Responses to Question 1: Take some time to think about the topic. Now write down what you know about it.

Statement Categories	Number of Responses	Representative Statements
SLIM Assessment #1		
Factual	14	"I think it's orphans going on a train and going to a state or something like that." "I have heard of the Orphan Train before, but I am not really sure what it was. I think it might be about orphans moving to a new place."
Explanation	3	"I have a book called *For the Love of Pete* which is about the orphan train. When kids came on boats to America, not all of them had parents and they lived on the streets. So orphanages would gather them up and move them west and then put them up for adoption and it wasn't the best trip ever." "The kids are traveling on a train trying to get to a new family. The kids on the train have no family."
Conclusion	0	
SLIM Assessment #2		
Factual	6	"It wasn't always good to be a 'rider.'" "The Orphan Train era went from 1854-1929." "Charles Loring Brace invented Orphan Trains."
Explanation	10	"There were children who were abandoned and were trying to make their way through life. Orphan Trains took them to places in the west so that people could adopt them."
Conclusion	2	"The orphan train is important and needs to be told because a lot of people do not know about it."
SLIM Assessment #3		
Factual	13	"Sometimes kids on the train got bullied." "Orphanages didn't have much food." "Brothers and sisters got separated." "Children up to sixteen could ride the trains."
Explanation	16	"Orphan Trains helped get kids off the streets where they were pick-pockets and got into trouble." "Most kids had a parent or parents, but they could not take care of them."
Conclusion	2	"The orphan train was an important mark in history. It gave kids homes and families instead of living on the streets."

Several factual statements from the first SLIM Assessment indicated uncertainty; phrases such as "I think. . ." or "I'm not sure. . ." were common. Students who had read about the Orphan Train Movement gave explanation statements that indicated that they understood the reason for the Orphan Train Movement. There were no conclusion statements on the first SLIM Assessment.

The responses to Question 1 on the second SLIM Assessment (given after reading the informational texts) were more confident. There were six factual statements, fewer than the first SLIM Assessment, but they were more specific in nature. Responses to the second SLIM Assessment included more explanation statements and there were two conclusion statements similar in nature.

Factual statements increased on the third SLIM Assessment and again were more specific and detailed. There was an increase in explanation statements and these reflected an understanding of the purpose of the Orphan Train Movement. There was no change in the number of conclusion statements and they were similar to those in the second SLIM Assessment.

Question 2 of the SLIM Assessment asked students to rate their interest in the topic. When analyzing the responses a numerical score was given to each response. Table 2 shows the results.

Table 2

Responses to Question 2: How interested are you in this topic?

Student interest estimate	Score	Assessment #1	Assessment #2	Assessment #3
Not at all	0	1	0	1
Not much	1	6	4	1
Quite a bit	2	8	10	7
A great deal	3	1	2	7
Totals		25	30	36

SLIM Assessment #1 reflects student interest at the beginning of the unit. Just under half of the students indicated they were "not at all" or "not much" interested in this topic. After reading several informational articles and investigating web sites, the students' responses indicated that two-thirds were "quite a bit" or "a great deal" interested in the topic. After reading *A Family Apart* and producing a newspaper, the positive responses outnumbered the negative responses 7 to 1.

Question 3 asked students to rate their knowledge of the topic and was scored in the same manner as Question 2 (see Table 3).

Table 3

Responses to Question 3: How much do you know about this topic?

Student knowledge estimate	Score	Assessment #1	Assessment #2	Assessment #3
Nothing	0	6	0	0
Not much	1	9	1	0
Quite a bit	2	1	12	8
A great deal	3	0	3	8
Totals		12	34	40

The total scores to Question 3 rose dramatically as students researched. At the beginning, all but one student felt they knew "nothing" or "not much" about the topic. Student knowledge increased after reading informational articles and then rose again after reading historical fiction.

Question 4 asked students to state what they found easy about the research process. Responses were categorized according to the following information literacy skills.

- Able to develop questions that lead to appropriate information
- Able to access information efficiently and effectively
- Develops and uses successful strategies for locating information
- Able to evaluate information critically and competently
- Can determine the accuracy of information
- Distinguish among fact, point of view and opinion
- Identifies inaccurate and misleading information
- Selects information appropriate to the problem or question at hand
- Organize all the information
- Integrate new information into one's own knowledge
- Applies information in critical thinking and problem solving
- Able to produce an appropriate product
- Derives meaning from the information
- Able to communicate information and ideas in appropriate formats
- Has strategies for revising and improving

- Respects intellectual property rights
- Uses information technology responsibly

Only those standards in which student responses could be categorized are listed below each SLIM Assessment. Table 4 shows how the researcher categorized students' actual responses within this list of information literacy skills.

Table 4

Responses to Question 4: When you do research, what do you generally find easy to do?

Standard	No. of responses	Representative Statements
SLIM Assessment #1		
Able to develop questions that lead to appropriate information	4	"I can write questions and find answers."
Able to access information efficiently and effectively	13	"I find it easy to 'Google it.'" "I can find books about it." "I can find pictures."
SLIM Assessment #2		
Able to develop questions that lead to appropriate information	12	"I can ask questions and find information." "I know what to look up."
Able to access information efficiently and effectively	4	"I can find information on web sites." "I can find fun facts."
SLIM Assessment #3		
Able to develop questions that lead to appropriate information	7	"I know what to ask." "I can type in specific [search] terms."
Able to access information efficiently and effectively	9	"I can find articles about the topic." "I can go to a web site and find the answer."
Able to produce an appropriate product	1	"Writing the article was easy."

All responses to the first and second SLIM Assessment fell into the first two categories. Interestingly, though the responses were in the same categories, the numbers were reversed. Students responding to the second SLIM Assessment were more conscious and confident of their ability to develop questions. Only one responder in the third assessment considered working on the final product an easy task.

Question 5 asked students to list tasks in the research process that they found difficult. This question was scored by categorizing responses according to the same information literacy standards as Question 4. Table 5 shows the categories addressed by students, the number of responses, and representative statements.

Table 5

Responses to Question 5: When you do research, what do you generally find difficult to do?

Standard	No. of responses	Representative statements
SLIM Assessment #1		
Able to access information efficiently and effectively	6	"It's hard to find the right details and facts." "It's hard to find good sites." "It is hard to find the web site that has the right information that you want."
Able to evaluate information critically and competently	2	"It is hard to read long paragraphs and find facts."
Can determine the accuracy of information	2	"It is hard to find what is true and not people just [lieing]."
Identifies inaccurate and misleading information	1	"It is difficult to say which [info] to trust and use. It is also difficult to find where the correct [info] is."
Organize all the information	1	"It is hard to put the information in order." "It is hard to take notes."
Respects intellectual property rights	3	"It is hard to put it in my own words." "It is hard not to copy right from the [sight]."
SLIM Assessment #2		
Able to access information efficiently and effectively	7	"It's hard to find good facts." "It is hard to find the right web site."
Able to evaluate information critically and competently	6	"What sites have the right information?"
Can determine the accuracy of information	1	"How do I know if I can trust it?"
SLIM Assessment #3		
Able to access information efficiently and effectively	3	"Sometimes I can't find anything under what I went to."
Able to evaluate information critically and competently	3	"Considering the source is hard."
Can determine the accuracy of information	7	"It is hard to find two web sites that really agree." "It is hard to know if the [info] is accurate."

The number of difficult tasks decreased as the research project progressed, but students became more concerned about the accuracy of what they found. At the beginning, students found tasks related to finding information and evaluating it difficult. They also found organizing information and putting it in their own words difficult as well. At the time of the second and third assessment, students did not mention concerns about organization and writing, perhaps because the assignment was completed.

Question 6 only appeared on the last SLIM Assessment and was intended to help get a sense of the student's perception of his or her learning. Statements were again categorized according to the same information literacy standards as Questions 4 and 5. Several students misinterpreted this question and listed facts they had learned about The Orphan Train Movement rather than what they had learned about the research process. Thus, there are fewer usable responses to this question. The results are shown in the table below.

Table 6

Responses to Question 6: What did you learn in doing this research project?

Information Literacy Standards	No. of responses	Representative statements
SLIM Assessment #3		
Develops and uses successful strategies for locating information	2	"I learned how to find better web sites and what to type in the search box."
Able to evaluate information critically and competently	1	"Make sure that you look at more than one web site."
Organize all the information	2	"I learned how to organize information into paragraphs and put it together in a newspaper."
Respects intellectual property rights	2	"It is important to write in your own words." "It is important to cite information."
Uses information technology responsibly	1	"Google Presentation is good to use when you work with a group. You can work on the project at the same time. Everyone can see it."

Based on responses to this question, students did learn the information literacy skills taught during the unit. Students noted the helpfulness of specific search terms, the necessity of multiple sources, the importance of proper citation, and the relevance of organizing and sharing information. Students also noted the benefits of collaboration available to them through Google Presentation.

Summary of Field Notes

Both the teacher librarian and classroom teacher were committed to careful planning and convinced of its benefits. The time spent planning contributed to the lessons proceeding smoothly with very few obstacles to overcome. The collaborative technique that worked best was co-teaching. Interacting together while teaching the lesson provided the opportunity to best use the instructional techniques of modeling and "thinking aloud." Those instructional techniques proved most effective when teaching the information literacy skills of analyzing primary sources, close reading, note-taking, and teaching the skill of interviewing for a newspaper articles. Students learned well from modeling of close reading and note-taking and did excellent work extracting information, paraphrasing, and sharing information from articles during the jig-saw activity. Student reaction to *A Family Apart* was positive and students were well prepared for the discussions. When asked to reflect on the newspaper activity, students responded with the following statements: "I liked the variety of writing," "We learned from each other," and "I learned to research better and share the information in an interesting way."

There were few frustrations in this teaching unit. The greatest frustration was discovering that the paperback version of *Rodzina* was out of print. Comparing the two books would have been ideal, but student reaction to the literature was positive and they

enjoyed the whole class discussion. The decision to stop reading *Orphan Train Rider: One Boy's True Story* was a mutual one. Students were frustrated by the similarity of information in the articles and the book and were eager to read and explore on their own. The Cobblestone articles provided sufficient background and the Scholastic article summarized Lee Nailing's life well. Both the classroom teacher and teacher librarian recognized the benefit of two minds in the classroom to further explain, add an additional example, or restate a concept for better understanding. This was especially helpful when teaching paraphrasing and citation, two concepts that required some re-teaching and review.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

At Starmont Community School there is a need for collaboration between the teacher librarian and the classroom teachers in order to integrate children's literature and information literacy skills into the existing curriculum. The purpose of this action research project was to document and analyze the collaboration between the teacher librarian and a sixth grade social studies teacher as they work together to incorporate children's literature and information literacy skills into a unit of six grade social studies.

Conclusions

This action research project developed a collaboration model that can be used consistently at Starmont. Five themes emerged that represent best practices for collaboration between the teacher and teacher librarian at Starmont Middle School. (1) The Unit Planning Template enabled the teacher and teacher librarian to focus on the appropriate AASL Standards and Iowa Core History Standards, the Essential Questions, student learning and assessment evidence. The Unit Schedule Template provided a day-to-day schedule with well-defined roles and expectations. (2) The three-hour, face-to-face planning session at the beginning of the project gave both the teacher and teacher librarian confidence that classroom time would be spent well. This time may vary, depending on the subject and experience of the teachers involved, but remains and important part of the collaboration process. (3) Collaborative technology tools such as Google Docs made the face-to-face planning time more productive and enabled the teacher and teacher librarian to communicate effectively throughout the unit. (4) The SLIM Assessment verified that student learning of both content and information literacy

skills improved potentially due to several instructional factors. One instructional success was the teacher and teacher librarian's collaborative selection and pairing informational and literary texts for the unit. Another success was the teacher librarian's instruction in information literacy processes, and database use for student inquiry research. (5) The SLIM Assessment also verified that student awareness of the need for accurate information increased as the project progressed, underscoring the importance of instructional modeling and practice, to increase student confidence in the skill of information evaluation.

This research identified three practices that will improve instruction of information literacy skills at Starmont Middle School. (1) Pairing information text with literacy texts increases student interest. Interest scores on the SLIM Assessment increased from 25 to 30 after reading informational texts and increased and additional 6 points (from 30 to 36) after reading well-written historical fiction. The teacher librarian has the expertise to identify and pair literacy and informational texts for classroom teachers in all content areas. (2) Collaboration and co-teaching provide opportunities for modeling and "thinking aloud." These instructional techniques are particularly effective when teaching the skills of close reading, paraphrasing, and note-taking, skills the SLIM Assessment indicated students found most difficult. (3) Collaboration and co-teaching ensure that both formative and summative assessment is more effective. Assessment (particularly formative assessment) and feedback are important when students are learning information literacy skills. The classroom teacher and the teacher librarian can work together to provide specific review and re-teaching as necessary.

Recommendations

Collaboration between the teacher librarian and classroom teachers should be expanded to other grades and content areas. This collaboration model has been shared with the elementary principal and she has suggested that the teacher librarian meet with grade level professional learning communities (PLCs) to work on a unit for each grade level in the elementary school beginning with fifth grade, and then expanding it to lower grades. This model can be implemented in other content areas such as science, math, and technology as well as social studies.

This researcher and classroom teacher will present this action research project to the School Board in August to keep them updated on the library program and show them examples of student work. This project will demonstrate the positive results of collaboration and the need for more time to collaborate with teachers at every grade level—elementary, middle school, and high school—to develop units that teach information literacy skills and give opportunity for authentic research and presentation. They will also make connections, as appropriate, to the Iowa Common Core in the areas of research, writing, reading in technical and content areas, 21st century technology skills, and College and Career readiness.

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APPENDIX A

PRE-COLLABORATION PREPARATION GUIDE

Carol Brown, in her article, "America's Most Wanted: Teachers Who Collaborate," identifies certain attributes for successful collaboration that can be grouped into two categories: social factors and environmental factors. Social factors include shared vision, self-confidence, open communication, and trust and mutual respect. Environmental factors include scheduled planning meetings, impromptu discussion, administrative support, defined roles, and flexible scheduling. As you anticipate working collaboratively on this unit of study, record your answers to the following questions. Make a copy of your answers to share with your fellow collaborator.

Social Factors

1. What do you see as the goal of this collaboration effort?

2. What strengths do you bring to this collaboration project?

3. What is your preferred method of communication (i.e. email, meetings, etc.)?

4. What contributions do you believe your collaboration partner will make to the project?

Environmental Factors

1. What are the best times and places for you to meet to plan this unit?

2. How many meetings do you think are needed to plan this unit and when should these meetings occur?

3. What instruction do you expect to be responsible for in this unit?

4. What instruction do you expect your collaboration partner to be responsible for in this unit?

APPENDIX B

UNIT PLANNING TEMPLATE

Unit:	
Conceptual Lens:	
Grade/Course:	
Dates:	
Desired Results	
Established Goals *AASL Standards* *Iowa /Common Core Standards*	
Understandings:	**Essential Questions**
Students will know. . . **Students will be able to. . .**	
Assessment Evidence	
Performance Tasks: Formative Assessment	**Other Evidence: Summative Assessment**
Teaching and Learning	
Learning Activities:	

APPENDIX C

UNIT SCHEDULE TEMPLATE

Date/Title/Teacher	Activity

APPENDIX D

SLIM ASSESSMENT

Name:

1. Take some time to think about your topic. Now write down what you know and understand about it.

2. How interested are you in this topic? Check the phrase that best matches your interest.

_____not at all _____not much _____quite a bit _____a great deal

3. How much do you know about this topic. Check the phrase that best matches how much you know.

_____nothing _____not much _____quite a bit _____a great deal

4. When you do research, what do you generally find easy to do? Please list as many things as you like.

5. When you do research, what do you generally find difficult to do? Please list as many things as you like.

APPENDIX E

CLASS EVALUATION AND FIELDNOTES FORM

1. What did the class accomplish?

2. What collaborative and instructional techniques enabled the lesson to go as smoothly as possible?

3. What positive student activity did you observe?

4. What frustrations or obstacles did you face during the lesson?

5. What steps were or could be taken to overcome the frustrations or obstacles?

Orphan Trains

April 2013

From 1854 to 1929, an estimated 200,000 homeless children from New York City and other large eastern cities were transported by train to homes throughout the United States. This pathfinder will help you find information about the orphan trains and the children who rode them.

Iowa Core Connection
- Students will understand ways groups, societies, and cultures have met human needs and concerns in the past.
- Students will understand that specific individuals and the values those individuals held had an impact on history.
- Students will understand significant events and people in the major eras of history.

For an introduction to the topic, see:
- www.orphantraindepot.com

This site provides an excellent overview to this topic. Note these topics on the sidebar: Orphan Train History, Orphan Train Rider Stories, FAQs and Educational Material

Resources

Books: Non-Fiction
- Warren, A. (1998). *Orphan train rider: One boy's true story*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. This award winning book tells the story of Lee Nailing who rode the orphan train in 1846. It contains interesting facts about his life and about how the orphan trains were started.

Search Aids

Search Terms
(Use for computer searches)
- orphan train
- Charles Loring Brace
- placing out
- Children's Aid Society
- New York Foundling Hospital

Subject Headings
(Use in card catalogs and print indexes)
- orphan train

Call Number
- 362 (Dewey Decimal)
- 362.734 (Dewey Decimal)
- HV985 (Library of Congress)

Indexes and Abstracts
- Gale Cengage
- EBSCOhost
- Sirs Researcher

Library catalogs
- Your local library catalog
- SILO - State-wide catalog
- World Cat - World-wide Catalog

Books: Fiction

- Bunting, E. (2000). *Train to somewhere*. New York: Clarion Books. A beautiful picture book written for all ages, this is the story of a young girl who rides the orphan train to find a new home.

- Cushman, K. (2003). *Rodzina*. New York: Clarion Books. An orphan train story by Newbery Medal winner Karen Cushman that tells the story of twelve-year old Rodzina who travels on an orphan train from Chicago to California.

- Nixon, J. L. (2000). *A family apart*. Milwaukee, WI: Gareth Stevens Pub. A well-written historical fiction book about Francis Kelly, his five siblings, and their eventful journey on the orphan train. This is the first book in a series that includes these additional titles: *Caught in the Act, In the Face of Danger, A Place to Belong, A Dangerous Promise, Keeping Secrets, Circle of Love, and Lucy's Wish*.

Magazine Articles (These articles were accessed from EBSCO*host*, an index your public librarian can help you use to find these and other articles about the orphan trains.)

- Allan-Meyer, K. (1998). From New York to Iowa. *Cobblestone, 19* (4), 18. Retrieved from EBSCO*host*. An interesting orphan train story with an Iowa connection.
- Smoots, S. (1999). A tale from the orphan trains. *Creative Kids, 18* (1), 24. Retrieved from EBSCO*host*. An orphan's experiences riding an orphan train from New York City to Blairsburg, IA.

Web Pages

- www.iagenweb.org/iaorphans This website explores the Iowa connections to the orphan trains
- www.nebraskahistory.org/sites/mnh/orphans A site with pictures of primary documents and artifacts such as advertisements and newspaper articles.
- www.squidoo.com/orphantrains This site features artwork, information about The Children's Aid Society, The New York Foundling Hospital, and an article from *Harper's Magazine*, 1893.
- www.usgennet.org/usa/ne/topic/trains//iowa.htm This is a chart of individuals who rode the trains to Iowa. Information includes birth year, the year they rode the train, and the town they were taken to.

AEA Resources (These resources are available through the AEA. Ask your school librarian for help in accessing articles from these resources.) Gale Cengage and SIRS Researcher are indexes of articles from magazines, newspapers, and reference materials. Use the key word *orphan train* to find articles such as these.

- Leibold, S. (2000). At home in Maquoketa: Dorothy Buck. *Goldfinch (21)*, 3, 18. Retrieved from *General OneFile*. Dorothy Buck talks about growing up in Maquoketa, IA and then returning to the Canandaigua Orphanage in New York to meet her birth family. (This issue of *Goldfinch* is devoted entirely to orphan train connections in Iowa. All of the articles are available in PDF form from Gale Cengage.)

- Teller, J. (2003). Author hopes to illuminate story of orphan trains. *Grit, 121* (5), 16+. Retrieved from *General One Source*. Article about Andrea Warren with primary source photographs.

Multimedia Resources

- *The orphan train* [DVD]. (2006). A documentary produced by PBS.

Organizations
Fayette County Historical Center, 100 N. Walnut St., West Union, IA 52175 (563) 422-5797
www.fayettecountyiowa.org/HistoricalCenter.html Source for resource books, newspapers from
1861, and a helpful, knowledgeable staff.

APPENDIX G

PRIMARY SOURCES PHOTO ANAYLYSIS WORKSHEET

Step 1. Observation

A. Study the photograph for 2 minutes. Form an overall impression of the photograph and then examine individual items. Next, divide the photo into quadrants and study each section to see what new details become visible.

B. Use the chart below to list people, objects, and activities in the photograph.

People	Objects	Activities

Step 2. Inference

Based on what you have observed above, list three things you might infer from this photograph.

Step 3. Questions

A. What questions does this photograph raise in your mind?

B. Where could find answers to them?

program-source.com

familybuildingfromwherelsit.blogspot.com

WANTED

Homes for Children

A company of homeless children from the East will arrive at

TROY, MO., ON FRIDAY, FEB. 25th, 1910

These children are of various ages and of both sexes, having been thrown friendless upon the world. They come under the auspices of the Children's Aid Society of New York. They are well disciplined, having come from the various orphanages. The citizens of this community are asked to assist the agent in finding good homes for them. Persons taking these children must be recommended by the local committee. They must treat the children in every way as members of the family, sending them to school, church, Sabbath school and properly clothe them until they are 17 years old. The following well-known citizens have agreed to act as a local committee to aid the agents in securing homes.

O. H. Avery   E. B. Woolfolk   H. F. Childers
Wm. Young   G. W. Colbert

Applications must be made to, and endorsed by, the local committee.

An address will be made by the agent. Come and see the children and hear the address. Distribution will take place at the

Opera House Friday, Feb. 25, at 1:30 p. m.

B. W. TICE and MISS A. L. HILL, Agents, 105 E. 22nd St., New York City.
REV. J. W. SWAN, University Place, Nebraska, Western Agent.

squidoo.com

APPENDIX H

KWLS CHART

K	W	L	S
What I Know	What I Want to Know	What I Learned	Source