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The Layers of Collequitable Learning: Learning Inquiry while Learning to Teach

Mark R. Heath

Milton Academy, mark_heath@milton.edu

Laura K. Colket

University of Pennsylvania, lcolket2@upenn.edu

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The Layers of Collequitable Learning

Learning Inquiry While Learning to Teach

Mark Heath

Milton Academy, Milton, USA

Laura Colket

University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, USA

Introduction

This article chronicles the journey of a student (and teaching fellow) in a two-year teacher education program at the University of Pennsylvania.¹ The master's in education program is embedded in rich and unique partnerships between independent secondary schools and the university, and collaboration is a key component of the program at multiple levels. Students are simultaneously admitted as master's students at the university and offered a teaching fellowship at one of nine partner schools, which are located throughout the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast. Courses are collaboratively designed and taught by university faculty and school-based faculty. Four times a year, the fellows come together as an entire cohort for an intense round of in-person classes. In the time in between, as the fellows are teaching at their schools, they are enrolled in a school-based field seminar while they are also completing virtual coursework for their classes at the university. The overall design of the program is guided by a commitment to inquiry-based practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993; Hubbard & Power, 2003; Rust, 2009). Beginning in the first year of the program, the fellows learn to listen to and learn from their students, investigate the physical and social environment of their classrooms and their schools more broadly, and collaborate with their peers as they ask and investigate the questions that emerge from their practice. In the second year of the program, the fellows engage more formally with inquiry, as they develop an individualized inquiry question that they explore throughout the second year of the program. Though their question may shift as they gather data and deepen their understanding of the context, the essence often remains. The fellows draw from a variety of supports as they engage with their inquiry, including university-based faculty, school-based mentors, their cohort of peers in the program, and literature from the field. In doing so, they begin to understand the nuances of teaching as they work towards developing *knowledge of practice* (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999). In other words, they learn how to play with knowledge, how to mold it and shape it so that it becomes context-specific, as it is informed by their own emerging identity as a teacher. This article shares the story of a graduate of this master's degree program, as he continues to develop his own theory of practice. In this article, Heath (the former student/current teacher)

¹ This program is one of several teacher education programs at the university.

argues that as he began deepening his inquiry stance towards his practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993), his understandings of effective teaching and learning were completely transformed. He begins here, with the story of his inquiry question.

Over-, Under-, and Seldom Appropriately-Whelmed: The Story of My Inquiry Question

As I looked around my classroom on the first day of my comparative government class during my first year of teaching, I was aware that I had students who spanned racial, gendered, classed, and political spectra. I was also aware that they carried with them various motivations for taking my class. Some students were motivated by a strong interest in world history and current events, others were encouraged by their friends and teammates, and still others had recently come to the realization that they knew little about the world around them. I knew on some level that teaching students with diverse academic backgrounds and interests would present a challenge (I didn't yet realize this could also be an opportunity), but unfortunately, it did little to affect my teaching strategies. As a new teacher, I opted for a one-size-fits-all strategy. This, of course, came back to haunt me.

Nothing made this clearer to me than my students' responses to an October feedback survey. In a number of questions throughout the survey, students were asked to reflect on the pace and difficulty of the course. To my surprise, one student wrote,

I feel the pace of this course could increase. I feel that too much time is spent clarifying the confusion of a single student in the class, which, while beneficial for that student, causes others in the class to sit on their hands while waiting for material to be clarified.

Meanwhile, three of this student's classmates felt unable to keep up with the learning they were being asked to do. It became increasingly clear to me that my one-size-fits-all strategy left some students underwhelmed and others overwhelmed. In the end, none of my students were learning effectively, as the rigor and workload were either too far below or too far beyond optimal challenge and support.

I knew I needed to make a change, and as a teacher-researcher, my inquiry question evolved into: How can I utilize my students' prior knowledge to make access to effective learning more equitable? It is not that I wanted my students learning the same pieces of information or the same amount of knowledge, as the standard term *equity* might imply. Rather, I wanted to ensure that the appropriate supports were distributed for each student to achieve effective learning: neither overwhelming nor boring, but a supported challenge. In my process toward such equity, I relied primarily on collaborative learning as a pedagogical tool in which students could challenge and support each other appropriately, thus distributing prior knowledge and collectively creating new understandings. Rather than

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taking on the impossible task of teaching each student individually, through collaboration, students could interact, combine, and distribute prior and new knowledge so that the diversity was not only embraced, but used to enhance the learning experience for each student.

While my experiences as a new teacher provided the impetus for this practice-based inquiry, much of my pedagogical interventions and data collection tools are a result of contemporary research on access to effective learning. Therefore, the next section offers this literature as a landscape to understand the importance of my research. With an understanding of the impetus and importance, I will then explain my intervention and data collection methodology before presenting and analyzing data from my students' experiences. Ultimately, I found that collaborative learning groups in my class seemed to promote access to effective learning that was intellectually equitable.

ZPD, CL, and CI: A Literature Review Alphabet Soup

We misunderstand learning. Brown, Roediger III, and McDaniel (2014) illustrate this as they refute a common misperception that effective learning occurs when content is easier, faster, and repeated. Brown and his colleagues instead argue that “learning is deeper and more durable when it’s effortful,” and when learners are asked to engage in retrieval practice: “recalling facts or concepts or events from memory” (Brown, Roediger III, & McDaniel, 2014, pp. 3, 11). Additional psychological scholarship supports Brown et al.’s (2014) conclusions and argues that effortful learning requires appropriate challenge.

Vygotsky (1978) describes adolescent development at two levels: “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.” (p. 86). Vygotsky noted that the difference between these two levels, which he termed the zone of proximal development (ZPD), offered a formula for best learning. Most importantly, he provided examples where students reached higher levels of learning when tasks were indeed challenging, but also supported with guidance from adults and peers. Nakkula (2006) then took this theory and extrapolated two classroom examples of inappropriate and ineffectual learning: “If lessons are too repetitive of what one already knows...students tend to become bored and little new learning is likely to occur. If lessons are too challenging...they become frustrating and too difficult to master” (p. 11). Without appropriate challenge, students’ efforts may actually be ineffectual and thus, their motivation to continue *effortful* learning understandably weakens. As Nakkula explains: “The ZPD suggests how critical it is to match student learning demands with the requisite supports if we hope to cultivate competent, powerful learners who are motivated to take on the next level of challenge in the educational process” (2006, p. 12).

While perhaps easy to understand for an individual, these ideas become profoundly more complex when applied to a classroom of learners, each with their own ZPDs. Given this highly complex context for learning, the teacher must become their students’ student if effective learning is to occur (Brighton, 2005; Nakkula, 2006; Tomlinson, 2015). In other words, teachers must “persistently seek to understand each student’s culture, interest, strengths, needs, approaches to learning, perspectives, and contributions” (Tomlinson, 2015, p. 205) in order to “construct the appropriate scaffolding helpful to their growth.” (Nakkula, 2006, p. 12). Brighton

(2005) adds that clear, concise preassessments can provide teachers with this knowledge and can be resources for teachers as they plan curriculum that “consider[s] all these students’ prior experiences, preferred modes of learning, and...appropriate degree of challenge” (p. 2). Without such knowledge, especially in academically diverse contexts, there will inevitably be students who are not afforded access to effective learning. They may be putting in effort, but the skills or content are beyond their ZPD; or they may have no motivation to put in effort, because the skills or content are not challenging enough. Within the complex realities of today’s classrooms, does this mean that diverse learning environments are predestined to fail?

Not in the slightest, and scholars tend to agree that such differences are actually desirable. Tomlinson (2015) argues that “learning is enriched by varied perspectives and learners are enriched by meaningful associations with learners from a range of ethnicities, languages, experiences, economic backgrounds, and abilities in a setting that provides for multiple ways to make and express meaning” (p. 205). Tomlinson urges for collaborative learning (CL) as a vehicle through which access to effective learning can be equitably distributed. She defines effective collaboration as “students work[ing] consistently in a variety of purposeful groupings with tasks designed to draw on the strengths of all group members and at appropriate levels of challenge to move group members ahead in their learning” (2015, p. 207). However, Cohen, Lotan, Scarloss, and Arellano (1999) warn educators that “the incorporation of multiple ability and interdependent group tasks will not, by themselves, provide access and equitable relations for students” (p. 80). Cohen et al. therefore advocate for Complex Instruction (CI) in which teachers can use CL to teach at a high academic level in diverse classrooms by “assign[ing] open-ended, interdependent group tasks and organiz[ing] the classroom to maximize student interaction”. As they explain, “In their small groups, students serve as academic and linguistic resources for one another” (1999, p. 80). Johnson and Johnson (1999) agree that through CI, the process of collaboration allows deliberate and purposeful groupings of heterogeneous students to rely on each other’s expertise and prior knowledge to discuss course material, help each other understand it, and encourage each other to continue their effortful learning.

This literature highlights that effective learning is effortful, and requires an environment where students are appropriately supported and challenged based on their prior knowledge. In academically and socially diverse settings, collaboration is a way in which teachers can ensure this environment is created for each student, thus allowing for equitable access to effective learning. Given my experience teaching an elective to students with varying degrees of prior knowledge, the aforementioned research prompted an integration of collaborative pedagogies into my teaching practices with the goal that *all* students would be appropriately supported and challenged.

Teacher-Research Methodology: How Can I Utilize My Students' Prior Knowledge to Make Access to Effective Learning More Equitable?

As I began the second year of my teaching, my teaching interventions and data collection tools materialized as a recursive process. The comparative government course I was teaching was structured in three units, and I began collecting data in the first unit. Based on that data, I implemented the structured collaborative learning activities in the second and third units, as I continued to collect data. My main source of data came from the surveys, but I also conducted

interviews and observations, and kept a teacher journal. The surveys took two main forms: preassessments for understanding students' prior knowledge, and surveys for understanding their experience in CL. Each of the surveys utilized a combination of Likert scale, ranking, and open-ended questions to accommodate time and ease of completing at the end of a class period, while balancing the possibility for students to explain their experiences.

The first unit of my class was introductory and provided me the opportunity to begin to build classroom community by getting to know my students as learners, and by beginning to create unstructured opportunities for collaboration. In preparation for the second unit, wherein students would engage in formal, structured collaboration, I spent time in Unit 1 collecting data on my students' prior knowledge. With Brighton's (2005) research in mind, I created two short preassessments, each aimed at gauging prior knowledge, though at different scales. Both were open-ended, and the first asked students about their interests and student experiences (Appendix A). In asking why students chose to take this course, I hoped to understand their interest in and familiarity with global politics and current events. While this offered a coarse description of each student's prior knowledge, I added refinement through a second, more focused, content-specific journal response (Appendix B). This second preassessment asked students to identify their knowledge about the particular countries we would study in the upcoming unit. Both of these preassessments were distributed as homework assignments, and admittedly, access to the internet complicates the validity of, and my confidence in, the latter. Nonetheless, by the end of the first month, all 14 students in the class had provided general information about why they chose to take this class, as well as specific information about their knowledge of the countries we would be studying. As students were engaging in informal collaboration throughout the first unit, I also implemented a diagnostic survey in order to better understand my students' experiences in my class (Appendix C).

I then used the data from the preassessments and the diagnostic survey to compose collaborative learning groups (CLGs) for the second unit. I created four groups that were as close to Meslec and Cursea's (2015) ideal balance (in prior knowledge, comparative approach, and gender) as possible. With the first set of CLGs in place, I began to structure class time and assessments around collaboration. I relied on Tomlinson's (2015) research to implement effective collaboration with flexible classroom routines that allowed for each learner's varied approach to learning, preferred intelligence, interests, confusions, and speed. Some consistent day-to-day pedagogies included collectively debriefing a free recall at the beginning of class, and group-facilitated minidiscussions before whole-class conversations. With these pedagogies and this philosophy, my class became more student-centered and allowed for students to ask and answer each other's questions, and create their own scaffolds toward an end goal.

Upon completing the second unit, I used additional data collection tools to understand my students' experiences with the structured collaborative pedagogies (for this, I used an intermittent survey as seen in Appendix D), and to prepare for the third unit which would include new CLGs (here I implemented a second preassessment focused on their knowledge of specific countries, as seen in Appendix E). After the third unit, I used a final survey, which was a bit longer, and included questions aimed at putting my students' experiences with collaboration and equity in conversation with the aforementioned literature (Appendix F).

While each of these surveys amassed snapshots of my students' experiences prior to and in this class, they certainly had their limitations. For one, they could not be anonymous. Because I relied on students' responses to create CLGs, I missed an opportunity to elicit survey responses that were not muddled by the relationship that I, as someone who assesses and grades my students' work, had with the respondents. Additionally, as Hubbard and Power (2003) argue, these snapshots "must be pieced together with other data to get a true picture of what is happening" (p. 65). In other words, I had to find ways to triangulate my data in order to gain a more nuanced understanding of my students' experiences. To fill in the gaps between these snapshots, I drew on interviews, observations, and a teaching journal to help me to better understand student experience and classroom dynamics. I conducted interviews with eight selected students throughout the semester. Four of these students, all male, were interviewed individually, and each came from a different first-round CLG. I chose these four because of their responses to the first survey; two rated the challenge level of the course highest, while the other two ranked the challenge level lowest, so I wanted to see how collaboration might have changed this. In addition to these four individual boys, I pulled together the only four girls who were in my class into a focus group. This was primarily a product of time and feasibility, though the questions I asked were the same for all participants; I focused on their experiences within the groups specifically, and their learning experience in the class more broadly. These interviews occurred within a three-week timespan as students ended their first round of CLGs and began their second round of CLGs. Furthermore, I relied on my own observations and teaching journal to take anecdotal records of my observations. In addition to reflecting upon the effectiveness of the collaborative pedagogies from each day, this journal also served as a space where I could track student behavior. In particular, I focused on one group for each week, and reflected on how each member of the group was participating; the role(s) he/she was taking; with whom they spoke; and anything that seemed relevant to their tendencies, strengths, and weaknesses in the process of collaboration and inferences about what they were taking away.

All of these data collection tools were useful in my two-pronged analysis. First, I analyzed the preassessments, diagnostic surveys, and observations to create balanced, effective CLGs. Second, I analyzed the diagnostic surveys, interviews and focus group, and observations to understand my students' experiences in the process of collaboration and how it impacted their learning. Despite the limitations of my data collection, I tried to vary techniques—with quantitative numerical data and qualitative data transcribed from interviews and observations—in the hopes of painting a more holistic picture of my students' experiences. Because their experiences are the essence to understanding equity, challenge, and support, and because only each individual could identify these variables for themselves, I wanted to ensure my data collection tools mirrored the authenticity and breadth of their experiences. These surveys, interviews, and anecdotal records attempt to do just that.

Findings, Learnings, and New Questions

My data suggest that the CLGs promoted access to effective learning that was intellectually equitable. First, as was intended in my inquiry, my students reported feeling appropriately challenged, no matter the extent of their content-specific prior knowledge. Whether at the beginning, midpoint, or end of the class, students consistently reported feeling "somewhat challenged" in the class. In particular, when asked to articulate this level of challenge out of 10,

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the median increased over time from 7 to 7.25 to 7.5. Wesley,² a junior in the class, mentioned that his response increased from the diagnostic survey to the intermittent survey because “the course was getting more challenging over time, which is to be expected in the process of learning and building on previous learning.” While there was some variance in the range of responses, only one student ever identified as feeling “less challenged” (and this was only once—in the next survey, he felt “somewhat challenged”), and no students responded feeling

“too challenged.” From this, it seems that students were engaging in effortful learning “situated at the edge of one’s knowledge or skill level, thereby requiring the student to stretch her mind” (Nakkula, 2006, p. 11).

I was also interested to see that all but one student indicated that prior knowledge was not necessary for their success in this course. The one student who disagreed offered a nuanced elaboration that shed light on the role of collaboration in contributing to or mitigating the prior-knowledge challenge. In his final survey, he said, “I think the students who knew most about global politics excelled in this class. Luckily they often shared that knowledge.” This student’s response seems to highlight collaboration’s role in his experience: What he lacked in prior knowledge, he gained from collaborating with others.

While my first finding was that students felt challenged in my class no matter their content-specific prior knowledge, it seems as though collaboration played an important role in equitably and appropriately scaffolding that challenge for each student. In particular, my second and third findings offer that CLGs scaffolded different types of support based on students’ prior knowledge. Students with lower levels of prior knowledge felt the CLGs *broadened* their learning, as they were able to cover more content collectively and received new ideas and perspectives from their peers to help fill in the gaps that existed in their prior knowledge. Meanwhile, students with higher levels of prior knowledge felt the CLGs *deepened* their learning, as the process of collaboration added an additional challenge to their understanding of the course material and experience in class.

Allison and Clay serve as two examples of students who acknowledged their lack of prior knowledge in the beginning of the course and who seemed to reach access to effective learning because of the scaffolded support offered through their CLGs. They both recognized that collaboration allowed them to learn and cover more material. Their experiences mirrored Johnson and Johnson’s (1999) conclusions that collaboration can proliferate academic achievement, as “[w]orking together to achieve a common goal produces higher achievement and greater productivity than does working alone” (p. 72). Indeed, collaboration seemed to broaden Allison and Clay’s learning by providing new perspectives on the content. In her final survey, Allison said: “Simply by discussing the material with my [CLG] and working on projects

² All student names have been changed.

with them, I was able to see how other people understood what we were learning.” Clay seemed to have a similar experience, as he acknowledged that specific classmates enhanced his learning because they “[gave him] a better overall picture of different countries” and “present[ed] new information in discussions.” In this way, students with limited prior knowledge also seemed to achieve equitable access to effective learning through collaboration because their peers contributed new ideas they had not originally considered, and they “work[ed] together and serve[d] as resources for one another” (Cohen et al., 1999, p. 80). From Clay and Allison, it seems as though the CLGs served as a scaffold that allowed them to feel appropriately challenged and supported in an otherwise new environment and discipline. It seemed to broaden their learning by allowing for greater productivity and covered material, and new ideas and perspectives were echoed in almost every survey for students who identified as less experienced in the discipline. Whereas there were initial signs that Allison and Clay could have been overwhelmed (as several of their predecessors were), the CLGs seemed to scaffold appropriate and personalized support to bring the content and experience within their ZPD.

While for some students the CLGs broadened their learning, for students like Quintin and Brett who arrived with more content-specific prior knowledge, the CLGs *deepened* their learning, as they were able to reach clearer and more complex and nuanced understandings of what they came to class already knowing. These two students had already spent considerable time exposed to world history and current events, and prior to the CLGs, responded feeling less challenged. However, when asked to collaborate, Quintin and Brett experienced an additional challenge by complicating prior knowledge through the process of collaborating.

For Quintin, collaboration was an opportunity for knowledge convergence: “Because we all know more or less about different parts of the material, our group work lets us work together to combine knowledge of all parts of the material.” While Allison and Clay seemed to also experience knowledge convergence, their language suggested a more parasitic relationship: They were benefitting from others by gaining new perspectives, but didn’t seem to think they contributed that same broad perspective to their classmates. Quintin, on the other hand, seemed to experience knowledge convergence as a symbiotic process: He felt he contributed prior knowledge and opinions to the group, and he felt the group allowed him to transform his prior knowledge into something more meaningful, complex, and deeper. In an interview, Quintin likened times when his group collaborated most effectively to “everyone having their own little pieces to put together for a final product,” thereby using and deepening what he already knew.

While Quintin seemed to deepen his learning in combining his ideas with his peers, Brett’s prior knowledge seemed to deepen from his peers’ feedback. Interestingly enough, when asked whether his CLG helped him see the course material in new ways, Brett’s responses in the intermittent and final surveys were practically verbatim: “Collaborative work forces me to explain my opinions out loud, where it is easier to see if my thinking is flawed or not compelling as it was in my head.” Brett working with peers provided a chance to receive feedback on the strength and clarity of his ideas and prior knowledge, thereby deepening his learning.

For students like Quintin and Brett—where higher levels of prior knowledge existed—the course content seemed to align with the lower edges of their ZPDs. They felt less challenged by the content itself, and yet felt appropriately challenged in the class due to the added layer of

complexity provided by CLGs. For Quintin, the CLGs seemed to raise the course higher in his ZPD because he and his peers were able to collectively deepen and complicate his prior knowledge. For Brett, the CLGs seemed to raise the course higher in his ZPD because their feedback challenged him to clarify and communicate his prior and new knowledge more effectively. While these students would have probably been bored (like my student from last year), the CLGs created experiences that were effortful, and access to effective learning became equitable even with vast prior knowledge.

While my understanding of CL has grown exponentially through this process, I am still left with unanswered questions. First, did the nature of the assignments and experiences require collaboration among certain students, thereby limiting more fluid interactions? Additionally, I have begun to wonder what role technology might play in creating collaborative learning experiences students. While these ponderings constitute the tip of the iceberg, they continue to guide my development as an educator committed to collaborative learning and inquiry. As a new teacher, I used to be overwhelmed by the multifaceted and seemingly never-ending components of effective teaching. My ideal was reaching access to effective learning for and with each student, and when I didn't do that, I became frustrated. I felt like there was only so much I could do, and wondered whether effective and equitable teaching were beyond my own zone of proximal development. Certainly, my ZPD has shifted since last I first began teaching. Nonetheless, I found that, as CLGs scaffolded my students towards effective learning, the inquiry process simultaneously scaffolded and supported me in my own quest to learn and grow.

A Reflection on Mark's Journey

There is considerable literature on teacher inquiry that emphasizes its potential for supporting the process of learning to teach, enhancing teacher professionalization, and helping teachers to blur the lines between theory and practice (Anderson, Herr, & Nihlen, 2007; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2001; Dunn, Donnell, & Stairs, 2010; Freeman, 1998; Rust, 2009; Souto-Manning, 2012; Zeichner & Nofke, 2001). However, the field needs more examples of what this actually looks like, from the perspective of the teachers themselves, and a main goal of this article was to make that contribution. As Heath illustrates in this article, because he was learning inquiry as he was learning to teach, he grew significantly as a professional during his two years in the teacher education program; and because he learned to take an inquiry stance towards his practice, he continues to learn and grow today. As Heath was simultaneously a student and teaching fellow in a program that deeply values inquiry and collaboration, he had ample opportunity to blend theory and practice. For example, he learned how to apply the university-based theories to his pedagogical approaches in his particular context, and he developed a conceptual understanding of collaborative learning, which he termed *collequitable learning*. This is a prime example of a teacher developing what Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) describe as *knowledge of practice*. Additionally, as Heath was investigating collaboration in his own classroom, he was also experiencing collaboration as a tool to support his own learning as a teacher. Throughout his two years in the program, he was able to draw on a variety of social and academic supports as he engaged in his inquiry. He had a collaborative group of university-based and school-based faculty from which he was able to draw a broad range of content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and methodological knowledge. Additionally, Heath belonged to a cohort of 25 other teaching fellows in the program, some of whom were also teaching at his school. There were

myriad ways in which he learned with and from the other fellows. For example, by collaborating with his peers, he was able to strengthen his own data collection tools as he gave feedback on the tools his peers developed for their own classrooms. Through his experience collaborating, Heath found that his knowledge about the inquiry process was *deepened*, and through his individual work engaging with the literature and his data, he found that his knowledge about creating collaborative learning environments was *broadened*. In essence, he had a parallel learning experience to his students; as he was studying collaboration in his classroom, he was experiencing collaboration through the inquiry process. It was not until reflecting on this experience after the fact that he became aware of this parallel learning; nonetheless, he was able to see the various ways in which his experience mirrored that of his students. In the end, he realized that it was the combination of the collaborative and the individual work that made his inquiry process all the richer, and this realization is now feeding back into his practice as a teacher.

Mark Heath is a teacher at Milton Academy, a co-educational independent day and boarding school just outside Boston, Massachusetts. A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania's Residency Master's in Teaching Program, Mark also serves as a dorm parent, advises the Model UN team, collaborates with the Office of Multiculturalism and Community Development, and hopes to model reflective practice at Milton.

Dr. Laura Colket is Associate Director of the Independent School Teaching Residency Program at the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education. At the University of Pennsylvania, she teaches across all teacher education programs, and in the School Leadership Program as well. She supports teachers and leaders with developing an inquiry stance towards their practice.

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Appendix A

Introductory Preassessment

HCGF | Introductory Letter

For your first journal, please write an introductory letter, like the one I wrote you. The purpose of this assignment is simply for me to get to know you, both as a student and as a person. Please be sure the letter contains the following information:

- Short biography
- Favorite part about our school
- What you see your strengths and weaknesses are as a student
- Why you chose to take this class
- What you love doing outside of class
- Favorite candy/snack

If you have any questions at all, don't hesitate to ask!

Appendix B

Unit 1 Preassessment

HCGF | Preassessment Unit 1

PROMPT: This semester, we will be using country-specific case studies to explore our essential questions about power, change, and democracy. This journal is just to start your thinking. **I am asking that you DO NOT do any kind of research in answering the question—remember, journals are graded on their completeness and honesty.**

- 1. The United Kingdom**
- 2. China**
- 3. Iran**

For this entry, please spend 7 minutes MAXIMUM thinking/writing about each country listed above.

- In the first 5 minutes, I would like you to brainstorm and write everything you know about the country's culture, leaders, institutions, and any personal connection you might have to this country.
- Then, write 2 questions you hope we answer in our study of this country.

After you have written your responses, code them.

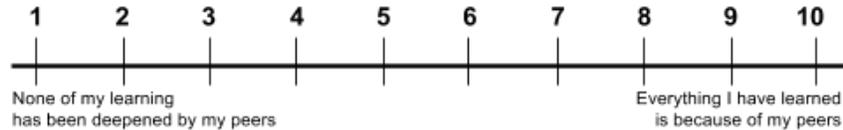
- Rank the countries (#1 should be the country you feel you know most about, #3 should be the country you feel you know least about). Use red text to show the country you are most excited to learn about.

Appendix C

Diagnostic Survey

PART A: COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

1. Circle the extent to which your classmates have deepened your learning/understanding:



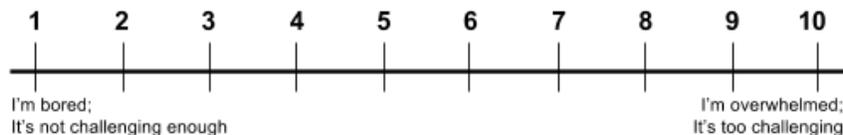
2. Use the space below to list three classmates (at most) and how they have deepened/enhanced your learning/understanding:

PART B: CHALLENGE AND SUPPORT

3. How do you prefer to express your learning? Rank the following activities from 1 (when you felt most in your element) to 12 (when you felt most uncomfortable).

___ Free Recall	___ Turn & Talk (partner work)	___ Silent Conversation
___ Four Corners	___ "Act It Out"/Simulations	___ Free-Write/Journal
___ Fishbowl Discussion	___ Whole Class Discussion	___ Debate
___ Videos	___ Schemas/Diagrams	___ Jigsaw

4. Circle the extent to which you feel challenged in this class:



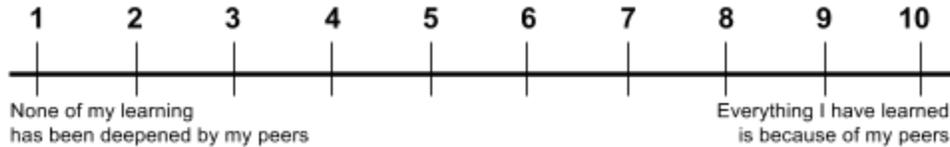
5. Please provide examples to explain your reasoning. Bullet points are fine.

Appendix D

Intermittent Survey

PART A: COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

1. Circle the extent to which your classmates have deepened your learning/understanding:

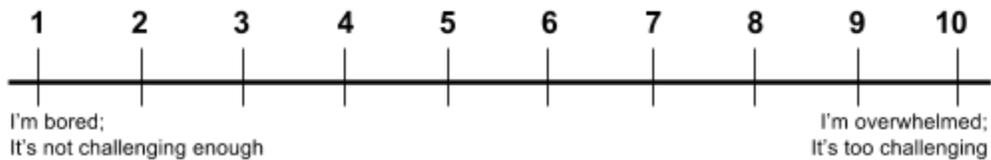


2. Use the space below to list three classmates (at most) and how they have deepened/enhanced your learning/understanding:

3. True or False: Your CLG helped you to see the course material in new ways. _____ Explain.

PART B: CHALLENGE AND SUPPORT

4. Circle the extent to which you feel challenged in this class:



5. Please provide examples to explain your reasoning. Bullet points are fine.

Appendix E

Unit 2 Preassessment

HCGF | Preassessment Unit 2

PROMPT: This semester, we will be using country-specific case studies to explore our essential questions about power, change, and democracy. This journal is just to start your thinking. **I am asking that you DO NOT do any kind of research in answering the question - remember, journals are graded on their completeness and honesty.**

- 1. Russia**
- 2. Mexico**
- 3. Nigeria**

For this entry, please spend 7 minutes MAXIMUM thinking/writing about each country listed above.

1. In the first 5 minutes, I would like you to brainstorm and write everything you know about the country's culture, leaders, institutions, and any personal connection you might have to this country.
2. Then, write 2 questions you hope we answer in our study of this country.

After you have written your responses, code them.

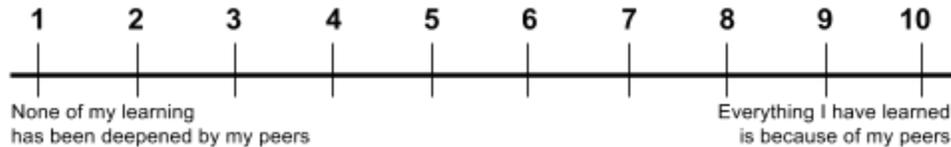
- Rank the countries (#1 should be the country you feel you know most about, #3 should be the country you feel you know least about).
- Use red text to show the country you are most excited to learn about.

Appendix F

Final Survey

PART A: COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

1. Circle the extent to which your classmates have deepened your learning/understanding:



2. Use the space below to list three classmates (at most) and how they have deepened/enhanced your learning/understanding:

3. True or False: Your CLG helped you to see the course material in new ways. _____
Explain.

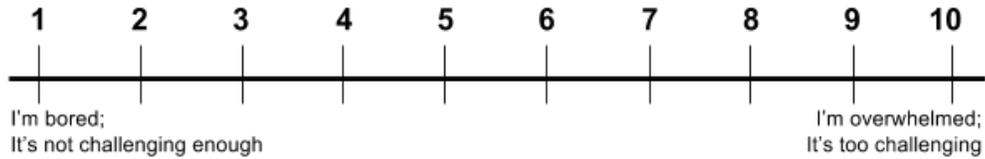
4. True or False: Working with your CLG on collaborative assignments helped you achieve more. _____
Explain.

5. True or False: Working with your CLG helped you establish and maintain friendships.

Explain.

PART B: CHALLENGE AND SUPPORT

6. Circle the extent to which you feel challenged in this class:



7. Please provide examples to explain your reasoning. Bullet points are fine.

8. **True or False:** Prior knowledge about global history, governments, and economics is necessary to learn most in this class. _____

Explain.

9. Circle the extent to which you feel comfortable in this class:



10. The biggest thing I'm taking away from these CLGs is...