Abstract

This qualitative action-research study recorded the experiences of seventh-grade honors-level social studies students who engaged in reflective writing strategies while studying ancient world history. The purpose of the study was to determine the effects of reflective writing upon the development of historical thinking skills.

Through the use of reflective writing strategies, such as learning logs, content reflections, and activity reflections, participants in the study demonstrated increased critical thinking, including analysis of historical relationships such as comparing and contrasting, change over time, and cause and effect. Additionally, as a result of classroom opportunities for verbal and written dialogue, students reported a significantly increased willingness to collaborate with peers to learn about the content.