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# Reading and writing from multiple source documents in history: Effects of strategy instruction with low to average high school writers

Susan De La Paz <sup>a</sup> ... Mark K. Felton <sup>b</sup>

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### Abstract

This study examined the effects of historical reasoning strategy instruction on 11th-grade students. Students learned historical inquiry strategies using 20th Century American history topics ranging from the Spanish-American war to the Gulf of Tonkin incident. In addition, students learned a pre-writing strategy for composing argumentative essays related to each historical event. Results indicate that in comparison to a control group ( $N = 79$ ), essays written by students who received instruction ( $N = 81$ ) were longer, were rated as having significantly greater historical accuracy, were significantly more persuasive, and claims and rebuttals within each

argument became more elaborated. Importantly, students in the control group read the same primary and secondary source document sets, and received feedback on written essays on the same topics.



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## Keywords

Historical reasoning; Disciplinary literacy; Argumentation; Pre-writing; Strategy instruction

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