

THE EFFECTS OF “READING APPRENTICESHIP” ON TEACHER  
INSTRUCTION AND STUDENT LEARNING

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Beth  
Who Believed in Me

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In all my 38+ years of teaching, I have attended too many professional developments to mention. For me, the only ones leaving an indelible mark on my soul, were RAISE, the professional development for my study, Strategic Reading by Jeffrey Wilhelm, and the National Writing Project. These professional development learning opportunities were transformational for myself, my students, and the teachers I worked with including their students.

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Many high-school students lack the specific subject matter knowledge, vocabulary, and reading strategies they need to learn from complex texts. Secondary teachers need professional development to improve content literacy instruction. This qualitative case study explored the impact of the Reading Apprenticeship Improving Secondary Education (RAISE) on three teachers and their students over an eight-month period. The teachers in this study attended RAISE workshops and received in-school coaching designed to help them recognize their own subject matter expertise and to apprentice students into the discourse and practices of historians through metacognitive inquiry. The teachers also learned how to support students in building identities as readers who could solve reading problems and persevere in learning from complex texts. The study was conducted at two Midwestern high schools, one rural and one urban. AP World History and U. S. History classes were the focus of the study. Analysis consisted of multiple cycles of coding that surfaced themes; these themes provided scaffolding for the analysis of the narrative responses of the participants and guided the selection of representative examples from transcripts. In the final analysis, the teachers demonstrated instructional efficacy and supported students in developing agency for reading complex history texts. The Reading Apprenticeship model was effective as an instructional innovation and transformational professional development option for school districts.

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

#### My Personal Journey

I have always had a passion for learning about literacy. This study has its roots in a paradigm shift that took place in my understanding of the reading process and the teaching of reading when I was teaching middle school language arts in a small Midwestern city. In fall of 2002, I attended a conference of the National Writing Project, which featured a session with Dr. Jeffrey Wilhelm. Although I had a Masters in Reading, his workshop session and his book, *Strategic Reading: Guiding Students to Lifelong Reading* (2001), gave me a whole new perspective on the teaching of content reading. Wilhelm engaged the audience in a reading strategy called a *think aloud* using the short story *The Chaser* by John Collier (1960) and a passage from the book *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry (1989). He made his internal thinking about the reading passages visible by using strategies he called thinking aloud and *marking the text*. He invited the audience to notice his thinking, to practice the strategies with his guidance, and then to try the strategies independently. His work reintroduced me to Vygotsky's social constructivist theory (Tracy & Morrow, 2006a) by suggesting that reading be taught in a learner-centered classroom wherein the teacher guides students as apprentices in complex, cognitive tasks (Wilhelm, 2001; Wilhelm, Baker, & Dube, 2001).

In my middle school classroom, I began to implement these strategies with my students using social studies content. I modeled *think alouds* and *marking the text* and engaged with my students in dialogue about our own thinking processes. We talked about our own metacognitive reading processes and reflected on how they were helping us understand the content. I observed that my students were learning new strategies for understanding complex texts and growing in

their ability to diagnose some of their own reading confusions. At the next parent conference, a parent remarked, “No one has ever taught my child how to read social studies!” Her comment resonated with me, because I was aware that I was teaching students to be strategic readers.

In 2006, my family and I experienced a different kind of life-changing event. My first grandson was born. My daughter and son-in-law, who lived in a large, Midwestern city two hours from my hometown, wondered if I might want to live with them and get a job in the city so I could spend time with my grandson, Keagan. My husband supported the idea, so I explored job possibilities. I accepted a position as a ninth-grade reading teacher at Roosevelt High School, beginning what would be a six-year commute along a four-lane interstate past fields of corn and soybeans. I drove home on weekends, but spent my weeks teaching for the Montgomery Public School District and watching Keagan grow.

The school district had many failing schools according to state measures, and Roosevelt School was working with a local university professor in a shared effort to address the problem of students’ low and failing test scores. She agreed to offer a graduate course in *Academic Literacy* at my high school for interested teachers and used the *book Reading for Understanding*, by Schoenbach, Greenleaf, Cziko, and Hurwitz (1999). This text provided me with a much deeper understanding of the metacognitive processes involved in reading, and I began to implement the *Reading Apprenticeship model* from the book in my ninth grade reading class. The students in my class were there because they had failed the eighth grade state test in language arts. These students had no desire to be in my class and came reluctantly, resistant to learning. I knew I needed to change their attitudes about reading, so I began embedding the reading strategies of *thinking aloud* and *talking to the text*, two metacognitive routines that would become part of our mental tool belt for understanding difficult text (Schoenbach, Greenleaf, & Murphy, 2012). As a

proficient reader, it was my task to “demystify the text” (p. 22) for my students so they could see themselves as potentially successful readers (Schoenbach, et al., 2012).

I established a daily routine in my classroom. Stopping after chunks of text, I asked my students, “What did you notice about my thinking?” I wrote student responses on large chart paper to provide visual reminders of the strategies they recognized. Students read text, shared their thinking, and the metacognitive responses were added to the chart. As the year progressed, the list of reading strategies grew. After modeling my own thinking to “demystify the text,” I had students engage in reading complex text using the same metacognitive routines. We made our thinking visible, named our reading strategies, described our reasons for choosing them, and talked about how we made sense of text. These routines created a sense of agency with my students for reading disciplinary text resulting in a twenty percent increase on the state standardized test for these students in the spring of 2007.

The next year, 2007-2008, the Montgomery School District hired me to be a secondary literacy coach. As a coach, I served ELA/reading teachers in five high schools. I modeled lessons for teachers using the same metacognitive routines used with my ninth grade students and had some successes in supporting positive changes in both teacher instruction and student achievement. For example, I worked with a secondary teacher named Adam and his students. After Adam practiced the above-mentioned metacognitive routines with his students, he reported the following:

I think the reading strategy was effective for me. It made the students ask questions that they otherwise would not have asked. Making them find the answers to their questions helped them to understand the text. If they hadn't, it would have been pointless for them to even read it. They would've been lost in the text (Personal communication, 2007).

My early literacy coaching experiences solidified for me the power of metacognition in the learning environment and ignited a fire within me to continue to learn about the *Reading Apprenticeship* model. Luckily, the Montgomery School District was invited to send literacy coaches to a summer institute for *Leadership in Reading Apprenticeship* (LIRA) in 2008, and a year later, I was recruited by WestEd to be a national history facilitator for the five-year national RAISE study directed by Schoenbach and Greenleaf. This federally funded research program was designed to provide teacher training in the *Reading Apprenticeship* instructional model and to collect data about the impact of the professional development. The first RAISE cohort of secondary teachers from districts all around the country was conducted in 2009-2010, and I was a facilitator-in-training. I took on a full facilitator role for Cohort II (2011-2012) and Cohort III (2012-2013). Ultimately, Cohort III became the focus of my dissertation study.

### **Why Do Secondary Teachers Need Professional Development in Reading?**

**Too many students cannot read complex texts.** Secondary teachers have voiced concern about students who read at grade level but still struggle with rigorous and complex academic texts. Many of these teachers feel unprepared to support students in how to internalize self-regulatory mechanisms and discipline-specific reading strategies to prepare them for the reading demands of college and the workplace (Greenleaf, Schoenbach, Cziko, & Mueller, 2001). Some teachers circumvent the academic reading demands of their subject matter by providing students with teacher-constructed notes, by reading to them, or by ignoring the text completely (Greenleaf et al., 2001; Heller & Greenleaf, 2007). These teachers believe they are doing students a favor by teaching the subject matter via the transmission model, but in reality, they are crippling students' agency for reading academic texts. Secondary students who read at or above grade level, including Advanced Placement (AP) students, are often not adequately

prepared for reading demands beyond the high school walls, even if these students are perceived as doing well in school. Many students invest a lot of energy in hiding their lack of understanding of complex texts and or inability to implement successful reading strategies. They ask, “What am I supposed to be doing when I am reading?” explains Greenleaf, Co-Director of the *Strategic Literacy Initiative*. “Students don’t really know because these content-specific ways of reading and thinking are invisible” (Greenleaf, 2011, p. 2). This roadblock can significantly impact students’ readiness for college, careers, and life in general (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, 2010).

Another segment of secondary students read below grade level. They struggle with “What am I supposed to be doing when reading?” but also encounter complex texts too difficult to comprehend. Research from data compiled by the Department of Education (2005) noted one-fourth or more of college freshmen at four-year colleges and one-half of freshmen at two-year colleges do not even advance to their second year of college (Kirst & Venezia, 2001).

The *2013 National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP)*, known as the *Nation’s Report Card*, reported high school seniors’ reading scores have remained stagnant since 2009 and even decreased four points from the first reporting of scores in 1992. Only 38% of seniors scored at or above proficiency level and were considered ready for the rigorous college reading demands (United States Department of Education, 2013). The above data underscores an urgency for teachers to receive professional development that can prepare them to support their students with the necessary metacognitive and cognitive tools for navigating complex and demanding texts.

***Common Core Standards required higher-level texts.*** In education, the standards for student learning are continually being revised, and the Common Core Standards, introduced in

2009, set forth guidelines for much more intellectually demanding course work in high school which raised the disciplinary-specific reading demands (Balfanz, McPartland, & Shaw, 2002) for both students and teachers. This change in standards was predicated on research showing that text complexity of high school reading had decreased, while the rigor of college reading and workplace reading demands had increased (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, 2010). If states adopted the Common Core standards and their emphasis on increased text complexity levels, twelfth-grade Lexile reading levels would have to increase from 1220 to 1335, representing an increase of two reading levels. This translated into higher stakes in terms of reading demands for secondary students.

Teachers also felt pressured to assign above-grade level reading materials, but lacked the professional knowledge needed to teach students to read rigorous academic texts. Many students seemed destined to become another statistic, college freshmen that dropout of college or struggle with workplace reading demands. The help most secondary students needed was not remedial assistance, but an instructional environment focused on developing metacognitive thinking to increase ownership of learning for discipline-specific reading (Schoenbach et al., 2012).

### **Professional Development in *Reading Apprenticeship* Offered a Viable Solution**

In 1995, a WestEd project led by Cynthia Greenleaf and Ruth Schoenbach to improve the oral and written language for secondary students in the San Francisco Bay area, uncovered a disconcerting issue. Although students were excited about the project-based learning activities, developed by Greenleaf and Schoenbach, they were alarmed about what was not occurring as students carried out their projects. Students were simply not reading the academic texts. Reading Apprenticeship was born from this disconcerting issue.

*Reading Apprenticeship* is a social-constructivist secondary model of literacy for teachers

and their students and has proved promising for raising achievement in reading since the first results were reported in 1999. The *Reading Apprenticeship* framework was developed by the *Strategic Literacy Initiative* (SLI) division of WestEd and was nationally recognized in the literacy field of professional development (Greenleaf, 2010; Reading Apprenticeship, 2009; Hale, 2012; Strategic Literacy Initiative, 2004; WestEd, 2010). What distinguished *Reading Apprenticeship* from many professional development models was that it implemented a practitioner-tested methodology and required teachers and administrators to attend professional development institutes as a team. The Reading Apprenticeship framework was comprised of four learning dimensions: social, personal, cognitive, and knowledge-building with metacognition central to the framework. These dimensions of instruction were largely absent in other literacy instructional approaches on the market at this time.

The professional development offered by the Strategic Literacy Initiative (SLN) was designed with the intentional use of multiple, mediational means, to situate and orchestrate teachers' learning in its context of use, assisting teachers to develop greater capacity to access and interpret student thinking through evidence-based inquiry and to make responsive instructional decisions during reading activities with students. It was designed to be generative. Carefully designed activities were intended to challenge teachers' conceptions of reading tasks and perceptions of students' reading and students' capabilities, and to expand teachers' knowledge in ways that helped them to generate in-the-moment solutions to assist students' reading development in classrooms (Greenleaf & Katz, 2004, p. 16).

### **Purpose of the Study**

As a literacy educator personally engaged in *Reading Apprenticeship* professional development and a coach to participating RAISE teachers, I saw a real need for a qualitative case

study that would illuminate the lived experiences of teachers and students as they wrestled with the new ideas about reading presented in Reading Apprenticeship workshops and their classrooms. I was interested in following the teachers on their journey through a ten-day professional development course and finding out what changed for the students as they acquired discipline-specific reading tools for the subject area of history. How did the RAISE professional development play out through the eyes and experiences of the teachers and students involved? To me, the central phenomenon to understand in this study was development of metacognition and agency for teachers and students in the participating history classrooms.

The teachers who participated in this study were first recruited by their respective high schools to participate in Cohort III of the *Reading Apprenticeship Improving Secondary Education* (RAISE). These teachers attended a five-day Summer Institute in July 2012 that was held at a high school in a neighboring state. The data collection for this study began with the follow-up Winter Institute in January 2013 and concluded during the final workshop conducted in July 2013. As the RAISE coach and researcher, I also made monthly classroom visits from January to May.

The study focused on three teachers and students in two AP classes. The male teacher worked at a rural school and taught AP World History. The two women teachers, one a history teacher and the other an English teacher, were co-teaching an AP section of an American Studies Humanities class in the urban Montgomery Public School District. These teachers and students were purposely selected because their contexts were so different in terms of rural, urban, socioeconomic, and cultural features.

### **Research Questions**

As the researcher, I set out to observe, record, and analyze the different ways teachers

constructed understandings and transferred those to their students. I was looking for evidence of metacognitive thinking, socially mediated learning, teacher change, which included agency, and student agency. I did this by collecting interviews and stories that would allow me to tell narratives of the teachers' and students' lived experiences. The following questions, which reflect my theoretical framework, guided my data collection and analysis:

**Central Question: What happens when secondary teachers engage in professional development as part of the RAISE study?**

**Sub Question 1:** *How do the RAISE experiences affect the teachers' teaching of reading within their discipline?*

- What do the teachers' remember and talk about from the Reading Apprenticeship framework?
- What do they do differently because of the RAISE experience?
- What ways of reading, thinking, and talking about text are evident?
- How is metacognition understood and utilized by teachers and students?
- What literacy routines and assignments are used to support students in subject-area reading?
- How are metacognitive conversations assessed?
- What impact does the CERA formative assessment have on teacher instruction and student learning?
- What are teachers doing to foster student agency?

**Sub Question 2:** *What aspects of the RAISE professional development experience contributed to transformational learning for the teachers?*

- What aspects of adult transformative learning are evident in the professional development model and grant design?
- What instructional strategies, literacy routines, resources, activities, support or expectations facilitated teacher change and instructional change?
- What aspects of adult transformative learning are evident in the lived experiences of the teachers?
- What aspects of transformative learning were not evident? Why? How did that impact the overall impact of the professional development?

## CHAPTER 2

### Introduction

This chapter is comprised of three different sections. In the first section, I discuss the *Reading Apprenticeship* (RA) model of professional development. This section provides a comprehensive review of the basic premises and practices of this framework for discipline-based reading instruction. The second section of the chapter discusses the theoretical perspectives of social constructivism, metacognitive theory, and transformational learning that I believe are inherent in the Reading Apprenticeship model. I believe the symbiotic relationship of these three theories separates the Reading Apprenticeship model from other literacy models. The final section is a literature review of current studies and synthesis articles related to this study.

### Reading Apprenticeship Professional Development

Reading Apprenticeship® began with the work of two senior staff members at WestEd’s Strategic Literacy Initiative (SLI)—Cynthia Greenleaf and Ruth Schoenbach. These adolescent literacy experts worked with two secondary classroom teachers—Christine Cziko and Lori Hurwitz—to combat misguided assumptions about adolescent reading. SLI was awarded a federal *Investing in Innovation* grant for a five-year study to investigate the efficacy of Reading Apprenticeship, a disciplinary literacy professional development approach. The focus of the RAISE grant was to implement “research-based, discipline-focused professional development” (Strategic Literacy Initiative, 2010; WestEd, 2010, p. 2) for a cohort of high school English, history, and science teachers.

The professional development provided a necessary roadmap for secondary educators by surfacing teachers’ disciplinary ways of reading, writing, and thinking in their disciplines (Greenleaf, 2011). The workshop sessions for teachers cultivated an environment where they felt

safe questioning their own practices and learning from each other as they surfaced their own disciplinary literacy practices in order to make them transparent for their students.

Metacognitive thinking was at the core of the RA framework, and teachers became aware of their own “metacognitive and cognitive toolkit” (Schoenbach, et al., 2102, p viii). They also learned ways to support students to internalize the necessary metacognitive and cognitive tools and perseverance needed to navigate reading in different disciplines. Teachers experienced the importance of becoming cognizant and metacognitively explicit about their own disciplinary reading processes, recognizing their own roadblocks and learning how to support their students to internalize the multiple cognitive strategies required to comprehend discipline-specific text (Greenleaf et al., 2001). This shift in instruction was uncomfortable at first for some teachers, because they had learned to focus only on the cognitive, the “what to learn” instead of also analyzing their own metacognitive processes: “How do I make sense of text? Why do I choose this strategy? How do I move through confusion?”

Teachers became more metacognitively explicit by learning to read as learners and to watch for possible roadblocks that could deter comprehension for themselves and their students. *Think alouds* (Kucan & Beck, 1997) and *talking to the text* were two key reading strategies teachers practiced during the trainings. They learned to do these strategies themselves, to demonstrate them for students, and finally to gradually release ownership of learning to the students (Schoenbach, Greenleaf, Cziko, & Hurwitz, 1999; Tovani, C., 2000; Vygotsky, 1978). The professional development aimed at teaching teachers to apprentice students in the metacognitive processes of discipline-based reading. The teachers learned to focus on the how, the what, and the why of the thinking processes in their disciplines, making the invisible visible.

Reading Apprenticeship was “not a program or a curriculum that teachers or schools “adopted.” It was an organizing paradigm for subject area teaching, one that enabled students to

approach challenging, academic texts more strategically, confidently, and successfully” (Schoenbach et al., 2012, p. 2-3). Reading Apprenticeship was not a neatly packaged skills-in-a-box that promised a quick fix. Reading Apprenticeship was not an add on to an already packed secondary curriculum, but a framework supporting secondary reading that developed and strengthened students’ disciplinary reading processes. The framework provided a foundation for developing students’ mental tool belts conducive to acquiring and accessing the different disciplinary reading processes necessary for content-area learning. Reading Apprenticeship helped students and teachers become more metacognitive about their cognitive thinking. In the words of a middle school teacher from Washtenaw, Michigan (Schoenbach, et al., 2012):

Reading Apprenticeship gave me the language and strategies to use with students that helped to “unlock” doors for them. . . I felt like a better teacher and that the time put into the process was given back in outcomes.

### **Theories Underlying the Reading Apprenticeship Professional Development Model**

#### **Social Constructivism**

Social constructivism is a perspective that views learning as a form of collaborative inquiry wherein learners actively construct new knowledge and understanding from previously learned ideas and experiences (Bransford, Derry, Berliner, & Hammerness, 2005; Dewey, 2009; a& Morrow, 2006; Vygotsky, 1978) with the help of a more experienced learner through social mediation (Powell & Kalina, 2009; Tracey & Morrow, 2006a, 2006b; Vygotsky, 1978; 1986). A major area of a contribution to the academic world was Vygotsky’s theory of learning and development as a mediated process. Learners use language and other symbols in the context where the learning was taking place. Vygotsky taught in the classroom setting where he conducted his research, different from other psychologists, giving him deeper insight into the

ways in which children learn. He was a researcher, using his theory of learning by testing it in a learner-centered atmosphere (Wilhelm, 2001).

Known as the “Father of Social Constructivism” (Powell & Kalina, 2009; b& Morrow, 2006), Vygotsky proposed that learners learned best in the zone of proximal development (ZPD), a popular theory studied in the Western world (Wink & Putney, 2002). In the ZPD, the learning of a new activity or knowledge occurs with a novice apprenticed to an expert until the knowledge becomes intrinsic (Vygotsky, 1978), which allows for independent learning. The zone of proximal development “is the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). “What a child can do with assistance today she will be able to do by herself tomorrow” (p. 87). In the realm of Reading Apprenticeship, the importance of working with students in the ZPD equates to the apprenticeship model because the learner is yet not ready to perform the task independently, but he or she can be scaffolded through a gradual release to ownership of learning (Rogoff, 1990; Schoenbach, et al., 2012; Schoenbach, et al., 1999).

An essential feature of learning is that it creates the zone of proximal development; that is, learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers. Once these processes are internalized, they become part of the child’s independent developmental achievement. (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 91)

Vygotsky did not believe learning needed to be matched to the actual developmental level: “the level of development of a child’s mental functions that has been established as a result of certain already *completed* developmental cycles” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 85), as other critics believed (Palinscar, 1998; Wink & Putney, 2002). He ascertained that waiting for the actual developmental level slowed the potential learning process. “We cannot limit ourselves merely to

determining developmental levels if we wish to discover the actual relations of the developmental process to learning capabilities” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 85).

Vygotsky’s theory developed when he noticed two children of the same chronological and mental functions varied in their approaches to learning, when the teacher supported the learning in a collaborative, inquiry process. Vygotsky viewed the knowledge that occurred with support as “buds or flowers of development rather than the fruits of development” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86), which led to the conceptualization of his theory by determining “the actual development characterizes mental development retrospectively, while the zone of proximal development characterizes mental development prospectively” (p. 86-87). These findings solidified Vygotsky’s basis for his theory of the zone of proximal development, which ascertained “performance before competence” (Lasky, 2005, p. 5). Although Vygotsky believed from his observations that “learning and development are interrelated from the child’s very first day of life” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 85), he argued that learning preceded development, which differed from Piaget’s Theory of Cognitive Development that ascertained competence or maturation precedes learning (Palincsar, 1998; Tracey & Morrow, 2006b).

Vygotsky’s theory pointed out an important learning misconception: “when educators focus only on the students’ actual level, they are orienting the learning to yesterday’s development” (Wink and Putney, 2002, p. 95). Many teachers I worked with in my former school district were misled by testing data and believed students identified through testing as reading below grade level would not be competent to handle grade level or above grade level subject-matter material. In applying Vygotsky’s theory, these students’ cognitive abilities were determined by what they could do independently, not by what they were able to comprehend and perform with teachers’ support. Student testing did not take into consideration what the student

would be able to cognitively understand and perform within the zone of proximal development with teacher support.

Reading Apprenticeship is built on the theory that literacy learning is situated, socially mediated, and cultural (Greenleaf et al., 2004; Lave & Wenger, 1991). The Reading Apprenticeship professional development is grounded in Vygotsky's theory, because it builds on teachers' past learning experiences and supports teachers' in new understandings while cognitively working in the zone of proximal development (ZPD). "Underlying the design of this professional development work is a conception of learning as the construction of new knowledge and practices through participation in socially-mediated activity" (Greenleaf et al., 2004, p. 4). During the first few days of RAISE, teachers verbalized feeling outside their comfort zone, but the Reading Apprenticeship facilitators supported the learning processes in the ZPD before letting participants "go it alone." The designers of Reading Apprenticeship "suggest that designing and nurturing such zones of proximal development for teachers will be necessary if we are to enable all students to reach high levels of literacy proficiency (p. 5).

Secondary teachers must develop a belief in their own instructional efficacy to meet adolescent literacy needs for their subject matter but in order for this to happen, teachers need to be supported in the ZPD and engaged in collaborative inquiry practices that will "foster the development of academic literacies" (p. 8) for themselves and their students. Instructional efficacy is not created, but constructed through socially-mediated learning experiences (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Greenleaf & Schoenbach, 2004; Schoenbach et al., 1999; Vygotsky, 1978) by developing the following:

- teachers' metacognitive awareness of their own reading processes and the discipline-specific reading processes required for their subject matter.

- understanding of the different discipline demands required to comprehend subject-area texts.
- belief in the academic potential of their students.

When teachers are asked to embed a new learning process, which means for some a shape shifting, a refashioning of their instruction (Gee, 2006), they need support of a proficient expert to scaffold the learning within a cognitive apprenticeship. Adult educators need just as much, or more, support when they are learning at an instructional level as students do when learning a new activity. Adult learners need support to step outside their comfort zone in order to “try on” new understandings before applying them in the classroom. The Reading Apprenticeship learning environment is a place where teachers socially and independently construct understanding for disciplinary reading. The socially mediated activities provide teachers with an awareness of the processes they use to think, read, and write in disciplinary ways in order to make these processes transparent for their students.

Even though Lev Vygotsky lived a short time, his social constructivist model of learning and development is still studied today. This is because of: “1) his emphasis on the active contribution of humans to the development of their own consciousness; 2) the importance of social interaction in development; and 3) the notion of the meditational role of language in the communicative process” (Wink & Putney, 2002, p. xvii).

### **Metacognitive Theory**

The term "metacognition" is most often associated with John Flavell. In “Metacognition and Cognitive Monitoring: A New Area in Cognitive-Developmental Inquiry” (1979), he defined metacognition as “knowledge and cognition about cognitive phenomena” (p. 906) and referred to self-regulated learning as a facet of cognitive monitoring. Flavell (1976) believed “monitoring of

a wide variety of cognitive enterprises occurred through actions of and interactions in four areas of phenomena: (a) metacognitive knowledge, (b) metacognitive experiences, (c) goals, or tasks, and (d) actions, or strategies” (p. 906).

Metacognitive knowledge is the schema learners bring to the text. Flavell refers to this as stored world knowledge (Flavell, 1976). For example, the schema that a reader brings to the text can enhance comprehension. Schema can help bridge from the known to the unknown.

Metacognitive experiences enable the reader to recognize when confusion sets in and to utilize self-monitoring tasks, such as writing a clarifying question, determining if a part of the text required inferencing, or reading further to ascertain if the passage was important. Teachers modeling their thinking about how they are making sense of a primary document, by using *think alouds* and *annotating text*, are utilizing metacognitive experiences. Both metacognitive knowledge and experiences deepen metacognitive awareness and development.

Flavell studied the memory capabilities in preschool and elementary children. His research was aimed at determining children’s awareness of their own thinking processes. Flavell discovered that the metacognitive awareness in preschool children was not developed compared to the elementary group. Although the preschool children believed after studying a set of items they would be able to recall them correctly, they did not have the metacognitive capacity to remember the items correctly. Conversely, the elementary children believed they were ready to recall the items after studying and were successful. This research led Flavell to theorize that very young children do not have the same metacognitive capacity as older children.

Kucan and Beck (1997) studied work in the area of metacognition through a review of research on *think alouds* as a form of inquiry, instruction, and social interaction. Simply stated, metacognition is “thinking about one’s own thinking” (p. 271). *Think aloud* protocols fall under

the umbrella of metacognition because they make visible what normally would be invisible, the internal thinking processes. Making thinking visible allows for opportunities to model, practice, and build one's own self-monitoring skills (Kucan & Beck, 1997; Pressley & Afflerbach, 1995). *Think alouds* are a way to demystify the reading process (Schoenbach, et al., 1999; Schoenbach et al., 2012) by verbalizing the how and why of the thinking processes. In a Reading Apprenticeship learning environment, participants verbalize their metacognitive processes and explain the thinking behind their cognitive processes, enabling the learners to take up self-monitoring tasks by generating clarifying questions, chunking the text, or realizing a part of the text may require inferencing. These are other important aspects of metacognitive experiences.

Georghiades and Paraskevas (2004) pointed out in their review of the three decades of metacognition that although Flavell was given credit for the term metacognition, "Dewey recognized and advocated processes metacognitive" (p. 366). Especially in the area of reading and writing through inquiry practices, Dewey's theory of inquiry learning (b & Morrow, 2006) posited that knowledge was constructed by applying problem-based learning, which integrated new knowledge to the child's existing knowledge (Dewey, 2009). Reading Apprenticeship is a constructivist model of teaching and learning that has proved promising for raising achievement in reading since the first results were reported in 1999 (Strategic Literacy Initiative, 2005).

Reading Apprenticeship professional development values experiences learners bring to the table and builds on that knowledge through collaborative inquiry to deepen understanding. Dewey, the Father of Inquiry, believed schools should teach students to be problem solvers. He believed this method of teaching was the best way to prepare students for the real world and a democratic society. Dewey's constructivist perspective paralleled Vygotsky's theory of social constructivism that children learned as a result of social interaction with others through

collaborative inquiry.

### **Transformative Learning Theory**

Teachers who participate in Reading Apprenticeship professional development engage in reflective discourse and rational discourse (Mezirow, 2002) about metacognitive thinking and its instructional application. These conversations heighten their awareness of their own metacognitive thinking about in their discipline, thereby transforming preconceived assumptions about their own instruction and how students learn. Transformative learning requires critical reflection of assumptions and rational discourse to arrive at the best conclusion with adult learners who view those at the communication table as autonomous learners (Mezirow, 2008; Mandell & Herman, 2009). Professional development that views learners as autonomous thinkers and collaborators by placing their voices at the center, with time provided for critical reflection, lays the foundation for transformative learning (Cranton, 1996). Magic can happen; teachers can be transformed; and students can be empowered.

I see Mezirow's theory of adult transformative learning as a key theoretical perspective even though it was not a theoretical perspective that was considered at the inception of Reading Apprenticeship. Transformative learning requires adult learners to reflect and reinterpret to make meaning (Mezirow, 1994), to participate in an "active, ongoing, inquiry, participatory process" (Tracey & Morrow, 2006a, p. 47) through which adult learners reflect and question former beliefs.

Reading Apprenticeship was designed using the theoretical foundations of metacognition and social constructivism. Although the theory of adult transformational learning was not a construct of the Reading Apprenticeship design, I believed from my Reading Apprenticeship experiences that it could have been. Cynthia Greenleaf, co-founder of Reading

Apprenticeship agreed with my belief. “I definitely see how it could be applied here (Interview, 2013).

**Mezirow is a leading educator in the field of adult learning.** He is credited for his theory on adult transformation learning. Perspective transformation, “the engine of adult learning” (Mezirow, 2009, p. 243) was the earlier name given to adult transformative learning. Mezirow contributed part of the formation of his theory to the work of Freire’s conscientization, his wife’s return to undergraduate study during the women’s movement in the 1970’s, and Habermas’s theory of communicative learning. Mezirow’s findings led to identification of transformative learning, as a process by which we “transform problematic frames of reference . . . to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, reflective, and emotionally able to change” (Mezirow, 2008, p 26) by reevaluating earlier assumptions, beliefs, and experiences that have defined life. Fostering transformative learning encompasses “transforming frames of reference through assumptions, validating contested beliefs through discourse, taking action on one’s reflective insight, and critically assessing it” (Mezirow, 1997, p. 11).

Adult learners constantly strive to make meaning of learning through interpretation of previously learned experiences. This process is “focused, shaped and delimited by our frames of reference” (Mezirow, 1994, p. 223) or “meaning structures” (p. 223). Transformative learning occurs when our own meaning structures or frames of reference are altered. Frames of reference involve meaning perspectives, habits of mind, schema, or points of view. Mezirow uses these terms interchangeably in his writings.

Meaning structures or frames of reference are comprised of two dimensions: points of view and habits of mind. Points of view are more receptive to feedback from others and can change based on a single experience. For example, if I am resistant about attending an upcoming

professional development but engage in a conversation with a colleague who had a positive learning experience for that same professional development, that conversation may result in a change in my point of view, but will not alter my habits of mind.

Habits of mind are “habitual ways of thinking, feeling, and acting influenced by assumptions” (Mezirow, 1997, pp. 5-6) and “formed by cultural, social, educational, economic codes, biases, or assimilation” (p. 6). These assumptions occur over time and are less open to change. Transformative learning that results in a change in frames of reference may be “*epochal*-sudden major reorientations in habit of mind often associated with significant life crises or *cumulative*, a progressive sequence of insights resulting in changes in point of view and leading to a transformation in habit of mind” (Mezirow, 2008). This study will identify the cumulative sequence of insights that resulted in transformative learning for the teacher participants.

It is important to understand the two dimensional for frames of reference in order to be able to understand what distinguishes transformative learning from other types of learning that are not life changing. Mezirow illustrates the difference between the two dimensions using the example of ethnocentrism. Ethnocentrism, a habit of mind, is less susceptible to change. Although an individual’s superior point of view may change toward a certain diverse group, this change does not mean the individual will be accepting of all diverse groups. These frames of reference would be transformed when the individual is accepting of all groups’ belief systems and able to engage in critical reflection and rational discourse, which aids in altering habits of mind. A teacher’s resulting point of view about one student’s unwillingness to learn may change based on a single experience, but a transformative learning experience is necessary for that teacher’s prior assumptions about all students to change.

Autonomous learning is another characteristic that separates adult transformative learning

from other types of learning experiences. Autonomous learning is the vehicle through which transformative learning develops (Mezirow, 1997) when the learner's interpretations are generated autonomously without coercion or pressure by transforming one's frame of reference through critical reflection and rational discourse. Any change that occurs coercively or by pressure may not be permanent or may be permanent for the wrong reasons and does not result in changing habits of mind.

Mezirow (1994) defines learning as “the social process of construing and appropriating a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one's experience as a guide to action” (pp. 222-223). Professional development for educators that is transformative provides a foundation for autonomous thinking, critical self-reflection, and discourse opportunities that are “participatory, interactive and involves group deliberation and group problem-solving” (Mezirow, 1997, p. 10). Reading Apprenticeship challenges teachers' frames of reference by engaging them in metacognitive awareness and development of metacognitive thinking by pushing them to be highly cognizant of their own thinking processes and self-regulatory monitoring mechanisms. These transformative ways of learning challenge teachers' former assumptions about why students struggle with rigorous academic texts, thereby empowering students in disciplinary ways of thinking, reading, and writing.

**Contributors to Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory.** You can see the influence of Friere's educational theory of conscientization in Mezirow's transformative learning theory, because transformative learning also requires critical awareness, reflection, and action to alter habits of mind. Freire argues that if learning occurs collaboratively, within the context of real life problems, participants develop what he identifies as conscientization, the “critical self reflection in the context of transformative action to change the social order” (Mezirow, 1990, p.

85). This act requires that learners be autonomous thinkers and collaborators (Mandell & Herman, 2009), an important essence of transformative learning. Transformative learning is not fostered through the banking method (Freire, 2010; Hansman & Wright, 2009), wherein the teacher deposits information into the student without any thought for the experiences the student brings to the table. Reading Apprenticeship recognizes that teacher participants do not come to the professional development as “blank slates” but with rich experiences to be built upon, not disregarded.

Another influence in Mezirow’s work resulted from the women’s movement in the 1970’s. This movement was transformative for women who had left college to raise families and were returning to undergraduate studies, including marginalized women who could now afford college education as a result of government-funded studies aimed at these populations. One of these women was Mezirow’s wife, Edee Mezirow, who was returning to undergraduate studies at Sarah Lawrence College in New York. Mezirow this and was quoted to say:

I got fascinated with the concept of conscientization and I began to see it in all kind of places where I had never seen it before. For instance, I ran into it in my wife when she went back to school. . . I could really see a transformation in the way she saw herself, the world, and the subject matter. She was going through a significant learning experience and it was clear to me that what was happening was perspective transformation (Marsick & Finger, 1994, p. 4-5).

Mezirow noticed phases of meaning in his observation of women entering college prior to transformation:

- disorienting dilemma;
- self-examination with feelings of fear, anger, guilt, or shame;
- critical assessment of assumptions
- recognition that one’s discontent and the process of transformation are shared;

- planning a course of action;
- acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans;
- provisional trying of new roles;
- building competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships;
- reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective. (Mezirow, 2008, p.28)

Many of these attributes are evident in the foundation of Reading Apprenticeship, providing the venue through which transformative learning occurs. Being able to identify the tenets of transformative learning can help adult educators evaluate professional development and extrapolate the necessary aspects that foster transformation. Educational systems need to use these rationales to provide educational learning and push back against the forces that push out professional development that is not transformative.

**Mezirow also drew on Habermas's communicative theory.** He identified two aspects of problem solving and learning: instrumental learning and communicative learning. Although instrumental and communicative learning may occur when resolving an issue or dilemma (Mezirow, 1994), communicative learning is paramount for transformative learning. Instrumental learning is a process through which the "environment or people are controlled or manipulated" (Mezirow, 1990, p. 3; 1997, p. 6) to produce a desired result. The end focus of instrumental learning is to "determine the truth" (Mezirow, 1994, p. 225). "Is this an accurate assessment of the student? Are there holes in my instruction that presented roadblocks for this student?" This type of formative assessment employs instrumental learning, but requires no communicative action. It can be done entirely in isolation without altering one's frame of reference.

The focus of communicative learning is to "establish the *validity*, or justification, for our

belief” (p. 225) through communicative action. Mezirow identifies three ways the adult learner establishes validity:

One is to turn to authority figures, like the priest, wise man, leader, teacher, or expert. A second way is to turn to force-through politics, the courts, or brute force. The only other option is to validate the problematic belief through rational discourse. (Mezirow, 1994, p. 225)

Neither of Mezirow’s first two options allows for rational discourse. It is only through Mezirow’s third option that transformative learning occurs, because transforming frames of reference does not occur when a decision is handed down by an authority figure or when that decision is coerced. Communicative learning that fosters transformative learning occurs when understanding transpires through rational discourse, which requires assessing the truth’s validity, but also the “intent, qualifications, truthfulness, and authenticity” (Mezirow, 2008, p. 25) of the communicator.

It is important that educators participating in professional development believe the facilitator has “walked the walk and talked the talk” and views participants as autonomous thinkers and collaborators. Genuine dialogue means a surrender of authority to uncertainty” (Mandell & Herman, 2009, p. 80). Adult learners need to enter into the conversation knowing and accepting that their prior frames of reference may be challenged and altered. One of the norms in the RAISE sessions is “Be open to possibilities” which provides awareness to participants of the “change” aspect.

**Rational Discourse.** Two important aspects of transformative learning are critical self-reflection and rational discourse (Mezirow, 2008, p. 28). Rational discourse plays a part in communicative learning, because one must be open to an unbiased evaluation of others’ assumptions and beliefs, including the utilization of other’s thinking, in order to arrive at the best conclusion. (p 25). Rational discourse is a necessary vehicle in adult learning and education for

fostering transformative learning. In order for the adult learner to transform “problematic frames of reference” Mezirow, 2008, p 26), the learner must engage in the communicative action of rational discourse. Habermas identified seven necessary criteria for participation in rational discourse, providing a path for a paradigm shift of thinking:

- have accurate and complete information;
- be free from coercion;
- be open to alternative points of view-empathetic, caring about how others think and feel, withholding judgment;
- be able to understand, to weigh evidence and to assess arguments objectively;
- be able to become aware of the context of ideas and critically reflect on assumptions, including their own;
- have equal opportunity to participate in the various roles of discourse;
- have a test of validity until new perspectives, evidence, or arguments are encountered and validated through discourse as yielding a better judgment. (Mezirow, 2008, p. 25-26).

Many of these same aspects were observed in Mezirow’s grounded theory study of women returning to college or entering for the first time. These criteria are centered on being open to alternative points of view in order to arrive at the best solution for the problem. A teacher must be open to the possibility that earlier assumptions about their instruction may have presented roadblocks. The responsibility for change must first come from the teacher before the student can be empowered in his learning.

**Role of adult educator in fostering Transformative Learning.** Although adolescents possess the ability to hypothesize and critically reflect, thereby developing autonomous thinking, it is not until adulthood when earlier assumptions from their youth may be challenged (Mezirow,

1997) and their scope of thinking is widened “to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, reflective, and emotionally able to change” (Mezirow, 2008, p 26). Taylor notes that developing an awareness of the background context, including understanding the personal and professional experiences that a learner brings to the table, are important influences in fostering transformative learning (Hansman & Wright, 2009; Mezirow, 2009). Adults do not make “transformative changes” (Mezirow, 1997, p. 7) as long as they are unwilling to challenge their frames of reference.

Professional development comes in different forms for different purposes. Some are the “sit and git” variety that can be related to the “transmission of information model” (Bruner, 1996, p. 21; Kern, 2000), which assumes the facilitator in the role of power, depositing information into the learner (Freire, 2010, p. 72). The transmission model does not afford a professional development environment that is conducive for transformative learning. Professional development that focuses on short-term goals without seeing the “big picture” is not transformative.

The goal of transformative professional development provides a foundation wherein the facilitator of learning recognizes, respects, and places the adult learners’ voices at the center by acknowledging “the learner’s objectives and goal” (Mezirow, 1997, p. 8). The design of Reading Apprenticeship supports adult learners to move outside their comfort zone by providing a learning culture that is safe to question former assumptions and engage in reflective discourse where autonomous thinking and collaborating are the norm and not the exception.

### **Literature Review**

A large majority of secondary students struggle with reading academic text (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004) and misguided assumptions about the nature of adolescent reading by educators,

researchers, policymakers, and parents have led to the belief that decoding is a primary cause for reading difficulties at the secondary level. Contrary to that assumption is the research data that determined only a small percentage of adolescent readers struggled with decoding, but a larger number of adolescent readers struggled with comprehending academic text (Biancarosa & Snow, 1994; Schoenbach et al., 1999).

Although secondary students possess serviceable levels of decoding skills (Kamil, 2003, p. 11), students are unable to effectively access academic text, because they have not learned discipline-specific reading strategies. Therefore, student successes inside the four walls of school and in their lives outside of school may be limited (Schoenbach, et al., 1999). The Reading Apprenticeship professional development developed by WestEd's Strategic Literacy Initiative (SLI) involved teachers in metacognitive literacy conversations that incorporated metacognitive processes, such as *think alouds* and *talking to the text*, utilizing a cognitive apprenticeship instructional model (Schoenbach et al., 1999).

This method has proved promising for raising achievement in reading since the first results were reported in 1999. Ninth grade students from Thurgood Marshall High School in San Francisco were enrolled in an Academic Literacy course that implemented the Reading Apprenticeship framework. These students demonstrated an average of two years' reading growth in seven months, with English Language Learners demonstrating the most gains. Data was gathered the following year from tenth grade students who had participated in the ninth grade study. Even though these students had not received any additional instruction, they gained over one year of growth in their independent reading level (Strategic Literacy Initiative, 2004).

A more recent study of Reading Apprenticeship in Biology (2010) conducted by the National Science Foundation using the Institute of Education Science (IES) standards

demonstrated significant gains (Greenleaf, et al., 2009). Biology teachers verified significant changes in teacher practice which resulted in higher student scores on standardized tests in biology, reading comprehension, and improvement in English Language Arts.

There have been numerous studies relating the development of metacognitive strategies to increase reading comprehension (Griffith & Ruan, 2005; Huff and Nietfeld, 2009; White and Frederiksen, 2005; Zohar, 2006). White and Frederickson's study (1998) determined that teaching of metacognitive strategies must be a part of subject content being taught in order to address the discipline-specific demands of academic text. A "one size fits all" metacognitive strategy will not work. Just because a teacher implemented a *think aloud* in a history lesson does not mean students will naturally transfer the strategy to other classes, unless it is done purposefully in other content subjects (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2006; Heller & Greenleaf, 2007).

Another study by Huff and Nietfeld (2009) showed significant gains in comprehension when self-monitoring skills were taught to fifth grade students. Teaching metacognitive monitoring skills at all phases of the learning process will build metacognitive awareness and capacity, resulting in an intrinsic ownership of these metacognitive skills. The act of reading requires constant problem solving. Developing metacognitive awareness and self-regulatory mechanisms provides learners with an internal support system that allows navigation with disciplinary reading. (Griffith & Ruan, 2005). Developing metacognitive skills within a cognitive apprenticeship model can promote ownership of learning, because students have engaged in collaborative inquiry, practiced independently, and had the opportunity to hear multiple voices, which deepens metacognitive awareness and self-regulation.

Although the relationship between metacognitive awareness and self-regulatory skills for

discipline-specific reading demands exists, this evidence is absent in many secondary classrooms (Schoenbach et al., 1999; Schoenbach et al., 2012). Even though research has supported the use of metacognition in the classroom to deepen understanding (Beyer, 2008; Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000; Pressley, 2002), instructional evidence in the classroom for the causal relationship between the development of metacognitive inquiry, transformative learning, and student agency is lacking. WestEd’s quantitative research-based evidence does, however, demonstrate sufficient support for metacognitive inquiry and its impact on student learning with large numbers of high school students (Greenleaf et al., 2009).

## **Conclusion**

In this review, a metacognitive culture is defined as an environment where two-way learning occurs between teachers and learners. Learners see the major focus on the thinking process, not the “correct answer.” It is a learning environment where the thinking process is visible and explicitly expressed through *think alouds*, *marking the text*, and *metacognitive conversations*. An observer to this type of classroom might hear the following questions or declarative statements by both teacher and learner: “What did you notice about my thinking?” “This is what I noticed about your thinking.” “How do you know that?” “Where did your confusion break down?” “How did you know you were confused?” “Tell me more.”

A metacognitive culture is an environment where both thinking and confusion are valued as part of the learning process (Schoenbach et al., 1999; Schoenbach, et al., 2012). Learning is socially constructed (Tracey and Morrow, 2006a; Vygotsky, 1978). It is a place where gradual release of the learning process transfers from teacher to student resulting in the learner owning the knowledge, instead of “here today, gone tomorrow” (Huff and Nietfeld, 2009; Schoenbach et al., 1999; Schoenbach, et al., 2012; Vygotsky, 1978; Wilhelm et al., 2001). A metacognitive

culture in a classroom built on Vygotsky and Dewey's constructivist theories can help to develop metacognitive awareness first in socially constructed learning situations, then independently in order to deepen the internal cognitive processes. Reading Apprenticeship provides the foundation for cultivating a metacognitive culture by:

- (a) encouraging two-way learning through teachers and students constructing knowledge together;
- (b) assessing the thinking behind the learning instead of focusing on an isolated skill;
- (c) providing a process for teachers to demystify for their students the specific disciplinary thinking processes of content-area subjects (Schoenbach et al., 2012).

Developing a metacognitive culture in the secondary classroom can help combat “the travesty that typically passes for literacy instruction for older youth in the United States who struggle with reading” (Greenleaf & Hinchman, 2009, p. 4). Beyer (2008) emphasized metacognitive reflection as an important component in explicit teaching of thinking skills to develop and strengthen a learner's self-monitoring capacity. This outcome is achieved through students “reflecting on, verbalizing, sharing with others, and analyzing step by step what they recalled doing mentally” (p. 226).

Thinking skills are basic tools of effective thinking and are categorized into two major types: those necessary for general learning and those that are specific to different content area subjects. When thinking skills are taught directly and systemically through modeling, coaching, independent practice, and conversations about the thinking processes, metacognitive skills are enhanced (Beyer, 2008). Another study to promote the efficacy of a metacognitive culture was White and Frederickson's study (1998), which determined teaching of metacognitive strategies must be a part of subject content being taught (p.19). Content-area teachers must see their role as

the master who demystifies the specific disciplinary process of reading for their apprentices.

## CHAPTER 3

### Research Methods

#### Importance for the Study

These kids just can't, or don't, or won't read. I don't know anything about teaching reading. Besides, teaching reading is not my job (Secondary teacher quoted in Greenleaf & Schoenbach, 2004, p. 98).

In my work as a secondary district literacy coach, I heard this same lament from many of the discipline-specific teachers I serviced in regards to reading. Some blamed elementary teachers for not teaching students to read; some believed it was the English teacher's job; and some just felt totally unprepared to teach reading in their content area. Greenleaf and Schoenbach, co-founders of the Reading Apprenticeship initiative, recognized this "elephant in the room" for secondary teachers and schools when it came to disciplinary specific literacy. Their research and scholarship around secondary reading instruction grew from observations in multiple classrooms and dedicated study of the secondary reading problems in the United States. Reading Apprenticeship confronted the problem by developing professional development for secondary teachers across the country, focused on inquiring into how discipline-specific teachers navigated reading in general and in their discipline.

Although none of the teachers in my study placed the blame elsewhere for their struggling readers, they all admitted, even with ten or more years of teaching experience, that reading was an obstacle for many of their students. Moreover, teaching reading was often a frustration. Alicia, one of the urban teachers in the study admitted:

I have to be honest. When I was on my own teaching regular US History or geography, I didn't make reading a priority because it was a fight. And it was a fight I got tired of having. I would become apathetic, because of students'

attitudes when assigned reading. I would start with the best of intentions, and then just start falling off (Interview, December 7, 2012).

## **Research Questions**

This chapter explains the methodology, research design, and methods I used in this study to guide my inquiry into these research questions:

**Central Question: What happens when secondary teachers engage in professional development as part of the RAISE study?**

**Sub Question 1:** *How do the RAISE experiences affect the teachers' teaching of reading within their discipline?*

**Sub Question 2:** *What aspects of the RAISE professional development experience contributed to transformational learning for the teachers?*

## **Role of the Researcher**

Worldviews, specific strategies of inquiry, and methods illuminate the design path for the selected research design (Creswell, 2009), which is the researcher's plan for the study (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003; Creswell, 2009). Selection of a design begins with the researcher "stating the problem or issue leading to the study" (Creswell, 2007, p. 101); then deciding on which design would best inform the study. I conducted a case study of teachers, who experienced the same phenomenon, the RAISE institute. A case study allowed me to explore the effects of Reading Apprenticeship on teacher learning and student achievement.

Based on my Leadership in Reading Apprenticeship training, its application in the classroom, and the positive coaching impact for the cognitive apprenticeship model (Schoenbach et al., 1999; Vygotsky, 1978) I knew my study would include implementation of Reading Apprenticeship in the classroom. Upon receiving the national I3 grant to implement RAISE in four states, West Ed contracted me to be a history facilitator, due to my commitment embedding

Reading Apprenticeship with teachers in my district.

I was familiar with two of the three teachers who participated in the study because they taught in my former district, Montgomery Public Schools. As a RAISE facilitator, I provided mentoring support, not coaching support, for teachers in my study as they embedded Reading Apprenticeship in their classrooms. The data from other Reading Apprenticeship studies attributed metacognitive inquiry as a significant factor in teacher change and student learning (Greenleaf, 2010). Because metacognitive inquiry is integral for developing disciplinary thinking and ownership of learning, I wanted to provide mentoring support beyond the professional development for my teacher participants as they began implementing Reading Apprenticeship in their classrooms. This intention to be a positive, metacognitive, and collaborative supporter was at the core of my relationship as a researcher with the participating teachers and students.

### **Rationale for Using Case Study Design**

I began this inquiry with a strong desire to hear and learn from the voices of teachers and students who were impacted by their relationship to the RAISE professional development. I decided to collect data in ways that allowed me to explore the lived experiences of the teachers and their students--as the teachers embedded Reading Apprenticeship into their instruction and students took it up as a way of learning to read in their history classes. I used a case study design (Stake, 2005), because it allowed me to spend dedicated time interviewing participants and being in their classrooms.

Paramount in the mind of the researcher must be “What can be learned here that a reader needs to know?” (Stake, 2005, p. 449). The study followed the journeys of the teachers during the winter and summer RAISE institute and in the classroom as teachers implemented RA to support their students in acquiring disciplinary-specific reading processes. One case study took

place in a rural high school and the other in an urban school. This set up windows for viewing the experiences of Reading Apprenticeship learning processes in two distinctly different contexts.

Because I would be in multiple classrooms as a participant observer, I believed a case study was the best way to present the in-depth experiences of AP teachers and students developing metacognitive capacity. Creswell (2007) defined three ways in which a case study differed from other inquiry strategies: (a) uses multiple forms of data; (b) provides an in-depth description; (c) uses the case to understand the complexity of the issue. All three of these criteria fit my research plan. Multiple realities require multiple methods of gathering data for constructing knowledge (Creswell, 2007). Yin (2009) described two criteria to be used for determining whether case study was the best approach for qualitative research: 1) explain how or why a social phenomenon works, and 2) provide an in-depth description of the social phenomenon being experienced (p. 4). All of these criteria fit my research plan.

### **Setting for the Study**

**The RAISE Professional Development.** The teachers who participated in this study attended ten days of professional development to learn about the Reading Apprenticeship model of literacy instruction. Twelve high schools made up Cohort III of the RAISE grant and each high school sent a team comprised of the school principal and teachers from each of the key disciplines: English Language Arts, science, and history. The teachers worked in discipline-based groups, practicing and learning about reading strategies and frameworks that prepared them to better teach students to read as a part of their content teaching. The Reading Apprenticeship framework taught teachers that reading was a complex and multilayered process that should be approached like problem solving. To be resilient readers, students needed to

engage with challenging texts and develop positive literacy identities. The teachers learned to recognize how they brought their own disciplinary knowledge to reading passages and reflected on how those might be missing for students. They learned to incorporate student/teacher discussions about the process of reading, model text-based strategies, and help students develop strategies for overcoming obstacles while reading complex texts from their academic disciplines.

**Selection of Participants.** This research study used purposeful sampling. Teachers were selected for the study because they were highly engaged and committed to learning how to better meet the needs of their students. These teachers were teaching in the same discipline area of history, but their classrooms were in two very different, but authentically interesting contexts. Their participation promised to help inform “an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon” (Creswell, 2007, p. 125), metacognition. A case study allowed for an in-depth understanding of Reading Apprenticeship through the eyes and experiences of the teachers and students involved. A case study allowed for the investigation of the central phenomenon, metacognition, within the environment of the classroom (Brandell & Varkas, 2001).

My work as a secondary literacy coach in the Montgomery School district provided an opportunity to become acquainted with the two participants from the urban school, Alicia and Sabrina. The teachers co-taught AP Humanities. Alicia taught the history portion while Sabrina taught English. I was introduced to Jack, the rural AP World History teacher, at the beginning of the RAISE institute. He became my third participant.

### **Data Collection and Timeline**

In my study, the data collection consisted of the following:

1. *classroom observations.* I visited each school four times between February and May of 2013 and observed in the AP class selected for this study. During my visits, I acted as a

participant observer and took field notes. I engaged in informal conversations with the teachers and students to deepen my understanding of what I observed, implementation of Reading Apprenticeship

2. *semi-structured interviews with the teachers.* I conducted audio-taped interviews with the teachers in December 2012 which provided baseline data about what the teachers were thinking and doing in their classrooms as a result of the Summer RAISE Institute. I also arranged to interview teachers on one of my classroom visits. These interviews allowed me to learn about their instructional goals and development of metacognitive thinking. The questions were open-ended and provided to the teachers in advance.

- Where do you feel you are with your instructional goal(s)?
- What evidence in your instruction demonstrates growth?
- What would you like me to notice in the next classroom observation that would support your goal(s)?
- In terms of your goal(s), where would you like to be at the end of the year?

3. *semi-structured interviews with students.* These were audio-recorded interviews with sixteen students from the rural school and fifteen from the urban school. I also selected two additional students from Jack's class to become focus students. I returned to these students when I had further questions or wanted to know more about the development of students over time.

4. *Documents and field notes from RAISE workshops.* Because I was a facilitator for the RAISE workshops for history teachers, I was in a position to see the planning documents, reflective writing and talking, and assessment data the teachers created as they participated.

The Curriculum Embedded Reading Apprenticeship Practice Rubric (CERA) and teacher planning conferences were the primary focuses of the January session. Teachers used the CERA

rubric to anchor their students' annotations to signify the level of students' metacognitive growth: (a) noticing reading; (b) focusing on reading; (c) taking control of reading. Based on students' annotations of text, teachers identified their own professional learning goals and student learning goals that would support metacognitive growth. After the independent process, teachers engaged in collaborative inquiry to solidify their decision based on text-based evidence and decided what would be the teachers' next steps for instruction. I was able to sit in on the conversations and record my observations.

In July 2013, the teachers returned to a discussion of their students' reading development using the CERA with a different pre and post reading of a history text. I also asked them to reflect on their personal and instructional growth in a semi-structured interview.

#### *End of Study Questions*

- Tell me about yourself as a learner.
- In the initial interview, you recognized your students experienced certain roadblocks. What have you noticed about these roadblocks now, at the end of the study?
- What instructional changes have you implemented because of your participation in the study?
- How would you describe a cognitive apprenticeship now?
- What would an outsider observe in your classroom when you are framing your instruction as a cognitive apprenticeship?
- What was your understanding of metacognition and metacognitive inquiry before the study?
- What is your understanding of metacognition and metacognitive inquiry now?

<b>Data Collection Timeline</b>		
<i>Date/Activity</i>	<i>Steps in the Inquiry Process</i>	<i>Data</i>
<b>RAISE Summer I Institute July 2012</b>	Selection of participating teachers (PT)	
<i>December 2012</i>	Conducted pre-study teacher interviews	Audio-taped and transcribed
<i>January 2013</i>	All consent forms signed	Securely filed
<b>RAISE Winter Institute January 28-29, 2013</b>	PT debrief RA successes during fall semester and learn about CERA assessments	Notes and reflections in RA binders about PT's progress and next steps
<i>February – May 2013</i>	Classroom visits to the urban and rural school  Semi-structured interviews with PT and students	Field notes  Interviews audio-taped and transcribed
<b>RAISE Summer II July 2013</b>	Final interviews with PT	Securely filed

## **Data Analysis**

My data analysis involved three separate cycles of coding and writing. In one coding process, I worked on pulling together an ethnographic description of the RAISE workshops, the school settings and AP classes, and the participating teachers. My goal in this distillation of the data was to explain the setting and participants of the study as a backdrop to my analysis of the interview transcripts of the teachers and students.

My second coding of the data was framed by the questions I generated to guide the study and the theoretical lenses that I identified as relevant to the study. This was the most time consuming of the coding efforts as I created charts based on my questions and theories and filled them out for each participating teacher and the students. I felt that this coding plan was valuable in giving me a wider view of my data and in beginning to find answers to my own questions, but I was still unclear on how to write about the findings based on the data.

I decided to conduct one more round of data analysis wherein I coded the data to recognize themes and insights that I could use to organize my writing of the findings and interpretations. In this final step, I was interested in providing insight into the significant experiences of the participants in the study. I also attempted to make linkages between the important observations and apparent learning of the participants and the RA framework and theory of transformational learning.

As the writing began, I started to member check with Jack and Sabrina to assure that I captured their words and thinking accurately. While analyzing the teacher interviews, it became apparent to me of times when I neglected to ask further probing questions. Both Jack and Sabrina were always willing to clarify comments and answer questions for me. Unfortunately, by the time the study had concluded, Alicia was no longer employed at Thomas Marshall High School and could not be contacted for member checking.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Because the study was qualitative, it was highly dependent on my personal perspectives as a researcher therefore I cannot be regarded as an objective observer. My stance was one of a participant observer. Another possible limitation of the study was the small sampling population for the two-case studies. Due to this limitation, the findings cannot be generalized to other

situations (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Merriam, 1988). Because of my availability to conduct the research, my visits in the field were limited to six months so the study cannot be considered a fully developed research project.

Since time elapsed between the interviewing of participants and the reporting of the findings, I realize some data may have been lost. The interviews were conducted using research questions although additional probing questions were used to surface additional thinking. Student interviews were always conducted with a teacher present. In an attempt to make sure my own biases did not influence how the interview information was portrayed, I conducted member checking with Jack and Sabrina. I was unable to complete member checking with Alicia as she had left the school system and could not be contacted.

A final potential limitation was my role as a national facilitator for Reading Apprenticeship. Although my inherent bias for Reading Apprenticeship cannot be denied, it was not my intent to view the RAISE professional development through rose-colored glasses. It was my goal to report the findings as objectively as I could.

### **Contributions of the Study**

Given the rising expectations for secondary content classes, it becomes imperative for teachers to take on the role of discipline experts by utilizing a cognitive apprenticeship with metacognitive development central to the instructional model in order for teachers to develop their own metacognitive thinking and increase student agency for reading disciplinary texts. Developing metacognitive approaches to learning will enable students to take control of their own learning, empowering them to become independent learners (Beyer, 2008; Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000). Explicitness about the thinking process in school-based literacies is essential for diverse students to be a member of the “same club” where other students participate

in order to increase literacy achievement (Delpit, 1995; Wilhelm, 2001).

Failure to recognize reading as a complex, cognitive process that requires discipline-specific reading processes and metacognitive inquiry can create instructional roadblocks and impact student learning. Observations of secondary classes in my former district revealed the absence of students interacting with text independently and socially. By cultivating student agency for the reading demands of discipline-specific texts, students can become members of the academic Discourse club that excluded them in the past (Gee, 1990). When I designed this study, I hoped that the study would provide awareness for metacognitive practices within a cognitive apprenticeship and explore its impact on teacher instruction and student learning. I also hoped the teachers and students' stories would allow readers of the study to follow the learning process of the teachers and students' lived experiences within a Reading Apprenticeship classroom environment.

## **Conclusion**

It has been a privilege to carry out this research study. I was well positioned by my job as a RAISE history facilitator to observe and analyze the nature of the professional development experienced by the teachers. I enjoyed developing rapport with the participants who willingly shared their experiences with me. I was welcomed into their classrooms, and they trusted me to quiz them about their developing understandings of reading as a metacognitive process. I have tried to validate all the voices of the teachers and students. In Chapter 4, I share detailed stories of the RAISE professional development with the teachers of the study. In Chapter 5, I share the experiences of the teachers, and Chapter 6 focuses on the students and their growing understandings of reading complex texts. Chapter 7 concludes this dissertation with an analysis of the findings presented in the three data chapters and a discussion of the significance of the

findings.

## CHAPTER 4

### **Introduction**

The central question of this study was what happened when secondary teachers engaged in the RAISE professional development provided to their schools by a federal grant written by WestEd. To set the stage for answering that question, this chapter describes the activities and participation of the teachers at the workshops. The three teachers who participated in this study attended three different RAISE Institutes: Summer I Institute was five days in July of 2012, Winter Institute was two days in January of 2013, and Summer II Institute was three days in July 2013. I was a facilitator at these institutes that served 12 high schools from the Midwest and a researcher in the classrooms of the participating teachers from January 2013-July 2013. Therefore, my ethnographic descriptions in this chapter came from both views of the educational experiences under study.

In any qualitative research study, understanding the experiences, the contexts, and the participants is essential. Toward that end, I describe and discuss key components of the workshops, introduce the participating teachers, and describe the rural and urban high schools where they taught. These descriptions came from my observations at the workshops, my interviews with the teachers, and my visits to their classrooms.

### **The RAISE Professional Development Sessions**

The writers of the RAISE grant were adamant that attendance be voluntary because they knew teachers who were pushed to attend, “kicking and screaming,” would not be in the right frame of mind to accept new knowledge, including being open to change. Teacher participants who signed up for the ten-day institute were required to sign an agreement acknowledging their commitment, which included attending school team meetings on a regular basis. Principals also

signed an agreement committing to school team meetings and allowing teachers to attend the January institute with substitutes paid for by the grant. For teachers, the commitment meant eight days away from their families during summer breaks and two days away from their classes in the middle of winter. Dedication and commitment were two definite adjectives to describe these teachers who signed on for the Reading Apprenticeship journey. One principal captured the ongoing nature of the commitment when he said:

Reading Apprenticeship makes a *difference* in the way people teach and the way kids learn, but it's not something you can say, "We're doing this tomorrow," and have it be done tomorrow. It takes time and energy, and some patience and commitment from all parties involved (Schoenbach, Greenleaf, & Murphy, 2017, p. 1).

### **Summer I Institute: Days 1-5, July 2012**

In my role as a facilitator, I knew how important it was to greet teacher participants on that first humid Monday morning and make them feel welcome. I knew from past experience that RAISE institutes were certainly not for the "faint of heart." The days would be long. Breakfast started at 7:30 a.m. and professional development began promptly at 8:00 a.m. continuing until 4:00 p.m. in the afternoon. Every day's agendas would be full. Except for a lunch break of forty-five minutes, teachers only had two fifteen minute breaks throughout the day. The teachers would be engaged every minute--reading, writing, talking about their thinking processes, and collaborating. Never a dull moment. There would even be assigned homework.

At the end of the first day, some teachers exhibited "glassy-eyed looks" like "deer in a headlight," but I trusted they would still return the next day. And I was not surprised on the third day when teachers' light bulbs began to come on and shouts could be heard from some of the participants, "Oh, now I get it!"

A suburban Midwestern high school, nestled among subdivisions, was the setting for the

professional development. The school building was a contemporary state of the art high school with the latest technology and a large, open area to meet for breakfast and lunch. There was no glamour. No city lights or bustling metropolis. Just the simple guarantee of five days of decent breakfasts, lunches, and plenty of java.

**Choosing teachers to participate in this study.** By the beginning of the RAISE institute, I had already invited Alicia and Sabrina to be a part of my dissertation study, but I wanted to include one more school to give readers of the study two different perspectives. Two criteria were necessary for the selection of a second school. Since I had left the Thomas Marshall Public Schools and returned to my hometown, I knew my second school needed to be in close proximity to where I lived. Once I learned one of the schools participating was twenty-five minutes away from my home, I began scrutinizing the history teachers participating from that school and looking for one who was truly invested in the new learning experience.

I noticed and wondered about Jack on my first day. He demonstrated a strong sense of reflection and displayed a genuine sense of humor, which can be a definite asset in a ten-month study. By the third day, I knew I wanted to invite him to be part of the study. Since his school team was located at the same hotel as the facilitators, I was able to ask him to be part of my study, and he accepted.

Jack had an easy-going personality and was comfortable in each of the various groups to which he was assigned. One way a Reading Apprenticeship classroom develops the social dimension is by changing groups on a regular basis in order for students to hear multiple voices and notice potential new ways to solve problems. In order for these practices to be routine in teachers' own classrooms, the work begins with facilitators modeling those practices and engaging teachers in the same routines. Although some teacher participants would outwardly

express a moderate resistance to movement, Jack never complained. Jack was a willing participant from the beginning, and it was evident from our conversations and my observations that he was a dedicated teacher.

Both Jack and Alicia were in my history cohort, whereas Sabrina was part of the English language arts (ELA) cohort. My only interactions during the RAISE institute with Sabrina were during lunchtime or at the end of the day. Although the RA framework was the same for both groups, I was not a witness to Sabrina's participation so readers will learn of her experiences from teacher-led interviews. Alicia's initial interview demonstrated the institute was a vehicle to help her students:

I will be honest. . . if I didn't feel like this would be successful, I wouldn't have continued because it wasn't about the money for me. It was about doing something that was going to work for my kids" (Interview, December 7, 2012).

**Searching for tools to support students' reading.** In Jack's initial interview, he explained one of his major reasons for deciding to attend RAISE was his intrinsic desire to improve in his teaching:

I didn't know what it would entail, but I wanted to learn some new practices. So my purpose. . . was to come out with some strategies that would be beneficial in helping them with reading the textbook. One of my biggest frustrations was having a wide range of reading abilities in the AP classes. I noticed that I had some students who were having trouble understanding the material. . . I felt I didn't have the tools that might be helpful to guide them a little better (Interview, December 8, 2012).

**Learning Reading Apprenticeship strategies by doing them in the institute.** The RAISE organizers purposefully built the social dimension of learning for the participants by changing the teacher groups frequently. This involved moving teachers into different groups, with groups being mixed-up approximately three times during the day. Sometimes the groups

were formed by random methods or specific participants were grouped depending on the dynamics of the groups. This regrouping provided opportunities to hear different ways other teachers made sense of text and provided more opportunities for voices that may have been silent. If facilitators noticed strong voices monopolizing the conversation, thereby quieting other voices, we knew it was time for movement after the next break. Teachers were told before break to “pack and stack” and be ready for new seating arrangements. Similar to our secondary classrooms, moans and groans would emanate from some participants.

Believing that *rational discourse* was a key component to adult learning, the designers of RAISE made it a cornerstone of the professional development sessions. The teachers were taught that *rational discourse* depended on following three rules: 1) be open to alternative points of view, 2) be concerned about how others think and feel, 3) reflect critically on assumptions. Being open to new ideas is one criteria exhibited by teachers who have a strong sense of efficacy (Protheroe, 2008).

From the beginning of the institute, teachers were immersed in thinking about their own personal literacy histories and surfacing their own metacognitive tools for making sense of text. Much time was devoted to reading texts, thinking about their own processes for reading, and surfacing their understandings with partners, followed by small and large group discussions. The teachers were doing lots of hard, but meaningful work.

One of the Reading Apprenticeship routines used to build the personal dimension was a *personal reading history*. This routine was created to surface for facilitators and teachers a time when they felt like an “outsider” and an “insider” as readers. It provided teachers a vehicle for gaining an understanding of their own students’ negative and positive literacy experiences, a valuable insight and tool for learning about their students. Teachers began to build an

understanding of the Reading Apprenticeship framework described in Chapter Two. Facilitators modeled building safety for discussing and sharing in small groups before large groups. Essential metacognitive routines included *think alouds*, *talking to the text*, and *capturing the reading process*.

***Capturing the Reading Process.*** Because metacognition is central to the Reading Apprenticeship framework, teachers were asked to notice their own metacognitive reading processes as they grappled with a difficult text. “Father’s Butterflies” was chosen as a reading passage for a strategy called *capturing the reading process* because the passage pushed the teachers out of their comfort zone. They were asked to be cognizant of the mental moves they performed as they tried to comprehend this complex text. Gayle Cribb, one of the writers for the RAISE professional development, shed light on reasons for the selection of “Father’s Butterflies.”

I remember discussing "Father's Butterflies" as a choice for *capturing the reading process*. First, it was quite a challenging text for most readers. Having to struggle a bit helps participants slow down and notice the reading processes that are typically so quick and automatic. The piece offered a challenge in terms of vocabulary, as it had both scientific and foreign language terms, lots of punctuation, and long, complex sentences. The topic allowed science teachers to find familiar places in the text and for them to read it with a science lens. ELA teachers often read it with a literary lens, attending to the use of language, and history teachers pieced together the historical context, considered the source, and the geographic details, and started making sense of it from there. As designers of the professional development, we wanted the text to offer both challenges and handholds for our diverse participants. "Father's Butterflies" fit those criteria (Interview, Gayle Cribb, August, 2017).

Teachers were instructed to “do whatever they needed to do” to make sense of this text. Following the independent reading time, teachers shared in small groups so all voices would be heard. Teachers then shared in the large setting while facilitators were “capturing the reading process” by charting the different strategies voiced by participants.

Facilitators probed for teachers' metacognitive thinking using metacognitive prompts: (a) What did you do? (b) Where did you do it? (c) How did it help your understanding?

Many teachers shared their personal frustrations as they grappled with this text, and one teacher shared an insight into her own students' reading struggles by shouting, "Now I know what some of my students feel like when they are reading text in my classroom!"

This difficult text required teachers to be more cognizant of their own metacognition due to more "mental moves" required by the reader to gain an understanding of the text. The *capturing the reading process* strategy provided them with a better grasp of the discipline-specific demands of the text and a sense of how students in their classes felt when grappling with difficult texts.

**Videos from Reading Apprenticeship classrooms.** Another key component of the RAISE institute was videos showing Reading Apprenticeship teachers supporting their students as they read difficult text. The videos were taped in authentic Reading Apprenticeship classrooms. The teachers in the videos had attended Reading Apprenticeship training and were sharing their own implementation of Reading Apprenticeship practices. *Evidence-Interpretation* was a metacognitive strategy used for viewing the videos. This graphic organizer was similar to a double-entry journal with "Evidence: What am I seeing?" noted on the left side and "Interpretation: What does this mean?" written on the right.

The history group was divided into two sections with one group observing the teacher's actions while the other half watched the students' actions. Teacher participants were also invited to view these Reading Apprenticeship classrooms solely for the purpose of observing what a Reading Apprenticeship class looked like. Facilitators strongly emphasized that the observations were not for the purpose of evaluating the Reading Apprenticeship teachers, but rather for

noticing teacher supports, including student conversations centered on disciplinary-specific texts. Facilitators asked participants to observe using the following questions depending on their viewing focus:

- (a) What metacognitive supports were being used by the teacher?
- (b) What evidence of the four dimensions was observed?
- (c) What were the students doing?
- (d) What was noticed about how students read and talked about their reading?

All teacher participants were extremely respectful sharing what they noticed about teacher supports and students' metacognitive thinking. Some participants even voiced surprise at the students' high level of conversation focused on text. Others expressed anxiety because they were worried their classrooms might not measure up to the strong model of the Reading Apprenticeship classroom viewed in the video. Facilitators reassured teachers their classes were not expected to look like the Reading Apprenticeship classrooms in their first few days of school, but would certainly begin to take on the Reading Apprenticeship identity viewed in the videos as Reading Apprenticeship routines became embedded in their instruction.

**Curriculum-Embedded Reading Assessment (CERA).** Toward the end of the week, teachers were introduced to CERA, a formative assessment for measuring literacy growth focused on metacognitive thinking. This tool provided an opportunity for teachers to observe their students' reading processes and growth by analyzing their students' metacognitive thinking using the same text, which would be administered twice. Upon returning to their classrooms in August, teachers would administer the history text before establishing Reading Apprenticeship routines, collect without evaluating, and then administer the same text before returning to the January 2013 institute. During the winter session teachers would analyze their own students'

thinking for metacognitive growth using the CERA rubric (Appendix A) and then engage in collaborative discussions centered on their own students' strengths and opportunities for growth.

The intense yet productive first week culminated with time for teachers to plan for Reading Apprenticeship implementation by receiving support from facilitators. Next, teachers met back in school teams to establish times for their site-based team meetings and decide on "next steps" for developing a Reading Apprenticeship community in their classes.

Teachers then returned to their discipline groups where they met in small groups to share their own Reading Apprenticeship implementation plan for the first two weeks and received feedback from colleagues. These exchanges were full of energy and excitement. A sense of humor permeated the group, evidence of the collegiality formed over the five days. The summer institute concluded with goodbyes, encouraging words, sharing of email addresses, and plans to return in January with optimism for no snow.

### **Winter Institute: Days 6-7, January 2013**

Mother Nature cooperated and snow was not an issue. As a facilitator, I looked forward to seeing my teachers and hearing their successes and concerns with their implementation of Reading Apprenticeship. Even though the winter institute took place in the dead of winter, teachers were full of energy and eager to talk about their students and Reading Apprenticeship. Days Six and Seven provided time for teachers to share what worked in their classrooms, including discussing areas where support was needed from facilitators and fellow colleagues.

One of the strengths of the RAISE institute was the ongoing support provided during the school year. Facilitators and teachers used group email for times when a teacher needed support from a facilitator, and it also provided an opportunity for teachers to reach out to colleagues in other parts of the state. Being able to meet during the winter to share successes and areas for

growth provided additional support for the teachers.

Teachers also spent time analyzing their students' pre and post CERA reading samples. They used the CERA rubric to assess if students were in the stage of (a) noticing reading; (b) focusing on reading; (c) taking control of their reading. Teachers then identified "next steps for instruction" to support students' literacy growth. Teachers were given another history text to administer upon returning to the classroom and then again at the end of the school year. Analyzing students' pre and post history text reading would be one of the focuses of the summer institute.

### **Culminating Summer Institute: Days 8-10, July 2013**

Teachers arrived for their final three days with binders in hand, filled with student work. They were noticeably more rested. The first day began with teachers sharing a "promising practice," used over the last four months with fellow teachers. Next, a facilitator directed teachers, "Move three spaces to the right and share one thing you have tried that has been promising." Facilitators continued calling out a specific number of spaces to move until all had an opportunity to share with several people.

The focus of the last three days centered on teachers' evaluating their professional goals selected in January, analyzing their students' metacognitive growth using the CERA rubric used in the winter session, planning for the next school year with support conferences held with facilitators, and deciding in school team meetings what their focus would be for the next year. It was evident from the support conferences that teachers had grown in their confidence for using Reading Apprenticeship in their classrooms. Teachers would continue to hold school team meetings at their buildings to continue talking and supporting each other as they began year two of Reading Apprenticeship, with a deeper sense of empowerment.

## Two Schools: One Rural and One Urban

In this final section of the chapter, I further describe the teachers who participated in the study and share the distinguishing features of their schools and their discipline-based classes. These accounts were gleaned from school and classroom observations and interviews with the teachers. Teacher interviews took place after school or during a teacher's prep, based on teacher preference. Alicia and Sabrina were interviewed together and separately.

### Jack Reisdorf: Rural Midwestern High School, AP World History

Jack's principal had approached him to inquire if he would be interested in being a part of the RAISE team from their school. Because the professional development would take place in the summer and required five days of precious time away from family, Jack needed to do some careful reflection. Fortunately for all parties involved, Jack decided to take the Reading Apprenticeship plunge.

To be honest with you, I really didn't know a whole lot about what was going to go on. I knew it was something dealing with reading, I didn't know what it was going to entail or anything (Interview, December 8, 2012).

In my initial interview Jack had pointed out his school had provided some informal training focused on reading strategies. A few he remembered included: 1) *blue—red*, 2) *I saw, I thought*, and 3) *K-W-L*. Although these strategies were taught to students, Jack never saw student buy-in, never saw students owning the process. Few educational systems are perfect, and even as a dedicated teacher, Jack still had some frustrations with his school system. The schools had so many different problems that the administrators did a little bit here and there, rather than design coherent solutions to address all of the problems.

There were a lot of agendas in our school system. Examples: reading, writing, test taking, attendance...things like that. I usually teach five AP classes out of six

classes a day. Last year I had forty-five students, and this year I have sixty-eight in AP world history. We have 200 students in the sophomore class...and I am dealing with 35% of them. You know, that is a little high for AP. I can do some professional development and such, if there is money, but most of the support is superficial (Interview December 8, 2012).

Despite some frustrations with the school system, Jack shared his positives:

Positives are that the students are choosing to take the class even though some of the students struggle with reading. I have a lot of students who take me for AP and then for AP US history.

Jack could have chosen to take the easy road, stayed home for the summer, relaxing, and continued to teach in his usual style, but Jack wanted more for his students and himself. Mezirow identified an autonomous learner as a characteristic for adult transformative learning (Mezirow, 2008). An autonomous learner assumes greater responsibility for, and takes charge of his or her own learning (Thanasoulas, 2000). Jack's thoughtful reflections of himself as a learner were an indicator of steps toward his own transformation of learning.

Jack's school was located at the north end of town past the quaint shops you often find in small towns. His easy twenty-five minute commute with little traffic provided time for reflection regarding his students and school day. As I headed my car south on a bitter December morning for my first interview with Jack and his students, my feelings were mixed. It was exciting to finally begin the case study, but I was a little anxious as to how I would be received. The latter emotion quickly disappeared after Jack introduced me, and the students smiled in a welcoming manner. Students were warm and inviting as I introduced myself and explained about the learning journey their teacher had chosen to undertake.

The AP classes were double periods, providing more time for me to interview the students. On each of my eight visits to the classroom, students displayed a high level of respect

toward Jack and me. At appropriate times, Jack could be overheard joking with them. All students were extremely respectful to me during the interviews. The level of respectfulness exhibited to their teacher and visitor demonstrated norms of respect already established in his classroom.

Student observations and interviews took place during the classroom period or during library time while another teacher was present. Due to school policy, no student interviews were conducted without a teacher present. At times, interviews were conducted in the door space between the classroom and the outside hall, within the teacher's sight of vision, or in a corner of the classroom. Although minimal background noise was heard on the tapes, the students' voices were easy to hear and transcribe.

One frustration Jack voiced was his concern regarding the number of students who chose to take the AP class who struggled with reading the difficult texts.

We have an early college program here, and so I have 67 students in my AP US History class out of 180. College Board would say I should not have more than 27, but some people are pushing an agenda of putting as many students in the class as possible. It makes it tough to reach all the students effectively. So due to the lack of depth of attention to an issue and changes being made, it is hard for a teacher to not be frustrated (Interview, December 8, 2012).

**Alicia Tanner and Sabrina O'Hara: Thomas Marshall High School, AP Humanities**

I was familiar with Alicia and Sabrina's school campus. It was one of the schools I serviced as a literacy coach. Also, Alicia and I were both Credit Recovery coaches and taught Saturday school here, giving me the opportunity to talk about the RAISE professional development and to also recognize her dedication to her students.

Alicia and Sabrina taught AP U. S. History as a humanities class, which afforded their students the opportunity to hear and observe the metacognitive thinking for history and English. The AP classes were double periods. Alicia was the disciplinary expert for history while Sabrina

took on the disciplinary role for literature. Because it was a humanities class, students were exposed to the U. S. history of the period with exemplary literary texts for that same time period. While Alicia was the dominant voice in the pair interviews, Sabrina took on that roll during class instruction. They were both enthusiastic and deeply concerned for the academic success of their minority students, because they believed in the individual potential of each of their students.

Alicia and Sabrina were interviewed together for the initial interview on December 2012. In looking back to the transcript for December, I realized Alicia's voice was much more predominant. Part of the lack of Sabrina's voice may have been due to my familiarity with Alicia. Both teachers were extremely selective when it came to participating in professional developments that would take them away from their students. During Credit Recovery, Alicia shared her reason for attending RAISE and her distrust for the types of professional development required in the district.

I have worked with you at Saturday school, and I get to talk to you on a different basis than anybody else does. I respect what you do as literacy coach so I knew you weren't going to send me to something that was a waste of my time. I have talked with you numerous times during Saturday school about some of the professional development in our district that was not as productive for Sabrina and me (Interview, December 7, 2017).

Sabrina also reiterated similar feelings about the district's professional development and dedication to her students.

Some of the PD we go to isn't worth our time being away from our kids. We are very selective about the PD because we don't want to be away from our classroom and students (Interview, December 7, 2017).

Thomas Marshall High School, a one hundred year old facility, was a sprawling multiple building campus and the largest school in the urban district. The interviews were conducted in

the Marshall building on the third floor, which provided me with physical exercise after a two-hour car ride.

Even though I was familiar with their building, I was still a little apprehensive, because I had not met their students before and was not sure how I would be received. Because I was familiar with the campus and their building, I located their class easily. The rectangular shaped classroom was deeper than wide, which placed some of the students a good deal away from the front of the classroom. Students were seated at rectangular tables in groups determined by their teachers. Sabrina was modeling *talking to the text*, evidence of an RA routine, using Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*.

Alicia introduced me as a facilitator of the RAISE professional development, whose role would be to capture the Reading Apprenticeship learning journeys of the teachers and students. The students were respectful and attentive as I talked, an indicator of their teachers' roles in establishing a respectful classroom. Students raised their hands when asking me questions, another sign of established classroom norms. After my introduction, I placed myself at the back of the room to observe while Alicia and Sabrina continued their lesson using a section from Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*. Students had their own copies, and I could see they had already been "*talking to the text*" by their annotations. Time was given for students to discuss their findings, which included citing of textual evidence for their metacognitive thinking. The lesson concluded with whole group sharing of findings and areas of confusion.

Students were respectful to me as I moved around the classroom. All students had received permission to be interviewed, but one student chose to have his interview written and not recorded electronically. All interviews took place in the outer door space of the Humanities'

classroom, in the teachers' office across the corridor, or in the back of the class. One of the teachers was always present during the interviews.

On subsequent visits, I observed established Reading Apprenticeship routines of *thinking aloud*, *talking to the text*, and collaboration in small and whole group settings to discuss the readings. Sometimes Alicia or Sabrina would invite a student forward to model his or her thinking, and the class would share the ways in which their peer had navigated the difficult text, another Reading Apprenticeship routine.

One female student in the class shared her admiration and thankfulness for being in their classes. "I have been in this Montgomery School District all my life and these are the best teachers I have ever had" (Interview, March 8, 2013).

## Chapter 5

### Part One: Teachers Telling Their Stories

#### Introduction

Chapter 5 portrays teachers' lived experiences with their learning progressions and transformative thinking. The chapter begins with a glimpse into teachers' past experiences of themselves and students prior to RAISE; then progresses through their pedagogical transformation and how these changes developed student agency for reading complex, academic text. I chose to include the teachers' voices from both schools together in Chapter 5 followed by the students' voices in Chapter 6. In analyzing my teachers' interviews, I discovered similar themes in both rural and urban schools. This chapter begins with teachers describing perceptions of their students prior to attending RAISE, their own transformation, and student empowerment.

Teachers admitted the instructional changes they instituted, which included a change in their belief system about learning, including student empowerment, would not have occurred without RAISE. I have chosen to use the teachers' voices to tell their story of the impact of RAISE on both teachers and students, providing evidence for the efficacy of Reading Apprenticeship.

#### Teachers' Reflections from the Past.

"Because you can't rely on students to read, I feel like I'm constantly summarizing the history textbook so kids don't miss the main points. I wish I didn't have to assume that role as much, but I find I do" (Schoenbach et al. 2017, p. 9).

If students are unprepared for the academic reading demands and teachers feel unprepared how to support them, then students are not held accountable, creating a domino effect. Teachers realize students are not reading the material, so they begin to synthesize the

material for the students. Students move through the grades without an expectation for reading academic text and end up in the workplace or college with below level reading skills (Schoenbach, et al., 2017). Before Reading Apprenticeship, Alicia and Sabrina were teachers who perpetuated the domino effect.

**Debbe:** If I had come into your classroom last year and taken a snapshot of what you were doing instructionally, what would I observe?

**Alicia:** We would have been doing all the work. They weren't. And when we were doing the work, I already knew, it so I wasn't making sure that they knew it. They needed to do the work so that they started knowing it versus me because I already knew it.

**Sabrina:** We did all the backup work. We would look up the information and figure out what they needed. So we have shifted from doing PowerPoint presentations to where now students are going into the text and figuring out what information they need.

Jack readily acknowledged that some of his students probably wanted a “hand out” instead of a “hand up,” but he was unwilling to enable them. The RAISE experience helped change his perception of his students as learners, including a strong need to provide his students with a sense of empowerment, but Jack disclosed where he found himself last year was quite different.

**Debbe:** Take me back to last year before Reading Apprenticeship, what were your past perceptions of your students?

**Jack:** I'll be honest and admit that last year I wouldn't have realized students really were struggling with the vocabulary and concepts. I would have said, “Well, that's your fault, look it up, you should know it, and it's your fault for not knowing it." I realize now that kids don't have the same knowledge I have in how to read in disciplinary ways.

**Debbe:** Obviously you are in a different place this year than you were last year. Have these perceptions changed? If so, would you please explain?

**Jack:** I believe the one thing that I assumed, prior to RAISE, about my students, especially my AP students, were that students would know the vocabulary beforehand. After attending RAISE, I could see why they would have that issue. Prior to RAISE, I

could see they were struggling, but I just didn't understand why. RAISE helped me to understand my students more.

Alicia and Sabrina also harbored prior perceptions about students, which changed due to the RAISE institute. They were both brutally honest about their prior assumptions of students and teaching practices prior to RAISE.

**Sabrina:** Looking back now I feel like before the RAISE study and before participating in all the training that I really didn't help the kids learn to read even though I'm an English teacher. I felt like I was more about the content and not about the process. I assumed my students were being lazy because they didn't read it at home, or it was something like, "Oh they just weren't interested in the material. They don't have an access point for getting into the text."

**Debbe:** Alicia, what about your original assumptions of how your students learned, prior to RAISE?

**Alicia:** I have to be honest; my kids had no clue. They didn't know what kind of learner they were, because they had never reflected on what kind of learner they were. Unfortunately, I believe the education system hand feeds the students because we're in a testing environment. So, in order for students to get passing scores, we're going to hand feed them because we have to get from point A to point B. In reality, what was stupid about that is they weren't learning anything because they weren't learning how to learn. I felt like I was repeating myself over and over again with information I thought they should have been able to link together to determine cause and effect.

**Debbe:** What were the consequences of your original assumptions?

**Alicia:** My kids didn't learn anything; they really didn't. They told me they loved my class and thought it was fun. They loved me as a teacher, but they never really said anything specific about what they liked or what they learned. In retrospect, now I can reflect and say, "Great, you liked me as a teacher, but what did I teach you? Now, the kids reflect about, "I love learning about this part of history." They even go back and re-quote something we learned. Now, they see the connections between parts of history, which they never saw before.

Alicia and Sabrina also understood the importance of giving their students a hand up, not a hand out. Ownership of learning and student agency does not occur when teachers provide a synthesis of the reading through PowerPoint, teacher-

generated notes, and readily provide answers, thereby handicapping students. Both teachers admitted that in the past they did provide answers because it was easier and faster than establishing a classroom culture where student questions were met with probing questions from the teachers, allowing students to see their peers as another valuable resource.

Jack reflected upon his decision to attend RAISE, and it began with one student. He admitted feeling helpless, without the tools to support his struggling students:

I remember specifically one of my students, Sarah, from the year before RAISE. She would sit with me every day after school and she just couldn't understand the material so when the opportunity for RAISE came about I said, "Yes, I want to go," and I really thought of her. I thought, "Okay, there are definitely some students I have who have a tough time reading text. I thought, "Is there something I could do better to help them out" Not just for my class but eventually for down the road when the text gets tougher. I thought of her (Interview, July 23, 2013).

**No fairy godmother, no magic wand, no quick fix for complex reading.** Jack remembered strategies introduced by his school to implement across the disciplines that did not yield sustainability over time or ownership by students.

**Jack:** I noticed that I had some students who were having trouble understanding the material. I was teaching, and I thought maybe anything would help just trying to do some reading things. I have done some reading studies before at our high school, but nothing like the RAISE experience. We had some things at my school where we initially tried to get students to apply reading strategies, nothing formal.

**Debbe:** Can you remember some of the strategies you used?

**Jack:** We did things like KWL, and I saw-I thought type things. We also used red-blue as a strategy because red and blue are our school colors. For this strategy, you would write in red facts from the reading and then blue was for your inferences. It was almost like talking to the text except you weren't writing on the text. While you were reading you would put under the "red" section of your paper what the text actually said. Then on the "blue" side you would put your interpretations, "Okay, this is what I think it means." The hard part about it was either the kids used it, or they didn't and the strategies went out of practice. I never saw student buy-in like I do now.

**Debbe:** Did you ever model these strategies?

**Jack:** No.

**Debbe:** You had noticed in years past that kids had difficulty reading and the strategies you tried weren't working. A graphic organizer is a tool but it doesn't get to, "Okay, how can I help this kid read this material and own that?" You went for the strategies, but I am hearing you took away much more than just a few strategies. Could you explain a little further?

**Jack:** Well, I went for the strategies initially, but what I learned was it could transfer to other readings like the primary documents my kids need to read for AP. So it wasn't about the textbook any more, it was helping my students to see that what they were learning could be used in other places.

One reason Jack attributed to the lack of success was due to teacher turnover. Another reason for lack of sustainability was due to lack of buy in by teachers and students. I believe part of the problem at Jack's school was related to the "skills in a box" (Schoenbach et al., 2012, p. 8) approach adopted by some schools to raise their reading scores. Strategies must not be viewed in isolation, or as quick fixes, to be lasting. Teachers also must have an understanding for the pedagogy behind the strategy. There is no fairy godmother, no magic wand, no quick fix to turn this pumpkin into a beautiful coach. Just as my teachers discovered at RAISE, complex reading is difficult, hard work. In building reading aptitude, there is no skills-only approach that can substitute for reading itself. Repeated studies have demonstrated that isolated instruction in grammar, decoding, or even reading comprehension skills may have little or no transfer effect when students are actually reading" (Schoenbach et al., 2012, p. 8).

### **Reading Apprenticeship: Catalyst for Change**

Jack, Alicia, and Sabrina demonstrated through their reflections a sense of agency that transformed their path of instruction and changed their perceptions of how their students learned. They definitely possessed the tools creating a sense of empowerment for their students not present prior to RAISE. At the heart of this change was their heightened awareness of their own metacognitive thinking and the potential power in demystifying the reading process.

**Debbe:** What have you taken from the Raise study this year that you feel transform

your learning?

**Jack:** I think I would say the biggest thing that has transformed my learning is that I feel more confident in trying to help students who are struggling with reading. This confidence has allowed me to definitely be able to focus on them when I see they are having trouble with reading the text or when they come to me letting me know they are struggling. Before, I wasn't confident at all, and I didn't have any strategies to help them. There are definitely new learning experiences I have taken from RAISE that have helped my students.

**Debbe:** What tools did you take away from Reading Apprenticeship that have transformed your thinking about instruction?

**Jack:** Things like think alouds, talking to the text using different strategies, evidence/interpretation strategy which some of my students call "I saw, I thought," making connections by relating it to today, asking questions, and think-pair-share. I realize though I need to practice the tools more myself. I understand that I have all reading levels, and I realize that not everyone reads the way I do. For me, being able to figure out what makes it easier for myself helps the students find ways to make it easier.

**Teacher transformation leads to student agency.** In the last interview, Alicia described a sense of ownership in her students that was not present before RAISE.

**Debbe:** Now that you have been implementing Reading Apprenticeship all year, what are your assumptions about your students?

**Alicia:** Now with Reading Apprenticeship, I feel that our kids can be successful, no matter what subject area because they're learning how they think in shorthand, which is what Sabrina and I call it. Whatever your shorthand is, your code, you will figure it out. The kids started learning what their code was and how they learned. And I'm really sorry that next year, it probably won't continue. Unfortunately.

Alicia was referring to the fact that she would not be returning to Thomas Marshall High School due to the fact her principal did not renew her contract, which I believed was a significant loss to the school. Both Alicia and Sabrina were very selective about the professional development they attended, as described in Chapter 4. Alicia was a bit more vocal to her principal about not wanting to attend certain professional development because she knew the quality of the

professional development was not worth the time away from her students. The result of Alicia's outspokenness resulted in her contract not being renewed.

**Turning roadblocks into possibilities.** Instructional capacity is partly a function of what teachers know students are capable of doing and what teachers know they are professionally capable of doing with students. ... Every student and curriculum is a bundle of possibilities, and teachers whose perceptions have been more finely honed to see those possibilities, and who know more about how to take advantage of them, will be more effective. (Greenleaf & Schoenbach, 2004, p. 120)

Because of RAISE, Jack saw his students' roadblocks, in terms of reading, as potential teaching opportunities he would not have been open to before. Jack believed in the capabilities of his students, and he used his students' struggles for navigating disciplinary text to inform what next steps he needed to take to help them overcome their obstacles:

There was one student, Samantha, who I just wrote a letter of recommendation for college, who came in one day and said, "I'm spending 3 hours on notes every night." And I said, "Well, let's meet after school to see a way to help you shorten your time spent on taking notes." So I modeled my thinking on how I would be more precise with note taking using her notes and the text. It knocked her down to 45 minutes a night. Her parents came to talk to me at parent-teacher conferences and said they wanted to pay for my kids' college. Exact words, they said, "We want to pay for your kids' college. You saved her, as she was staying up to 2 o'clock in the morning and now she's done in 45 minutes. Thank you, Mr. Reisdorf!" (Interview, July 23, 2018)

Jack believed strongly in the Reading Apprenticeship model, as evidenced in the following interviews, as a pedagogical change vehicle. The following interviews with Jack provide evidence for his own transformative learning that resulted in an increase of student agency. I believe the readers of this study will see for themselves, "Reading Apprenticeship *did* make a difference in the professional lives of my teachers and their students."

**Debbe:** Jack what are you noticing now about your students in terms of taking ownership for their own learning?

**Jack:** I notice now when my kids are doing their note taking they are underlining, writing questions, and organizing their thoughts in some manner. In their homework, I notice they are incorporating into their own what they need to do to make sense of text.

**Debbe:** When you see them doing it without you telling them, you are witnessing your students showing ownership in their learning, which I also call an increase in student agency.

**Jack:** Right, and I think that's probably one of the bigger things that I have been noticing this year.

**Disciplinary specific strategy.** But there was much more Jack had taken away from the RAISE professional development as evidenced by the student interviews in Chapter 6.

**Debbe:** Jack, what I have noticed in many of the interviews with your students was their continual mentioning of outlining as a strategy they owned, which is evidence of an increase in student agency. Did you approach this differently because of RAISE?

**Jack:** Oh yes, most definitely! Beforehand when it came to outlining, I would, basically tell them, "All right, here's the header, this is what it is. A, find the point in here; B, find the point in here; C, find the point in here. Move on, do whatever you can. What I found with Reading Apprenticeship was it was more of, "Okay, let me help you find the specific point." And the easiest way to do that is, "Okay, so as you're doing your reading you need to focus on this area because those are the areas they look for in AP writing and on the test." So it was more purposeful outlining than just outlining. In both my AP U. S. and World History classes, I have modeled how I look for the specific categories College Board is looking for: society, politics, economics, environment, culture, and I call it S. P. E. E. C.

**Debbe:** Could you explain what you mean by S. P. E. E. C.? Is this a strategy you created?

**Jack:** I did. It stands for "Society, Politics, Economics, Education, and Culture." It is what I do when I am reading the history text for what the AP exam will be looking for in students' writing. Then I say, "Okay, so as you're doing your reading let's look for things that are society." And so they look for social classes. They look for their gender roles. Then they look for politics, economics, education and culture. So now the students have a purpose that's geared a lot more towards specifically those areas asked for on the AP exam, and I would never have done that without Reading Apprenticeship.

**"You've always had the power to go back to Kansas! You just had to learn it for yourself."** Just as Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz* learned she always had the power within to go

back to Kansas, but she had to find it out for herself, the teachers in my study had to come to their own realization that they always had the power within to support their students in navigating difficult text. Intrinsically, they possessed a desire to be a better teacher for their students, an openness to change, a willingness to admit they did not possess all the answers, and belief in the potential of their students. They always possessed the magic red shoes but needed a catalyst for change. RAISE was their catalyst. Teachers are “untapped resources” (Schoenbach, et al., 2012, p. 12), but many never realize the power lies within themselves. The Reading Apprenticeship framework acts as a catalyst in surfacing teachers’ disciplinary knowledge.

One transformational change in Alicia and Sabrina’s perceptions of their students, due to the RAISE experience, allowed them to discover the solution had to begin with them. Alicia and Sabrina also shared a change in their instruction, which resulted in an ownership of learning for their students.

**Sabrina:** We have come to the decision this year that it is better we go through things slowly.

**Alicia:** Slowly and solidly. If they learn how to do it for themselves then when they take the AP test, even if we didn’t get to the information, they might be able to decipher it and come with an answer.

**Debbe:** And that is ownership of learning. What else did you take away from the RAISE experience?

**Sabrina:** Now, when I am preparing for a lesson, I read and mark it up by talking to the text.

**Alicia:** And you ask me questions if you don’t know. We have also learned that we need to model what we are doing and be more transparent about what we do when we are reading, and why we are doing it when we read.

**Debbe:** These are great metacognitive questions that help your students hear and see your metacognitive thinking, which helps demystify the reading for them. You are not just standing at the front of the class waving a magic wand, and “poof” comprehension miraculously appears! What your instructional next steps are telling me is you realize the importance of being transparent for your students and building their mental tool belt.

Jack also realized he had the power within to create change in his students and it began with his own metacognitive thinking:

I definitely spend a lot more time reflecting on where or what, or how I came up with my own understanding or what things triggered it to make it easier so that I can try to come up with ways to make it easier for my students to understand the material. So if I know of ways that made it easier for me, maybe that will help them understand better (Interview, July 23, 2018).

**Taking off the training wheels.** Jack was a teacher who had chosen not to take the easy road but to do what worked best for his students. In the beginning of school, Jack spent a lot of time modeling his thinking, but by November Jack had begun taking the training wheels off his students’ bicycles in his effort to push his students toward ownership for their own metacognitive thinking. He pointed out an intuitive understanding for some of his AP students who had fared pretty well in the past playing school, performing for extrinsic value instead of intrinsic value, until AP World History. He realized some of his students were not ready to take ownership for their learning because they still wanted to “be told what to do.” Jack was not willing to allow student “push back” to deter him from developing ownership of learning in his students:

I understand the importance of modeling what I do but some of my AP kids still want to know exactly what I want in terms of their writing and thinking processes. This is how some approach the learning process. "Just give me what you want, and I'll do exactly what you want." I have found by this time of the year I want to know how they are taking ownership for their own learning. If I only do the modeling and don't let them experiment with what works best for them, then I won't know what they acquired intrinsically. If I model it first, then some try to do exactly what I do and that isn't learning the way they learn. So there are times when they will literally say, "If you would just give us this outline, it would be so much easier and then we would have given you an outline just like that." That isn't learning, I tell them. That is you replicating me, and you learn differently than I do. So sometimes I want to give them a shot at trying it for themselves so I can see

what they can do. Then I will model, and they can find what works best for them or see what other people do and change their thinking process. For some of these kids, if I do it first then they will say, "Why don't you just write it word for word?"

Jack realized some of his students, especially his AP students, had learned to play the game of school. Although he realized this was a reality for some of his students, he was not willing to allow them to seek only the extrinsic value, the grade. Jack recognized developing ownership of learning would positively impact his students for the marathon run, not the sprint.

### **The Four Dimensions: Foundation of Reading Apprenticeship**

It was if all the energy they had put into hiding their sense of failure could now go into trying to understand what they were reading—or at least into understanding where they were getting lost or what is that confused them (Schoenbach, et al., 2017, p. 57).

**Debbe:** What is your understanding of the four dimensions and how they relate to reading?

**Jack:** Basically, the idea is, if you don't create a safe environment and have students develop a personal connection to their reading, they aren't going to learn your context and they aren't going to learn about their own learning. They are just going to see it as, "This is busy work, and I don't want to do it."

**Debbe:** How does the social dimension support learning?

**Jack:** In the classroom, students need to feel safe enough to grow with their own learning. In order to gain the trust of students so as to help them gain in their metacognitive thinking, a student needs to feel safe. So the social aspect of the reading spectrum is very important. If students don't have a voice in their classroom rules, then they will not open up to the teacher right away and then the teacher will really have to work at gaining the trust of struggling readers. I found by giving them a voice in their classroom rules and explaining and following through with the norms they helped develop, it allowed students to see that the teacher did care about their voice.

Creating a safe environment for discussions about how readers make sense of text including where they struggle builds a community of readers. Alicia and Sabrina built a classroom environment where confusion was not only acknowledged but also supported by peers

and their teachers:

Sabrina and I set up a very welcoming social classroom where kids feel okay asking questions, and they feel okay if they can't ask us they can ask someone else. We have really established that there are no dumb questions. Because of the classroom environment we have set up, students realize that there are other people at their table that struggle too. This isn't sit in a row, sit in your chair, don't talk to anybody else. Answer 15 questions, read 12 chapters, report out. I believe students feel more comfortable because of the environment we set up (Interview, July 24, 2018).

Initially, many teachers ask, “How do I start?” All three teachers realized building the social dimension was crucial for students to feel comfortable sharing confusion. These teachers had established a safe space where students felt safe “sharing reading processes, confusion, and solutions” (Schoenbach, et al., 2012, p. 25). Developing metacognition was an integral part in the teachers’ classrooms. Metacognitive conversations cannot begin in a classroom where students feel uncomfortable sharing how they make sense of text and feeling safe stating confusion. When teachers and students gain understanding into the metacognitive processes of others, they are “noticing and appropriating others ways of reading” (Schoenbach, et al., 2012, p. 25), a tenet of the social dimension. This aspect helps to build a community of readers. Sabrina noted an interesting observation when discussing the dynamics of their classroom setup.

Once you have a learning environment and students feel supported in asking questions and getting their questions answered, the buy-in starts happening. Kids realize they can work with their table groups or a partner to work through difficult text. RAISE professional development begins with routines to develop a safe environment where collaborative discussion about the metacognitive processes of reading, writing, and thinking is the norm norm (Interview, August 10, 2013).

Building the social dimension on the first day is imperative in creating a Reading Apprenticeship classroom. “Starting Reading Apprenticeship from day one means beginning with the social dimension of the classroom to create a safe and collaborative learning environment, and tapping into the personal dimension by building connections to students

knowledge, experience, creativity, and curiosity” (Schoenbach et al., 2012, p. 56).

**Debbe:** Would you explain your understanding of how the social dimension supports learning?

**Jack:** In the classroom, students need to feel safe enough to grow with their own learning. In order to gain the trust of students so as to help them gain in their metacognitive thinking, a student needs to feel safe. So the social aspect of the reading spectrum is very important. If students don't have a voice in their classroom rules, then they will not open up to the teacher right away and then the teacher will really have to work at gaining the trust of struggling readers. I found by giving them a voice in their classroom rules and explaining and following through with the norms they helped develop, it allowed students to see that the teacher did care about their voice. When the students gain trust with the teacher, that trust allows students to open up about their own reading, and they are willing to explain their faults, difficulties, and eventually share their successes. The social aspect must be established first or the struggling student will not look at their cognitive, knowledge, and personal aspects with the teacher. They usually just feel defeated. So helping students gain the trust of the instructor has to be done first in order to help the student to grow.

**Debbe:** What was an AHA moment you took away from the RAISE experience in terms of the four dimensions?

**Jack:** Well, most people don't look at reading as having all those dimensions: the personal, social, cognitive, knowledge-building built on metacognitive thinking. "I never thought about putting social into it. Which one should be first? I think social should be." I always start with the norms to develop a community of learners, because students aren't willing to open up unless they are socially happy. Then you can work on their knowledge and their cognitivebuilding, but the social and personal dimension must be first. Before RAISE, I would have sat there today and said, "They aren't getting the knowledge, why is that?" Well, my room isn't safe for them. They're not ready to; they're not wanting to learn.

### **Metacognition: Follow the Yellow Brick Road**

At the heart of the Reading Apprenticeship classroom is metacognitive conversations: an inquiry into how readers make sense of text. The conversation is both internal, as individual readers observe their own minds in actions, and external, when readers discuss what they are noticing, what they are stumped by, and how they are solving reading problems. In a Reading Apprenticeship classroom, metacognitive conversation about reading is an

integrated, ongoing topic of study in a discipline: *How* do we read U.S. history, or biology, or calculus, or Shakespeare? (Schoenbach et al., 2012, p. 89)

**Debbe:** What changes have you noticed in regards to your metacognitive thinking?

**Jack:** I notice I pay more attention to my metacognitive thinking when I am reading. I definitely spend a lot more time reflecting on where or what, or how I came up with my own understanding or what things triggered it to make it easier so that I can try to come up with ways to make it easier for my students to understand the material. So if I know of ways that made it easier for me, maybe that will help them understand better.

**Debbe:** Why do you think you pay more attention to your own thinking?

**Jack:** Well, I pay more attention to my metacognitive thinking because I find myself asking, "How do I understand it? How do I bring it to me? How do I relate the content for my students?" Beforehand it was, I just knew it, but I never reflected on how I knew it. So when I reflect on how I am making sense of text, I recognize some of my kids are struggling, and now I know what to do to help my kids where I didn't before. Last year I was pretty harsh in my thinking. "Well, that's your fault, look it up. You should know it, and it's your fault for not knowing it." I take a lot more ownership for myself realizing they are having some issues with understanding the material. I'm a lot more cognizant of their struggling, and they should struggle because it's a higher-level reading than what they're used to. If they're going to struggle they need to do something about it, and if I just let them go I know they would have a tough time, and I wouldn't be doing my job.

**Debbe:** I'm definitely hearing a heightened awareness of your metacognitive thinking.

How did you support metacognitive conversations in your classroom as a teacher?

**Jack:** In the beginning, I did more questioning with them, specifically about their reading. I would question them beforehand and say, "What does that make you think of?" or "What do you think about what you just read? "What does that help you with?" By the middle of the year I would do more of, "Okay, where did you see that in the text? What word in there tells you that?" That type of thing.

**Debbe:** Did you ever assess metacognitive conversations formatively?

**Jack:** Yes, I used CERA and on the last essay they had to explain their growth. I wasn't specifically looking for their learning. I was trying to see their study habits and then their learning came out in their reflection.

**Metacognitive question stems support students' discussion about text.** Jack used

probing questions known as metacognitive question stems as he surfaced students' metacognitive thinking. These sentence stems not only aid a teacher in surfacing students' metacognition, but also are used by students in socially mediated learning situations to surface their peers thinking and hear multiple ways of knowing. As students grapple with difficult text, metacognitive conversations not only get at the heart of what the text means but also how a reader comes to the understanding of the text (Schoenbach, et al., 2012). Metacognitive stems were modeled for teacher participants at RAISE so teachers would utilize these same stems when they modeled their own thinking and when they elicited metacognitive responses from their students. Additional metacognitive question stems include:

- What did you do?
- Where did you talk to the text?
- How did it support your reading?

**Debbe:** Where do you both think you are now in terms of your own sense of awareness for your metacognitive thinking?

**Sabrina:** I am certainly paying more attention to what kids need to know in their reading. I have always been a strong reader; I read something and then I am done with it. Because of RAISE, I know I am taking more time to think, "OK," what would somebody else not understand about this? We are looking at the texts we give to them more thoroughly now.

**Alicia:** And we also ask each other, "Why are we doing it?"

**Debbe:** Reading with students in mind. Ladies, that is huge!

Before an educator can read with students in mind, they need to be cognizant of their metacognitive thinking process. This heightened awareness allowed the teachers to provide and then gradually release the ownership of learning to the students. The next conversation about their students provided evidence for the teachers' instructional changes, which led to ownership of learning for a group of students.

**Alicia:** There is one group who only misses one out of fourteen every time on the chapter reviews, and these are hard questions. So hard that even Sabrina and I debate the answers. So I asked them, “Why do you guys work so well together?” And she said, “We divide the work and then we did our homework; then we talked about it and if we had a question we went back to the text and discussed it.”

**Sabrina:** And they respect each other, and we are trying to get that to spread, which is why we changed seats. And kids hate when we change seats but we do it because you need that dynamic everywhere.

**Debbe:** What benefits did you see happening with your kids because of the metacognitive conversations?

**Alicia:** You got to step back at some point and be the facilitator. I didn’t need to learn the information because I already knew it, so I got to watch them learn. Not to say I wasn’t teaching but I wasn’t doing drill and kill. I was actually able to see them take a concept and break it down, rethink, discuss it again, and reevaluate their thinking. I felt like this was going on constantly in the classroom. So, the lasting benefits are, “You just get to step back and watch them learn.”

Metacognition is our “active control over our thinking processes” (Livingston, 1997 p.1). In metacognitive conversations, participants become consciously aware of their mental activity and are able to describe it and discuss it with others” (Schoenbach, et al., 2012, p. 27). A middle school teacher, featured in the 2012 edition of *Reading for Understanding*, shared what she noticed in her own students when they became aware of their own metacognitive thinking.

The very first benefit (of Reading Apprenticeship), that I really saw early on, was metacognition, the idea of having them actually think about what they were thinking. It was just so great to me, to have them actually participate in their own brains. That their brains do these miraculous things and they can actually control that! Paying attention to the wheels in their head-knowing that they have wheels-I see the pride growing in them (Schoenbach et al., 2012, p. 92).

**Debbe:** Alicia, what was your understanding of metacognition prior to RAISE?

**Alicia:** I never thought about my thinking before. I would have said, “I know what I do. I just do it. I never thought about what I did or why I did it until this year.

**Debbe:** Now, what is your understanding for the role of metacognition in comprehending text?

**Alicia:** It's the only way you're going to comprehend a text.

**Debbe:** What would you point to from RAISE that brought you to this understanding of metacognition?

**Alicia:** It made me stop and think about how I think, which I never did before. I just knew I did it, and I kept saying, "Why can't the kids do what I do?"

**Debbe:** In regards to disciplinary literacy, the way you read, write, and think as a historian. What is different now?

**Alicia:** Definitely different now. I asked the kids at the end of the year when we did our reflections: "What do you look at differently when you look at historical documents? The kids answered, "We look at dates, names of people, the type of language they use. And I realized, "Wow, they did learn how to make sense of historical documents, because that's what I automatically do."

**Debbe:** How did you support metacognitive conversations in the classroom?

**Alicia:** First, we looked at the social aspect of how we had the classroom set up and then looked at the personalities. What personalities were working better with others? You have the one that always thinks they're right. And then you would have the one that really is always right, but very rarely says anything. So we started mixing the kids up personality wise.

**"I had been doing it wrong all these years."** Alicia realized after attending RAISE that she had been teaching the Cornell note taking all wrong. When she began to reflect on the process she would use, as a learner, she realized she had been repeating a process that was already in the book.

**Alicia:** When I was an AVID teacher, we did Cornell notes. Instead of questioning on the left-hand side, I put main ideas, people, places, things, events, dates because I felt that's what they needed and the definition next to it. Then I realized, "Okay, that's pretty generic. That's in the glossary along with people, places, things, events, dates." Then I realized that if I were taking the notes, I would probably write down the information on the right-hand side, and on the left side ask questions.

**Debbe:** Cornell notes can be metacognitive in nature. One side is the reflection part, which you realized. It's what going on in your head. It's what you deem as important.

**Alicia:** To me, I needed to teach them that left-hand side almost stays blank. You take your notes on the right-hand side then you go back and you read what you wrote. On the left-hand side, you start asking questions and you put the answers there. I realize now that's what Cornell notes are. The left side is where you go back and reflect, simplify what you had written so that when you go to study, you have the right-hand side for either the answers or the definition if that's what you have there. So, yeah, I finally realized why Cornell notes are effective, and I wasn't doing it correctly for years.

**Debbe:** So now you know. You came to this understanding because you put yourself in the learner's seat, and you surfaced the type of metacognitive thinking that would help you get a deeper understanding of the text.

**Alicia:** I realized that I knew how to do it, but for some reason, I never thought to stop and show them how I did it.

I believe that metacognition was the “yellow brick road” that transformed my teachers' way of thinking about how they read, which led to a sense of empowerment for their students.

**CERA: formative Assessment for measuring metacognitive growth.** As detailed in Chapter 4, CERA was the process where students read the same text twice in order for teachers to formatively assess their students' level of metacognitive conversation. Students were administered the text at the beginning of the school year before teachers began to implement *talking to the text* and a second time before teachers returned for the winter institute. At the winter institute, teachers analyzed their own students' pre and post text, then assessed where their students were in terms of metacognitive growth. Teachers analyzed the post text for metacognitive growth, noting what their students were doing well and areas for improvement. Based on their students' data, teachers then determined their own instructional goals to move their students toward greater metacognitive growth.

**Debbe:** Jack, when you were sitting through the CERA discussion process during the winter institute, what were your thoughts about implementation?

**Jack:** Well, when I looked at it, the hardest part about the CERA implementation was, “How am I going to individualize it for all of my different students? So I worry, “How do I get those high achieving students to grow as a reader while not putting those who are on the lower end completely out?” As I analyzed my students’ metacognitive growth, I began to see the benefits of the process because it would allow me to focus a little bit more towards the higher end at times and at the lower end at times and in the middle, yet still use it within the same context. So when I am giving a document based question, I can sit there and talk to the one student, who is at the higher end and say, “Okay you get that, you can understand the topic. Now, how does that help you answer the question? How does it help you with the analysis of the reading? Could you take your analysis a step farther?” So, it allows me to push that student, while I am looking at the other person at the lower end and asking, “Okay, what is the information you are taking away from the reading?” So, the process allows me to push all students in different ways.

**Debbe:** So now you are talking about differentiating in a classroom. What did you think of the CERA process in terms of assessment?

**Jack:** I thought it was a pretty good assessment. I liked the idea of the CERA process because it was a formative assessment. Students weren’t being given a letter grade but the process was more to show growth on their metacognitive thinking for me, but it also allowed the students to see their own growth. It was nice to compare their pre and post and see the changes that some of them did without me prodding them into doing it and making them do it. I really liked the process, but I think it would be better with more of a topic geared towards my time period, as we haven’t gotten to that part in American History.

**Debbe:** I should have been more transparent to your class that all the students in the history section of RAISE were reading the same text so the data could be analyzed for research purposes. So that was really my fault.

**CERA surfaced a new perception of students’ learning abilities.** Both Alicia and Sabrina used the CERA process to reflect, not only about their students thinking processes, but also instruction. Alicia learned through the CERA process an innate willingness in her students that they really wanted to learn, wanted to be better.

**Alicia:** I liked the CERA process because it was a formative assessment, not a test, and the students didn't see it as a test either. The marking of the text evidence showed they are starting to own the process; they see a reason behind the marking of the text and not just because Ms. Tanner wanted me to do it.

**Sabrina:** I liked being paired up with people and having them look at my students because I think sometimes I look at my students through rose-colored glasses. It was just nice to have other teachers look at my students' CERA texts. When they were impressed with my kids, it made me feel good. It was good for me to see how other teachers would evaluate them because that helps me learn how to evaluate them as well. Also, being able to see other students from around the state made me see how far my kids had grown compared to other teachers' students.

Each teacher commented on the student growth they observed in terms of interaction with text compared to their pre-reading sample. Although the teachers recognized metacognitive growth in their students, the CERA samples demonstrated, that as teachers, their work was still not done.

### **Reflection Leads to Transformation**

Teachers are their own disciplinary experts, a goldmine of untapped resources. In Chapter 1, I referred to this as, "You have the secret, as the disciplinary expert, to empower your students; you just need to let your students in on the secret and watch the magic happen!" In apprenticing their own students, teachers pull back the invisible veil and make explicit their own thinking. "When teachers become more aware of the complexity of how they themselves make sense of text, they gain a new appreciation for the reading difficulties students may face" (Schoenbach, et al., 2012, p. 12).

**Debbe:** Jack, how did Reading Apprenticeship affect your teaching of reading in your discipline?

**Jack:** My purpose of trying to initially go to RAISE was to try to come out of there with some strategies that I thought that would be beneficial to try to help students with reading the textbook. But I have taken away a lot more than just strategies. I have been able to use the RA routines in trying to help any of my levels, whatever level I get, and I am more focused with teaching strategies.

**Debbe:** Jack, what are you noticing about yourself as a learner and how you read academic text?

**Jack:** Well, I definitely understand more about my own reading. What I've noticed is I pay more attention to how I do things with the reading. And I'm also very cognizant that not everybody reads the same way as I do. So when I'm doing the homework or I'm asking my students to do the reading, I'm trying to focus more on, "Okay, what are you getting from this? What do you understand?" When I am reading something for my subject matter that I would like to use, I see myself more conscience of, "Okay, what areas are students going to slip up in?" So, I do catch myself doing that a lot more than what I used to.

**Debbe:** What other changes have you noticed about yourself in regards to your students?

**Jack:** I noticed that I'm very cognizant of their reading. I spend a lot more time asking myself, "Are they understanding it? What are they doing that's not making them understand the material?" Unfortunately, there are some who don't do the reading outside the classroom so it's hard to gauge what I am doing, in terms of modeling my own thinking for how I understand text, is helping them. But the ones I know who are reading outside the class are still struggling to understand it, but compared to last year, I recognize they would be struggling a lot more if it wasn't for me doing some of the things that I have done.

**Debbe:** Anything else you have noticed about yourself?

**Jack:** Well, I pay more attention to my thinking like, "How can I relate this to my students? How do I understand it? How do I bring it to me?" Before RAISE I never gave much thought to my thinking, I just knew it. Why did I know it? I think I take a lot more ownership on my own realizing that my students are having some issues of their own, and I know they may be struggling. I'm cognizant of their struggling a lot more, and they should struggle because it's a higher-level reading than what they're used to. If they're going to struggle, they have to do something about it. If I just let them go, I know they would have a tougher time, and I'd be failing them.

**Debbe:** What I am hearing from your reflection is your own transformation as a learner and teacher. You also have a sense of ownership for your students' learning. I'm also hearing a deeper sense of reflection. Do you feel you have more awareness of your own metacognitive thinking?

**Jack:** Yes, definitely! I know I spend a lot more time reflecting on where, what, or how I came up with my own thinking processes, or what things triggered my thinking to make it easier so that I can try to come up with ways to make it easier for my students to understand the reading. So, if I know of ways that made it easier for me and share that with my students in a guided learning situation, maybe that will help them internalize the

learning.

**Debbe:** I hear through your students' interviews an increased level of confidence in navigating complex text compared to last summer when you gave them instructions to read the AP text and take notes. What was in the Reading Apprenticeship design, or the PD, or your instruction that caused an increase in student agency for reading difficult text?

**Jack:** Well, first off, the teacher modeling really helped. In the past I would have just told them to how to do it, but I would never have modeled my thinking for the way I make sense of text. What I really like about the modeling is it empowers my students to try it on their own and say, "Okay, I need to develop something that works for me," versus me just telling them, instead of showing them.

Unfortunately, many schools including Jack's have gone to individual IPADS, which are not conducive for *talking to the text* like one can do on paper. One of Jack's biggest AHA epiphanies was the Reading Apprenticeship routine of *talking to the text* in disciplinary ways. He realized the importance of modeling his own metacognitive thinking and having the opportunity to use his students' *talking to the text* as a formative assessment in order to evaluate how his students were thinking as they read, including observing areas where they struggled. Jack was doing what was best for his students by copying the text in order to establish metacognitive thinking routines early.

By the time I could visit his classroom in November Mike had gotten creative and students were using Google Docs to make their thinking visible. Students were also sharing their own thinking in socially mediated ways by attaching their IPADS to the projector so classmates could view how their peers were making sense of the text, and support each other in observing multiple ways of thinking.

**Building ownership of learning for their students.** Alicia and Sabrina's academic counselor was a strong advocate for her students. She would place students in their AP class who had the potential of being successful, even though these same students did not believe they were

capable. Alicia and Sabrina always believed in their counselor's insight, never questioning her decision. Alicia and Sabrina were honest with their students from the beginning, letting them know, they had signed up for a challenging course although they were honest with their students, but believing in their potential. Alicia and Sabrina shared a sense of confidence in their students for reading AP text that was never there before.

**Alicia:** When we talked about AP, we were very honest with them at the beginning that this class will not be an easy course. It is going to require a lot of work. But you can do it.

**Debbe:** What have you done this year, different from last year, to build this confidence?

**Alicia:** Implementing Reading Apprenticeship.

**Debbe:** Could you tell me specifically what you have done?

**Alicia:** We stop and think about how we will present the material.

**Sabrina:** We also validate their confusion, which is a change from last year. In the past, we would say, "Okay, you are confused. Let's go on." Now we give them that confidence that it is okay not to always know the right answer. and we give them the resources to understand that the text is a resource, your friends are a resource, your own knowledge is resource. The climate we have built this year is definitely something we have done differently because of RAISE.

**Alicia:** We also work toward getting them to be a little more independent, and also communal in their learning about stating confusion. I think when our students felt confused in the past, they held it to themselves, thinking, "Nobody else is confused so I am not going to tell anyone that I am confused."

**Sabrina:** Right, and we have validated that it is okay for them to be confused and to share that confusion.

Alicia and Sabrina admitted they had been cognizant of the fact their students were confused last year, but they were concerned about covering the AP material. Although that worry was still present due to the AP curriculum demands, they learned by providing time in class to address students' confusion, it allowed them to eventually speed up. One of the concerns teacher

participants voiced during RAISE was the worry about not covering the material. Reading Apprenticeship teachers discovered when they slowed down to provide a foundation for metacognitive thinking, collaboratively inquiry, and applying the four dimensions to their instruction, the slowing down helped them to speed up.

In order to establish a classroom where confusion is expected and validated, some Reading Apprenticeship teachers give class participation credit for sharing reading confusion and questions. When a climate is established where students feel safe stating *where* the confusion occurred and *why* they were confused, positive learning changes occurred, just as Alicia and Sabrina observed with their students.

**Sabrina:** Now, we take the time to deal with students' confusion. We just say, "Okay, we need to stop, we need to deal with it and by dealing with it we are actually getting through more material, actually going faster in reality. Because the students feel it is okay to ask clarification questions when it is important, not twenty minutes later. They tell us, "I am confused about this." So we deal with it right then and help them maneuver through the confusion.

**Alicia:** And our students make us stop before moving forward, "Okay is there anybody else who is confused?"

**Sabrina:** Right, and this year we have a new practice we are using called, "questions and statements." I will ask the students, "Okay, for what we have read so far, what are some statements you want to make about what we have read?"

**Alicia:** Or questions you have.

**Sabrina:** Even though I have generated questions about the text, I wanted to know what they were struggling with and that has been more powerful.

**Debbe:** Is this a practice you have created because of your participation in RAISE?

**Alicia:** Yes. I never thought about having students generate questions after I had already asked them my questions. Alicia and I also make it a regular practice for students to generate inquiry questions while they are reading. We began this early in the year when we modeled inquiry questions and then read on to see if our questions were answered.

**Debbe:** What in the RAISE sessions brought you to this point?

**Sabrina:** In one of the winter sessions, the facilitators talked about questioning and the need for the kids to ask the questions. I still ask questions because there are certain things that I want them to get out of the book, but having them ask questions shows me where their thinking is.

**Discovering the power of inquiry.** One of the sessions during the winter RAISE winter session provided an opportunity for teachers to generate before, during, and after inquiry questions as a strategy to use in the classroom to deepen understanding of the text. Research has proven that good readers ask questions all the time while they are reading in order to deepen their understanding of the text (Schoenbach, et al., 2012). Alicia and Sabrina discovered the power of allowing their students' inquiry to drive the discussion, thereby developing a sense of empowerment.

**Sabrina:** By hearing their questions I know, "Oh wait, they are past the knowledge stage. They know who the characters are." Then I look for evidence that they are inferring. "Okay, what clues aren't they seeing in the text that I see that are letting me infer?"

Sabrina utilized her students' questioning as a means of formative assessment. By evaluating their metacognitive thinking through questions, she was able to evaluate where they were in their levels of thinking, and used this insight to plan next instructional steps. The CERA tool, described in Chapter 4, provided teachers with tools for using metacognitive thinking as formative assessment.

Alicia and Sabrina recognized that some students came into the class with a defeated sense of self. They realized the importance of creating buy-in with those students in order to move students toward a sense of empowerment. Alicia described how Reading Apprenticeship provided that foundation:

Some students come in with assumptions like, "I don't know why I am in an AP class. These teachers are mean. There is going to be way too much work. I am behind. I can't catch up." I can think of two students who fit that description. For the first report card,

both of those students had F's, but as they continued working on comprehending the text, they began to see the buy in. I know the Reading Apprenticeship training helped these students see buy in. I will admit though, both Sabrina and I had difficulty struggling with how to implement Reading Apprenticeship. Then the students began to say, "Maybe this isn't as hard as we thought." I have seen a real turnaround with them. Now, I don't have to fight them to do their work, and when I don't see their work, I say, "Wait, what happened? Why isn't their work turned in?" So there has been a real turnaround from the first semester. They barely passed first semester because of the mistakes they made in the first nine weeks, but now they are strong, high C's, low B's. That is impressive in an AP class (Interview, July 23, 2013).

I believe part of the students' success was due to Alicia and Sabrina's belief in their students' potential, what Protheroe (2008) terms "a teacher's sense of efficacy." One of the ways Alicia and Sabrina tested their students' comprehension of the AP text was through the use of multiple-choice questions. Although this was a practice before RAISE, now the teachers noticed a significant improvement in scores, providing additional evidence for an increase in student agency.

**Alicia:** Last year, our students did poorly on the multiple-choice tests. In the previous years we would say, "Go read the chapter; here is your homework." The first week of school, before we really began implementing Reading Apprenticeship, we gave them the first chapter's homework to prepare for the multiple-choice questions test, and the kids bombed it. By the next test, Sabrina and I had really begun implementing Reading Apprenticeship I remember one student in particular, Arianna, who sometimes pushes against the class, because she thinks it is too much work. She literally said, "Ms. Tanner, the questions really weren't that hard." Our first thought was, "Oh my gosh, they bombed it!" Then Arianna says, "The answers were right there. All you had to do was go back to the book." And I thought, "What we have been doing has made a difference. It really did."

**Sabrina:** I have been really surprised about the kids' scores, compared to last year.

**Hand up instead of a hand out.** Many teachers feel frustrated because they do not have the tools to help their students. This frustration can lead to teachers giving up on their students or admitting you do not have all the answers. This was true for all three of my teachers in the study. The teachers in the study took the initiative and sought out a way to give their students "a hand up," instead of a "hand out."

Jack was honest in his interviews. He did feel frustrated from years past, but he was not going to give up on his students. He was looking for answers and Reading Apprenticeship became his path to “follow the yellow brick road.”

**Debbe:** Could you explain in detail some of your frustrations?

**Jack:** I am getting kids at all different levels. And I had a couple of students last year that just couldn't understand the reading. And they couldn't do it. And I felt helpless because I am sitting there trying to use my schema, trying to use everything I knew to help them, and it wasn't helping. It wasn't helping at all, and they were frustrated throughout the whole year. They would do poorly on tests and by the end you could see they had given up. and it was hard. It was hard because I worked my butt off to try and help them, but I felt helpless.

**Debbe:** I am feeling your frustration from last year because you were really trying, but what you were doing wasn't helping those students who needed the most help. Now you are into the second semester, what are you noticing about students?

**Jack:** I am noticing some of the ones at the lower end are thoroughly enjoying the Reading Apprenticeship routines we are using, like thinking aloud, talking to the text, evidence/interpretation They use them in everything they do. There are others that are still resistant which is common but if you help one to read a little bit deeper, then I believe that is a benefit. So, they are sticking with it even though I know that they probably would have some issues with the reading.

### **Continued Benefits of RAISE**

**Debbe:** How did RAISE help you to understand your students better?

**Jack:** I would say, as a teacher myself, most people go into the profession with the idea that the subject matter is the *only* thing they need to work on or be able to focus on with the students. I assumed that most students coming into my class had the vocabulary to understand the material that I was presenting. After being involved with RAISE, I recognized it was not just the content my students were having trouble with; it was the "everyday" words I had assumed the students would already know. So it made me cognizant of the students that are not able to understand the words around the content vocabulary. RAISE allowed me to be more understanding of the students and not so angry at the fact that they were not getting the content. In general, they had a tough time doing the reading because they had no idea on the context around the vocabulary. RAISE made me more aware of the situations in my classroom and not to assume my students know everything when coming into my classroom and to be more patient with them.

Another important learning opportunity history teachers were immersed in during RAISE

was extended reading opportunities using text sets, also referred to as “text plus one.” This learning opportunity afforded Alicia the opportunity to interact with text independently and collaboratively, thereby deepening an understanding of the concept, using a horizontal text set. Teachers began with a political cartoon, a textbook section, and primary document all thematically connected. This type of text set provided an opportunity for Alicia to see how extensive reading can be used in the classroom to build schema for a particular topic using a variety of thematic reading texts.

**Debbe:** What instructional changes have you and Sabrina implemented because of your participation in the study?

**Alicia:** We used more primary documents to make it more real for the kids. By learning the skills of marking the text in the textbook, they learned how to do it on the primary documents, which helped them make connections between the text and the primary documents and also understand where the information fits in the time period.

**Debbe:** Why wouldn't you have used the practice before?

**Alicia:** I'll be honest, probably laziness and because I'd rather just give the answers and move on because I've got to get somewhere, to the other time period. Now, I don't care because if they learn the skills, whether or not we got to that time period, they might be able to work their way through the reading because they are not afraid of the textbook any more.

**Debbe:** It sounds like you and Sabrina have helped your students toward ownership of learning.

**Alicia:** And that was one important take away from the study-moving kids toward ownership of learning. Quality over content. If I'm only teaching them content, that isn't going to help them learn any better than if they were learning on their own. So if I teach them how to learn, they will be successful on their own.

**Disciplinary discourse.** The humanities class afforded Alicia and Sabrina the opportunity to talk and plan together, but it also provided students an opportunity to hear different ways in which a history and English teacher surfaced metacognitive thinking for their

own disciplinary texts. At times, Alicia and Sabrina would model their thinking for each other's subject. This process provided opportunities for students to observe their own teachers struggling with unfamiliar text, just like the students. Teachers may not be aware that students are reading the text for the first time, while the teacher has had multiple encounters with the text. The RAISE design provided opportunities for teacher reflection allowing Alicia and Sabrina to be cognizant of why their students may be struggling.

Different disciplines use different discourses to create and relay knowledge (Moje, 2008). "Disciplines are constituted by discourses" (p. 99). Heller and Greenleaf (2007) liken this pedagogical understanding to the fact that as students navigate to different classes, they are confronted with different disciplinary discourses. Students in Alicia and Sabrina's class were provided windows into the disciplinary ways that teachers constructed disciplinary knowledge in their own discipline.

**Debbe:** What are some changes you both have made because of RAISE?

**Alicia:** Modeling our thinking using think alouds, talking to the text, and letting our students observe what we do as learners when we read a text that is not our subject.

**Sabrina:** For example, when I read the social studies text I would think aloud and say, "I don't know this person but he might be important so I am going to make a note to the side right now and keep reading."

**Alicia:** I would do the same thing with the English text. I would stop and ask clarification questions when I was confused like "What is the author trying to say here?" And I was not faking my confusion when I asked questions, I really was confused!

**Sabrina:** So when kids see that we ask questions when we are confused, then they also start feeling more comfortable asking questions.

**Alicia:** Part of the advantage of our co-teaching is the opportunity for our students to see that we are fallible and don't know all the answers. There was one time when Sabrina was reading the history text about General Howe and the revolution. When she came to General Howe, she said, "General Howe, okay. Was he British? Was he American?" And she would write that. Then she said, "Don't tell me. I'm going to keep reading." She kept reading and thinking out loud, and she got to the bottom and said, "Well, it talks about how he was with the reds. . . Oh, he's British." She turns to me and said, "And that's why you couldn't tell me because I could have found it out myself even if I had to go to the index to find it." It helps our students to see us struggle with text but see us model how we still push through the reading.

**Debbe:** What I am hearing is a transformation in the way you both think about instruction?

**Alicia:** In how we teach? Yes. Absolutely!

Alicia and Sabrina's students experienced an authentic learning moment when Sabrina modeled how she dealt with confusion by reading on to find out if her question was answered. What I observed when visiting their classroom were students who were not dependent on their teachers to provide answers but a climate of problem solving with peers and evidence of student empowerment. For more information about a Reading Apprenticeship classroom, refer to "What Does a Reading Apprenticeship Classroom Look Like? (See Appendix A).

**"The book is my friend."** Alicia and Sabrina shared that as early as September, they began to see evidence of student agency for reading the AP text, which they had never seen before. Students were seeing the book as a resource now. They both admitted, based on past experience, of finding ways to get around teaching the textbook because they knew their students would not read the text. These transformational changes were a result of their RAISE experiences.

**Debbe:** How did Reading Apprenticeship affect your teaching of reading in your discipline?

**Alicia:** One huge change I have noticed is the kids immediately go to their book to find evidence for their discussion, which they never really did before.

**Debbe:** Why do you think they are using their book, if they had not in the past?

**Sabrina:** They see their book as a resource now, and they don't feel afraid of the book like they used to.

**Alicia:** We have made the book an absolute requirement. We told them, "There is going to be reading, and your textbook will be part of it."

**Sabrina:** This year we have given them class time for it. Before, it was assign the book for homework and we assumed they read it, which we discovered wasn't true.

**Debbe:** What was the path that brought your students to this point?

**Sabrina:** We spent the first four weeks really going over the AP book. First, Alicia and I would do a chapter together where we would model our own talking to the text talked about our thinking process. We also modeled what we did to maneuver through the difficult language. The students also talked to the text using the strategies we modeled, like asking questions, making comments, looking for context or reading further to see if the text gave any clues to the difficult language.

**Alicia:** We noticed the students were getting too hung up on the wording, so we told them, "You are worrying about the language too much and you are not worrying about what you are actually absorbing." Next, we had them work in groups and they helped each other out. I think that helped them not be so afraid of the book. They aren't paranoid any more with the amount of information in the text and realize they may not understand everything, and that's okay. They are able to digest the information in smaller pieces, and share with each other, and that has really helped them.

**Sabrina:** In the past, we didn't really feel like we had time in class to have them read the text. Now, we provide time in class for the reading, independently, and collaboratively looking for evidence, asking questions. We do these multiple-choice challenges where, as a small group, they have to come together and argue about their answers to the questions to see if their answers are all the same or different. Then the teams give their answers. As individuals they find the questions, so they have to do their deep reading, and then they argue it out and get some really good conversations going where they say, "No, the answer is this! Here it is in the text."

**Alicia:** They go find it in the text, now. Last year, we did not provide the type of support

and practice we are providing this year. Students didn't see the text as a resource, as a way to get the information they need like they do now.

Providing time in class for students to grapple with the text with the teacher's support and support of their peers helped these students understand that the book is their friend. RAISE teachers experience first hand the practice of diving back into the text to cite textual evidence independently and then collaboratively, which builds on the four dimensions of Reading Apprenticeship. Alicia and Sabrina learned what they already knew about the importance of using the text as a resource, but now understood how to make it happen. These teachers understood the rationale and the importance of using the text as a valuable tool for citing evidence for argumentative thinking.

Text-based discussions are a regular routine in a Reading Apprenticeship classroom, and these discussions were observed happening each time I visited the classrooms. Although Alicia had described the early struggles implementing Reading Apprenticeship, she realized struggles were well worth the effort after seeing the evidence of student agency. Alicia and Sabrina had set up a classroom where text-based discussions were the norm. "Results from three recent experimental research studies show that in high school classrooms where teachers integrated core Reading Apprenticeship routines to invite students into text-based, problem solving ways of working, students made statistically, significant gains in reading comprehension and content knowledge" (Schoenbach et al., 2012, p. 14).

**Debbe:** After you attended the five-day RAISE summer institute, were there any learning epiphanies for you?

**Jack:** I think the biggest aha, if you would, is that it doesn't matter what level of student you have, they all need help understanding the material. Students in my AP classes were having a tough time understanding the material. The text is a college text so they were struggling, and I wanted to help them read the textbook better. Before, I didn't have tools that might be helpful to guide my students better and after the summer RAISE

professional development, I definitely had tools that would be helpful. I just needed to practice them more. The tools I learned helped them focus on their comprehension of academic text, including helping them focus on the AP test questions, and taking ownership for their own learning.

**Debbe:** Now that you have been implementing Reading Apprenticeship for a school year, what do you see as the lasting benefits from your participation in RAISE?

**Jack:** In general, I would say, it has obviously changed my understanding for how I view the way in which my students read. What I see as easy, my students will not. Reading the text as a learner and surfacing my schema has allowed me to prepare in a different way. A lasting learning for me is that I need to make sure I am addressing their struggles so they are helped. Prior to RAISE, I don't think I helped enough along the way. It was more sink or swim. Now it's more like, "Hey, I'll give you life preservers" type of thing, "but they're leaking air so you're going to have to eventually swim on your own."

**Debbe:** What are specific "take aways" that are definitely a part of your RAISE tool belt?

**Jack:** I see the value of CERA for me so that I can better help my students. My goal is to get my students to see the benefit of what they are doing without me having to probe them. In other words, having them compare their pre and post CERA so they can evaluate what they are able to do in terms of understanding text and noticing over time. I definitely see the value of CERA, but I did have some students who put little effort into the process. It's the students who struggle but rise to the challenge who see value in the class.

Although Jack viewed the students who struggled as the ones who benefitted the most, his student interviews proved differently. All ranges of learners demonstrated an increase in student agency. Even a few strong readers began their initial interviews stating, "I don't read any differently this year than I did last year," but when I asked probing questions to surface what they were doing when they are reading, it was clear from their dialogue they definitely took away "newly acquired tools." A strong reader, Brodie, commented, "The talking to the text thing is new, and it helps me relate better to the text."

**Jack:** If it hadn't been for RAISE, I would never have thought about making my thinking visible in order to empower my students to do their own understanding and develop their own metacognitive thought processes. I wouldn't have done any of that if it hadn't been for Reading Apprenticeship. I would have just sat there and said, "Why aren't you

outlining right? What's wrong here? What could you be doing better?" Then I would just be sitting there frustrated because they would be saying, "We don't know how to do it." And I'm like, "How do you not know how to do it? It's just outlining!" Now, because of RAISE, I realize I need to show my students how I think through the text as I read and model my outlining process.

All three teachers readily admitted Reading Apprenticeship was the catalyst providing their transformation for instruction including the changed perceptions for how their students learned. "Programs whose content focused mainly on teachers' behaviors demonstrated smaller influences on student learning than did programs whose content focused on teachers' knowledge of the subject, on the curriculum, or on how students learn the subject. Moreover, the knowledge that these more successful programs provided tended *not* to be purely about the subject matter---that is, they were not courses in mathematics---but instead were about *how students learn* that subject matter" (Schoenbach et al., 2017, p 243-244).

I believe the impact of Reading Apprenticeship provided the catalyst for my teacher's instructional transformation, sense of efficacy, and the empowerment of learning for their students. The professional development approach for Reading Apprenticeship provided a platform where my teachers were immersed in active, collaborative learning based on a strong pedagogical knowledge of how teachers learn in their discipline, thereby affording opportunities for their students to become more proficient in their own literacy learning.

## Chapter 6

### Student Voices

#### How Teachers' Pedagogical Transformation Impacted Students

Even with the substantive work with improving adolescent literacy across the United States, only thirty-four percent of eighth graders and thirty-seven percent of high school seniors were reading at or above proficiency levels (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2015). Greenleaf and Valencia's (2017) work in secondary classrooms provided a picture where reading was being circumvented, where texts were "missing in action." One of the concerns raised by Greenleaf and Valencia was the same pressing dilemma expressed by eight of the rural students and seven of the urban students prior to being in a Reading Apprenticeship class. Students shared not receiving any teacher support in other classes for how to read critically, extrapolate necessary information, and synthesize information, including teachers who did not even require reading.

Many secondary students are unprepared for the rigor of academic text even though they were regarded as successful (Greenleaf & Valencia, 2017; Moje, 2008; Schoenbach, et al., 2017). Many secondary teachers have not been prepared to apprentice their students in how teachers themselves read their own disciplinary text (Fisher, Frey, & Lapp, 2011; Greenleaf & Valencia, 2017; Schoenbach, et al., 2017). RAISE was developed to address this literacy gap and to "address the fact that students were unprepared for academic reading across subject areas, but had many strengths and strategic capacities that were going untapped in the classroom" (Personal communication, Cynthia Greenleaf, October 20, 2017).

In the first section of Chapter 6, students from both rural and urban schools shared their prior experiences as readers of academic text followed by their learned experiences as students

with a first year Reading Apprenticeship teacher. The similar findings that emerged from both schools included the following: (a) student agency for reading complex, academic text; (b) development of metacognitive thinking; (c) lack of reading support from other teachers.

Urban students' voices begin the first section followed by rural students' voices. I wanted to honor the students' voices, and believed that allowing them to tell their stories would be more authentic for the reader than summarizing large sections of student conversations.

### **Student Voices from Thomas Marshall High School**

Seven of the fifteen urban students described receiving no reading support from other teachers. Twelve students pointed to Ms. Tanner's and Mrs. O'Hara's modeling of their thinking and *talking to the text* as positive influences in moving them toward ownership of learning. All students experienced an increased sense of agency for reading complex, academic text.

**“It’s not set in our mind.”** At the end of Chapter 4, a student had described her teachers “as the best teachers I have ever had.” That student was Natasha, a junior, in Ms. Tanner and Mrs. O'Hara's class. During Natasha's initial interview, she asked me about Reading Apprenticeship because she had experienced a truly, positive learning experience with her teachers that she had not experienced in other classes. She was interested in knowing if Reading Apprenticeship was open to all teachers because she wanted other students to experience a confidence for reading complex text that she had acquired.

**Natasha:** Is Reading Apprenticeship open for other teachers who are not just English and History teachers because I think these are the best IPS teachers I've come across the entire time I have been in the Montgomery Public Schools, and I have been in MPS since first grade. The teachers have helped me out a lot, and I think a lot of teachers could learn from this apprenticeship. A lot of teachers don't do what they do. Other teachers don't help us out. They give us the work and expect us to do it, but we don't really understand. It's not set in our mind.

**Debbe:** What do your teachers do that is different?

**Natasha:** Our teachers go over the reading and break things down. They tell us to ask questions when we are reading. Ms. Tanner and Mrs. O’Hara really give us a sense of direction on how to do the work. They don’t just give it to us and tell us, “Well, here’s the work, and it is due by such and such a time. Our teachers assign us work and then they break it down. They give us direction on how to do it and different ways to do it. They actually go through the reading step-by-step and show us different ways to read the text.

**Debbe:** You shared with me your positive learning experiences in Ms. Tanner and Mrs. O’Hara’s class. What are you experiencing in other classes?

**Natasha:** In other classes, we just sit there and don’t talk about the lesson. In my chemistry class, she gives us the work, we take notes, and that’s the end of it. We will start getting paperwork that we have to do, but she doesn’t go through it step-by-step. She doesn’t show us how she does the problem. She knows it, but we don’t know it yet, and that’s why we’re in the class. One day she said, “I don’t know what other way for me to help you all because you’re not doing the work.”

Prior to the teachers’ participation in RAISE, all three teachers in the study had harbored the same thoughts that Natasha was sharing, as articulated by Jack in Chapter 5: “It’s your fault for not knowing it.” Teachers did not understand that students really did want to do the work, as evidenced by the students’ interviews; they just needed the support for reading complex, academic text. One student, in particular, that Alicia wanted me to interview was Manuel because he had failed the AP Humanities class the previous year. Manuel elected to retake the AP class and was successful. Alicia concluded that it would be enlightening to hear how he perceived himself as a learner after being in a Reading Apprenticeship environment.

**Debbe:** Would you take me back to last year and describe how you felt about reading academic text?

**Manuel:** Last year, it was more difficult for me to kind of understand the text because I didn’t have the reading strategies that my teachers have given me, like underlining the text. When I underline the text, it helps me make connections with the text so today it’s more easy for me to understand.

**Debbe:** What other strategies do you use besides underlining the text?

**Manuel:** Context clues. I just keep reading to figure out what the words mean.

**Debbe:** Were these strategies other teachers showed you?

**Manuel:** No, other teachers don't teach us this.

**Debbe:** What is different in this classroom?

**Manuel:** Everyday we are doing that [using strategies], like underlining, making connections, and they are showing us how to do it and it is easier for us to understand the text.

**Debbe:** How does their modeling help you?

**Manuel:** It's very helpful because I'm able to understand like difficult text that I couldn't understand before.

**Debbe:** How do you feel this year about yourself as a reader of academic text?

**Manuel:** I've been more confident because I'm already used to the strategies because we do it like everyday, almost.

It was evident from Manuel's conversation that he had acquired a sense of agency for reading academic text. He did not possess a sense of ownership for reading complex text last year in the AP class even though he had the same teachers. The only difference: Reading Apprenticeship.

Carlos was the only student who chose not to be audiotaped. His interview was transcribed in a face-to-face interview. He was also another student, like his peers, who admitted to not having a game plan for reading prior to being in a Reading Apprenticeship class. Carlos was the only student who mentioned making inferences as a reading strategy and was explicit about his purpose in utilizing specific strategies. This demonstrated that Carlos had not been taught strategies in isolation but had internalized them.

**Debbe:** How did you see yourself as a reader of academic text last year?

**Carlos:** I just read it from beginning to end but didn't mark up any text or define anything, and at the end I ended up confused because I didn't understand the reading. I felt like I wasn't good at reading. I struggled with it and felt that I wasn't doing a good job to academically succeed.

**Debbe:** What have you learned this year to help you understand history text?

**Carlos:** I learned to mark up the text. My teachers showed us with examples of their own thinking and then we practiced it on our own.

**Debbe:** What learning opportunities have your teachers used in helping you to learn how to read academic text?

**Carlos:** They gave me a list of things I can do: inferencing, making questions, underlining unknown vocabulary and look for context clues, making connections to prior knowledge, summarizing the paragraphs in my own words. None of the above did I know how to do before.

**Debbe:** When do you use these strategies?

**Carlos:** When I read a passage, I can infer what is going to happen next. I make questions when it doesn't explain in the passage. I ask, "What does this mean?" When something unexpected happens, I ask, "Why did this happen?"

Although Carlos' interview was briefer than the others, I believe the salient points he shared with me provided evidence of a student who had acquired agency for reading academic text.

**Dumbifying the text.** Aliyah was also another student who admitted a lack of support from other teachers for reading academic text. Aliyah shared an experience that is too familiar in secondary classrooms: telling students to take notes, but not realizing students need to observe their teacher modeling how they take notes, and then providing time for students to practice. She coined an interesting term, "dumbifying the text," to describe a strategy she learned from Ms. Tanner that worked for her.

**Debbe:** Is there anything you are doing this year to understand text that you didn't do last year?

**Aliyah:** Yes, Ms. Tanner taught us how to dumbify the questions so we can understand what it is asking by underlining only the key terms, instead of all the words, so it is easier to figure out what the question is asking.

**Debbe:** How does that help you as a reader?

**Aliyah:** It helps a lot because they'll be some words I won't even understand, but the context clues around it will actually help.

**Debbe:** Did Ms. Tanner model how she used this strategy?

**Aliyah:** Yes, she would first read it, and then take out some of the things that she wouldn't understand and just rewrite it in her own words.

**Debbe:** What other strategies do you find useful besides dumbifying the text?

**Aliyah:** I would write questions. When I am using Cornell Notes this year, I write my notes on one side and on the other side I write questions to help me study for tests.

**Debbe:** Did you use Cornell Notes last year?

**Aliyah:** I tried using them last year in my AVID class, but it didn't really work out. These teachers are actually helping a lot more than my AVID teacher from last year by helping me get more in-depth into the reading. Last year, all my teacher would say was just, "Take Cornell Notes," and some people wouldn't even know how to take them.

Aliyah's metacognitive use of Cornell Notes occurred because Alicia discovered that she had been teaching Cornell Notes wrong and began teaching the notes as a metacognitive tool, as described in Chapter 5. Some teachers believe students walk into their class equipped with the same mental tools as the disciplinary expert, the teacher, but the student data from both schools proved this was not the case. The majority of the students from both schools shared similar confessions that only their present teachers ever modeled their thinking processes.

Unfortunately, some teachers may assume that students arrive in their classrooms knowing the specific “tools of the trade” teachers implicitly own for navigating complex text. As described in Chapter 5, all three teachers in the study realized that their former assumptions about students proved untrue once they began implementing Reading Apprenticeship. They realized it was their job to apprentice students by providing the metacognitive tools that they themselves utilized when reading complex text.

Because secondary and postsecondary academic subjects become increasingly specialized in their discourse, teachers need to apprentice students in the disciplinary discourse and practices of their subject (Schoenbach et al., 2012). The specialized manner in which a science teacher navigates subject matter through reading, writing, and thinking is different from the literature, math, and history teacher. Heller and Greenleaf (2007) compare students’ transition between the different academic subjects to walking into different foreign language classes each time they move from class to class. Each academic subject “has its own vocabulary, textual formats, stylistic conventions, and ways of understanding, analyzing, interpreting, and responding to words on the page” (p. 8).

Teachers are their own disciplinary experts, and the inquiry stance in Reading Apprenticeship classrooms guide teachers in supporting students in learning the disciplinary language of academic subjects (Schoenbach et al., 2012). Teachers in the RAISE study understood that, “I am the only one who can teach my students how to read in my discipline.”

*Reading for Understanding* (2012) provides educators with student goals for “building knowledge of the disciplines of math, science, literature, and history” (p. 275). Michael Kelcher, a science professor at a community college, who attended Reading Apprenticeship, realized lecturing was not helping his students in understanding the discipline of science:

I had been teaching for a long time doing what most of us do—stand and lecture. I was getting the same results over and over. Really strong students can survive, but many students were not learning . . . So I started modeling Think Aloud, Talking to the Text, various things to get students to be more active readers, to think about what they're thinking about when they're reading, or why they aren't understanding. Are they asking questions? . . . I want them to become better aware of what it is that they are reading—you don't read a chemistry text the same way you read a novel. (Schoenbach et al., 2012, p. 274-275)

## **Student Voices from George Washington High School**

**Students' prior perceptions of themselves as readers of academic text.** In the next section, Jack's students share their prior experiences as readers of academic text and then provide the reader with their learned experiences as students with a first year Reading Apprenticeship teacher. In the following sections, are a few excerpts from interviews conducted with Jack's students. The initial question, "How did you read academic text prior to Mr. Reisdorf's class?" was intended to surface how students viewed themselves, in the past, as a learner and reader of academic text.

**Noel:** Last year, I just kind of read it and picked out as much information as I could and tried to remember it. I was basically just speed-reading. I didn't like having to slow down and reread things. If I didn't get something, I just maybe reread it once and then just kept going and figured it would make sense later.

Noel described what had been her strategy before Jack's class. Her strategy was an example of a "hit or miss" process, certainly not a strategy to build student agency for Noel. Another student, Ethan, shared a sense of hopelessness for reading academic text prior to Mr. Reisdorf's class.

**Ethan:** I kind of just read it to read it. This summer when we were doing notes for Mr. Reisdorf it took me a lot longer to read the text then it does now. I didn't understand it. I kind of just wrote down what the book said pretty much. The AP book was a lot harder to understand than I have ever read before. It took me a couple of sections reading before I could even understand what it was talking about.

**Debbe:** What did you do this summer to try and understand the material?

**Ethan:** I would reread it and reread it.

**Debbe:** How did that work for you?

**Ethan:** It worked eventually (nervous laugh), but it still wasn't as good as good as I feel like I am right now.

Eight out of sixteen students, including Ethan, described other classes where guidance in reading academic text was lacking. He described a situation, all too common in secondary classrooms, where students do not own a game plan, like Ethan and Noel, for reading difficult text. These students, including Ethan, shared similar situations of teachers who did not support them with reading or taking notes. Regrettably, Ethan and his classmates were part of the following stark statistics: “two thirds of U.S. high school students are unable to read and comprehend complex academic materials, think critically about texts, and synthesize information from multiple sources” (Schoenbach et al., 2012, p. 3).

**Debbe:** Students, how have other teachers supported you with reading?

**Brodie:** Other teachers didn't show us how to take notes.

**Daniel:** Mr. Reisdorf would take parts of our reading and show us how to take notes from the reading where other teachers would just say, “Write this part.” Mr. Reisdorf gave me other options for taking notes and other teachers would just say, “Do it this way.”

**Ethan:** Other teachers would put the notes on the board and then we would just copy them.

**Jennifer:** I have a lot of teachers that tell us what they did, but they don't show us their thought process.

**Maggie:** What was so hard for me last year was the teacher didn't give directions when she was reading. She just gave it to us, and you would read it, but it wouldn't absorb, but now it does.

**Melissa:** For me, I just skipped the reading. I didn't really think about it. In other classes, we usually had worksheets that went with the tests, so I didn't really read the text. I could just look at the worksheets and study guides. This year I have to read, think about it, and analyze the reading to do well on the quizzes.

Melissa described a scene present in some secondary classes where teachers had circumvented the teaching of disciplinary reading while “teaching around the text” by providing a PowerPoint presentation identifying salient points from the text, reading to students, or providing an outline of the information. Teachers may engage in these practices because they know from experience their students simply will not read the text. In fact, six students in Jack's class conveyed reading was not required in other classes.

This particular phenomenon is pervasive, not just in culturally diverse schools but in white, middle class America (Schoenbach, et al., 2012). Were these teachers at Jack's school unaware of the need to model their thinking? Had they given up requiring reading because past experiences had proven that many students were simply not completing the required reading? Below are a few comments from teachers and students interviewed for the 2012 edition of *Reading for Understanding*, who shared their own frustrations:

“I'm doing back flips in the classroom to get the content across without expecting them to read the textbook. I've stopped assigning reading. The text is almost supplementary.”

“Because you can't rely on students to read, I feel like I'm constantly summarizing the history textbook so kids don't miss the main points. I wish I didn't have to assume that role as much, but I find I do.”

“Usually, the teacher just writes stuff on the overhead. Then we copy it down and she gives us lots of labs to do. I don't remember using the book. We probably only used it a couple of times to look for stuff.” (Schoenbach, et al., 2017, p. 9)

It is not only secondary students in culturally diverse or lower socioeconomic schools who have difficulty reading complex texts and are unprepared for the reading demands in the workplace and college. Jack's school was a predominantly white, and middle class socioeconomic setting. Twelve of the sixteen students reported being discouraged while trying to read the AP text in the summer. Eight of these students reported receiving no support from previous teachers on how to read complex text.

**Laurie:** For other classes I don't have to read that much or outline. I mostly just take away what they teach in class and don't have to do any reading outside of class.

**Joel:** None of my other classes require textbook reading.

**Lillie:** I don't really have other classes where you have to read the text.

In June of 2012, Jack's AP students received their texts to read over the summer, with only the directions to "read and take notes." These brief instructions were prior to his attendance at RAISE. Unknowingly, Jack was leading his students down a dark path of frustration and angst. Melissa shared her own defeated attitude for reading the AP texts assigned for the summer and was brutally honest about her lack of a strategy for reading them. Her honesty did make me chuckle though, and I appreciated her candid response. I wonder, how many students have looked at their academic texts and felt the same sense of hopelessness that Melissa felt.

**Melissa:** It was like I opened it and said, "I'm not doing it, and I shut the book and said, "Nope, I'm not going to read it." I waited two months and in the middle of July I thought, "I really should start reading. Then I just kind of skimmed it really quick because I didn't know anything about it.

Luckily for Melissa and the rest of her classmates, her teacher had attended RAISE and was equipped with the necessary tools to engage his students in a cognitive apprenticeship with the goal of developing and increasing student agency for reading complex text.

## Focus Students

Two sophomore students were selected as focus students in order to provide more of an in-depth observation of their experiences with a Reading Apprenticeship teacher, in a Reading Apprenticeship classroom. I also wanted to present a male and female perspective. The first student, Joel, did not perceive himself as a strong reader but like each student in Jack's class had internalized strategies to help him navigate the AP text. Joel was also part of the six students who declared reading was absent in other classes. The second focus student, Maggie, perceived herself as a strong, academic student until she encountered a biology text in her freshmen year. Maggie represented twelve of Jack's students, who shared frustrations when encountering the difficult AP text. To be honest to my readers, I also selected Maggie because she used an interesting metaphor to explain her learning experiences.

**Debbe:** Can you tell me how you were as a learner and reader of academic text before Mr. Reisdorf's class?

**Joel:** I just simply read the book, but now the way I read is different. Compared to now, we pause and we think about every paragraph but in the past I just read it and I would ask myself did I remember anything I read? If I didn't remember anything, I would go back and read it again. That's pretty much what I did before Reisdorf's class.

**I've never had a strategy before.** Prior to Mr. Reisdorf's class, Joel was like many of Jack's students, who did not possess a game plan for reading difficult text. I felt it was interesting to note Joel's use of "we" because it pointed to the importance of socially mediated learning as a positive influence in Joel's literacy metamorphosis.

**Debbe:** How do you see yourself as a reading of academic text this year?

**Joel:** Better than I was before.

**Debbe:** Why do you feel much more confident as a reader now of academic text?

**Joel:** Now, I feel like I remember more of the information that we've learned.

**Debbe:** You said, “The way we read now.” Can you explain?

**Joel:** Well, I never had a strategy before so this is the first one I have ever used. We start by reading a paragraph and then we stop, summarize the paragraph, take notes and then do the process over again.

do the process over again.

Joel also represented three students who remarked that prior teachers had not required reading. He readily admitted in his interview that he had never learned a strategy before, but I do believe Joel had been introduced to strategies before. Joel’s statement confirmed what the founders of Reading Apprenticeship discovered in their observations of secondary classrooms: teachers were either teaching around the text or putting texts on the shelf because they knew from past experience many of the students would not read them. Perhaps Joel was taught strategies in isolation, which has been shown to be ineffective (Schoenbach et al., 2012). Research points to the teaching of a “disembodied set of cognitive strategies—separate from the texts that necessitate their use and without support for independent use of these strategies—will not develop students’ strength and independence as readers” (Schoenbach et al., 2012, p. 33).

When Jack modeled his thinking, he shared with his students *why* he was using the strategy and *how* it helped him. Joel observed his teacher utilizing the strategy, chunking, with a text that necessitated breaking it into chunks in order to comprehend the text. Chunking became a strategy for Joel’s mental tool belt, providing him a sense of empowerment.

**Debbe:** I call the strategy you described, chunking, which is a strategy that helps when you are reading difficult text, because you are breaking down the information into manageable chunks. How does this strategy help you?

**Joel:** The summarizing puts it back in my brain.

**Debbe:** Explain your metacognitive thinking, your thinking about your thinking. How does your brain summarize?

**Joel:** I don't put every single detail down; I just put the gist of it.

**Debbe:** How did Mr. Reisdorf get you to this point?

**Joel:** He would put a copy of the text on the projector, and then he would read it and think aloud about how he would come up with the gist of a paragraph.

**Debbe:** These are mental tools you have acquired this year, Joel. You are beginning to develop your own mental tool belt for reading AP text. Do you use this strategy now without Mr. Reisdorf telling you to do it?

**Joel:** You mean like chunking? Yes, I do when I am reading the AP World History book. It helps me remember it for the test. Before, my main problem when reading text was I would skip over a whole paragraph and then I realized I had just skipped over a big chunk. Then I would go back and reread. So that's how reading in chunks helps me understand what I am reading.

Joel was using the strategy, chunking, because he found value in its use. He implemented a mental tool, without being told, evidence of ownership for this cognitive strategy. Joel's internalization of this strategy occurred because of the cognitive apprenticeship Jack established in the classroom. Joel's conversation with me confirmed what I knew from my own teaching and coaching experience when teachers develop metacognitive thinking in their instruction: "For me, it was like a light switch that I could not turn off." Ten years later, the light bulb is still on.

**Building a foundation.** Although Maggie, who was now a sophomore, viewed herself as a strong reader, she shared her frustration when confronted with a difficult text for the first time

in her freshmen year. What Maggie experienced was a common theme expressed by many of her classmates but also for many students in secondary classes across the country. Many teachers lack the pedagogical knowledge to support students in navigating complex text. Secondary teachers, both middle and high school, do not view themselves as literacy experts in their field but rather as content specialists focused on delivering content (Heller & Greenleaf, 2007; Schoenbach et al., 2012). For this reason, it was understandable that Maggie would hit a brick wall when encountering a difficult text for the first time.

**Debbe:** Maggie, can you take me back to how you were a reader of academic text prior to Mr. Reisdorf's class?

**Maggie:** My biggest struggle last year was biology. I would sit down and try to read that textbook, but it was one of the hardest things for me to get into my mind.

**Debbe:** Why was it such a struggle for you to read and understand the text?

**Maggie:** The language was worded in a very difficult way, and I wasn't used to that. It was a struggle for me. Coming into high school as a freshman and then getting a really hard textbook and then now knowing how to read it.

Maggie was not alone when she spoke about being unprepared for the academic demands of disciplinary text. Many of Jack's students also expressed unpreparedness for reading academic text until his class.

**Debbe:** What I am hearing you say is you had this textbook in front of you and in all of your years leading up to being a freshman, you had no idea how to tackle the text?

**Maggie:** Correct.

**Debbe:** So what did you do last year to muddle through it?

**Maggie:** I would sit down after basketball or soccer practice with a piece of paper and write down, kinda like what Mr. Reisdorf has us do now. I would write down what I was thinking when I was reading (st agency) my textbook. That helped me a little.

Maggie demonstrated perseverance, a building of her own agency for trying to overcome her literacy obstacle. Regrettably, not all freshmen possess an inner sense of determination to succeed like Maggie. Building a sense of agency for students is foundational to Reading Apprenticeship where teachers and students “become partners in a collaborative inquiry into reading and thinking processes” (Schoenbach et al., 2012, p. 13).

**Debbe:** How do you feel about yourself as a reader this year?

**Maggie:** It's so much easier now because Mr. Reisdorf has helped a lot with talking to the text and all of the other things he has introduced to us. I sit down and actually focus, and I know what I am reading so it really helps a lot.

**Debbe:** Is talking to the text a new instructional practice because I am hearing it from many of your classmates?

**Maggie:** Yes, it is for me.

**Debbe:** What does this talking to the text look like for Maggie?

**Maggie:** I split my paper into two columns and from his instruction I record on the left side, "What I am reading." and on the right side I write, "What I think inside my brain when I am reading."

**Debbe:** Maggie, what you described is a metacognitive journal because “what you know” is your cognitive. It is what the brain is actively doing when you are reading but when you have to go into your brain and consciously think about how you are processing the information, that is your metacognitive thinking. This metacognitive piece is one major reason why I am so passionate about Reading Apprenticeship, why I used it in my classroom and my coaching because Reading Apprenticeship yielded such solid results. The metacognitive foundation is one aspect I have not seen in other literacy models. So how does using a metacognitive journal help you when you are reading a text?

**Maggie:** It makes me focus so when I write down what I am learning, and what I am thinking, it just helps me absorb the information more and I'm able to get it into my brain.

**Debbe:** You said that you attempted this kind of thinking last year.

**Maggie:** It just didn't work out for me until this year.

**Debbe:** Did Mr. Reisdorf model his thinking for how he reads history text?

**Maggie:** Yes.

**Debbe:** What would he do?

**Maggie:** He would ask questions about the text and then he would answer it in his own words, which made it much simpler to get it into his mind. That helped me because that's what I do. I never had that last year, and now I know what I am supposed to do.

Maggie's first attempt at writing down what she was thinking was not successful to the extent it became under Mr. Reisdorf's leadership. She was lacking the structure of the cognitive apprenticeship mentioned in Chapter 2. "Learning to read academically complex material is yet another task that requires a cognitive apprenticeship" (Greenleaf et al., 2012, p. 22).

Another significant piece of the Reading Apprenticeship puzzle for me was changing the way in which I read text. I began to read the text with two lenses: "How am I making sense of the text?" and "What roadblocks will my students have when reading the text?" I used this paradigm shift in my own classroom, with the teachers I coached, and with the teachers in the study. Jack's reflection in Chapter 5 was evident that he, too, used these inquiry questions when reading history text.

**Debbe:** Maggie, are there specific routines you have used this year?

**Maggie:** Lots of questions like Mr. Reisdorf. When he comes across a specific piece of evidence he doesn't exactly understand, he will make a question mark, and I do the same thing. Then later I will research it more to get a more in-depth understanding. I also do a lot of making connections to other parts of history.

**Debbe:** Did Mr. Reisdorf ever model stopping and making connection?

**Maggie:** Yes, he has before.

**Debbe:** How does that help you?

**Maggie:** There was a time when we were studying India, and I wrote down, "Meanwhile this was happening in Germany- Hitler was doing all this with the Nazi concentration camps. This connection really helped me establish a time period and to connect it with what was going on all around the world and not just India.

**Debbe:** You were making a "text to world" connection. Did that ever happen before?

**Maggie:** No, I never put two and two together, never thought about the text as in-depth as I do now.

**Debbe:** Is there anything else you do when you are reading to help you comprehend?

**Maggie:** I make side notes a lot, little blurb to myself, like remember this or this doesn't seem important.

**Debbe:** How does that help you?

**Maggie:** (soft chuckle) Important points usually are found on tests. I'll make notes and try to remember the more important things while focusing on the little things but not as much.

**Debbe:** Did Mr. Reisdorf ever do that?

**Maggie:** He hinted on it a few times like remember the important stuff. You don't need to remember everything, just get a feel for what you should know. You can't know everything.

**Debbe:** So in my conversation with you, I drew the conclusion that Mr. Reisdorf has been building a foundation. He modeled how he navigated through difficult text.

**Maggie:** (cuts in) Correct, he made the foundation for the house, I put up the walls, I put the plumbing and the wiring in. Everything he laid down for us, but I have been able to put in place.

Maggie's analogy for how she saw her own learning was profound for a sophomore. Evidence of her metacognitive thinking portrayed through the interview, including an increased sense of agency, did not happen on its own. She was fortunate to have Mr. Reisdorf as a teacher, who believed in the Reading Apprenticeship design. Although I do not know where Maggie is today, I believe strongly her foundation with the walls, plumbing, and the wiring are still strong today. Looking back, I wished I had the luxury of time to revisit Jack's students as juniors.

**Other student voices.** The "apprentice" in Reading Apprenticeship denotes a socially mediated process wherein the more skilled learner, apprentices students by modeling one's metacognitive thinking and engaging students in a collaborative process about how the classroom community is making sense of the reading (Greenleaf & Schoenbach, 2004). The goal in an apprenticeship model is toward self-internalization of the learning (Vygotsky, 1978). Jack's students shared how their teacher modeled his thinking and described how their teacher's metacognitive thinking helped him make sense of text. Students further described how Jack's class helped them to have a sense of empowerment and ownership of learning they did not have before.

**Adrianna:** He showed different strategies, not just outlining. Then I could pick one.

People learn differently so having a variety of strategies to pick from is good. Other teachers show us one way and don't show other options.

**Noel:** This year, Mr. Reisdorf made me slow down and reread things, made it sink in, and kind of summarize it in my mind so I knew exactly what was going on instead of having to know every little thing. He would have us read a section and then write exactly what we thought about on that one paragraph or that one page and analyze every little thing. If you didn't analyze enough, he would tell you.

**Devin:** In other classes I would write pages and pages of notes I didn't need to write and talking to the text summarizes the note taking from four pages to one page, saving ink (soft laughter). Talking to the text helps to funnel my time, and it will really help at college because it will be less writing. One of the note taking examples I use is where you

divide your paper into two categories, then write a quote on one side and what it meant on the other. That strategy helped a little but not as much as talking to the text.

Jack was a teacher who chose not to allow his students to choose the easy road but do what worked best for his students. He realized some of his students had learned to play the game of school, especially some of his AP students. Although he realized “playing school” was a reality for some of his students, he was not willing to allow them to seek only the extrinsic value, the grade. Jack recognized that developing ownership of learning would positively impact his students for the long run, not short term. One of Jack’s students, Paul, shared what he believed set his teacher apart from other teachers. Paul detailed the way in which Jack presented note taking, which was very different from other teachers. Jack attributed this instructional change to the RAISE professional development.

**Paul:** Besides just learning this material and so far although it is a learning curve, I'm already feel like I'm learning so much in like note taking. I always thought I knew how to study but here after taking this first course, I know that there's a lot of things I still can learn and can't wait to do so.

**Debbe:** Why do you think you feel this sense of empowerment to push through the difficult text? Mr. Reisdorf went to the RAISE study, but what do you think it is besides him being a good teacher? What is it about his instruction, that even though it's really difficult, you feel like you can be successful?

**Paul:** It's something in the way he explains it. It's something that I haven't had in other teacher.

**Debbe:** I am hearing you say that you are learning a lot in his class about note taking. Could you tell me more about what has changed this year?

**Paul:** I have definitely learned how to take more detail notes and pay attention to the smaller things. Especially with this class, Mr. Reisdorf has shown how to look at a small detail and dive into it deeper and find that there's a lot more behind it than just what the book says. And that's another thing. Mr. Reisdorf has taught us that you don't have to always rely on what the book says.

Twelve of the sixteen students exhibited a sense of empowerment for reading difficult text. Even the four male students who viewed themselves as strong readers, prior to Mr. Reisdorf's class, pointed to *talking to the text* strategy and the disciplinary specific way in which their teacher modeled his thinking using the S.P.E.E.C. strategy described in Chapter 5, as fostering a stronger reader identity.

In an earlier interview, Ethan shared his own increased sense of agency for reading complex text by contrasting the manner in which he comprehended text before to the manner in which he navigated difficult text now by stating emphatically, "Not as good as I feel right."

**Debbe:** That is a powerful statement, Ethan. I would say that you have acquired your own "mental tool belt." What has happened this year to get you to this feeling of confidence?

**Ethan:** Mr. Reisdorf had done that talking to the text thing but we can't do it in our books, so I mentally do it in my head. I make notes of who people are and where they fit in.

**Debbe:** How does that help you?

**Ethan:** Instead of just reading it like I did before, I talk to the text mentally. It helps me summarize the reading and make sense for me.

**Debbe:** What did Mr. Reisdorf do instructionally?

**Evan:** In the beginning of the year, we did a lot where he would take a section and put it on the board and he would talk to the text. Then, we would read and talk to the text with a different piece of text, and it really helped.

**Debbe:** How does that help you when he shares his own metacognitive thinking about how he reads text?

**Ethan:** I learn by watching others do it, and then I want try it. If I don't get it at first, I watch him do it a couple more times. He did a good job of that. We did it a lot at the beginning of the year.

Ethan described how learning from others built his mental tool belt through socially mediated learning, thereby developing the social dimension. Jack provided multiple opportunities for engaging his students in a cognitive apprenticeship, an example of socially mediated learning, which led his students to an increased sense of agency.

### **Metacognitive Conversations: The Heart of the Reading Apprenticeship Framework**

Based on my own profound experience with Reading Apprenticeship, I attributed metacognitive conversation as the secret ingredient for a cognitive apprenticeship. When teachers utilize metacognitive conversations, they build a strong sense of efficacy for themselves and an increased sense of student agency for reading academic. Metacognitive conversation, whether internal or external, is foundational to the Reading Apprenticeship framework. Surfacing our metacognitive thinking, whether internal or external, allows learners to view reading as a puzzle that can easily be put together. The mystery to comprehending complex text becomes available to all.

Although making one's thinking visible is essential as a first step, there is more. Developing the metacognitive conversation also cultivates one's "ability to use insights about the reading processes, strategies, and motivations to interact with, and comprehend" academic text (Schoenbach et al., 2012, p. 127). With Jack's instruction, students gained insights into the metacognitive thinking of their teacher, their peers, and themselves and were motivated, not repelled to tackle the text.

**Debbe:** Melissa, now that you have had a semester in Mr. Reisdorf's class, what are you

noticing about how he makes sense of text?

**Melissa:** When he does his lectures and when he is talking to the text he says exactly what is going on in his brain. So then I was thinking about what was going on in my brain when I read the next night, and I'm thinking Mr. Reisdorf did not do this at all." I was thinking I was doing something wrong, but the next day when he was asking questions about the reading, I thought "Oh I remember that!" So I have my own kind of thing that is way different than his (soft laughter).

**Debbe:** Mr. Reisdorf is sharing with you his way of making sense of the text. It's not that your thinking is wrong because it's not the same as Mr. Reisdorf. Your brain is also actively making sense of the text and you might be coming at it from a different angle. You might be using different strategies. People make sense of text in different ways.

As stated before, Reading Apprenticeship is a collaborative inquiry into how one reads, thinks about their reading, and appropriates other ways of thinking. Reading Apprenticeship helps teachers help their students be able to think in multiple ways and notice others ways of comprehending. Even though Melissa worried because her own metacognition was different from Mr. Reisdorf, it worked for her.

Lillian described awareness of her metacognitive thinking, which was not present prior to Jack's class, and how it aided her comprehension.

**Lillian:** I would say I'm much more surer as a learner now. I notice a lot more when I am reading. I will question why something happened or the text will say, "Then this war. ." and I will question, "Why did they want to do that?"

**Debbe:** So in the past, you were not aware of your own thinking as you were reading text?

**Lillian:** I didn't question what happened. I just read it and thought O.K.

**Debbe:** How does being aware of your own metacognitive thinking help you as a reader now?

**Lillian:** It makes me more curious because I want to know more about the subject. When I am reading now and the book will say something about the subject, I think, "Well why can't you talk more about that?" It will say a little chunk and I will think, "Can we keep

talking about that?"

**Debbe:** Why do you feel more confident about reading history text?

**Lillian:** Because of the way Mr. Reisdorf has taught us to read. His way has helped me to understand what's going on. I'm just not spouting words that I read; I actually understand what I am trying to say now.

**Debbe:** How did Mr. Riehm teach you to read history text?

**Lillian:** He taught us a lot of talking to the text, which is where as you go through you make comments to yourself like, "This relates to this," or "I don't know what that means," so you can help yourself understand what's going on instead of having it go in one ear and out the other.

**Debbe:** In your talking to the text, are there things you notice this year about yourself as a reader?

**Lillian:** I would say I notice a lot more when I am reading I will question why something happened or it will say, "Then this war. ." and then I will question, "Why did they want to do that?"

**Debbe:** Did Mr. Reisdorf model how he read the text?

**Lillian:** Yes, we would start out by taking pictures of the book on our IPADS and he would have us underline important things we thought were important. We used different colors and then we put them in front of the class and explained why we underlined certain things and what they meant. Then he would read it out loud and tell us what he thought.

**Debbe:** So there are two aspects of learning I am gathering from our conversation. One, he was sharing his own metacognition, which is the thinking behind the cognition. Two, when you explained to your peers and Mr. Reisdorf how you knew what you knew and why you chose to make the specific *talking to the text* comments you were letting your peers and Mr. Reisdorf in on your own metacognition.

John was among the many students in Jack's class to describe a sense of being overwhelmed by the disciplinary text demands. Under Jack's tutelage, John found his own "yellow brick road, through metacognitive conversations, which led to a sense of empowerment and inquiry. As John stated earlier, "Now, when I look at the text, I just want to read it and know more about it."

**Debbe:** John, how do you see yourself as reader of academic text now?

**John:** There's a big difference. At the beginning of the year when I opened up the book, I saw how much harder the words were and how much detail was in the text. Now, when I look at it I just want to read it and know more about it.

**Debbe:** How did Mr. Reisdorf get you to this point where you feel confident reading the AP text?

**John:** He got me to the point where I could take a sentence and break out certain points by taking information out of a sentence.

**Debbe:** Could you describe the type of instruction Mr. Reisdorf showed you?

**John:** He showed me talking to the text.

**Debbe:** Many of your classmates described how Mr. Reisdorf modeled different ways of talking to the text. Talking to the text is an umbrella for a lot of the metacognitive strategies you use when reading text. What specifically would I see in your talking to the text?

**John:** You would see me underlining stuff, and putting sayings like, "I know that," or "This happened in this year."

**Debbe:** If you wanted to teach me, how would you describe your thinking processes?

**John:** I would say you take a paragraph and underline different key points, history, and dates that help with understanding the paragraph.

**Debbe:** You just described your own metacognitive thinking, John.

Although only one student in Jack's class could define metacognition, John was able to describe his own metacognitive thinking processes; he just did not have a working definition for the term. It is important to remember that metacognitive conversation helps to demystify the invisible thinking of not only the teacher but also other classmates. Unfortunately, many students have been led to believe the teacher is the only "keeper of the knowledge," the sage on the stage, and they wait for the teacher to give them the answer. "Perpetuating students' dependence on teachers denies them opportunities and successes" (Schoenbach, et al., 2012, p. 10). Reading Apprenticeship is a platform where both teachers and students notice and appropriate others' way of thinking and making sense of text.

Even though the majority of Jack's students were not able to describe metacognition, there was evidence in their interviews that their teacher utilized the metacognitive tool, making his thinking visible, for how he made sense of disciplinary text, which helped his students build their own mental tool belt. In the next section, students describe a variety of metacognitive tools, providing them with a sense of ownership.

**Metacognitive tools for making sense of text.** Jack attributed the following metacognitive tools, as described earlier in Chapter 5, for the transformation of his instruction: (a) *talking to the text* using different strategies; (b) making connections by relating events to today; (c) evidence/interpretation chart; (d) asking questions. These tools are metacognitive because Jack made visible the cognitive strategies he was drawing on to make sense of the text, named the strategies, and described how they helped him gain a deeper understanding of text. It was evident from his students' voices that what Jack saw as pivotal tools for transforming his

instruction were the same tools described by his students that helped them develop a sense of empowerment for reading complex text.

Eleven of the sixteen students credited *talking to the text* as a significant part in helping them become more confident readers. Twelve different strategies were described: a) underlining important details; (b) connecting important facts between texts; (c) inquiry and clarification questions; (d) identifying unfamiliar vocabulary; (e) determining point of view; (f) paraphrasing; (g) summarizing; (h) rereading; (i) chunking information; (j) identifying impact of events; (k) categorizing social, political, economic, education, and cultural events. The following four major strategies were described by seven or more classmates: (a) underlining important details; (b) connecting important facts between texts; (c) inquiry and clarification questions; (d) summarizing. Out of the eleven students who pointed to *talking to the text* as an acquired and important tool, I chose to highlight a few short snippets of dialogue from their individual interviews.

**Debbe:** Ben, is there anything Mr. Reisdorf has done this year that is different from past years?

**Ben:** The talking to the text thing is new. It tells me how to relate better to the text.

**Debbe:** Daniel, what strategies work best for you?

**Daniel:** I like talking to the text where you write out your questions about the reading, circle words you don't know, underline bolded words. That's my favorite.

**Debbe:** Why is it your favorite?

**Daniel:** When you go back and look at your notes, you remember what you were thinking when you first took the notes.

**Debbe:** How do you feel about yourself as a reader of academic texts?

**Maggie:** It's so much easier now because Mr. Reisdorf has helped a lot with talking to the text including all of the things he has introduced to us. I sit down, actually focus, and I know what I am reading so it really helps a lot.

**Debbe:** Jason, is there anything you have learned this year that will help you in college reading rigorous text?

**Jason:** Probably talking to the text. That's the main thing, take notes better, analyze, look at things more in-depth than regular note taking.

Jack's students had developed a sense of agency for reading academic text and confidence for tackling difficult texts, an agency his students did not possess before.

## Chapter 7

### Findings, Conclusions, and Implications

#### Introduction

Secondary literacy issues have been a concern for many years leading to a variety of literacy programs sold to schools across the country. Unfortunately, some school districts look for quick fixes to solve their secondary literacy issues, but quick fixes are not solutions to systemic issues. Because of the positive learning outcomes I had experienced when implementing Reading Apprenticeship in my own classrooms and with the teachers I worked with as a secondary literacy coach, I wanted to study the effects of *Reading Apprenticeship* on teacher instruction and student learning. As a facilitator for RAISE, I was afforded the opportunity to select teachers from RAISE Cohort II to use in my study.

The purpose of this study was to: (a) illuminate the lived experiences of AP teachers and students in a Reading Apprenticeship classroom in both rural and urban settings; (b) study the impact of Reading Apprenticeship on teacher learning and instruction; (c) study the impact of Reading Apprenticeship on student learning; and (d) study the role of metacognition in conceptual change.

I wanted this study to be a vehicle to give teacher participants a voice to share their RAISE experiences so readers of the study might see themselves in these teachers and say, “That’s me. I can do this. I want to change my instruction so I can be a better teacher and my students can feel empowered.” Students’ voices provided the outcome of teachers taking a risk, stepping out of their comfort zone, and being open to new ways of thinking. This study was conducted as a means for teachers and students to share their instructional journeys after implementing RAISE for a full school year.

The Reading Apprenticeship studies I read for my research used a summary approach for conveying meaning to the reader, using more synthesis than actual participant conversation. I chose the latter approach because I wanted the voices of my participants to tell their stories. As teachers and students “in the trenches,” they were living these experiences, and I believed their rich stories should be conveyed with accuracy using their voices.

The three major research questions that guided the data analysis, which determined the study’s findings, included the following:

- What happens when secondary teachers engage in professional development as part of the RAISE study?
- What aspects of the RAISE professional development experience contributed to teacher agency?
- What impact did Reading Apprenticeship have on teacher instruction and student learning?

### **The Journey Begins**

As described in more detail in Chapter 1, my journey began as a teacher in the Montgomery Public School District, the same district, which included the urban school in my study. A university professor agreed to offer an Academic Literacy course in 2006 at the high school where I was teaching, and *Reading for Understanding* was the core text. I began embedding the Reading Apprenticeship model in my classroom, which resulted in student agency for reading academic text and a transformation in my instruction with metacognitive thinking foundational to my teaching. Little did I know how life changing this book would prove to be, and the doors it would open up for me.

The following year I was hired as a secondary literacy coach for the district and

two other district coaches joined me in implementing Reading Apprenticeship with the teachers we supported. As coaches, we believed strongly in the Reading Apprenticeship model and were fortunate enough to travel to Oakland, California the following summer, 2018, for the *Leadership in Reading Apprenticeship* (LIRA) professional development. In 2009 WestEd, which was the non-profit organization responsible for developing Reading Apprenticeship, invited our state to be part of a federally funded research grant, RAISE (Reading Apprenticeship Improving Secondary Education), which provided professional development in four states. WestEd hired me to be a national facilitator for RAISE, which provided an opportunity for me to work with history teachers in my state. The third cohort of RAISE became my dissertation study.

### **Statement of the Problem and Its Effects**

Approximately thirty-seven percent of high school seniors are unable to read and comprehend complex, academic text (NAEP, 2015). Coupled with this problem includes many secondary teachers who feel unprepared in teaching their students self-regulatory mechanisms, which include discipline-specific strategies (Schoenbach et al., 2012). All three teachers in the study felt ill prepared in how to help their students in comprehending complex, academic text. Unfortunately, this problem had far reaching effects not only in secondary schools across the country but also presented a problem for the teachers and students in the study prior to their teachers implementing RA in the classroom:

- Teachers taught around the text: “We were doing all the work. We would look up the information and figure out what they needed.”
- Teachers viewed students as lazy and disinterested: “I don't know what other way for me to help you all because you're not doing the work.”
- Students lacked agency for reading complex, academic text: “In the past, reading

took me a lot longer to read than it does now. I did not understand it. I kind of just wrote down what the book said pretty much.”

### **Findings: Teachers and Students**

#### **Teachers Successfully Implemented Reading Apprenticeship**

In this section, I reflect on what I learned by analyzing the data. The teachers’ accounts of changed beliefs and practices illustrated how participating in RAISE contributed to developing teacher agency and transformational learning. These transformations translated into student agency for reading complex, academic texts and developing confident student literacy identities. In Chapters 5 and 6, I used teacher and student voices to present their lived experiences in a Reading Apprenticeship classroom. In this final analysis, I chose teacher dialogue to substantiate the findings and selected a variety of student voices to validate the student findings.

Rural and urban data echoed similar findings for teachers and students in terms of developing agency. Although my experience implementing Reading Apprenticeship had only been in an urban setting, I believed the Reading Apprenticeship design with metacognitive thinking in an apprenticeship model, would foster student agency, no matter the zip code, or the color of one’s skin. In essence, although students came from different demographic settings, they were receptive to their teachers’ instruction and conveyed a sense of empowerment for learning. They expressed gratefulness for their teachers who gave support that led to student empowerment for reading academic text. The data pointed to the fact that Reading Apprenticeship produced equally powerful results and that demographics were not an obstacle to teacher change and student learning.

Four major findings emerged from the data analysis from both schools: (a) teacher agency, (b) metacognitive thinking fostered teacher agency, (c) evidence of the Reading

Apprenticeship framework, (d) Reading Apprenticeship is differentiation. In the following sections, I present the major findings followed by conclusions from the study, current limitations, recommendations for educators, and implications for future research.

### **Teacher Agency**

**What is teacher agency?** Teachers with a strong sense of agency find ways to utilize tools presented to them and adapt to their own learning situations. Reading Apprenticeship calls that “flexible fidelity” (Schoenbach, et al., 2017, p. 246). “Teacher agency is a teacher’s sense of power to influence or reject change” (Cooper, Kintz, & Mines, 2016, p. 129). In this study, I provide evidence of teachers who achieved agency and how their agency fostered student agency for reading complex, academic texts. These teachers influenced their students in taking on a positive literacy identity, resulting in a sense of empowerment for reading academic text.

Gerstein (2018) also defined teacher agency “as a quality within educators, a matter of personal capacity to act, usually in response to stimuli within their pedagogical environment” (p. 18). The stimuli or catalyst for fostering teacher agency was the RAISE professional development model. The pedagogical environment included both the professional development and the classrooms.

Many teachers enter the teaching field, not for the money or the glory, but because they believe they can make a difference in the lives of students. Along the way, teachers are met with many obstacles that deter them from their original path. The three teachers in the study took a chance on a professional development, stepped outside their comfort zone by engaging in an apprenticing role with their students, and embarked on transformational change resulting in empowered students. These teachers’ stories are evidence of transformation in their thinking and their practice. Move

**Roots of agency.** I believe the roots of teacher agency began with the disorientation of teachers' former assumptions (Mezirow, 2008) of how students learned and why students were not learning. I believe this disorientation began via the reading of "Father's Butterflies" as described in Chapter 4 on the first day of RAISE. This text placed teacher participants in the learner's situation, and teachers began to think introspectively about "How do I make sense of text? How do I learn?" The reading of this difficult text provided a learning situation where teachers struggled with the reading, which forced them to become highly cognizant of how they were making sense of text and identifying the metacognitive thinking necessary to navigate through the roadblocks this particular text afforded teachers. I believe this was the first step in transforming teachers' thinking.

Alicia described a feeling of anxiety as she read the text. She commented after reading the text, "Now I know how my students feel." The vulnerability these teachers experienced occurs with many secondary students on a day-to-day basis as they try to make sense of difficult text. This vulnerability provided an opportunity in planting the seeds for teacher transformation in their thinking and their learning.

**Critical reflection leads to instructional change.** Teachers shared that a critical reflection of themselves as learners resulted in an instructional change. Alicia's comment reflected the perspective shared by all the teachers in the study, "RAISE completely transformed how I teach and how I present." Constant reflection became the norm for these teachers. Alicia's final reflection provided additional evidence for a result oriented RA design:

This has been the best teaching year of my entire 15-year career. Both Sabrina and I took what we learned at RAISE and ran with it, really implemented it. Our kids grew because of it, and we grew because of it. I have never reflected as much on what I am doing and why I am doing it.

**Former perceptions of students changed.** Another transformational change

began when teachers questioned former assumptions they had harbored about how students learned and why students struggled reading academic text. Before attending RAISE, Alicia, Sabrina, and Jack assumed students taking an AP class should already know the vocabulary, were lazy, not interested in the material, and believed the fault lay with the students. Teachers' former assumptions were challenged, which allowed a change in their frames of reference (Mezirow, 2008). All three teachers moved from former assumptions "that students were at fault for not knowing how to read text" to realizing that the teachers themselves provided the key to supporting their students in reading academic text. RAISE helped the teachers understand why their students were struggling, but now teachers possessed the tools to effectively support their students. Jack was brutally honest when sharing past perceptions of his students:

**Jack:** I'll be honest and admit that last year I wouldn't have realized students really were struggling with the vocabulary and concepts. I would have said, "Well, that's your fault, look it up, you should know it, and it's your fault for not knowing it." I realize now that kids don't have the same knowledge I have in how to read in disciplinary ways. Prior to RAISE, I could see they were struggling, but I just didn't understand why. After attending RAISE, I could see why they would have that issue. RAISE helped me to understand my students more.

By the time I visited the classrooms for the initial visit, the teachers' had realized that their former assumptions had been faulty, and I observed teachers and students engaged in collaborative discussions about text. Teachers' prior perceptions of students' learning had changed, and I attributed the change to the Reading Apprenticeship design. Teachers understood they were the change agents for their students, but now had the tools to support students in developing agency for reading AP text.

### **Metacognitive Thinking Fostered Teacher Agency**

The strongest impact teachers attributed to a change in their belief system about teaching and instruction originated from a deep sense of reflection and metacognitive understanding of

their own thinking. They applied this new pedagogical understanding to generate a sense of empowerment in their students:

**Alicia:** I never stopped to think about how I think. When I think of *marking up the text*, I realized it changed our entire vocabulary. I would say to the kids, “Don't highlight it. I want you to talk to the text. I want you to mark it up. I want you to bleed on it because you need to bleed on it.” Now I realize it's the only way you're going to comprehend a text.

**Sabrina:** I am certainly paying more attention to what kids need to know in their reading. I had always assumed, “Oh, they just weren't interested in the material.” And maybe they didn't have an access point for getting into the text, whereas the *thinking aloud* and the *marking of the text* provides that access point. I always assumed the interaction with the text happened inside the head and didn't have that physical aspect. I forgot about the kinesthetic process of reading by marking up the text. When I began to think about my own thinking, I finally realized my students didn't have the techniques to read it competently.

**Jack:** My thinking about my thinking, allows me to reflect on what I do as a reader and as a teacher. I realize I don't learn the same way my students do. So when I generate an essay question, I assume the answer is obviously there, and they are saying “I didn't get that from the reading,” I can now understand why. As a teacher, it allows me to be more cognitive of the fact that I learn differently from other people. When I am teaching, I need to be more conscious of their learning, not just my own and share how I make sense of academic text.

Awareness of their own metacognitive thinking and critical reflection guided teachers into recognizing where students would struggle. “What are they getting? What are they not getting?” These reflective practices also resulted in instructional change. Because teachers were reflective about how they learned, they realized students did not walk through their classroom door with the same agency teachers have for comprehending text.

Developing metacognition was an integral part in the teachers' classrooms. This transformation resulted in acknowledging and addressing confusion with their students, thereby fostering student agency. New literacy routines became a part of the instructional environment. Teachers realized the importance of modeling, scaffolding instruction, and then providing

independent and collaborative time to talk about their learning. All three teachers pointed to RAISE as the catalyst for their transformation, beginning with awareness of their metacognitive thinking.

**Jack:** I notice I pay more attention to my metacognitive thinking when I am reading. I definitely spend a lot more time reflecting on where or what, or how I came up with my own understanding or what things triggered it to make it easier so that I can try to come up with ways to make it easier for my students to understand the material. So if I know of ways that made it easier for me, maybe that will help them understand better.

**Alicia:** I never thought about my thinking before. I would have said, “I know what I do. I just do it.” I never thought about what I did or why I did it until this year. Thinking about my thinking is the only way you're going to comprehend a text. It made me stop and think about how I think, which I never did before. I just knew I did it, and I kept saying, “Why can't the kids do what I do?”

**Sabrina:** I find that in being more aware of my own metacognitive thinking results in paying more attention to what my kids need to know in reading. I find I take more time to think, “Okay, what would somebody else not understand?”

By the time the initial interviews occurred, the routine of metacognitive conversations in a socially mediated learning environment was firmly established and assumptions had changed. Once teachers began to reflect about their own thinking, which began at RAISE and continued into the classroom, teachers had a major “AHA moment”. They realized their students never had the tools before, and it was their responsibility to provide the necessary tools by supporting students in reading complex, academic text.

Another impact of metacognitive thinking was to utilize it as formative assessment. When teachers were able to hear how their students were making sense of text and where they were struggling, the teachers were better equipped to help deepen their students' understanding of text, because the invisible was now visible. *Talking to the text* was a vehicle to help teachers notice what students were getting and where they were having trouble so teachers could plan next instructional steps. Jack's summation was true for Alicia and Sabrina:

**Jack:** So the role of my metacognition, my thinking about my thinking, is highly influential in order for students to become more independent of the teacher and independent of school so that wherever they go they are able to own their own learning.

The CERA process, a metacognitive tool, was another formative assessment, described in Chapter 4 that provided teachers a window into students' metacognitive thinking. By noticing the thinking processes students applied to reading, teachers were able to understand how they were making sense of text, which strategies were being utilized, including which strategies were not being used, and noting areas of confusion. The metacognitive tool, CERA, helped teachers gauge where students were in their reading process in order to plan next instructional steps.

**Sabrina:** When I looked at my students' *marking of the text*, I could see where I had focused heavily on one reading strategy but not as heavily on other strategies. It helped me see that I have hit some strategies harder than others. It also helped me realize that maybe when I am modeling, I am not pointing out the other strategies that I am using.

All three teachers noted the importance of the CERA process as formative assessment for their students' metacognitive growth. They pointed out how the CERA tool demonstrated what tools their students utilized when reading complex text, but also what additional disciplinary tools teachers needed to include when modeling their own thinking. Sabrina and Jack shared how they continued to assess formatively the metacognitive thinking beyond the CERA process.

**Jack:** I would ask questions throughout the year, in discussion orally and in written form, asking about how their metacognitive thinking had impacted the way they were learning and how it impacted their own reading as well. I also used the CERA on their last essay where my students had to explain their growth. I wasn't specifically looking for their learning. I was trying to see their study habits and then their learning came out in their reflection.

**Sabrina:** I continued using the metacognitive rubric throughout the year. I used the student data in my Student Learning Objectives to show evidence to my administrator for student growth.

***CERA: metacognitive assessment tool.*** At the winter RAISE institute, teachers used the Student Learning Goals (See Appendix A) for their discipline as they analyzed their students' CERA reading samples and chose next instructional goals. Discipline-specific teachers naturally read in discipline-specific ways, but these discipline-based practices are often invisible to observing students. Discipline-based thinking often only becomes visible when teachers specifically point them out and name them for students. This explicit teaching around the reading of discipline texts helps students internalize the vocabulary and language integral to the discipline-based reading task. In retrospect, I realized as a RAISE history facilitator, we could have been more transparent with our teachers when we modeled the different history texts by naming specific disciplinary strategies used in reading history texts.

All three teachers noted the importance of the CERA process as formative assessment for their students' metacognitive growth. Both the rural and urban teachers pointed out how the CERA tool demonstrated what tools their students utilized when reading complex texts. The CERA rubric also helped them identify what additional disciplinary tools they needed to include when modeling their own thinking as readers of history.

### **Evidence of the Reading Apprenticeship Framework**

What separates Reading Apprenticeship from other literacy models is a metacognitive framework that consists of the social, personal, cognitive and knowledge-building dimensions. Metacognitive conversations are central to its framework and the magic elixir that permeates each of the dimensions. Building the social dimension involves creating safety in the classroom, but in the Reading Apprenticeship classroom, it means more than just building a safe environment. A safe environment in a Reading Apprenticeship classroom is a collaborative environment, where talking about confusion and learning from each other is established.

In Chapter 4, I noted that RAISE was not for the faint of heart. RAISE took commitment and a desire to develop student agency for reading academic text. Jack, Alicia, and Sabrina were dedicated to implementing Reading Apprenticeship in their classrooms. Alicia shared this memory of a major “AHA moment” during her first few days at RAISE.

**Alicia:** Oh, my! In the first few days, I felt like you facilitators were talking to us, introducing what Reading Apprenticeship was. You were showing us examples of what Reading Apprenticeship would look like in the classroom. And I was thinking, “I do this. Why am I here? I do that.” Then it hit me, “I didn’t do that.” And I was lying to myself. Just handing someone a primary document does not mean I’m helping kids to think about their reading. Oh yeah, I’m putting lots of reading in front of them, but are they understanding the reading? Are they going through it and really getting what it means? Then we read about a classroom case for the video we were going to see and those of us at the table were saying, “Well, we do that.” Then you showed us the video of the class and we saw first-hand the conversations these kids were having with each other about the text. We realized our students weren’t having these conversations. We all went, “Oh, my gosh! Wow, they are super smart!”

Alicia noted an instructional insight that I attributed to the Reading Apprenticeship design. When students know they are supported to discuss their thinking about text in socially mediated ways, issues with class dynamics lessen or are eliminated as Alicia pointed out in an interview.

**Alicia:** I am not going to lie. It was hard work, especially at the beginning. It’s easy to talk now that the metacognitive conversations worked, but I remember talking to you at Credit Recovery in the beginning of the year that I was tired of explaining what *talking to the text* meant. I would say to the students, “How do you guys not know this?” Sabrina and I would re-evaluate and redo the modeling again. I felt like I was modeling, modeling, modeling, and I kept thinking to myself, “These kids are going to shut down because they are going to get tired of hearing this.” My past experience told me they would shut down, but they didn’t. It was amazing because they saw it as beneficial.

When students realized *talking to the text* had a purpose and increased their agency for reading complex, academic text, student buy-in occurred. One caution to educators who begin establishing metacognitive conversations, these conversations must be purposeful and authentic.

Too many times I have heard teachers share with me, “My kids are tired of *talking to the text!*” This occurs when teachers do not model authentic ways in which they are making sense of text or when teachers fake their *think alouds* by stating confusion where it does not exist. Adolescents are savvy creatures, and they know a fake *think aloud* when they hear it. None of the teachers in my study reported students complaining, and none of the student data expressed negativity about repetitively *talking to the text*.

One scaffolding routine I did not see implemented during my school visits was a routine modeled throughout the RAISE. After modeling a *think aloud*, a facilitator would ask the teachers, “What did you notice about my thinking?” This question was posed to pairs or small groups in order for more voices to be heard before asking for whole group responses. Next, the responses were charted as a visual reminder to be added to as teachers continued reading. Teachers engaged in this scaffold numerous times throughout RAISE. This socially mediated scaffolding was an example of a cognitive apprenticeship process based on Vygotsky’s work (Schoenbach et al., 2012; Vygotsky, 1978). The teachers may have practiced this routine on days when I was not present. In retrospect, I should have asked my teachers some probing questions to see if they did do this kind of scaffolding with *think alouds*.

**Incorporating the four dimensions of Reading Apprenticeship.** Developing the personal and social dimension in a RA classroom means developing a safe community of readers and building personal reader identity through metacognitive conversations. After attending RAISE, the teachers realized their former classroom culture did not compare to the present classroom environment. The Reading Apprenticeship design helped teachers to understand the importance of building the social and personal dimension by developing safe spaces to share talk about reading. Teacher and student data from both classes demonstrated evidence of

metacognitive conversations, which further strengthened the social environment where collaborative discussions about confusion and learning from each other were established.

Although Alicia and Sabrina believed they had built a safe place for students in the past, it was not an environment where students were developing reader identity by becoming aware of their own metacognitive thinking and sharing understanding or confusion in a community of readers. Their former understanding of a safe classroom was a place where students would feel safe asking questions of their teacher and a place where their teacher would not tolerate bullying.

**Sabrina:** Alicia and I established a really comfortable learning environment this year. We validated confusion. So, by validating confusion, the kids felt it was okay to ask questions and it was okay to be wrong, and it was okay to be right too. Because sometimes people are worried about being right in front of people as well. It was supporting them in their learning and having that atmosphere. In our modeling of *marking up the text*, we were honest when we were confused with the text, and so they saw adults having confusion.

By the time I began observing in their classroom, I witnessed students working in pairs or triads sharing how they were making sense of text, stating confusion, and supporting each other in maneuvering through difficult sections. Alicia and Sabrina admitted that 100 percent buy-in each day might not always occur, but the social support for learning was definitely established.

After attending RAISE, Jack realized the need to create a safe environment in order for students to develop a personal connection to their reading through their internal metacognitive conversations:

Developing a safe environment allows students to become more personal with the reading. By doing that, it not only allows them to look at their own metacognition, but now they can look at the knowledge of the subject matter and at the cognitive aspect of what they are learning. Students also need to gain the trust of their teacher. When that happens, that trust allows students to open up about their own reading, and then they are willing to explain their faults, difficulties, and eventually share their successes. The social aspect must be established first or the struggling student will not look at their cognitive, knowledge, and personal aspects with the teacher. They usually just feel defeated. So helping students gain the trust of the instructor has to be done first, in order to help the student to grow.

(Interview, July 23, 2013).

As described in Chapter 4, Jack's classroom furniture consisted of individual desks whereas small group tables were part of Alicia and Sabrina's physical surroundings. Although my observations in Jack's class showed evidence of talking about how they were making sense of text, including sharing confusion, there was less student data in regards to talking collaboratively about their thinking. This may have been due to the questions I asked his students. Another reason may have been due to the collaborative nature of the co-teaching environment and the small table groupings.

Evidence of the social, personal, cognitive and knowledge-building dimensions was in my observations and conversations although less substantiation for the knowledge-building dimension was present. While students were building knowledge about language, content, and the world, there was not as much evidence of disciplinary specific strategies shared by the urban students. I did find two examples in the data, however. Alicia and Sabrina did model different ways history and English teachers made sense of the text. In Jack's class, many students described a history strategy modeled by their teacher to organize information by identifying the social, political, education, economic and cultural effects. In these two instances, the teachers identified and taught discipline-specific vocabulary and ways of knowing.

### **Reading Apprenticeship Is Differentiation**

Teachers learned as they began implementing Reading Apprenticeship, that it was a model of differentiation. Although both classes comprised a variety of reading levels, teachers learned that when they modeled their own metacognitive thinking, it allowed teachers to address the different reading levels in their classrooms using the same text. Jack shared the value of metacognitive thinking in terms of differentiation:

**Jack:** As I analyzed my students' metacognitive growth, I began to see the benefits of the process because it would allow me to focus a little bit more towards the higher end at times and at the lower end at times and in the middle, yet still use it within the same context. So when I am giving a document based question, I can sit there and talk to the one student, who is at the higher end and say, "Okay you get that, you can understand the topic. Now, how does that help you answer the question? How does it help you with the analysis of the reading? Could you take your analysis a step farther?" So, it allows me to push that student, while I am looking at the other person at the lower end and asking, "Okay, what is the information you are taking away from the reading?" So, the process allows me to push all students in different ways.

### **Student Findings**

The major finding that emerged from both rural and urban student data was evidence of student agency, which included the following: (a) teacher support for reading; (b) development of metacognitive thinking; (c) ownership of learning. Another finding that surfaced was a lack of reading support in other classes. This section begins with descriptions of how students viewed themselves as learners prior to being in a Reading Apprenticeship environment, followed by student evidence for agency. A conclusion of the student section describes areas which were not as strong: (a) less evidence of students describing disciplinary ways of thinking in the urban classroom; (b) students' lack of understanding of the term, "metacognition" even though the student data provided evidence that students were engaged in metacognitive thinking and routines.

### **Students' Prior Perceptions of Themselves As Learners**

Students shared in their initial interviews how they viewed themselves as learners prior to being in a RA classroom. By the time I was able to interview students, they exhibited a newfound sense of empowerment for reading complex, academic text, which demonstrated a reshaping of their literacy identity. In the following section that highlights student voices, I have chosen to separate the voices using urban and rural headings.

Urban	Rural
<p><b>Manuel:</b> Last year, it was more difficult for me to kind of understand the text because I didn't have the reading strategies that my teachers have given me, like underlining the text. When I underline the text, it helps me make connections with the text so today it's more easy for me to understand.</p> <p><b>Carlos:</b> Last year I just read it from beginning to end but didn't mark up any text or define anything, and at the end I ended up confused because I didn't understand the reading. I felt like I wasn't good at reading. I struggled with it and felt that I wasn't doing a good job to academically succeed.</p>	<p><b>Ethan:</b> I kind of just read it to read it. This summer when we were doing notes for Mr. Reisdorf it took me a lot longer to read the text than it does now. I didn't understand it. I kind of just wrote down what the book said pretty much. The AP book was a lot harder to understand than I have ever read before. It took me a couple of sections reading before I could even understand what it was talking about.</p> <p><b>Joel:</b> I just simply read the book, but now the way I read is different. Compared to now, we pause and we think about every paragraph but in the past I just read it and I would ask myself did I remember anything I read? If I didn't remember anything, I would go back and read it again. That's pretty much what I did before Reisdorf's class.</p>

### Student Agency

All students from both school settings experienced an increased sense of agency, in varying degrees, for reading complex, academic text and attributed the fostering of agency to their teachers. This evidence was demonstrated through a new sense of confidence, the ability to push through difficult text, and being comfortable stating confusion amongst their peers and teachers. All students pointed to their teachers modeling of their own thinking through *think alouds* and *talking to the text* as a catalyst in fostering student agency.

**Teacher support for reading fostered student agency.** Students from both schools were emphatic about the support they received from their teachers who provided encouragement

and guidance for navigating difficult text. Although the AP texts and primary documents students were required to read were difficult texts, no students shared any resistance or lack of confidence in tackling these difficult texts because they felt supported by their teachers and peers. Even though the urban setting was diverse, there was no complaining from the students when they were asked to read multiple texts written by old, white males. One urban student, Zoey, shared with me her tackling of an extremely difficult text, *Dante's Inferno*, a text she would not have possessed the confidence to undertake in the past:

Urban	Rural
<p><b>Zoey:</b> My teachers are really smart . . .and I want to be able to make the same connections so I try to read harder stuff and it's harder but I try to understand it. I just tried to read <i>Dante's Inferno</i>, and it was really hard to understand, but I kept trying to read it.</p> <p><b>Natasha:</b> Our teachers go over the reading and break things down. They tell us to ask questions when we are reading. Ms. Tanner and Mrs. O'Hara really give us a sense of direction on how to do the work. They don't just give it to us and tell us, "Well, here's the work, and it is due by such and such a time. Our teachers assign us work and then they break it down. They give us direction on how to do it and different ways to do it. They actually go through the reading step-by-step and show us different ways to read the text.</p>	<p><b>Maggie:</b> It's so much easier now because Mr. Reisdorf has helped a lot with talking to the text and all of the other things he has introduced to us. I sit down and actually focus, and I know what I am reading so it really helps a lot.</p> <p><b>Lillian:</b> Because of the way Mr. Reisdorf has taught us to read. His way has helped me to understand what's going on. I'm just not spouting words that I read; I actually understand what I am trying to say now.</p> <p><b>Noel:</b> This year, Mr. Reisdorf made me slow down and reread things, made it sink in, and kind of summarize it in my mind so I knew exactly what was going on instead of having to know every little thing. He would have us read a section and then write exactly what we thought about on that one paragraph or that one page and analyze every little thing. If you didn't analyze enough, he would tell you.</p>

**Metacognitive thinking fostered student agency.** *Talking to the text* was a new strategy for all the students. Students shared how their teachers modeled specific strategies and named

those strategies so students could see and hear how teachers read complex, academic texts. These texts included the rigorous AP text and a variety of primary documents. Students credited their teachers for helping them become better readers by surfacing metacognitive thinking and providing opportunities for students to develop their own metacognitive thinking.

Urban	Rural
<p><b>Alejandro:</b> I focused on the reading, and I focus on marking up the text most of the time when I am reading. Like I read a sentence, and I think about it, and I just start marking it up, or make little side notes. So as time goes on, when I get to read more and more, I get a more and better understanding about what the reading was about.</p> <p><b>Whitney:</b> I have learned how to mark up the text better and to find the main points and then what I need to know, instead of just grabbing a bunch of information that's unnecessary. I don't have trouble studying because my teachers showed me how to simplify what I wrote instead of highlight. Now, I don't highlight as much.</p>	<p><b>Devin:</b> In other classes I would write pages and pages of notes I didn't need to write and talking to the text summarizes the note taking from four pages to one page, saving ink (soft laughter). Talking to the text helps to funnel my time, and it will really help at college because it will be less writing.</p> <p><b>Ben:</b> The talking to the text thing is new. It tells me how to relate better to the text so when you go back and look at your notes you remember what you were thinking when you first took the notes.</p>

**Ownership of learning.** All urban students shared a sense of empowerment, for reading complex, academic text that was not present prior to being in a Reading Apprenticeship classroom. Twelve of the sixteen rural students exhibited a new sense of empowerment for reading difficult text. Even the four rural male students, who viewed themselves as strong readers, prior to Mr. Reisdorf's class, pointed to their teacher's modeling through *talking to the text* as having positive, lasting effects on their literacy identities. The majority of rural students also described a disciplinary specific strategy, S.P.E.E.C., described in Chapter 6. Their teacher had modeled this strategy over the course of the year because it was a metacognitive tool he used

when reading history text. It was evident from the student interviews that these students had internalized it as their own.

Urban	Rural
<p><b>Santiago:</b> Hearing about other people's opinion, helps you. It's like "Oh yeah I could use that when I'm reading the text." It helps you like grow as a person. It's kinda of like, slows down the text a bit. Like, "Let's just bring it all in for a second and think about what we just read."</p>	<p><b>John:</b> There's a big difference. At the beginning of the year when I opened up the book, I saw how much harder the words were and how much detail was in the text. Now, when I look at it I just want to read it and know more about it.</p>

Manuel, an urban student, demonstrated a definite increase of student agency, which was evident in his academic performance. Manuel had failed the same class the previous year, before his teachers had attended RAISE. He elected to retake the class again and was successful academically.

**Manuel:** Last year, it was more difficult for me to kind of understand the text because I didn't have the reading strategies that my teachers have given me, like underlining the text. When I underline the text, it helps me make connections with the text so today it's more easy for me to understand. Everyday we are doing that [using strategies], like underlining, making connections, and they are showing us how to do it, and it is easier for us to understand the text.

**Lack of reading support in other classes.** Seven of the fourteen urban students reported receiving no reading support from other teachers. Eight of the sixteen rural students described other classes where guidance in reading academic text was lacking, and six of these students conveyed that reading was absent in other classes.

Urban	Rural
<p><b>Aliyah:</b> Last year, all my teacher would</p>	<p><b>Ethan:</b> Other teachers would put the notes</p>

<p>say was just, “Take Cornell Notes,” and some people wouldn’t even know how to take them.</p> <p><b>Natasha:</b> In other classes, we just sit there and don’t talk about the lesson. In my chemistry class, she gives us the work, we take notes, and that’s the end of it. We will start getting paperwork that we have to do, but she doesn’t go through it step-by-step. She doesn’t show us how she does the problem. She knows it, but we don’t know it yet, and that’s why we’re in the class.</p>	<p>on the board and then we would just copy them.</p> <p><b>Maggie:</b> What was so hard for me last year was the teacher didn’t give directions when she was reading. She just gave it to us, and you would read it, but it wouldn’t absorb, but now it does.</p> <p><b>Joel:</b> None of my other classes require textbook reading.</p> <p><b>Lillie:</b> I don't really have other classes where you have to read the text.</p>
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Natasha, an urban student, was so profoundly affected by the student agency she developed because of her teachers that she wanted all teachers to become Reading Apprenticeship teachers:

**Natasha:** Is Reading Apprenticeship open for other teachers who are not just English and History teachers because I think these are the best IPS teachers I've come across the entire time I have been in the Montgomery Public Schools, and I have been in MPS since first grade. The teachers have helped me out a lot, and I think a lot of teachers could learn from this apprenticeship. A lot of teachers don't do what they do. Other teachers don't help us out. They give us the work and expect us to do it, but we don't really understand. It's not set in our mind.

### Areas for Growth

**Disciplinary ways of reading and thinking.** Both urban and rural data showed some evidence of disciplinary specific ways of reading. When Alicia and Sabrina analyzed the students’ end of the year reflections, they noticed students reported looking for dates, names of people, and the type of language used when reading historical documents, but disciplinary ways of reading history text were never reported by the students. As described earlier, the majority of Jack’s students used S.P.E.E.C. (categorizing social, political, economic, education, and cultural

events), the disciplinary way of thinking and reading in history modeled by their teacher. Other disciplinary specific strategies the rural students utilized involved the following: (a) connecting important facts between texts; (b) determining point of view; (c) identifying impact of events.

**Defining metacognition.** While metacognitive thinking was clearly instrumental in changing the reading experiences of the teachers and students, the majority of students from both schools could not define “metacognition.” Teachers could describe their understanding of metacognitive thinking, and its impact was evident in the data, but the majority of students had no working definition of the word. Although many students could not define metacognition, evidence from student interviews demonstrated they were aware of their metacognitive thinking, by utilizing it through *think alouds*, *talking to the text*, and sharing their thinking in small and large group discussions.

## Conclusions

### The Perfect Storm

The teachers in this study did not attend a “strategy workshop”, but rather a professional development that transformed their belief systems and instructional practices, leading to increased student agency for reading complex, academic text and student empowerment. Merriam Webster defines perfect storm as “a critical situation created by a powerful occurrence of factors.” The “critical situation” began with teachers recognizing their instruction was not developing confident, skilled readers of academic text. The “powerful occurrence of factors” was the RAISE professional development and its application in their classrooms. *Metacognition + a social constructivist learning environment + critical reflection + teachers who were willing to step outside their comfort zone for the betterment of their students* created the “perfect storm.” “Process, not content,” became the teachers’ new mantra.

The teachers in the study believed in the Reading Apprenticeship framework because they had experienced a transformation in the way they viewed instruction and a transformation in how they perceived the learning abilities of their students. These teachers utilized the core principles of Reading Apprenticeship with metacognitive conversations at the center, and adapted instruction to meet the needs of their students.

### **Reading Apprenticeship Is a Viable Disciplinary Literacy Model**

During RAISE, facilitators surfaced specific disciplinary ways of reading and thinking. This process began using a “funnel” process for metacognitive thinking: (a) noticing thinking; (b) focusing on reading; (c) focusing on solving reading problems; (d) focusing on disciplinary literacy practices (Schoenbach et al., 2012). In the summer, the focus was on surfacing the first three in the funnel, and by January the focus funneled to focusing more on disciplinary literacy practices.

Both Alicia and Jack were in the same group, but the student data demonstrated that disciplinary ways of reading and thinking were more prominent in the rural setting. As described in Chapter 5, teachers on the first few days of RAISE looked like a “deer in the headlight” because so much new information and new ways of thinking were being absorbed. Teachers learn at different rates and the urban teachers may have felt comfortable making sure their students were able to surface their metacognitive thinking in more general ways before moving toward specific disciplinary ways of reading and thinking. In hindsight, I realize that I did not specifically ask the urban teachers to describe disciplinary specific strategies they applied when reading text.

**Similar but different.** The data showed there were equally powerful gains for teachers and students even though there were diversity differences between the schools. I believe the RA

framework has demonstrated through the study that students from varying backgrounds can achieve competency and confidence in reading complex, academic text when Reading Apprenticeship is the foundation. I realize that the different cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds bring with them different cultural tools to the learning process. In hindsight, I realize I was not looking for these aspects in my research but recognize that studying diversity using a <https://www.empiricaleducation.com/pdfs/RAISEfr.pdf> framework would be a worthy study.

### **Teachers Need Support**

In this study, I chose to be a participant observer. I purposefully chose to take myself out of the equation as a coach. The intent was purposeful for two reasons. Realizing that not all school districts have literacy coaches, I wanted readers of the study to view the potential possibilities without coaching support. The second reason was professional but also personal. Due to my passion for Reading Apprenticeship, I realized that my over zealousness might overwhelm teachers beginning their maiden Reading Apprenticeship journey. As a former literacy coach in the Montgomery School District, I learned that some of my teachers had been easily overwhelmed by too many metacognitive probing questions that were intended to help them surface disciplinary ways of thinking. I could not expect teachers to have an understanding of the Reading Apprenticeship framework if they had not taken the Reading Apprenticeship journey. I wanted the teachers in the study to feel supported, not threatened. Providing mentoring support during my visits was the manner in which I wanted to be involved.

The RAISE institute was a vehicle for teachers in the study to be change agents for themselves and their students. I believe the teacher and student evidence, told through their stories, provided evidence for the efficacy of RAISE. I believe the three teachers in the study

were transformed. Instruction took on a new look from previous years, and student agency was increased for reading complex, academic text, resulting in a sense of empowerment.

Although principals had to give permission for teachers to be involved in the study, the principals only provided lip service without any support. The principal who had encouraged Jack to attend RAISE left the school district before the RAISE institute began so there was no support from the incoming principal. The principal at Thomas Marshall had an understanding of the Reading Apprenticeship professional development, but to my knowledge, never visited the classroom. Sabrina shared a frustration about the lack of support, but she never let this hindrance veer her from the path she was traveling:

I see two problems. One is getting other teachers to buy-in and the other is getting the powers to be to understand that sometimes I have to go slower than what the pacing guide says because I want to work on quality vs. quantity.

Alicia and Sabrina were subjected to the district's benchmark testing four times a semester and their teacher evaluations were tied to the students' test scores. Covering content, not helping students learn, was the district's initiative. Alicia and Sabrina were responsible for sticking to the curriculum schedule, which was extremely rigid, with no room for re-teaching. Both did what was best for their students, not the system. I believe my teachers had remarkable results without any administrator support.

### **The Reading Apprenticeship Initiative Continues to Evolve**

In 2015, WestEd received a grant from the U. S. Department of Education to provide for another Reading Apprenticeship initiative. The three-year study, Reading Apprenticeship Across Disciplines (RAAD), was implemented in New York City, Chicago, and the states of California, Michigan, Texas, and Wisconsin. This study was less time intensive than RAISE. Educators met five days in face-to-face learning and then participated in online professional learning

communities for continued support.

In 2017, I was hired by WestEd to be a part of the RAAD initiative in New York City. This work placed me amidst passionate, experienced facilitators, and dedicated teachers in New York City, who wanted to be better teachers for their students. This time, teachers met for three days of face-to-face learning followed by synchronous online professional learning communities for three months. Teachers returned for two final days of face-to-face learning. In the spring of 2018, teachers participated in asynchronous online learning opportunities.

My RAAD participation allowed me to see the adaptations WestEd made based on the developer's of RAAD and educator's input. One noticeable change had to do with the role of metacognition in conceptual change. Metacognitive understanding, and its role in the increase of student agency, was made more explicit to participants from the first day of the professional development. Teachers' understanding for the importance of metacognitive thinking was evident in teacher feedback on the first day, a change from RAISE.

### **Recommendations to Educators**

As secondary students and teachers are held to increasingly more complex and rigorous expectations in discipline-based classes, it becomes imperative for teachers to take on the role of discipline experts. By utilizing a cognitive apprenticeship with metacognitive development central to the instructional model, teachers are able to support students in reading complex, academic text, thereby increasing student agency. Developing metacognitive approaches to learning will enable students to take control of their own learning, empowering them to become independent learners (Beyer, 2008; Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000).

Explicitness about the thinking process in school-based literacies is essential for all students so they can become members of the "same club" as those students who excel at literacy

achievement (Delpit, 1995; Wilhelm, 2001). By cultivating student agency for the reading demands of discipline-specific texts, students can become members of the academic discourse groups, which have excluded them in the past (Gee, 1990).

Based on the impact metacognitive thinking had on both teacher and student agency in the study, I recommend two further studies for consideration. One recommendation would be to research the role of metacognition in conceptual change. A second recommendation would be to research the amount of supported academic reading actually occurring in secondary schools.

Although I detailed a few recommendations within the analysis of the data, I wanted to recommend the following for educators who may desire to learn more about the RA model:

- For teachers, schools, and districts that begin to implement Reading Apprenticeship, it is important to begin naming disciplinary specific ways teachers read and think in their disciplines by second quarter. This focused metacognitive process will allow students to internalize the disciplinary discourses allowing them to better comprehend disciplinary text.
- For maximum benefit, Reading Apprenticeship needs to be a part of a school or district's professional development plan. Janet Rummel, Academic Officer for Goodwill Education Services, attended the same cohort as the teachers in my study. "Reading Apprenticeship can't be seen as an extra program, it can't be seen as a one-off. It has to be embedded into professional development and revisited (Schoenbach, et al., 2017, p. 3).
- If a school or grade level makes the commitment to implement Reading Apprenticeship, administrator support is necessary for greater educational benefits.
- Educators who want to implement Reading Apprenticeship must understand that Reading Apprenticeship is a curriculum, not a program that is implemented once a week. Reading

- Apprenticeship needs to be implemented with fidelity.
- University professors, who teach core subjects, should implement an apprenticeship literacy model. A college biology professor shared an AHA moment about his advanced students. “I asked my students to raise their hands if they had read. . .the two chapters we were scheduled to cover during the day’s lecture. I was disappointed, but not surprised, that not a single student raised a hand” (Schoenbach, et al., 2017, p. 9).

### **Implications for Future Studies**

#### **A Limitation of This Study**

The findings of this study cannot be generalized to other studies. Now, I realize that as a white middle-class female I was not looking through a lens to acknowledge that urban students might think aloud and talk to the text in different ways. A future researcher might want to do a study of the Reading Apprenticeship model with a focus on cultural differences. Are there differences in *think alouds* and *talking to the text* across rural and urban settings? What is the impact of the cultural tools in fostering student agency?

#### **Final Reflections**

In my final interview with teachers, I asked them for any parting thoughts they would like to say to the WestEd group who developed the Reading Apprenticeship model.

**Alicia:** Reading Apprenticeship is phenomenal. I always wondered how I could get my students to think like me and that is what Reading Apprenticeship helped me to do.

**Jack:** What the Reading Apprenticeship people have done has a lot of benefits. Everybody can learn from it. It is not just a lower level learning, or middle level learning, or upper level learning; it’s an all-level learning. Students all learn about their own metacognitive understanding and then are able to learn and grow.

It is my hope the study provided awareness for metacognitive practices within a cognitive apprenticeship and its impact on teacher instruction and student learning in a Reading

Apprenticeship classroom environment. It was my intent not to present the data through a Pollyanna lens. I realize I have a bias toward Reading Apprenticeship, but it was my goal to present the data as objectively as I could.

All three teachers were extremely positive throughout the study. The only negativity and frustration they expressed was toward their school for lack of support from administrators, including the constraints placed on them by the system, which were not in the best interests of their students. All three teachers in my study needed to be applauded for their dedication and tenacity. With additional demands being placed on the teachers from their school district, these teachers decided to take on a new initiative that required immense time and energy. I am extremely grateful for these teachers and their students, for allowing me to be a part of their Reading Apprenticeship journey and to share their stories of success.

## Appendix A

The following Reading Apprenticeship documents are referenced in the study.

1. Curriculum Embedded Reading Apprenticeship Rubric (CERA).
2. What does a Reading Apprenticeship classroom look like?
3. Student learning goals: history

The documents can be accessed at the following web site:

<https://readingapprenticeship.org/publications/downloadable-resources/>

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National Board Certified Teacher: Early Adolescent, Language Arts, 1999

Reading (1-12); Language Arts (1-9); Social Studies (1-9)

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Highly qualified teacher status, Indiana Department of Education

### **Teaching Experience**

#### **Post-Secondary Teaching**

##### **Adjunct Professor, Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis, Indiana**

Literacy in the Content Areas: Online and Blended Content-Area Academic Literacy for pre-service teachers.

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- Provided responsive literacy instruction to increase student agency.
- Monitored students' academic progress via online web services and phone communication.
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- Maintained up-to-date assessment records to help students monitor academic progress.

##### **Adjunct Professor, Manchester University, North Manchester, Indiana**

- Provided language Arts methods instruction for pre-service teachers.
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### **Public and Private Teaching Experience**

**Title I: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Fort Wayne, IN**

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**Humanities and Language Arts Teacher, Center for Inquiry, Indianapolis Public Schools**

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**Language Arts and Social Studies Teacher, Canterbury Middle School, Fort Wayne, IN**

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**Fifth Grade Language Arts and Social Studies teacher, Van Buren Elementary, Hamilton, OH**

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### **National Professional Development Experience**

- Reading Apprenticeship (RA) Content-Area Facilitator, WestEd Strategic Literacy Initiative.
- National Middle School Conference: "Learning How to Learn,".
- National Council Teachers of English, "Reflection and Writing."
- 

### **Indiana Professional Development Experience**

- Generated and facilitated "Learning How to Learn Across the Curriculum Using Metacognitive Conversations, Adolescent Literacy Conference, Indianapolis, Indiana.

- Presented "Multi-Genre Research Writing" at Indiana Teachers of Writing, Indianapolis, Indiana.
- Planned and facilitated in-service for Fort Wayne area teachers interested in National History Day program.
- Selected by Indiana Department of Education to facilitate reading and writing workshop sessions.

### **Professional Services and Opportunities for Growth**

- Selected by WestEd to facilitate Reading Apprenticeship Across Disciplines (RAAD), New York City Public School Teachers, July 2017-December 2017
- Selected by WestEd Strategic Literacy Initiative to include Indiana in WestEd's National Innovation I3 Grant: Reading Apprenticeship Improving Secondary Education (RAISE), due to the implementation of Reading Apprenticeship in Indianapolis Public Schools.
- Selected by WestEd to facilitate Reading Apprenticeship Improving Secondary Education (RAISE) in U. S. History for Michigan and Indiana, 2011-2014.
- Mentored teacher through National Board process. Teacher obtained National Board for Professional Standards in Early Adolescence/Language Arts, Fall 2011.

### **Professional Associations**

- Hoosier Writing Project

### **Research Interests**

Adult Transformation; Metacognitive Theory and How It Supports Comprehension; Disciplinary Ways of Thinking, Reading, and Writing; Cognitive Apprenticeship; Building Capacity with Professional Development; Professional Collaboration; Professional Learning Communities

### **Doctoral Dissertation Study**

Title: A Study of the Effects of "Reading Apprenticeship" on Teachers' Instruction and Students' Learning

Case studies exploring the impact of high school teachers involved in the Reading Apprenticeship Improving Secondary Education (RAISE) study that utilizes a social-constructivist learning model with metacognitive conversations as central to the learning process.

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