Effectiveness of DBQ strategies for deaf students in Social Studies classroom

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Effectiveness of DBQ Strategies for Deaf Students in Social Studies Classroom

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Abstract

Document-based question (DBQ) strategy is considered one of innovative teaching strategies which allow students to learn through real life historical events, demonstrations, and sources. Research has shown that DBQ strategies are effective in any content subject, especially in the social studies content area. DBQ strategies are heavily incorporated in advanced placement courses. There is a growing number of state mandated exams with DBQ items where students are asked to provide in-depth responses. The problem statement of this research study is whether or not DBQ strategies could be used effectively for deaf students at middle and high school academic levels. In the results of the qualitative analysis among the interviews, the findings show that deaf children have the same passion as their hearing peers in learning history through the visual aids of historical and primary sources/documents. Furthermore, this study also show that the use of DBQ as an educational tool for deaf students would promote and improve their interpretative and critical thinking skills.
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Introduction

The standard definition for a Document Based Question (DBQ) is the "assessment on the students' ability to analyze and interpret historical sources in more than one form" (Pappas, 2006, p.1). Usually, it is in an essay format in which the students respond to answer the given question that requires them to analyze, interpret, formulate, and/or argue with supporting evidence. To emphasize the importance of essay writing, it is "like a standard essay, the DBQ is judged on its thesis and argument" ("DBQs and Primary Sources", 2006).

The primary reason for the use of DBQ in the classroom is the student would have to interpret its corresponding historical documents in his or her own words with the addition of outside information such as what is being learned in class. The secondary reason is to prepare students to apply their analysis and interpretative skills to state-mandated tests, such as the New York State Regent exams, that include DBQ primary sources. In addition, the use of DBQ strategies allows students to relate their life experiences to historical documents in order to develop strong interpretative skills.

Prior to this qualitative research study on Document Based Question Strategies for deaf students, the investigator searched popular websites, scholarly journals, and articles on using DBQ as an educational tool can be useful for deaf students. There is but little literature that discusses the use and effectiveness of DBQ strategies among deaf students in the social studies classroom. The challenge is to connect to primary sources that are language accessible and deaf-friendly for deaf students. The following recommendations are for social studies teachers of the deaf to find ways to make the primary sources equally accessible and available for deaf students like their hearing
peers. Deaf students struggle to comprehend the complexity of the notable primary sources with English as the primary language. Language accessibility is one of the major factors that impacts deaf students’ ability to read and write. It is crucial for deaf students to have basic knowledge in social studies content area to be able to interpret primary sources. DBQ strategies are some of the ways for deaf students to learn how to apply and construct skills while learning about history.

It is important to state, based on what the investigator learned from the research, that there is a bigger need for primary sources and websites to be available to deaf students. There is also a need for available instructional methods to incorporate DBQ strategies for deaf students. In addition, there are available historical documents for everyone.

Purpose

The purpose of this research study is to collect and examine the inputs from social studies teachers of the deaf about potential effectiveness of DBQ strategies for deaf students. The study seeks to address three questions:

1. How do social studies teachers of deaf use DBQ strategies effectively in the classroom?
2. How can the DBQ strategies be used effectively among deaf students?
3. How can social studies teachers make primary documents language-friendly for deaf students?
Literature Review

*Purpose*

The purpose of using Document-Based Question strategies among deaf students is to allow them to have a sense of reality to connect to the history of past, present, and future. In addition, the purpose behind the use of DBQ is to encourage reduction of limitations of classroom teaching strategies among deaf students. “Education has been traditionally thought of as preparation: as learning. Acquiring certain things because they will later be useful” (Dewey, 1957, p. 183). Deaf students are encouraged to learn as much as possible to apply for their future in interpreting historical primary sources. Primary sources are used to show deaf students how historical events affected people to become presidents, well-known figures, advocates, and activists of their times.

On the benefits of using primary sources as educational tools, L.A. Potter (2003) wrote:

“Primary sources also serve as excellent tools for teaching students the skills that will ensure their success in the information age. Primary sources encourage critical thinking, make students question where information comes from, drive students to determine validity and reliability of sources, push students to consider bias, point of view, and audience, and enable students to realize the importance of referencing multiple resources, and finally as artifacts, primary sources have histories of their own, and often their significance transcends their content” (p. 372).

The purpose for showing both hearing and deaf students primary sources and documents is to allow them to connect between the past to the present. In addition, the teaching approach through storytelling with historical evidence engages deaf students to develop skills to tell stories about their culture, history, community, and language.
According to his article, "Eliciting Critical Thinking Skills Through Questioning" Savage (1998) states candidly that "teachers are taught to use the textbook as part of instruction" (p. 292). He believes that teachers should not solely rely on classroom textbook to teach about historical facts, key concepts, and events. Social studies teachers should be aware of the "tips from teachers which are also strongly supported by the social constructivist approach to learning" (Marschark, Lang, & Albertini, 2002, p. 200). Again, the textbook alone does not suggest as much as significant historical evidence. The values of using primary sources in the classroom strongly encourage the development of interpretative, constructive and critical thinking skills in deaf students.

The Role of DBQ Strategies in Social Studies Classroom

DBQ strategies function by the application and categories through the steps of identification, interpretation, and synthesis of historical photos, quotes, stories, political slogans or “catch” phrases, and cartoons through essay writing, project, and collaborative tasks among deaf students. To apply DBQ effectively among deaf students, they have to be encouraged to use their critical thinking skills to apply and relate to the given historical documents from class to daily knowledge. They learn effectively using visuals. DBQ strategies used in the classroom promote “high-level thinking” among students including deaf students.
Implications for Learning Through DBQ for Deaf Students

According to the value of historical learning, learning history through the use of DBQ strategies enhances deaf students to develop visual recognition and literacy skills. It does not justify all deaf students have the ability to apply and “use rote memorization skills for interpreting historical issues and events” (Hacsi, 2004, p. 1396). The educational theory in the importance of DBQ as a useful tool from the teachers’ perspective is to encourage students to become critical thinkers to be able to identify and interpret historical information accurately.

Teachers emphasize on storytelling to encourage deaf students to become creative thinkers. It leads deaf students to have a vision of how people of different historical periods wrote stories based on historical events to show to others that history was something to cherish and preserve for a lifetime. For the general population of students, it would be interesting for them to find out that

“as this little-known information about the Declaration suggests, the backside of an historical document can reveal interesting details about the document’s history as an artifact, such as the details might relate directly to the document’s travels, its owners, or handlers; or they might offer clues to the economic, social, and political conditions at the time of the document’s creation” (Potter, 2004, p. 376).

This suggests that the historical document can provide clues and questions that students in general can research on to find why this specific document was produced during that time, such as the Declaration of Independence. The given historical document shown for deaf students allows them to visualize what the person, producer, or creator who wrote the document was doing at the moment.
Another significant example is when deaf students are assigned to read a story loosely based about the Abraham Lincoln assassination, they have the responsibility to discover the central themes of the story to apply and discuss with others from what they learned in class. This demonstrates the principle of “educating character, part of citizenship” (Sanchez and Mills, 2005, p. 270). The goal for students is to become good citizens and apply the importance of history to daily life and current and world events.

Role of Social Studies Teachers

Nowadays, social studies teachers from all states in the United States have to follow their national and state curriculum standards for teaching social studies. National Council for Social Studies is the largest professional organization for social studies teachers. There are other prominent social studies organizations as well.

According to National Council for Social Studies, in their “Expectations of Excellence: Curriculum Standards for Social Studies, teachers need to address 10 thematic strands: culture, time, continuity, and change, people, places, and environment, individual development and identity, individuals, groups, and institutions, power, authority, and governance, production, distribution, and consumption, science, technology, and society, global connections, and civic ideals and practices” (Marschark, Lang, & Albertini, 2002, p. 196-7).

Social studies teachers can refer from “The Center for Civic Education and the National Center for Social Studies developed standards for civics and government, and the National Center for History in the Schools developed the standards for history, all of which were published in 1994” (Callahan, Clark, & Kellough, 2002, p. 65). These
standards in part of the curriculum allow social studies teachers and educational professionals to apply in social studies learning for their students including deaf students.

In addition, social studies teachers are in charge of following the national standards for social studies curriculum teaching. Social studies teachers who are required by law to follow the national and state curriculum standards in the classroom will have an impact on the general student population, especially deaf students.

"For organizing thematic instruction to promote language development, critical thinking, independence, and interpersonal collaboration, all of which are important factors in the instruction of students who are deaf and hard of hearing" McAnally, Rose, & Quigley, (1999) recommend social studies teachers for the deaf to review the six criteria offered by Peregoy and Boyle (1993):

The six criteria begins with the first criterion which “states that all thematic instruction must have meaning and purpose, second criterion is that thematic instruction should build on the students’ prior knowledge, third criterion stipulates that the teacher create integrated opportunities for the students to use oral and written language and literacy for learning purposes, fourth criterion emphasizes that the planning of thematic instruction includes scaffolding for support, that is, the teacher structures instruction so that it supports students’ efforts and values their accomplishments, fifth criterion encourages collaboration by providing students with many opportunities to work together on theme-related projects and activities, and the last criterion emphasizes the learning process must promote variety-variety in study themes, in learning strategies, in the functions of oral/signed and written language used, and in task difficulty” (McAnally, Rose, & Quigley, 1999, p. 166-67).

The six criteria of thematic instruction allow social studies teachers to determine the potential of DBQ strategies to apply to deaf students and their historical learning process.

These six criteria also support the instructional strategies by social studies teachers to promote significance in higher learning and appreciation of history through the use of DBQ and primary documents.
Burroughs (2002) wrote “many teacher education programs now use the national standards as foundational materials in preservice teacher education courses; an initiative that will further augment the standards’ influence and momentum” (p. 315). What this suggests is that social studies teachers are in position to favor or oppose the idea of giving state-mandated tests, depending on which states, especially in the state of New York, where it is strictly required for students to take the regent exams to pass for graduation. Teachers are allowed to express their own opinions about the real purpose of giving state-mandated tests to evaluate how much students know in the given content areas, especially in social studies. According to Rulli (2003), he provides 8 criteria for social studies teachers to determine the usefulness of documents:

1) integration of documents into the curriculum,
2) the potential for discussion of larger issues and concepts,
3) determining the immediate or potential relevance for students,
4) identifying the historical context of the documents,
5) the use of primary documents in cross-curricular lessons,
6) the use of primary documents as one teaching tool to cover a large amount of material,
7) determining the legibility (close examination for clear writing) of the documents,
8) the use of documents as an opportunity for students to become their own historians” (p. 378-80).

These criteria by Rulli show the significance for social studies teachers for the deaf to consider the useful and visual approach using historical documents in the classroom. Teachers are encouraged to use the document based question strategies to increase the significance of historical learning to deaf students. They can become their own historical scholars to be able to use and apply history from the classroom to daily learning. Teachers are considered innovators when it comes to arranging field trips such as to national landmark historical sites. Again, the criteria by Rulli suggests to social studies
teachers to reflect upon their instructional teaching to make history original and interesting for all students including deaf students.

In addition, the New York State Education Department website, http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/dhq/ssindex.html, is considered a wonderful social studies resource for social studies teachers to apply their social studies teaching to promote the importance of using DBQ in the classroom tasks, assignments, and preparation for the regent exams. The website emphasizes the importance of historical understanding and application in using the “How, What, Why, and When” questions. It emphasizes specific procedures for social studies teachers to apply DBQ assessments for evaluating students’ essays using DBQ strategies. According to McCoy, as a social studies teacher, she stated, “I began by using Level One as a way to determine my students’ prior knowledge on a topic that we were to study” (2003, p. 201). This refers as a teacher observation of students achieving the writing task by the teacher to determine what students already know about a topic.

For example, social studies teachers can apply this component in their teaching by creating a K-W-L chart about a specific history topic to evaluate students’ prior knowledge, such as preliminary ideas, context, and application from textbook reading. “K-W-L is a strategy that can be used with any text, but is probably most effective with expository text and with students who are at least 8 years old” (McAnally, Rose, & Quigley, 1999, p. 198).
This K-W-L chart is drawn like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What I know</th>
<th>What I want to know</th>
<th>What I learned</th>
<th>What I still want to learn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

(McAnally, Rose, & Quigley, 1999, p. 201)

The main purpose for the use of K-W-L chart allows social studies teachers to evaluate students’ prior knowledge related to the history topic, meaning of the topic being taught, students’ learning process, and the final product of the learning process for the students. It is a graphic organizer used for all content areas including social studies.

For effective instruction to occur in the social studies classroom, social studies teachers of the deaf can incorporate the K-W-L process to introduce the history topic to deaf students during their thematic instruction. Teachers are to follow “the next step in developing thematic instruction to establish guiding questions to serve as a scope and sequence” (McAnally, Rose, & Quigley, 1999, p. 168). Social studies teachers have to maintain careful planning for thematic instruction for effective classroom teaching in regards in the social studies context by using this specific kind of graphic organizer to prepare deaf students for in depth analysis and learning about the given history topic. This kind of classroom teaching strategy allows deaf students to develop strength in critical thinking, writing, and expressive skills in the social studies context.

Currently, the DBQ related and available websites are written in the format for teachers only to apply in their social studies classroom. Social studies teachers have to
evaluate the quality of available DBQ websites to verify that they connect to deaf students' historical learning process. The challenge for social studies teachers is to determine what can be done to have the website modified to meet the language competency, needs, and standards of deaf students.

*Teaching with the use of DBQ*

Social studies teachers include a wide variety of teaching DBQ strategies in their classroom. Some DBQ strategies would be effective to deaf students as well.

For example, if students are studying about the notable Supreme Court case, *Brown vs. Board of Education*, teachers are asked to consider what kind of classroom learning and testing strategies deaf students can benefit from.

Chism and Potter (2004) made recommendations for social studies teachers to include teaching activities such as:

- a focus activity, vocabulary development, document analysis and discussion, group research, writing and role play activity, individual writing activity, and extended research activities (Chism and Potter, 2004, p. 26-29).

These activities are enhanced by the core topic to discuss why the *Brown vs. Board of Education* case on education itself became recognized due to the issue of eliminating segregation during the 1950s. To implement these teaching activities previously mentioned, social studies teachers can encourage deaf students to evaluate the environment they are in, such as studying the history of segregated classrooms in the southern state schools of the deaf as a case study to determine what kind of emotions and issues were involved to make this part of Deaf history and U.S. history altogether.

In addition, teaching basic economics to students can be a challenge alone. Using primary documents such as the famous "Purchase of the Louisiana Territory", it can be
Effectiveness of DBQ Strategies

an asset for students, for they would analyze why money may be an important factor when making large purchases like the Louisiana Territory Purchase. In this kind of activity, Lee Ann Potter, Karen Needles, and Marisa Wilairat (2003) recommend social studies teachers to “lead a brainstorming session with students about basic consumer economics, divide students into three small groups to analyze the ‘Louisiana Territory’ document and discuss its meaning and ask one representative from each group to explain what they learned from the group discussion, provide students with copies of the two featured documents and lead a class discussion about the importance of the ‘Louisiana Territory’ for the United States” (p. 104). Discussion questions are as follows:

- What types of documents are these?
- What are the dates of the documents?
- Who created the documents?
- Who received the documents?
- What was the purpose of the documents?
- What questions do the documents raise? (p. 104)

Following the questions and class discussion, social studies teachers “provide students with information on the relationship that the United States had with Great Britain, France, and Spain from 1794 to 1803, and have students write a one page reaction predicting if things were different, and ask students to select one of the main characters involved in the Louisiana Purchase and research is or her involvement and instruct students to write one page opinion paper about the purchase as if the student was the actual person” (pp. 100-04).

When social studies teachers decide on what or which documents to teach to students, they are responsible to evaluate the authenticity of the historical documents before giving to the students. If a given topic such as slave trade is discussed in class, they can consider showing one of the primary documents about the “Telegram Relating
to the Slave Trade” which is mainly about the controversial issue about slave trading. The teacher will have to introduce the purpose and concept behind the use of this specific primary document because this document primarily discussed about the famous man, Nathaniel Gordon, who was involved in slave trading, especially from the United States. He was known to be the only man to be executed in history on U.S. grounds for slave trading.

For effective teaching to deaf students, the teacher will go through the same activities as previously mentioned by Potter (2003), which includes the teacher to providing each student a copy of the document and lead a class discussion answering the five standard questions about the document, sharing the information from the documents about the charges against Nathaniel Gordon, asking representatives to express their findings and thoughts and writing a one-page reaction about the situation, listing the following events in random order on the board, and asking students (the class) to place them in a chronological order, then discuss the events using the cause-effect relationship process, reminding students that Gordon’s attorney took advantage of the appeals process and assigning small groups to research all the requirements required in court, and finally informing students that the captured Africans were brought to Monrovia, Liberia, and placed under the care of the American Colonization Society (Needles, K. and Potter, L.A., 2002, pp. 336-342).

Again, this process can be accommodated to meet the language levels of deaf students to feel encouraged to the challenge to learn history in depth.

If social studies teachers teach about basic consumer economics, here is another opportunity for social studies teachers to teach students about the 1930s census which is considered to validate the reasons why it is different from today’s census. Social studies teachers are recommended to direct students to read Article I, Section 2, of the United States Constitution and ask them to explain why the enumeration of the population was important to the framers of our government, ask students to define the words: census, enumerator, canvass, and population schedule from the board, encourage students to visualize the 1930s and see what it is like to apply for the position of becoming an
enumerator part of the U.S. Census, lead students in a class discussion about the process of test schedule and share with each other their narratives, provide students with information from the background essay about the 1930 census, the work of enumerators, and the questions asked in the 1930 census following the sample in Figure 1 on p. 147, which included 32 questions to be asked about each person, remind students about the current census, how it was taken, and questions and ask students to write one page position paper about their opinions in the value of information collected between 1930 and today, and lastly, inform students that the Bureau of the Census released statistical summaries based on the census schedules in 1930, due to a 72 year privacy law, PL 95-416, and the current schedules are closed to researchers until 2002 (Potter, 2002, pp. 144-48).

In this activity, students including deaf students would be given a copy of the 1930s census document and the current census to compare and contrast the information collected in the 1930s and today.

*Testing with the use of DBQ*

Generally, students in the state of New York are required to take the state examinations called the Regents. Regents are considered the state-mandated examinations to pass high school and receive diplomas. Teachers are required to give state mandated tests that involve the use of identification, interpretations, and analysis strategies in sample DBQ questions. There are two types of Regent examinations that are recognized and required by the state of New York: Regents and Regents Competency Exams. Regents, the regular written examination, are required by all students in the state. Regents Competency Exams are also for the general and Deaf population with limited language accessibility and for those who are English as Second Language Learners. In the general Regents exam, students have to complete two DBQ essays and 8 primary documents with the 100 percent ability to identify historical documents, quotations, political cartoons, and excerpts to apply with strong supporting evidence. Social studies teachers in the state of New York can review and reinforce their students to this website:
http://www.nysedregents.org/testing/hsregents.html, to prepare for the actual Regent exams when given in January, June, and August in one academic year (see Appendix A for an example).

One another key question related to the use of document based questions in assessment is whether or not it is considered valid for its authenticity. The rubrics for evaluating DBQ essays, Regents, and Regents Competency Exams can be found through these educational websites: http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/osa/socstre/index.html and comparison between the original version of rubric from 2000 to the present version of rubric: http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/osa/socstre/appendix_d.html.

This can relate to the challenge of assessing various reading comprehension levels among students especially among deaf students. The application of document-based questions is considered best when it comes to the test development especially the Regents and the modified Regents Competency Tests for the students to take. For social studies teachers, they are responsible to promote the success of deaf students' understanding, application, knowledge, and synthesis of history, they have to show capability to pass both the regular Regent and Regent Competency Exams; they have to demonstrate strong readability and historical interpretation skills.

Significance of Visual Aids in DBQ strategies

According to Marschark, Lang, and Albertini (2003), they state “the visual modality is certainly important for deaf students. Clearly, visual materials are important for communication and learning, but care must be taken to ensure that the learning environment is constructed in such a way that visual materials are both available and accessible” (p. 117-8). In addition, the same authors suggest “deaf students’ reliance of
visual information makes the use of overhead transparencies, video projection, and similar teaching tools indispensable” (p. 149). According to a teacher mentioned in the book, “she stressed the important ingredients of hands-on activities, visual media, participative learning, organization and structure, and working through the affective domains” (p. 199). According to McAnally, Rose, and Quigley, it is important to recall the significance in using graphic organizers like the K-W-L organizer, in regards to Diane Joseph (1989), “while organizers such as pictures, discussions, models, illustrations, and video displays are intended to prepare the student for contextual reading, the bridge between the prereading activities and the text must be carefully constructed by the teacher” (p. 273). These statements reflect that social studies teachers of the deaf are recommended to value the use of visual aids for DBQ strategies that does make an effective and positive impact on deaf students' visual process in historical learning and use of primary documents.

Document Based Question strategies (DBQ) are identified as a tool for social studies teachers to use and apply to their teaching to bring in abstract concepts into concrete historical examples. For social studies teachers, they can refer to the list created by Tom Gray and Susan Owens to know where to find primary documents to promote rich historical learning, such as museums, personal letters, old maps, pictographs, census records, and church records” (2003, p. 386-388). Teachers are likely to become more knowledgeable of what is considered as useful visual aids to show to students especially for building deaf students’ visual competency skills. In planning effective lesson plans, the incorporation to use such documents as DBQs, as stated in the article, "Preservice Teachers Report the Impact of High-Stakes Testing" "the presence of a primary source
identified as a DBQ is enough to make a lesson innovative” is considered a valid statement to evaluate the whole theory behind the use of DBQs (Gerwin, 2004, p. 72).

“High-stakes testing” according to American Educational Research Association, also plays an important factor in evaluating students’ proficiency in their test-taking skills. Furthermore, the theory behind the "high-stake" testing is that it provides a challenge for the teacher mainly to determine whether or not students, deaf or hearing, would benefit from the use of document-based questions during class time or test time.

According to Potter, “educators are encouraged to visit www.ourdocuments.gov, view the high-resolution images of the milestone documents, read the transcriptions and brief explanations, share and discuss the documents with students, and develop instructional activities that focus on the documents” (2002, p. 390). For successful and creative lesson plans and instructional activities, it is important for social studies teachers to continue updating their teaching resources in the classroom to keep students motivated about history and encourage them to consider becoming historians, especially for deaf students.

**Application to Deaf Students Using DBQ Strategies**

Using primary documents among deaf students is considered a crucial approach to promote higher learning and overcome high stake testing challenges. Deaf students are likely to show strength to connect between primary sources to illustrated stories to reflect upon the historical period to discuss in class. Deaf students have varying reading comprehension levels which provide for the social studies teacher the challenge to determine the best teaching approaches and strategies for teaching history. Deaf students are encouraged to become independent and critical thinkers to equalize the challenge of
analyzing and understanding the "How" and "Why" questions when it comes to interpret the historical primary sources through classroom application and activities. As the idea of including visual aid is important, it is also significant to note that deaf students can identify and analyze the original texture and design of the displayed historical documents. To justify this in the “Guidelines for Using Primary Sources” (Potter, 2005, p. 365), there are nine specific guidelines for Social Studies teachers to guide their students through the process of identifying original historical documents and primary sources. This strategy permits students to reason what kind of materials were necessary to include writing out the original document. For example, Potter (2005) in "Teaching Civics with Primary Source Documents" in Social Education: NCSS states: "The letterhead, handwriting, special markings, size, color, texture, or other features of a document can engage and help students to recall information at a different time" (p. 358).

Deaf students succeed best when they have sufficient knowledge and understanding of recognizing and interpreting valued historical documents with true authenticity. It is also important to validate that teachers are responsible to encourage their deaf students to be exposed to real time history besides the classroom textbook. For effective teaching history with DBQ with deaf students, they should be exposed to the New York State DBQ guidelines to comprehend the process of using DBQ in their essay questions in application to historical learning.

Little Evidence Shown among the Use of DBQ strategies for Deaf Students in Social Studies

As evidence shows, there are not many scholarly articles about the effectiveness of deaf students using DBQ for deaf students in their classroom learning and testing taking skills. Most articles focus on the general population of hearing students. The
remaining challenge is to promote more recognition of deaf students' effectiveness in using DBQ strategies during their historical learning. For deaf students to become strong critical thinkers, they would have to be exposed to many different and interactive classroom activities. Critical thinking is considered one of the major aspects in achieving students' learning process from the teacher perspective. The approach that teachers use to promote critical thinking abilities among the students will be considered a motivating factor as well. For example, in class or group discussions would be considered beneficial compared to answering only teacher-directed questions as a critical thinking mechanism.

As one of the most effective methods, scaffolding would be considered one of the critical thinking approaches that are successful among the students. In the framework of social constructivism, scaffolding is considered as an effective student-centered and teaching model used in deaf students.

Scaffolding is best described as an approach where the teacher uses more than one document at once such as "Document A and B" to encourage deaf students to use "comparison and contrast" skills. The development of having the kind of a critical thinking mind takes time and efforts between the deaf students' own will and teacher's strong involvement during their historical and daily learning in the classroom.
In many ways, the teacher again is solely considered the prominent role model to contribute to deaf students’ learning and knowledge of historical information. Deaf students succeed best if they are exposed to rich and primary historical documents to develop a sense of preserving history for the future. Deaf students will improve in their writing, literacy, and expressive competency if they are exposed to the effective use of DBQ strategies in application of using primary documents and sources in the social studies classroom. Social studies teachers again are responsible to determine how to promote the effectiveness of using DBQ strategies with deaf students in their classroom.
Method

The research study is not dependent primarily on primary sources, but live experiences teachers of the deaf.

Participants

The participants were five females and two males. Four female participants were deaf, one female participant was hearing, one male participant is deaf, and one male participant is hearing. All participants have attained higher education beyond their undergraduate degrees such as a Masters in the Deaf Education field. Together in teaching experiences, one participant had thirty-three years of teaching, another participant had twenty-one years of teaching, one participant had ten years of teaching, one participant had four years of teaching, one participant had six years of teaching, and one participant had thirteen years of teaching experience. All participants have taught American History, Government and Civics, Participation in Government, World Culture, and Social Studies. All participants communicate by the use of American Sign Language.

Procedures

By the recommendations of MSSE faculty, the participants were invited to partake in the semi-structured interviews by e-mail correspondence (see Appendix B). After they signed the consent forms (see Appendix C), the interviews were proceeded. The interview was videotaped for the purpose of documentation. The interview questions (see Appendix D) were given to the interviewees in advance prior to their interviews. They were asked to answer the three questions related to their teaching experience in using DBQ or related strategies in their classrooms for the deaf. The interview questions would be given in signs and printed English. The interviews took approximately an hour
of their time. The location of the interview site was determined for the interviewee’s time and place of convenience.

After each interview was completed, the interviewer viewed the videotape of the interview to transcribe all the significant information from the interviews then typed into a word by word form. The final interview transcript was returned to the interviewee for member check to verify that the translation of the interview from signs to printed English is accurate. All seven interviewees approved the final transcripts.

Coding procedures were used to identify common themes related to the use of DBQ strategies for deaf students. The themes were documented by code numbers to identify which interviewee said what related to the interview questions. The coding themes are as follows: a) the goal to encourage deaf students to become critical thinkers, b) the significance of visual accessibility and use of visual aids, c) literacy competency skills, d) types of instructional methods such as presentation, technology use, and historical documents, e) state testing and necessary accommodations, f) role of social studies teachers, and g) language difficulties among deaf students.
Results

After doing the coding analysis of the interviewees’ transcripts, it occurred to the investigator that there are eight common themes: 1) common characteristics among deaf students, 2) visual competency skills, 3) literacy competency skills, 4) state testing, 5) visual accessibility and use of visual aids, 6) instructional methods, 7) role of Social Studies teachers, and 8) language difficulties of deaf students.

Common Characteristics Among Deaf Students

All the interviewees stated that they encouraged their deaf students to develop stronger visual competency and become independent and critical thinkers. For example, one interviewee quoted her personal philosophy on learning history to “see students eating out on information out of hand, meaning to see students learn and ask questions about what they are being taught.” This quote is an example of an effective teaching strategy for deaf students to understand history on their own by the teacher’s guidance. According to another interviewee, “deaf students are likely to show at least one or two skills related to critical thinking.” This suggests that deaf students in general demonstrate minimal skills to interpret and analyze the primary historical information using a critical thinking approach. Historically, deaf students have been considered visual learners.

Visual Competency Skills

The value of developing visual competency among deaf students, according to the interviewee, involves the “use of maps to encourage students to develop the skill how to analyze the materials.” This particular DBQ strategy emphasizes the use of map as a constructive and collaborative approach for deaf students to work individually and as a class to see how different history occurs in all states on the map to apply using their
expressive, writing, and critical thinking skills. As the interviewee stated, “History is important to teach, not to repeat”, that reveals how deaf students are exposed to different kinds of history, in order to increase their DBQ use in historical learning and applications. As an example, the use of visual aids is considered the best strategy to encourage deaf students to have a real intuition of history. When deaf students see real things related to history, they are able to interpret about that directly. There is a website called, “Deafis”, established by students from American School for the Deaf, where they have website links to Deaf History and Culture. The website included primary sources by Deaf historians. The website is considered kid-friendly, deaf-friendly, and accessible for all students.

One interviewee suggested “encouraging students to read without jumping to answers.” This is described as a collaborative effort among deaf students to think independently and depend on their peers while understanding and interpreting the given historical information. In addition, “DBQ is relevant and can relate to other information from other classes” according to an interviewee, who also emphasized that DBQ strategies are also important to be considered in other content areas as well.

*Literacy Competency Skills*

“History is something to be able to eat out of the hands” according to an interviewee, which is defined as a way to see students learn and be encouraged to ask questions about what they learned from class. According to another interviewee who said “deaf kids cannot memorize or remember everything once like magic does with one trick.” “Without background knowledge” as one interviewee mentioned, “they struggle with the historical information to apply in their literacy and writing development.” In
addition, another interviewee emphasized the key motto for deaf students: “the more you read, you know what it is or without, the real comprehension of English while having the real comprehension of American Sign Language.” This offers a self-explanatory image of how deaf students perceive language in printed English and in signed format, especially in the area of social studies, where there is in-depth reading that require critical analysis.

*State Testing and Necessary Accommodations*

According to an interviewee, there is another type of Regents examination called “Regents Competency Exam where there are some modifications made to the test to make it language accessible for deaf students.” To prepare deaf students for this kind of examination, the interviewee mentioned how deaf students should have to focus on the progress of “answering the core essay question by applying outside information onto the scratch sheet.” The following step is for the deaf students according to an interviewee, “to identify which historical documents match the information in their webbing of ideas, facts, and information to strengthen their answer to the core essay question.”

On the other hand, another interviewee gives a different perspective on how the Regents of New York State could benefit deaf students. “DBQ was not existent back then, deaf students were basically emphasized to review history and social studies by rote memorization” quoted by the interviewee, and this suggests that deaf students have the difficulty to interpret history and primary sources. The Regents examination generally focuses on specific area themes. Currently, the Regents examination focuses on the aspects of Global History and U.S. History. The Regents examinations are given at 5th grade and 8th grade in the state of New York to compare scores annually. The purpose to give these Regents exams at those grade levels is to see any significance in scores,
knowledge, content, and application to prepare deaf students for the actual high school examinations for completion of high school. As one interviewee proposed, "DBQ is considered significant for testing purposes" because these educational strategies prepare deaf students to become experts in analyzing history within the classroom.

On state testing, such as in New York and Connecticut, one interviewee commented that "it is required for students in fifth and eighth grade to take the state mandated tests." For example, for high school deaf students, as the interviewee stated "state testing is required for graduation and the completion of a high school diploma," which is defined as deaf students are responsible to do their best on the state tests, passing or not. Social studies teachers can consider this as a factor such as "sampling variation is only one reason that a school might experience a change in test scores over time" (Kane, & Staiger, 2002, p. 245). This statement reflects that a group of deaf students can show variation in test scores representing one school. This also reflects that when deaf students take either the Regent or Regent Competency exams between 5th and 8th grade in the state of New York, the scores might show a difference in their student performance on the tests based on the given sources in the classroom. One interviewee described how the Regents exam looks like with the use of DBQ and how students can be prepared for the Regents exam:

"The Regents for Social Studies are made up of two exams; one in Global Studies and one in U.S. History and Government. The High School Social Studies Regents exam involves three parts; fifty multiple choice questions, a thematic essay, and 6-8 documents with scaffolding questions along with a DBQ essay. The scaffolding questions are to assist and organize ideas that can be weaved into an essay format. DBQ is also used in the 5th and 8th grades but the numbers of multiple choice questions are less and it excludes thematic essay part but includes constructed response questions (CRQ) that is much similar to DBQ scaffolding questions with no essay required to write based on CRQs."
The interviewee continued to discuss that “for students, who are challenged readers, we [social studies teachers] look at test accommodations to see if students need additional support such as tests to be signed.”

On the other hand, an interviewee stated, “However, at times, I am concerned that there is an over-emphasis in preparing students for taking these kinds of tests when students simply move into a ‘regurgitation’ mode and retain very little of what was instructed in the first place.” From the interviewees’ expertise, it is important to ensure appropriate assessments for deaf students to verify their strengths and weaknesses in content areas such as math, reading, science, and social studies. Most state tests focused on the areas in math, science, and English. Although, the state of Massachusetts, as the interviewee mentioned, had modifications made to their state tests that “contains history and social studies question try-outs to see if students have the background, comprehension, and knowledge of the information given from class too.”

The same interviewee mentioned an important statistic that showed “about 15 students have taken the MCAS more than once, at least twice. The state of Massachusetts permits two opportunities to retake the tests during 11th and 12th grade, in the fall and spring. If necessary, an appeal is written to verify the fact that the students are taking the tests, and attempting to pass but scores do not meet standard.” This brings out a controversial issue among state test evaluators, professionals, and teachers who administer the tests to deaf students because it is crucial that deaf students are not under the burden to fail, but do their best on the state mandated tests. Deaf students are also given the option to graduate with high school diploma without the necessary supplementation of the scores from the state mandated tests.
As a matter of fact, one interviewee suggested that “even with test modifications, the test does not draw as much as could be drawn upon from those students’ memories of social studies concepts.” As one interviewee stated, “the success rate for students to pass the Regents of both types is not quite high.” Specifically, the state of New York and Connecticut provide state tests such as Regents Exams, Regent Competency Exams, and Connecticut Academic Performance Test to assess deaf students’ strengths in literacy, writing, comprehension, and application. One interviewee stressed to “keep up with the responsibility to identify necessary accommodation for deaf students.” For example, as one interviewee mentioned, “for reviewing before test, students are given an oral test through the use of PowerPoint and they are likely to remember the important facts and events.” This is considered an alternative method of giving tests to deaf students. These examples show that deaf students still struggle with state mandated tests such as the Regents and other state tests. The teachers opt for alternative testing methods for their deaf students, due to their literacy, writing, and expressive abilities.

**Instructional Methods**

According to another interviewee, the “goals in the deaf education field showed the need for bigger change and different educational philosophies showed that every child has a gift and it was up to the teacher to nourish/nurture these gifts into a full educational plan.” It is supported with the process of education in four different philosophies: “Montessori, Adventure Education, Open-Classroom, and Teach the Talented (TTT)” for this specific northeastern school for the deaf. These four educational philosophies provide an educational framework of what would be best and accommodated especially for the education of deaf students. For deaf students, it is like having two separate brains in the
deaf student’s mind; understanding the information in the expressive way using American Sign Language from the teacher’s perspective, in the meantime, struggling to relate the English-written text given to them. American Sign Language is recognized as a visuospatial language, which is a visual approach to obtain information through the expression of hands. One interviewee verified that “English is considered to have both visual and written avenues when compared to American Sign Language.” “It is important key to use as a language to be compatible to the students’ communication skills,” stated an interviewee.

On the teaching method of using DBQ in her the classroom, one interviewee commented:

“She encourages her students to feel and understand the importance of history. As one of her classroom strategy, she uses Document A and B on Pilgrims to show to students to see how the Pilgrims really adapted to life along with the Indians and the environment. Another example she offered was the discussion on the Covenant Chain that involves the alliance between the Iroquois Confederacy and the British. The discussion focuses on whether if the Iroquois has made a sound decision to form an alliance with the British and about the struggle between the French and British towards alliance through trade using guns and furs and land ownership. Another example she offered was the discussion on Iroquois Confederacy discussing about the struggle between the French and British towards alliance through trade and guns.”

This provides the effective teaching strategies which the interviewee uses to instruct and encourage “deaf students to distinguish the differences between primary and secondary sources in the social studies classroom.”

Also, another interviewee mentions that “with regard to the DBQ is as follows: students should keep in mind the core or essay question.” Deaf students are encouraged to answer the DBQ questions with accuracy. The challenge remains for the majority of deaf students’ whose struggle in using their reading, writing, and memorization
capabilities to apply social studies information with the recognition of using American Sign Language and limited language accessibility. Overall, this list of suggested methods for teachers to use is considered crucial and appropriate for students’ ongoing process of studying history.

**Visual Accessibility**

According to another interviewee, the use of PowerPoint program would “benefit students into becoming visual learners.” The PowerPoint program is a visual strategy best for deaf students to grasp what is shown in front of them. “Everything again has to be visually accessible to students and they must have preceding information and knowledge about something or someone important, as the interviewee stated, for the application and effectiveness of deaf students’ historical learning.” For deaf students, the use of DBQ strategies in the classroom is considerably important when the “information is simplified, meaning there is a big difference between giving them a piece of paper with written information and PowerPoint,” according to another interviewee. The same interviewee mentioned “arranging field trips for deaf students allow them to see the real historical events such as the Pilgrims and they are likely to remember and connect to the discussion in class.” This visual and critical thinking strategy is considered best for deaf students to see the connection between words to pictures to grasp the whole concept of the whole topic being discussed in the social studies classroom. Another interviewee valued the idea of visual accessibility “because kids need to see visuals, they don’t read into details.” This provides an open door opportunity for deaf students to become more visual compatible in learning about history. Also, the interviewee emphasized that “pictures help to make connections for the students.”
Role of Social Studies Teachers

The use of DBQ strategies encourage deaf students to “work with documents in
developing analytical skills in addition to selecting concepts that support a line of
thinking,” according to an interviewee. This effective strategy encourages deaf students
to follow the effective “think out of the box” learning model. The importance of using
DBQ includes a process where students are required to refer to the “minimum number of
documents within the body of their essay and all other ground rules for completion of the
essay.” To elaborate more, the interviewee emphasized that the DBQ essay itself written
by deaf students “are not driven by DBQs but supported by DBQs.” The deaf students
have to become more aware and analytical of what is considered primary to secondary
sources to document in their essays for their class requirements. This type of DBQ
strategy effectively prepares deaf students for the Regent Exams. For successful history
learning, deaf students have to use heavy rote memorization to remember key facts and
concepts, which means the DBQs are considered “daunting for the English language
demands they place upon others of deaf students,” according to an interviewee. The
remaining challenge for future social studies teachers is to figure out the appropriate
instructional strategies for appropriate and effective historical teaching, learning, and
testing for the deaf students.

Language Difficulties of Deaf Students

To wrap up the evidence of results among the interviewees, an interviewee
provided an evaluative insight that deaf students have “limited potential to interpret the
sources especially with the use of vocabulary comprehension.” Another interviewee gives another perspective that “the purpose of writing in journals is for students to be able to transfer the feelings towards the readings and information given in class.” What this reflects is that deaf students have to develop the ability to distinguish between primary and secondary sources. To add, deaf students show their best ability by showing connections between the pictures to their writing task with the core application of understanding the kind of history provided in the given primary sources. The goal by the interviewee for deaf students is to learn how to “weave all historical documents into a well-organized essay.” The process of a well-organized essay includes the steps of pre-writing, writing, drafting, and editing to make it a successful writing experience. Towards the success of using DBQs, as the interviewee emphasized, social studies teachers are given “training workshops 2 to 3 times a year to understand how to use DBQ and organize the website resources in their favorite folders to use.” This provides a perspective of why it is important for social studies teachers to become knowledgeable and attentive to the appropriate DBQ strategies that are matched to their deaf students based on their language, writing, and reading comprehension level skills in their social studies classroom.
Discussion

For an effective social studies instruction, teachers of the deaf should promote the use of DBQ as a classroom strategy to encourage deaf students to become avid historical researchers. History can make an impact on any deaf students at any time. The purpose of including written historical items, artifacts, and documents in the curriculum is to have students analyze why they were made in the first place in order to understand the past and current chronological events. In the field of deaf education, this is an area that appears to be little researched and in need for public recognition. This study calls for more research, qualitative, quantitative, or mixed on the effective of DBQ strategies for deaf students in the social studies classroom as a classroom teaching.

The goal is to see whether or not DBQ as a classroom and testing strategy can be accepted, adapted, and produced effectively among deaf students. In addition, the use of DBQ as a tool for deaf students promotes the importance of historical interpretative skills. Ideally, deaf students in the social studies classroom would be taught by their teachers to develop and strengthen their critical thinking, historical interpretation and application skills, and development of new ideas and theories independently. Deaf students depend heavily on the use of visuals, so the use of on-line sources to find historical documents to demonstrate in class is considered an effective teaching strategy. As an example, the website: [http://www.upstatehistory.org/services/DHP/DBQ.html](http://www.upstatehistory.org/services/DHP/DBQ.html) provides the laymen terms of what DBQ is and how it is applied to all levels of education, elementary to high school. As the website emphasizes what DBQ is all about,
Document-based questions are for all students, from elementary school through high school. They help prepare students to compare and contrast particular issues from multiple perspectives, reconciling differing positions, evaluating the strength of particular arguments, providing authentic opportunities at a high level of thinking, and developing life skills.

This website justifies the preceding research on how the DBQ strategies are beneficial for students and social studies teachers in the classroom. Deaf students like their hearing peers can benefit from using this website as a general DBQ resource to increase their knowledge, comprehension, and interpretation of primary sources/documents.

What the investigator had observed through the interviews and interviewees’ input about the effectiveness of DBQ strategies for deaf students in the social studies classroom is that the importance of visual competency and critical thinking skills both emphasize deaf students to become more motivated in learning history. The findings among the interviewees show that deaf children have the same passion as their hearing peers to learn history through the visual aids of historical and primary sources using the DBQ strategies.

According to the interviewees and their comments, thoughts, and suggestions, the main themes and concerns among them are to emphasize and modify the standardized levels in visual competency, increase literacy competency for language development for deaf students, and lastly, to encourage deaf students to become independent and critical thinkers in learning history in the classroom and with their peers. It is crucial to emphasize that deaf students are encouraged to learn about different perspectives of history on their own and their peers. As one interviewee stated, “the success rate for students to pass the Regents of both types is not quite high.” This provides part of the answer to the “living proof” of why deaf students are still challenged by their various
writing, literacy, and expressive skills. These areas reflect the various levels in their knowledge, comprehension, interpretation, and critical analysis in their DBQ essays in preparation for the Regents and Regents Competency Exams. Deaf students are best exposed to visuals and encouraged to use the "comparison and contrast" approach to use their critical thinking skills to become stronger and independent thinkers to grasp the significance of rich history itself.

For educational purposes, it is important to emphasize those deaf students like hearing students can learn and adapt to the use of DBQ strategies in their classroom tasks and testing skills. This quote makes sense for deaf students: "this is an education that seeks competence as well as community, that enables all people to find and act on who they are, what their passions, gifts, and talents may be, what they care about, and how they want to make a contribution to each other and the world" (Darling-Hammond 1996, p. 5). In understanding the authenticity behind the effectiveness of using document-based questions among deaf students, Grant, Gradwell, and Cimbricz (2004) emphasize the "use of authentic assessment where it is more of what is considered important to apply to classroom teaching and learning practices. Students are encouraged to develop more than one type of skills during their learning process such as interdisciplinary skills, especially when it comes to study deaf students and their learning skills" (p. 315).

To emphasize effective teaching to deaf students using DBQ strategies, social studies teachers prepare their deaf students for the state-mandated examinations, such as Regents Competency Tests and general Regents. As one can recall, Regents exams are offered three times a year: January, June, and August. Social studies teachers can refer to
the website to find when the New York State Regents examinations are given, http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/osa/schedules/june06schedule.htm.

Social studies teachers should consider that the specific guidelines of using DBQ that involves criteria to follow to implement historical documents within tasks and questions to test to see how much students understand of the context. Deaf students are taught about the primary purpose of learning history is best used through their development of identification, interpretation, and analysis for historical documents related to writing DBQ essays.

Deaf students should not be limited to one of the DBQ strategy of using “rote memorization,” but to alternative historical approaches to appreciate, learn, and observe the demonstration of primary sources/documents. This complex process can be modified appropriately for deaf students through the use of American Sign Language as a guided practice for more than one day worth before they achieve this as a classroom task and homework independently.

The theory of using and applying Document Based Question (DBQ) Strategies in the classroom for teaching and testing may encourage deaf students to become critical thinkers to embrace history. Learning and appreciating about history is not something for deaf students to become frustrated in the degree of complexity, but in the degree of simplicity. One of the notable and effective uses of DBQ strategies such as the PowerPoint can be valuable to deaf students to recognize the connections between pictures to words. Using historical and pictorial books, for example, Mathew Brady’s pictures during the Civil War period would allow deaf students to develop a real sense of what it was like to be part of that historical experience.
In the social studies classroom, social studies teachers are primarily responsible to provide an effective and innovative approach for their deaf students to increase their historical learning process in interpreting, studying and applying of primary sources/documents using effective DBQ strategies for higher level of learning. As an example, deaf students become thrilled when social studies teachers bring them to visit historic landmark sites to learn about their own history including deaf history and culture firsthanded, especially visiting graves of famous historical figures like Susan Anthony, Frederick Douglass, Noah Webster, Laurent Clerc, the Gallaudets, and the Cogswells, in the state of western New York and historic West Hartford, Connecticut.

In addition, it is important to recognize that it is always possible to have the innovation of a new DBQ tool that is modified and used again and again for deaf students. The purpose for effective DBQ strategies for deaf students is being used primarily by the Social studies teacher in the social studies classroom.

Social studies teachers are encouraged to use the list of “Suggested Methods for Integrating Primary Sources into Classroom Instruction,” which allow them to do the following:

“Focus activity,” where they introduce document analysis as part of the activity in the beginning of class, brainstorming activity, where there is a brainstorming session prior to a new unit of study with a document, visualization exercise, where teachers encourage students to visualize another place or time by viewing and analyzing graphic materials, project inspiration, where the documents serve as examples for student-created projects, dramatic presentation activity, where documents are used to inspire dramatic presentations by students, writing activity, where documents as prompts for student writing activity, listening activity, where teachers allow sound recording to give students the sensation of being present at an historical event, creating a documentary, where teachers use vintage film footage to encourage student-created documentaries, cross-curricular activity, where teachers can use documents to suggest and reinforce collaboration with a colleague in another department on assignments for students, current events activity (What is Past is Prologue), where teachers use
documents to launch a discussion about an issue or event in the news, **drawing connections activity**, where teachers can use documents to help students recognize cause and effect relationships, **integrating geography activity**, where the use of documents to emphasize where significant events have taken place, **small group hypothesis activity**, where teachers use documents to encourage creative thinking and the significance of a particular document, **self-reflective exercise**, where teachers use documents to prompt student understanding of how actions of the government and/or events of the past affect their lives today, and finally, **assessment**, where teachers incorporate documents into a document-based essay questions to assess student knowledge of a topic or event” (Social Education, 2003, p. 414-415).

However, one of the activities would not be appropriate for many deaf students which is the listening activity to listen to historic people’s voices. It doesn’t apply to them due to their hearing loss. This listening activity can apply to some deaf students who have higher level of hearing as well cochlear implant users. Hard of hearing students may benefit this one as they can listen to the historical voices. The modification can be made by the teachers by inserting a historical videotape either in sign language or with captions or subtitles. Within the call of limited language accessibility, such barriers can be overcome for deaf students to achieve advanced and rich historical learning experiences.

The remaining challenge for future social studies teachers is to figure out the best academic and DBQ strategies for appropriate and effective historical teaching, learning, and testing for deaf students. Social studies teachers are responsible to evaluate which DBQ activities are appropriate and accommodated to meet the visual, literacy, and language development among their deaf and hearing students. Social studies teachers are also encouraged to use available resources on-line and books to provide their deaf students a rich spectrum of history during different times in history. For instance, there is a deaf and kid-friendly website for all students to browse on, “Deafls”, established by American School for the Deaf that focuses on Deaf history, technology, culture, sports,
famous deaf people and sign language. The website for deaf and hearing students and social studies teachers can use is http://www.deafis.org. This is considered a primary source for deaf students to use and apply in their self-identify as deaf individuals, social studies learning, and future careers.

Deaf students are likely to become visual competent learners if the Social Studies teachers promote the importance of historical learning through the use of DBQ strategies in the classroom. This is considered a visual approach that allows Deaf students develop strong interpretation skills in understanding history at a later time. Social studies teachers are encouraged to develop skills to teach deaf students the best approaches in recognizing, interpreting, and analyzing historical documents, artifacts, items, quotations, letters, and photographs to relate the past to the present. These classroom activities using DBQ strategies are considered effective for deaf students to relate to their own families and history.

The importance of using technology can enhance deaf students to improve their literacy skills. For example, “such activities may simultaneously develop students’ literacy skills as they examine historical, geographic, and cultural information captured in images” (Berson, 2004, pp. 214-215). As one can recall, the key for deaf students is to become strong visual learners to understand and apply historical information from the past to the present through the use of technology to increase their writing competency. Deaf students should be exposed by their social studies teachers to varying techniques and strategies to interpreting and analyzing primary sources using guided website resources such as
“Literacy Matters”: http://www.literacymatters.org/content/socialstudies.htm. The website’s main purpose is to encourage literacy development among deaf students while learning social studies content in a balancing act.

Social studies teachers also can reflect the impact of “the social constructivist view of learning conceptualizes knowledge as a social artifact that is consensually formed through social interaction” (Bruffee, 1986, p. 241).

“A social-constructivist theory of learning is predicated on three assumptions: 1) knowledge is constructed through the individual’s interaction with the sociocultural environment; 2) higher mental functions, including reading and writing, are social and cultural in nature; and 3) knowledgeable members of a culture can help others learn” (McAnally, Rose, & Quigley, 1999, p. 241-42).

This theory suggests that since deaf students are part of the majority culture in the social studies classroom. As a minority culture in the larger society, they are likely to learn about different cultures. They encourage themselves to consider old and accept new ideas to incorporate in their historical learning process. Deaf students should observe how each kind of culture made a significant impact on the timeline of history in the United States.

Overall, the main reason for the teaching deaf students how to use DBQ strategies in the classroom is to develop higher appreciation and learning level of historical figures, events, political controversies, and period to apply to their current generations. On the other hand, DBQ strategies for deaf students in the social studies classroom needs to be further studied, researched, and analyzed based on effective classroom teaching. For the effectiveness of using DBQ strategies in the social studies classroom, social studies teachers bear the primary responsibility to find ways to provide deaf-friendly primary sources to allow deaf students to feel comfortable learning about history in their writing,
reading, and expressive abilities. All of these suggested DBQ teaching strategies namely by L.A. Potter can be beneficial and useful for deaf and hearing students alike. These strategies previously mentioned incorporate the knowledge, application, and interpretative skills and of math, consumer economics, history, English as a language, vocabulary development, creativity, and literacy. Deaf students should be encouraged to welcome these kinds of challenges to become stronger visual, critical, and independent thinkers plus the possibility of becoming their own historians to teach to their families and peers.

References


Effectiveness of DBQ Strategies

Territory. Social Education: National Council for the Social Studies, 67 (2), 100-104.


Appendix A
Part A

Short-Answer Questions

Directions: Analyze the documents and answer the short-answer questions that follow each document in the space provided.

Document 1:

We must look this matter in the face, and must recognize that in order that we may have more employment to give we must create more demand. Give me the demand for more goods and then I will undertake to give plenty of employment in making the goods; and the only thing, in my opinion, that the Government can do in order to meet this great difficulty that we are considering, is so to arrange its policy that every inducement [encouragement] shall be given to the demand; that new markets shall be created, and that old markets shall be effectually developed. You are aware that some of the opponents please themselves occasionally by finding names for me-and among other names lately they have been calling me a Jingo [extreme nationalist]. I am no more a Jingo than you are. But for the reasons and arguments I have put before you tonight I am convinced that it is a necessity as well as a duty for us to uphold the dominion [power] and empire which we now possess. For these reasons, among others, I would never lose the hold which we now have over our great Indian dependency- by far the greatest and most valuable of all the customers we have or ever shall have in this country. For the same reasons I approve of the continued occupation of Egypt; and for the same reasons I have urged upon this Government, and upon previous Governments, the necessity for using every legitimate opportunity to extend our influence and control in that great African continent which is now being opened up to civilization and to commerce; and lastly, it is for the same reasons that I hold that our navy should be strengthened—until its supremacy is so assured that we cannot be shaken in any of the possessions which we hold or may hold hereafter....


1. Based on this document, state one reason Joseph Chamberlain believed colonies were valuable to Great Britain. [1]
Email Correspondence with Interviewees

Email format:

Dear Mr. or Ms. ____________________,

Hello. My name is Sophie-Shifra Gold and I am inviting you to participate in an interview for my thesis research on DBQ. Please let me know if you're interested in doing the interview. Please communicate through e-mail. Thank you!

Sincerely yours,
Sophie-Shifra
Sample of Consent Form

CONSENT FORM

You are being invited to participate in a research project conducted by Sophie-Shifra Gold, a graduate student in the Masters of Science in Secondary Education of Students who are Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing (MSSE) at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) at the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) in Rochester, New York. This project is conducted under the direction of Professor Gerald Bateman and Assistant Professor Christopher Kurz at RIT. They can be reached at (585) 475-6776 or email them at gcbevmp@rit.edu and caknsp@rit.edu, respectively. Sophie-Shifra Gold can be reached at skg5946@rit.edu for further information.

I, Sophie-Shifra Gold, am conducting a capstone project study, called “Effectiveness of Document-Based Questioning Strategies on Deaf Students.” I am hoping to learn more about using Document-Based Questioning (DBQ) strategies in the social studies classroom for the deaf. For this project, you will be interviewed at your home or school and the interview will be videotaped for the purpose of documentation. During the interview, I will ask three questions related to your teaching expertise in using DBQ or related strategies in your classroom for the deaf. The interview session should take about one hour of your time. The interview questions will be given in signs and printed English. This interview will be done at a time and place chosen by you for your convenience.

You will be contacted to verify my transcripts of our interview to ensure that my translation of your answers (from signs to printed English) is accurate.

There are no potential risks associated with your participation in this study. The videotape will be destroyed after the study is complete. The videotape of your interview would only be kept with the investigator for the completion of the final project. We expect that the project will benefit you in that you will receive information regarding the results, which may be of use to you and to the field of deaf education. There will be no further compensation for your participation. You may refuse to participate or discontinue participating at any time without penalty.

I understand the above information and voluntarily consent to participate in the research project discussed on this form. With my signature I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this consent form to keep.

I hereby agree that I am giving my consent to be interviewed for this project.

Name_________________________________________ Date__________________
Appendix D

Sample of Interview Questions

Interview Questions

1. What is your general perspective about using DBQ strategies in your teaching experiences?

2. How can DBQ strategies help deaf students' efforts in reading and writing in Social Studies?

3. Why do DBQ strategies appeal to assist the general population of deaf students towards Deaf Education?
Effectiveness of DBQ Strategies

NTID IRB Form A: Approved March 1, 2006

Appendix F
Sample of DBQ Tool

Document Based Question Tool:

Students have to interpret and analyze this pictograph and write an essay in response to the DBQ question:

How does this represent the emotions of the people in the picture to the events of the Underground Railroad?

(Intended website: http://www.collectionscanada.ca/obj/023001/f4/nlc001862-v5.gif)

"Prelude to War", p. 111 from The American Reader by Diane Ravitch (1990)

Evaluation:

Students will be responsible to document with supporting facts in the DBQ essay.