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Exploring The Past With Place: Incorporating Multimodal Archival Composition In Secondary English Education

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BY

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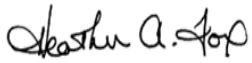

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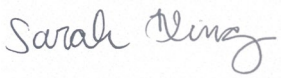
X 

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SARAH KING

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DEDICATION

I wish to dedicate this work to the memory of Mr. John Potts, whose words ten years ago guided my life and inspired my following work: "Remember your roots. This is your home and you will always have a part of you reaching back here. It has made you who you are. Never forget where you came from or how you started. Never forget your roots."

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I would also like to acknowledge the pivotal role played by my family and friends. Their endless encouragement, understanding, and unwavering belief in my abilities have been my greatest sources of strength. Additionally, I extend my most thanks to my husband Logan, whose love and encouragement have been my anchor throughout the years. I would not have been able to complete this project without you.

ABSTRACT

This project presents a comprehensive pedagogical approach that integrates place theory, multimodality, and archival elements to create a versatile framework for crafting compelling narratives and meaningful connections for public audiences. This project consists of three assignment models, collectively titled "Exploring Personal History Through Archives." These assignments guide students through a progressive and cohesive learning experience, incorporating multimodal archival composition. Collectively, these assignments enhance students' abilities to analyze and integrate information from diverse sources to address historical questions and challenges, empowering them to appreciate the role of archives in shaping history, navigate perspectives, and contribute to the preservation and sharing of our collective past. The project's structured information can serve as a valuable resource for educators, promoting the sharing of best practices in teaching similar units and reshaping secondary English education into a more relevant educational experience.

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I. Introduction

My first time visiting the Estill County Historical Society and Genealogy Museum inspired this thesis. I went there on a whim looking for different archives or artifacts I could use in the upcoming school year or at least get inspiration for different assignments or projects. When I entered, I was met by two women - Lisa and Jeraldine - and a man - David, all older folks. After introducing myself and explaining why I was there, David went to the back to look for some pictures for me. The ladies had me sit, and one remarked, "Well, first things first. Let's see how we know you. Who's [sic] your grandparents?" After listing off all of them, the name of my dad's father seemed familiar to them. After asking how my parents were doing and hearing that both had recently passed, Jeraldine remarked, "Well, you're an orphan like us. But that's alright. Let's get you a tour." Lisa then took me around a tour of the museum, noting the various artifacts and collections they had acquired over the years.

Occasionally, when there was a piece I was particularly interested in, Lisa would give me the history surrounding it. One piece that immediately caught my eye was a skeleton in a glass case (see fig. 1). Lisa explained that this skeleton was first found in the now-shutdown Irvine High School and has been in the museum since. They call the skeleton Ezmerilla and used to position her around the museum during Halloween time until she started losing some bones. Now, she stays in the glass case, with a joke note on the front making fun of her current resting spot - "And where have y'all been all these many years?" and in response, "As for me, …Well, uh, I've been hanging around!" Finally, Lisa took me to one of the computers they use for genealogy, where we found out I am the niece of the husband of the grand niece of the husband of her first cousin

once removed. After spending time with them for a little longer, I left with a supply of information - both for my classroom and about my heritage.

Fig. 1: Skeleton from Irvine High School, n.d., Estill County Historical Society and Genealogy, Irvine, Kentucky.

These interactions gave me a firsthand experience on the impact local archives can have on individuals, ranging from identity exploration to academic research and creative inspiration. Leaving the Historical Society, I felt connected to the people there

and more grounded in the town where I grew up. Though I did not have any personal attachment to many of the artifacts there - from various military jackets to cider mills and vintage school apparel - I felt that pieces of my past were finally clicking into place. I was invigorated, ready to jump into curriculum development and share this experience with my students. I wanted them to feel that same connection with their town and heritage so that they could connect with their past, understand the present in context, and shape the future based on the lessons learned from their local history. The only question was how to do it in a meaningful, authentic way.

As a public educator in Kentucky, my curriculum must align with the Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS) for Reading and Writing. These standards are useful for secondary education since they provide clarity, consistency, and accountability across districts and states; however, standard-driven curriculum also places limitations on content and teaching methods. The requirement to strictly adhere to the standards leads to a narrow curriculum that focuses primarily on the content covered in standardized tests, thereby inhibiting the opportunity to introduce authentic and creative learning experiences to students. I couldn't figure out how to navigate between the two camps of standard-based and student-driven instruction. So, I left the archives at the Estill County Historical Society and Genealogy Museum and waited for a better opportunity to incorporate its treasures into my English classroom.

However, two factors led me back to the archives and to the work in this project. In the 2022-2023 school year, my district implemented a new initiative which focused on incorporating an Appalachian connection into each unit that we taught and provided funding to purchase new materials that responded to this plan. The English department

re-evaluated our curriculum and swapped out short stories for ones authored by Kentucky authors.We traded canonicalized novels for Young Adult literature that was centered in Appalachia and talked about problems teens face living in the region. For this substitution, we left Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* for the dual credit courses and instead adopted Jeff Zentner's *In the Wild Light*, a novel about a teen boy named Cash who struggles to decide whether to stay in or leave his small Appalachian town, into the junior English curriculum.

When students read about Cash and how he found his mother passed away in their bathroom from overdosing on drugs, many of them were shocked. Not due to the gruesome subject but because of the truth within it. They saw their own lived experiences in Cash's recounting of his mother's death. There were also many who followed up with me after class that day explaining that it felt like someone had spied on them and wrote about their lives. Quite a few told me about their own mothers, fathers, aunts, cousins, and more who had overdosed and that it was both difficult and cathartic to read about Cash's experience and see it truthfully but respectively illustrated. As we continued the novel, students who previously had resented reading became engrossed in Cash's life. I witnessed many trading the few other copies of Zentner's books available in the school's library later in the school year. The curriculum substitutions showed me the impact that having relevant content could have on students. Zentner's novel transformed what usually was a grueling three weeks of redirecting students to pick up their books and read the classic American literature into a reflective, moving scene where students saw their lives and hardships reflected in the coursework. They connected to the work, so they cared about what they were learning. I had always

heard about why relevancy was important, but with the Appalachian connections initiative, I was able to witness the change relevancy creates.

The next factor at my school that influenced my trajectory to this project was the construction of the Estill County Area Technical Center on the school campus. The new center brought technical education opportunities to students just next door to their regular high school classes. Now, students would be able to study industrial maintenance, health sciences, information technology, diesel technology, and engineering fields, gaining certificates and training necessary for their future careers by the time they graduate. This focus on career readiness made me rethink my ideas on what type of assignments I should present to my students. With the walkway to the ATC just steps away from my classroom, I got to witness students returning from their technical classes and hear their excitement as they talked about the lesson that day. They were curious and energized, something that I rarely saw in my English classes. This experience proved to me that it was important to have English assignments that cater to career readiness alongside those focused on college readiness.

But, I was confused. How could I incorporate the personal connection my students experienced reading about Cash into the informational text side of the English curriculum? How could I engage career-track students in courses they felt were useless in their future fields? What connections could I present to them to make their work something they would actually revisit after high school? It was evident that students wanted to learn more about their community and reflect on their lives outside of school, but how could I incorporate this into my teaching? And, perhaps the most important logistical question, how do I do any of this and still make sure I teach to the rigor of the

Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS)? This ultimate question, how to balance a standards-driven curriculum that still incorporated meaningful connections and authentic scenarios, became my focus, which eventually led to the work here.

This thesis essay delves further into four assignment models that teach secondary English reading and writing goals with multimodal archival composition. These pedagogical approaches range from close reading exercises with selected archival materials to empowering students to conduct their archival research.To ensure that educators could incorporate these assignment models in their secondary curriculum, each segment is matched with a standard and success criteria following the KAS for Reading and Writing. By integrating archives, place theory, and multimodality, a comprehensive approach to student engagement and learning emerges.

II. Components of Project

Place-Based Writing

Starting out, it became clear that one research methodology or theory was not enough to answer all of these questions about balancing standards and student-focused teaching, and that it would take a combination of practices to respond to them. Relevancy was the core of both the Appalachian connections initiative and the ATC's success. This interest led to research about place theory, which provided the solution to how to bring community into the classroom. Place theory takes into account the environment surrounding the author as they write since "our lives are shaped by the places we inhabit and the communities therein" (Esposito 70). Place shapes an individual's identity, which, in turn, informs their writing. Writing becomes a means of expressing and exploring identity, and it can also be a medium for examining the relationship between identity and place. So, students would need to use their hometowns as a backdrop for their writing to investigate some part of their identity. This was the answer to how to bridge relevancy to the KAS's composition standards.

The relationship between place and the act of writing is a complex and multifaceted one, transcending the boundaries of traditional classroom settings. Encouraging students to write about subjects outside of academic topics, particularly their hometowns and heritage, holds significant importance as it fosters personal connection and engagement, allowing students to draw from their own experiences. NCTE's position regarding this topic is that "[w]riters compose in and outside the classroom" and that "Because writing takes place in different contexts, writers compose for different readers, with varied purposes, and in diverse situations and places"

(“Understanding and Teaching Writing…”). Writing about one's understanding of place nurtures a sense of identity, community engagement, and emotional expression, providing students with practice in honing critical writing and communication skills relevant in academic and real-world context. The idea of how the places in which writing unfolds is essential to the significance of the local nature within the assignment models.

In "Defining Place," Tim Cresswell examines the concept of place and its importance in human experience. Cresswell defines place as “a way of seeing, knowing and understanding the world” (136). To Cresswell, place implies more than a location or environment; rather, it is the person’s perspective on that place or on that environment. Furthermore, place theory can refer to physical dimensions and their value. For instance, Gaston Bachelard in "The Poetics of Space” explores the dimensions of the spaces in which people live and call home. Bachelard states that “all really inhabited space bears the essence of the notion of home” and explains how this sense of home is impacted by imagination and memories (5-10). Throughout the book, Bachelard examines various types of spaces around or within a house, such as a cellar, a chest, or corners, and discusses their meanings and impact on a person’s understanding of home. Both Cresswell and Bachelard follow NCTE’s idea of expanding the definition of the place of writing to include areas outside of a classroom or academic setting.

This idea of place connects to the assignment models since part of the focus is on the students’ personal connection to the archive and their community. Cresswell examines the relationship between place and identity, and discusses how different

people and communities experience and interpret places (130-133). Cresswell further discusses how people create their place: “When humans invest meaning in a portion of space and then become attached to it in some way (naming is one such way) it becomes a place” (135). This point is important as Cresswell explains how despite outward influences, developing place is significantly an intrinsic process. Bachelard continues on this idea by explaining that a person’s sense of place might not be centered in the present but instead in the past: “To inhabit oneirically the house we were born in means more than to inhabit it in memory; it means living in this house that is gone, the way we used to dream in it” (16). By dreaming of a place, Bachelard explains, a person can relive the experience of being in the space as a visitor, stripping away the familiarity. This new perspective then changes the person’s perception of place and gives them a greater appreciation of their home. These ideas expand the idea of what place could mean to students when they are going through the assignment models and highlight how the place components of the project could have broad definitions to the students. Cresswell, Bachelard, and NCTE’s statement emphasize the importance of understanding place as a dynamic and constantly evolving concept, rather than a fixed state.

Furthermore, place-based writing prompts that gear students to engage in active learning through their community also allow room for educators to incorporate student-centered writing instruction. In his article “Re(Place) Your Typical Writing Assignment: An Argument for Place-Based Writing,” Eric Jacobs explains how effective place-based writing assignments are process-focused, inquiry based, and genre-specific and can help students specifically with incorporating voice by having

them writing from their experiences (50). By having the writing based on themselves, place-based writing forces students to generate content and ideas. This idea follows Peter Elbow, who places voice as an essential component of effective writing: “voice is the force that will make a reader listen to you, the energy that drives the meanings through his thick skull” (6). Since process pedagogy emphasizes the personal act of writing, voice allows writers to convey their unique perspectives, experiences, and personalities through their writing. Adding this component to place-based writing creates a work that reflects the writer's distinct style and their identity against the world around them.

Jacobs continues by explaining how this combination of placed-based writing and student-centered writing instruction provides student agency in the students’ composition courses that is lost in typical academic writing. Jacobs explains the benefits of this agency: “By asking students to double back on themselves - to speak of the past and their place - students, by definition, write from positions of authority.” (50). By completing placed-based writing, students gain experience in pressing the writing process while also gaining confidence in their abilities as a writer and as a storyteller of their experiences. Process movement supports this goal by providing students the skills necessary to take their place-based writing and transition it to other rhetorical scenarios. Donald Murray illustrates this transfer by explaining how writing instructors “ are teaching a product your students can use—now and in the future—to produce whatever product his subject and his audience demand” (6). When students have authority over their work, they are more likely to be engaged and motivated, as they see themselves as active participants rather than passive recipients of instruction.

Student authority encourages students to think about their intended readers and adapt their writing to effectively communicate with them. When students write from or about their "home" or personal places, this concept takes on a unique significance within the framework of place. Writing from a place of personal connection allows students to tap into their own experiences, emotions, and memories, which can result in more authentic and relatable content. This personal connection often leads to a heightened sense of authority in their writing, as they become the experts of their own experiences. When they communicate from their "home" or place of familiarity, students are better equipped to engage in a thoughtful, iterative writing process. This process enables them to fine-tune their message, structure, and style to better resonate with their intended audience, whether it's a specific community or a broader readership. Striking a balance between personal authority and a broader audience perspective is vital in ensuring that their writing remains engaging and accessible to a wide range of readers while maintaining its authenticity and personal connection.

Multimodal Composition

This integration of place theory also aligns with the principles of multimodal composition, which refers to a form of writing or expression that combines multiple modes or media to convey a message or information. In multimodality, writers utilize a variety of mediums to enhance the effectiveness of their communication. Nora Bacon in "Building a Swan's Nest for Instruction in Rhetoric" discusses one composition instructor's decision to expand the idea of writing to include multimodality in their classroom. Bacon argues that the purpose of composition courses is to prepare students for a variety of rhetorical situations rather than just academic writing (590). Students approach writing in various scenarios and in different formats. However, many composition courses do a disservice to students by only targeting and preparing students for the specific forms related to academic writing. Bacon continues on this idea, emphasizing the need to expand composition studies to include other disciplines (606). Bacon's ideas showcase the growing need for a more expansive composition curriculum that adequately prepares students to respond to a variety of rhetorical situations. Multimodal composition recognizes the diversity of human communication and leverages various modes to create richer, more engaging, and more accessible forms of expression.

Despite using various mediums, multimodal composition follows the path of already founded composition principles, such as process theory, where writing is looked at as a process rather than as a product or as an assessment tool (Emig 122). Students reflect on the skills they practice - brainstorming, drafting, revising - using their interests and voice to write rather than follow a predetermined format (Murray 19). By

going through the methodology of writing, students learn that "We don't begin at step one, 'find a topic,' and follow an orderly sequence of events to 'proofread the paper'… prewriting and writing can occur simultaneously. So can drafting and rewriting" (Lindemann 23). By considering the role of place and space within this process, writers can gain an awareness of how different spaces and environments influence the writing process allowing them to adapt their approaches.

One source contributing to this study is Jason Palmeri's *Remixing Composition: A History of Multimodal Writing Pedagogy*. Palmeri explains that since students engage in various modes for communication, composition courses should include formats other than traditional "alphabetic texts" where students only compose in words. In the first section of his book, Palmeri highlights the similarities between multimodality and process theory: "they share a concern with teaching students to engage in composing as a recursive process of discovery—a process in which composers continuously redefine their 'problem' as they intensively explore, transform, and rearrange materials (words, images, objects)" (30). Palermi's comparison demonstrates how established composition studies have always fit within the framework of multimodality. Furthermore, Shane Wood in "Multimodal Pedagogy and Multimodal Assessment: Toward a Reconceptualization of Traditional Frameworks" also explores the focus of process movement through multimodality. Wood discusses how "Multimodal pedagogy, like composition studies as a whole, emphasizes and values process—thinking about thinking, writing about writing, composing, revising, analyzing conventions, and critically thinking about constructions" (248). Wood echoes Palmeri's point that adding multimodality into composition does not detract from its

metacognitive foundation but rather reinforces the process movement. Encouraging integration of multimodal composition, then, is not reinventing the field but allowing in a new perspective.

However, multimodality offers levels to composition that are lost through producing alphabetic text. For example, Wood explains that multimodal composition adds complexity into the process of composing: "Multimodality's emphasis on process counters traditional concepts, though, because it asks students to consider multiple modes throughout the process; the process becomes multifaceted" (247). When composing an essay or other word-based text, the process focuses on idea development and revision. While necessary, these assignments do not take into consideration factors of design, sound, or accessibility; each of these variables adds on a different step of planning, composing, and revision to the overall process. Palmeri further explains the benefits of adding multimodality into composition: "if some information might 'better be expressed in other ways' than words… it makes sense to reimagine composition as a course that teaches students to discover" (37). Palmeri's ideas highlight how the goal of multimodal composition inclusion is not to overshadow or throw away traditional writing; rather, the purpose is to offer students a different context to transfer their already existing composing skills.

However, multimodal composition does not always need to involve computer-based software. Though computers and smart devices are the popular tool of composing, multimodal composition can take form in many different outlets that have students exercise rhetorical skills. As an example, Russel Wiebe and Robert S. Dornsife Jr. in "The Metaphor of Collage: Beyond Computer Composition" emphasize the need

for incorporation of various technologies: “only when other contemporary media - television, video, photography, music, and so forth - are considered… can ‘computer composition’ really become a living discipline in an academy that responds seriously to the lives its students live” (133). Wiebe and Dornsife believe that a broader spectrum of choices for multimodal composition is necessary so that students are exposed to many different types of texts and scenarios. Though they agree that multimodal composition could never take the place of traditional writing, Weibe and Dornsife assert that “to be genuinely empowered composers, our students must not only think about media; they must write about it, criticize it, edit it, and create it” (133). Weibe’s and Dornsife’s argument reflects Palmeri’s thoughts that incorporation of multimodal skills will better prepare students for realistic composition and that multimodality is necessary for the greatest understanding of those situations.

To add on to both Palmeri, Weibe, and Dornsife, Jody Shipka in *Toward a Composition Made Whole* explains that composition teachers’ understanding of multimodality should be expanded to more than technology and include other means of translating writing-based concepts. Shipka explains that, “whether or not a particular classroom or group of students are wired, students may still be afforded opportunities to consider how they are… to read, respond to, align with—in short, to negotiate—a streaming interplay of words, images, sounds, scents, and movements” (21). Shipka provides an example of this methodology by explaining an assignment where students practiced research and essay writing skills through the design and marketing of a doll box (141-2). This assignment allows students to practice these familiar concepts in a different mode, thereby removing their preconceived notions of what academic writing

looked like or how it should be written. Shipka encourages composition instructors to constantly explore various methods, styles, and strategies that lead to compelling, meaningful work, enriching their understanding of meaning making (134). Shipka's thoughts on multimodality showcase the complexities offered by allowing students to explore other means of composition other than alphabetic text.

Additionally, composition instructors can take multimodality a step further to leverage it with place-based writing. In the article "Where to Begin? Using Place-Based Writing to Connect Students with Their Local Communities," Lauren Esposito explains why composition courses should incorporate placed-based writing. Esposito begins by explaining that "Place influences our interactions by shaping the genres, texts, and languages we use as writers and reader" (70). The idea of place is significant because the way a writer sees the world shapes the way they would see themselves. After students are comfortable with the writing process, they can branch off into other forms of composition: "Writing with new technology for outside communities can sometimes mean writing in completely unknown terrain... we need to present them with opportunities to write for numerous audiences and with newer technologies for a purpose" (Esposito 75). When students learn the writing process through familiar concepts, they can focus on developing stronger writing skills. Esposito's explanation about place-based writing demonstrates the importance of incorporating community issues and concepts into the classroom so that students can develop multimodal writing skills for multiple purposes.

Archival Pedagogy

The last component of the project is the final combination of place theory, composition, and multimodality: archival research. Archives traditionally consist of textual documents, photographs, items, and other tangible materials, though the term has wider implications (Schmidt 5). This broad category is purposeful; almost anything can be considered an historical artifact for study. Due to this wide definition, archival research works as one source to explore multimodal composition. Lynee Lewis Gaillet and Jessica Rose define archives as "both (1) collections of materials related to a person, family, or organization that have continuous social and cultural value, and (2) the places in which these collections are preserved and stored for future use" (125). Archives serve as repositories of cultural memory, safeguarding valuable records and documents while making them accessible for research, education, and the preservation of a community's history and heritage. Sarah Ruffing Robbins expands the definition of archives by explaining that archival research can create "a "learning legacy'—a story about an intercultural learning process that used collaborative epistemologies toward potential social agency" (4). Robins's definition adds in a social component of archival research that imagines people with different cultures and backgrounds learning from each other, working together, and sharing their knowledge. These definitions work together to illustrate how archives are not static repositories but living resources that foster cross-cultural learning, collaboration, and the potential for individuals and communities to drive positive social impact based on their shared knowledge and history.

The study of archives introduces a new world of exploratory and inquiry-based

education where students become historians themselves. Archives can be powerful tools for teaching and learning, enabling students to connect with history and culture in a more profound way: “When an appreciation of history develops among the young - who today are frighteningly a-historical and even anti-historical - it establishes deep and secure roots and makes an essential contribution to the search for self-knowledge” (Osborne 18). Archives can help students engage with history on a personal level, encouraging them to explore their own connections to the past and shape educational experiences beyond just completing research: “The assignments that focus on recovery foreground the feminist methods of cooperation and collaboration; the importance of an ethic of care toward research subjects; and an acknowledgment of - and reflection on - the connection between the researcher and her research subject” (Hayden 136). Incorporating archival materials into the classroom can move students beyond learning facts to fostering a deeper sense of responsibility and empathy. Archival pedagogy encourages students to not only engage critically with historical records but also to consider the various elements of research, where the focus could be individual stories, voices, and perspectives.

Along with this perspective change, archival research offers a multitude of benefits that enrich academic and research practices. When working with archives, students must “[ask] questions about the nature of presentation of the past, [establish] authority in relation to a historical object, and [consider] issues of audience, especially how to contextualize this material for future users” (Enoch and VanHaitsma 217). As representations of history, archives need more analysis on their rhetorical situation than a regular informative or fictional text. Archives then become a way for students to

engage in critical thinking that they would otherwise not experience just with traditional texts. Furthermore, in “Historical Thinking Through the Archives,” Caroline S. Boswell and Jonathan C. Hagel explain how separate history courses practiced rephotography, recreation of pictures, to challenge students' perspectives about their university. After providing the criteria for success and procedures for the experimental lesson, Boswell and Hagel found: first, students are more likely to be curious about the assignment since the focus is relevant to them; second, through the process of recreation, students were able to witness and reflect on changes in their campus; and third, since some pictures cannot be recreated, students learn the limitations of historical analysis, in which some information will always be unclear or lost (223-41). Archival research not only enhances critical thinking skills but also fosters a deep understanding of the complexities of history and its relevance to contemporary issues.

Though any archive has the opportunity for students to research it in depth, local archives offer the possibility for students to make deeper connections within and about their own communities. As Lauren Schmidt explains, local archives are common and accessible for the public to peruse for personal or academic purposes: “in almost every town and library you will find some kind of archival collection preserving history and the lives therein” (12). Providing students an opportunity to engage with local archives not only enhances their understanding of history but also explores “how our experiences in spaces of the everyday impact upon our identities, our confidence, our senses of self" (Reynolds 10). Furthermore, though not every student might have a personal item or story significant to their individual lives, “there are smaller, local archives that interpellate us, calling us to value their holdings and reflect on the purpose that archive

might serve" (Glenn and Enoch 18). Local archives beckon students to delve into their communities, instilling a sense of appreciation for local heritage and a deeper understanding of their own place within it.

Additionally, when working with local archives, students are encouraged to question traditional narratives and sources. Students have to use critical thinking and inquiry to expand their understanding of evidence and research: "Through archival research, you become an academic detective. You reconsider what counts as evidence, rethink who can be identified as an expert, and discover how and where historical accounts are generated" (Gaillet and Rose 127). This process of investigation fosters a deeper connection to the historical and cultural contexts students explore. However, local archives are set for this type of explorative research since they house various items for study: "These smaller collections or serendipitous discoveries also expand our notions of what counts as a primary resource and especially of what counts as a contribution to the histories, theories, and practices of rhetoric and composition" (Glenn and Enoch 18). By extending the idea of research, smaller collections allow students to contribute original research for items that previously were unknown. Working with local archives not only enriches students' critical thinking and research skills but also broadens their perspectives on the significance of diverse and often overlooked sources in shaping their understanding of the past.

Local archives, then, offer students not only a chance to respond to important rhetorical situations, but simultaneously offer them the chance to respond to situations that affect themselves and their communities. Lisa Mastrangelo in "Using the Archives to Teach Slow Research and Create Local Connections" presents an example from her

Advanced Composition course where students engaged in such research. At the end of the study, Mastrangelo concludes that “the greater connection to community created by the work in the course is a clear side effect of the archival work that the students are doing” (43). This illustrates the powerful connection between archival research and community engagement. Through archives, students can explore the rich history of their local areas, shedding light on issues that matter to them and fostering a sense of responsibility and connection to their communities. This not only enhances their academic and research skills but also encourages them to be active and informed citizens who can contribute positively to the well-being of their neighborhoods and regions.

Additionally, Mastrangelo’s case study used a specific research methodology - slow research - further connects archives to both multimodality and place theory. Mastangelo defines slow research in the archives as “slow and careful analysis of documents, the search for information not readily available, and extrapolations of information based on obscure textual clues” (32). Mastrangelo’s use of slow research is important because it lets students engage with a different form of research they would otherwise not be able to experience in her composition course. This detail shows how archives offer benefits to the practice of multimodal composition. Furthermore, Mastrangelo explains that “Through the assignments in my course, the students used slow research to negotiate archival material and primary source research, raise questions that couldn’t or wouldn't be answered, and explore their local surroundings and the history of the institution” (32). Using this research practice forces students to work slowly through details and really engage with the information in front of them.

Mastrangelo explains that by having students slowly explore the archives, she hoped to increase student knowledge and interest in the campus and its history. By this method, Mastrangelo incorporated both place theory and multimodality into the structure of her composition course.

Archives serve as dynamic educational tools that foster student engagement, collaboration, and the potential for individuals and communities to leverage shared knowledge and history for positive social impact. The addition of place theory offers students an immersive exploration of archival materials, cultivating a profound connection to their local environments and histories. Then the integration of multimodality enriches the composition instruction by challenging students to address community-related issues, equipping them with the skills to respond effectively to rhetorical situations and fostering a deeper understanding of their surroundings. Embracing these interconnected pedagogical approaches empowers educators to provide students with a comprehensive and engaging learning experience that extends beyond conventional composition coursework, preparing them to navigate the complexities of the world with informed, ethical, and empathetic perspectives.

III. Assignment Models

This fusion of place theory, a multimodal approach, and archival elements enriches the writing experience by providing a versatile framework for writers to craft compelling narratives, persuasive arguments, and meaningful connections with their readers across different modes of expression. Next, however, was how to make this writing appropriate for students with various needs of audiences and purposes in their English coursework. The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) has guidance for this scenario and provides position statements for educators to guide their composition instruction. NCTE first believes that "writing serves a variety of purposes" and that students' writing will "[reflect] their own assessment of the purpose, audience, context, and value of the writing" ("Understanding and Teaching Writing…"). NCTE's statement on writing purposes highlights the importance of branching out of academic forms to embrace multimodality archival composition. By encouraging students to explore and engage with a diverse range of texts and modalities, writing instructors incorporating multimodality can align with the evolving nature of communication and prepare students to be competent and adaptable communicators in the digital age.

There are three assignment models to create the whole unit, titled "Exploring Personal History Through Archives." The assignment models in this unit build on one another to guide students through a progressive and cohesive learning experience. In the first segment, "Archives Slideshow," students explore the significance of archives in historical perspective through a gradual process of piecing together the story behind images of the old Kentucky State Penitentiary. It introduces the concept of archives and their role in shaping historical perspectives. The second segment, "Blogging the

Archives," takes students a step further. Students go deeper, exploring how perspective influences archives and history. They research selected archives and create blogs to engage the community. In the concluding "Archive Research Posters" segment, students select archives, conduct thorough research, and design research posters. These posters both contribute to local archives and showcase the students' enhanced understanding of archives and their historical importance.

Each of the assignments focuses on the KAS RI.11-12.7 standard, which states that students should “Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different print and non-print formats in order to address a question or solve a problem” (“Reading and Writing”). Throughout the unit, students must integrate and evaluate visual sources to address the question of the source and significance of these images. Additionally, they are required to integrate these multiple sources of information, evaluate their credibility and relevance, and then use them to address questions related to the history of their selected archives. By gradually piecing together the narrative, they solve the problem of understanding the importance of archives in shaping historical perspective.

Furthermore, each assignment model also has a connection to one of the NCTE’s Position Statements to make sure that the segments are grounded in research-based best practices. In these assignment models, students use writing as a source to help organize their thoughts, build a narrative, and make sense of the images (“Professional Knowledge…”). It's the process of writing that guides them through the discovery and critical thinking needed to understand the importance of archives . Also, students learn to adapt their writing to a digital context to effectively convey their

research findings. This statement highlights the versatility of writing as it evolves from traditional text-based writing to more digital and multimedia-oriented modes ("Understanding and Teaching Writing…"). By the end of the unit, students should understand how writing can serve multiple purposes, from scholarly documentation to public communication and preservation of historical knowledge ("Understanding and Teaching Writing…"). The project incorporates these principles to foster a rich and multi-dimensional learning experience for the students.

The assignments collectively build students' abilities to analyze and integrate information from diverse sources to address historical questions and challenges. This progressive learning journey empowers students to appreciate the role of archives in shaping history, navigate perspectives, and actively contribute to preserving and sharing our collective past. In the table below, a comprehensive overview of the unit is provided to summarize the methodology, research focus, standards, and best practices for the project (see table 1). This information offers clarity about the unit's structure, objectives, and the progressive nature of its assignments. Teachers can align their teaching strategies with the unit and adapt instruction to meet their students' needs. This structured information can also serve as a valuable resource for professional development and collaboration among educators, promoting the sharing of best practices in teaching similar units and enhancing the overall educational experience.

Table 1 - "Exploring Personal History Through Archives" Unit			
TITLE	**"Archives Slideshow"**	**"Blogging the Archives"**	**"Archive Research Posters"**
OVERVIEW	The objective of this lesson is to discover why archives are important pieces of historical perspective. The students unknowingly observe pictures of the old Kentucky State Penitentiary and slowly build a narrative of the source of these images before the ultimate reveal. The lesson introduces archives and the importance of perspective.	The objective of this lesson is to piece together how point of view influences archives and history. Students research the history behind selected archives and organize their findings into a blog that is accessible to the community. This lesson introduces students to archival research and community engagement with their writing.	The objective of this lesson is to have students engage with archives and the writing process to create a final research poster that could be used by a local archive. Students each select an archive, research its origins, and finally design and present a research poster summarizing their findings.
KAS STANDARDS	RI.11-12.7 RI.11-12.3 ("KAS: Reading and Writing" 358)	RI.11-12.7 RI.11-12.3 ("KAS: Reading and Writing" 358)	RI.11-12.7 C.11-12.2 ("KAS: Reading and Writing" 358-364)
NCTE PRINCIPLE CONNECTIONS	"Writing is a tool for thinking" ("Professional Knowledge…")	"Writers compose using different modes and technologies" ("Understanding and Teaching Writing…")	"Writing serves a variety of purposes." ("Understanding and Teaching Writing…")
TEXT FOCUS	Kentucky Historic Institution "Kentucky House of Reform" Website	C. M. Treadway's "Railroad comes to Ravenna" USDA's "Fitchburg Furnace" Website	Online Research
MULTIMODAL ELEMENT	Physical or digital copies of Figure 2 and KHI photographs.	Digital Collections Multimedia Blogging	Physical or digital materials. Multimedia Blogging
ARCHIVE FOCUS	Figure 2 and KHI photographs.	Figures 3-5, Treadway's "Railroad comes to Ravenna"	Physical or Digital materials like Figures 6-8.

IV. Instruction Using Multimodal Archival Composition

"Archives Slideshow"

The first assignment for the sequence is titled "Archives Slideshow," where students see how their understanding of one image develops after looking at a series of pictures. The purpose of this first assignment model is to introduce students to how perspective and context can alter our understanding of history. Furthermore, it guides students through their potentially first intentional exploration of archives and the role archives play in interpreting the past. The first picture comes from EKU's Special Collections and Archives (Grettes). It shows children making brooms at the Kentucky State Reformatory in 1911 (see fig. 2). Students are presented the picture without any context, asked to write down their observations about the picture (Who is in it? What are they doing? What stands out as odd or interesting?), and make a guess on what the title could be for this original picture.

Correctional Photograph Archives

Fig. 2: Image of children making brooms at the Kentucky Reformatory at Greendale, ca. 1911, Eastern Kentucky University Special Collections and Archives, Richmond, Kentucky.

Then, students are presented with a new picture, which is very different from the original photograph. The new sets of pictures come from the website the Kentucky Historic Institution (KHI), which is dedicated to creating collections on the state's asylums, hospitals and institutions. On their page about the Kentucky House of Reform, they list several different pictures from the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives and University of Kentucky. While the initial photograph showed a snapshot of child labor in a wood building, the second image shows two large buildings spread out on a large space of land (Kentucky Historic Institution). The students now spend time reflecting on this picture. How does this image agree with the previous photo? How does it counter or disagree with the previous one? What does it add to the visual narrative or what does it complicate? After independently working on their own reflection, students share first with a partner and then with the whole class. After discussing how their ideas developed, they create a new title for the original image. Then, the students are presented with two additional photographs. The third set of pictures illustrate two groups of children posed for group pictures, one with boys standing in military-like stances in front of a large building and another with girls sitting in matching white and gray dresses in front of a similar structured building (Kentucky Historic Institution). After viewing these pictures, students repeat the same process of analysis as before.

These steps of addition, reflection, discussion, and reappraisal are continued two more times. In the fourth set of photographs, there are two pictures of students sitting at tables. In one, many boys with short hair and similar uniforms sit in neat rows at desks that occupy the full room and in the next, girls dressed in matching dresses with short cut hair sit in rows, though not all have a desk, with five girls standing against the far wall (Kentucky Historic Institution). The fifth and final set of pictures give more context of the setting. One photograph shows cots pushed together to fill a room while the other image shows similar looking buildings displayed in previous photographs, but this time one also includes a chimney with black smoke coming from it (Kentucky Historic Institution).

After seeing all of the pictures, students are shown the KHI's page on the Kentucky House of Reform, and they read a passage detailing its history. Then, students make one final guess at the title before it is revealed - "Children Making Brooms at the Kentucky Reformatory at Greendale." The point of showing students this series of pictures is to introduce one piece of the truth at a time so that their perception is always missing important information until the very end when they have all of the possible details and "see the full picture." The lesson is concluded by having students answer one last set of questions (Why is it important that all of these pictures are documented? What would be missing if we only looked at the first picture?) to gauge if they are engaging in the critical thinking required for assignment.

Along with the unit's main standard focusing on examining multiple sources to address a claim, this lesson's supporting literacy standard is RI.11-12.3, which states that students show "Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events, and explain

how specific individuals, ideas or events interact and develop over the course of the text" ("KAS: Reading and Writing" 358). By having students revisit the title of the original picture each time they are presented a new set of images, they document the sequence of their thinking and how each new piece of information added to or morphed their previous ideas. They must make inferences, draw connections, and identify patterns in the images to build a coherent storyline. Additionally, they have to consider how individuals, objects, or settings depicted in the pictures evolve or change, leading to a deeper understanding of the historical context. This assignment has students engage in critical thinking since students are challenged to go beyond surface-level observations and make reasoned interpretations based on the visual evidence presented to them.

Also, this sequence is designed to co-align with NCTE's position statement that "writing is a tool for thinking" ("Professional Knowledge…"). Though students were not generating paragraphs of thought, the four steps - addition, reflection, discussion, and reappraisal - mimic the writing process used when creating long-form content. These steps correlate with how NCTE explains that writing should not be used to put down final ideas on a paper but instead "to reconsider something one had already figured out" and to discover "more and more wrinkles and implications in what one is talking about" ("Professional Knowledge for the Teaching of Writing"). This approach to writing provides students with an opportunity to practice the process of writing in a low-risk environment. By returning to their previous ideas to add or edit them, students engage in revision and editing, which are necessary skills for effective composition.

This assignment follows the theories of archival research, incorporates elements of place theory, and explores options for multimodality. Enoch and VanHaitsma's ideas about the importance of preservation and reflection are reflected in the assignment through the disparity about the subject of the pictures and the emphasis on documentation. Though it isn't revealed until the end that the pictures are from Kentucky, the students' realization that the pictures are from their state and not some distant location provides the interest and connection to the assignment that Cresswell and Esposito encourage through their practice of place theory. Finally, multimodality is incorporated into the assignment through the use of the pictures, following Weibe, Dornsife, and Shipka that not everything has to involve a computer to be considered multimodal. In my execution of this assignment model, students would have physical pictures to look through as they analyze the visuals. Having the tangible items in front of them would lead them to engage in Mastrangelo's slow research process. They would not be able to zoom in on the picture and would have to instead really look at the pictures to find the details. Though an instructor wishing to adapt this lesson to a digital format could easily put the images on a slide deck, the physical pictures offer students an opportunity to engage in the resource as if they were physically in the archives searching through troves of documents.

By engaging with historical images and piecing together a narrative, students gain a firsthand appreciation for how primary sources in archives can offer valuable insights into the past and help construct a nuanced historical perspective. The assignment places a strong emphasis on documentation and the importance of preserving historical materials. By asking students to reflect on why these pictures are

documented and what would be missing if only the first picture were considered, it reinforces the value of archives in preserving our history. The assignment aligns with place theory by connecting students to the local history of Kentucky, fostering a sense of interest and connection. It also incorporates multimodality by utilizing physical pictures, allowing students to engage with the resources as if they were physically in an archive, which aligns with the concept that not all multimodal experiences need to be digital. In conclusion, this assignment is a well-structured and pedagogically rich exploration of historical perspective and archival research. It encourages critical thinking, emphasizes the value of documentation and archives, and aligns with key educational standards and theories, ultimately fostering a deeper understanding of history and the role of primary sources in shaping our collective narrative.

“Blogging the Archives”

The second assignment for the sequence is titled “Blogging the Archives,” where students practice working with archives and text to uncover a piece of their town's history. In this section, the selected archives align with two distinct historical features of the city central to the students in this research. Should other educators wish to adopt this assignment model, it is a seamless process; they can simply replace these archives with ones from their own local area. The purpose of this second assignment is to introduce students to archival research where they will have to work with multiple mediums and focus on details they otherwise might overlook if they were doing traditional academic research. Digital archives from local, university, or state collections might prove the most accessible for students to interact with and explore. Though students do not get the investigative experience of going into an archive and exploring the physical space, they still have the ability to cross-reference multiple sources of different mediums. These digital collections not only make the historical and cultural content more accessible but also enhances the richness of storytelling and engagement. By incorporating diverse modes of communication, this assignment model can better convey the complexity and depth of historical narratives. Furthermore, this assignment extends the audience of their research farther than just the classroom as they publish their work onto blogs that are accessible by the public and community. What sets this assignment apart is its outreach; it extends the reach of their research beyond the classroom, offering them a platform to share their discoveries with a wider audience and thus creating relevance in their work and bringing more attention to the artifacts.

The first research topic students would explore is railroads, specifically how the second-largest city, called Ravenna, in the county was created by the railroad industry. The first artifact students would look at comes again from EKU's Special Collections and Archives, which is an advertisement about an election for the Louisville Southern Syndicate to build a rail system from Estill to the Three Forks area in Lee County (see fig. 3). The advertisement lists various reasons for how extending the rail system could improve the local economy and open opportunities for anyone interested. Students might notice that it lists "less than a five hours ride" to Louisville or that "The Company will have to spend not less than three hundred thousand dollars among the people of Estill while building the road through the county" ("Railroad Proposition"). This archive gives students an insight into the beginnings of the rail system in Estill and the culture during the late 1800s in Estill.

Election Saturday, Aug. 11, '88.

Railroad Proposition!

The Louisville Southern Syndicate proposes to extend its road through Estill up to the Three Forks upon the following terms:

1st. That this county will subscribe for $100,000 of stock, paying for the same in 5 per cent. 30 year bonds, which can be redeemed in such installments as may be convenient, the stock to be issued to the county for its use and benefit.

2nd. None of the bonds are to be delivered to the Company until the road is completed to Irvine, when it is to get one-half; the remaining half when it is completed to the Three Forks. The interest will not commence to run until six months after the Company is entitled to the first bonds.

3rd. The Company is to place its whole line under contract within sixty days, and commence work on the road bed in Estill County within six months. It is to be completed to Irvine inside of three years, and to the Three Forks within one year thereafter. If the Company fails to comply with either of these conditions as to time, it is to forfeit $2,000 to the county.

4th. The Company agrees not to charge over three cents a bushel for hauling coal to any depot in the county, and not to discriminate against freights shipped to or from the county. The County Court, composed of the Judge and Justices, is to elect a Director in the Company to see that our interests are protected.

Reasons for Voting It!

The road will be a direct line through our county to Louisville. It will only be 115 miles from Irvine to Louisville—less than five hours ride. We can go to the city in the morning, transact a day's business and return at night. Or we can do the same thing with Cincinnati by changing cars at Richmond or Nicholasville.

The Company will have to spend not less than three hundred thousand dollars among the people of Estill while building the Road through the county. Every man who wants work, or has a team to hire, or anything to sell, will get his share of this money.

With this amount of money put in circulation old Estill will be again fairly started on the road to prosperity. Our laborers, our farmers, and our merchants will get such a start at money-making that it will be easy to keep it up. We can sell the Company enough cross ties to pay the whole subscription.

Let every farmer prepare to increase his products for the next year, for he can sell them all at high prices. His wheat, corn, oats and hay, his hogs, sheep and cattle will be in demand. Even the ladies can make money off their gardens, poultry, milk and butter, while the road is being built.

While other counties with railroads have been growing richer, and richer, Estill, without a railroad, has been getting poorer and poorer. We are not worth as much now as we were twenty years ago. We can remedy this by voting this proposition.

The county will never have a chance to make a better investment. We get $100,000 of stock in a live railroad; we secure the distribution of not less than $300,000 in our county; we will immediately increase our wealth from one to two million dollars. The taxable property of the railroad will not be less than $400,000. We obtain all this by issuing our 5 per cent. bonds for $100,000, which we can take up at any time during thirty years that suits our convenience. Isn't that fair?

What Will It Cost?

We get certificates for $100,000 of stock in exchange for our bonds. We can sell this stock at any time and apply the proceeds to the payment of our bonds. But if we prefer to hold it we can still pay the subscription and not feel it. We can safely rely upon having two millions of taxable property when we make our first payment of interest, which is a year after the road is completed.

The man who has $1,000 worth of property will only have to pay $2.50 a year; if he has $500 in property he only pays $1.25; if $100 in property he only pays 25 cents a year; and if he owns no property he will not have to pay anything. Where is the man who cannot make ten times the amount of his tax out of the railroad itself?

Will It Be Built?

This Syndicate has built three other railroads and is now building two others. It has never undertaken any public enterprise it has not completed. It binds itself in a forfeit of $2,000 to construct ours if the subscription is made. The Company will certainly build the Road if we vote the proposition. What a glorious day that will be for Estill! We will see our iron furnaces re-opened, our mineral resources developed, our houses beautified, and prosperity smiling alike upon our farmers, our merchants and our laborers.

Register Print, Richmond, Ky.

Fig. 3: Election notice for a railroad proposition, ca. Aug. 11, 1888, Eastern Kentucky University Special Collections and Archives, Richmond, Kentucky.

The next artifact students would look at is a textual account of the history of railroads in Estill County. This account, written by C. M. Treadway, is from a copy of the now discontinued Estill Herald and is titled "Railroad comes to Ravenna, Should bring big boost to county." The article summarizes the development of the county as the

rail system was introduced, such as how the population increased exponentially, “The population of Estill County in 1870 was 9,196 – In 1810 the population was 2,082… Since 1890, the rise of Irvine and Estill County can be written in the same vein as that of its railroads” (Treadway). The piece continues, providing a history of how the L&N bought the rail yard and transformed it into the bustling center of business during the early 1900s. This reflects the previous archive in fig. 3 since students could infer that the vote went through for the Louisville Southern Syndicate to purchase and develop the rail system in Ravenna.

The last image comes from the Kentucky Historical Society's visual materials section online and is a capture of a Louisville and Nashville (L&N) railyard in Ravenna, Kentucky, in 1920 taken by Willard Rouse Jillson. At first glance, students might not recognize any familiarity with the image; however, after looking closer at it, they should start to notice that the shops in the background are very similar to the current buildings lining Main Street in Ravenna (Jilson). Then, using their knowledge gathered from fig. 3 and Treadway’s “Railroad comes to Ravenna,” students can infer that this would be a snapshot of the final railroad built after the vote in 1888. This connection between past and present, subtly concealed within the image, becomes the final thread for this segment in students’ journey through their community history.

The second research topic students would explore would be the history of Fitchburg Furnace, which is “considered the largest charcoal furnace in the world” (United States Department of Agriculture). The Fitchburg Furnace is also located in Ravenna, Kentucky and holds great historical significance for the county. The first archive comes from the University of Kentucky Library and is a collection of notebooks

from Frank Fitch, builder of the furnace. The notebooks range from 1867 to 1873 and contain details about the construction and sketches of his ideas. Students would look through these pages, unknowing of the author, and try to pin down what significance these notes have to the history of Estill County. If students have any knowledge of the furnace's first structure before a fire burned down the front and back buildings, they might be able to recognize the general sketches Fitch drew out in the notebooks (see fig. 4). Others might be able to pick out some key words throughout the construction notes to lead them to the furnace. These first-hand accounts and sketches provide valuable insights into the history and construction of the Fitchburg Furnace. Whether students are familiar with the furnace's pre-fire structure or are starting with a clean slate, these notebooks offer a crucial resource for letting students investigate archives and uncover their histories.

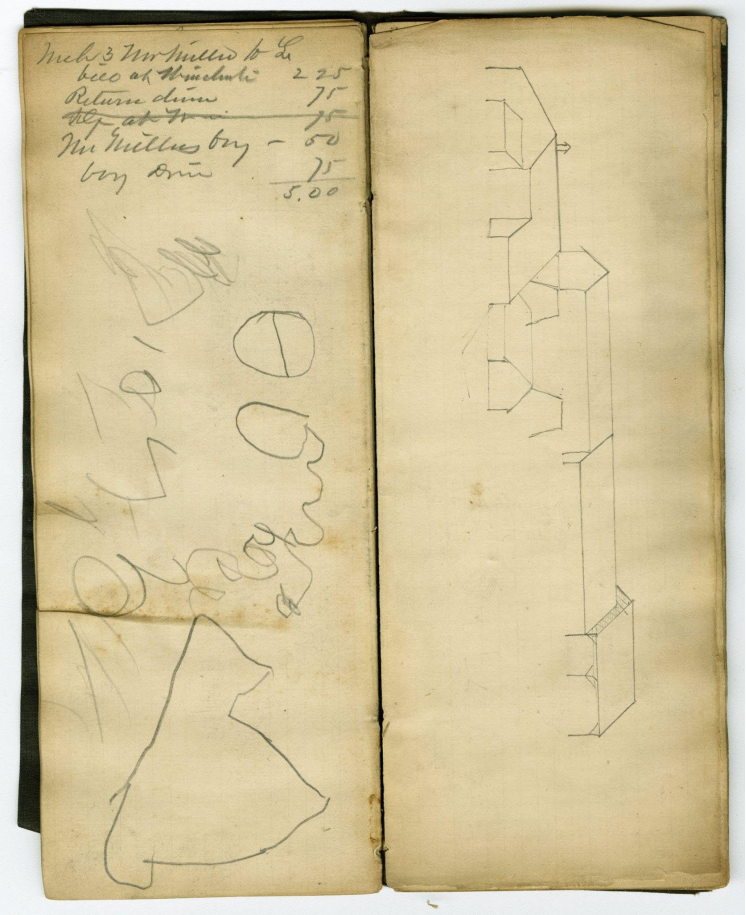

Fig. 4: Frank Fitch notebooks, 1966-2008, undated University of Kentucky Special Collections Research Center, Lexington, Kentucky.

The next students would look at would be a picture from 1895 held in the Estill County Historical Society and Genealogy Museum. This image shows the fully constructed furnace with people standing at its entrance (see fig. 5). The furnace at this point was abandoned, as shown by the missing casting house (*Fitchburg Furnace*). At this point, students will be able to see the familiar structure in the picture and can reflect on the similarities and differences to how the furnace remains today. The photograph provides a valuable visual glimpse into the past, allowing students to witness the Fitchburg Furnace in a more-completed state. The absence of the casting house in the

picture indicates that the furnace had already fallen into disuse by that time, underscoring the changing industrial landscape of the region.

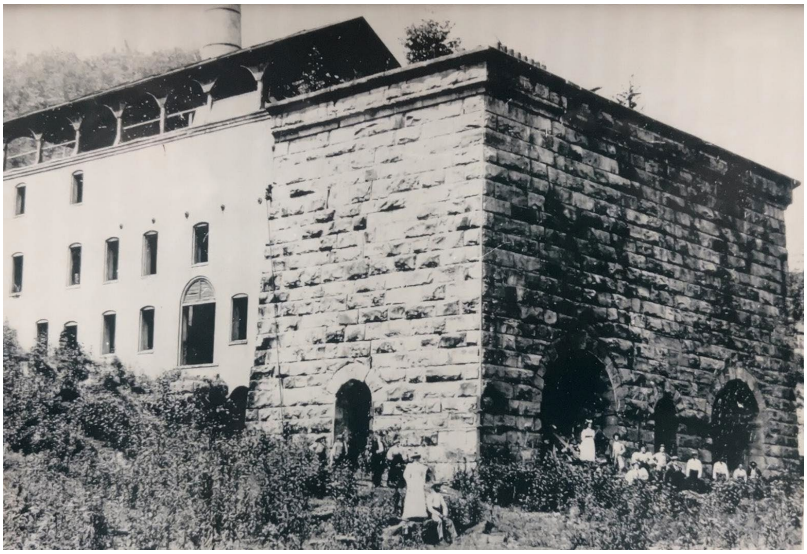

Fig. 5: Image of Fitchburg Furnace, n.d, Estill County Historical Society and Genealogy, Irvine, Kentucky.

The last text students would look at would be the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) site for the Fitchburg Furnace. This page works to fill in any gaps left from the previous two archives and provide the full history of the furnace. It discusses how Kentucky was one of the top iron producers in the country during the 1830s and that Fitchburg Furnace would have revolutionized the pig iron industry if other factors had not caused the furnace to be shut down and includes a picture of what remains of the furnace today (USDA). Comparing this image to the other conditions of the furnace, students can make meaningful connections and discern how time has shaped this historical site. Through this visual exploration, students gain a deeper appreciation of the furnace's evolution and its place in Estill County's history.

After completing all of the research, students will write blog posts detailing their findings and reflections on the investigations. For the first research topic, students may

reflect on how the Louisville Southern Syndicate's rail system impacted the local economy and opportunities in Estill County during the late 1800s. They may take notice of the changes in the 1920 photograph of the L&N rail yard in Ravenna and explain how it connects to the historical context they learned from Treadway's article and the L&N proposition. For a simpler reflection, students might explain why the district-wide sports mascot is the "Estill Engineers" now that they have the historical background. For the second research topic, students might reflect on how the industrial landscape and status of the Fitchburg Furnace changed over time. They also may reconsider Fitch's notebooks and sketches after reading the USDA's report that the furnace's "venture was cut short in 1875, costing out-of-state investors more than $1 million at that time" and reflect - or conduct further research - on what led to the furnace's downfall. Students would write at least one blog post for each research topic before composing one final blog post answering the following question: "what insights did you gain about Estill from comparing the different archives and sources about the history of railroads in Ravenna and the Fitchburg Furnace?"

Similar to the "Archives Slideshow" assignment model, this unit incorporates skills from other standards that students can practice along with learning about archival research. This assignment model uses the same RI.11-12.3 literacy standard from "Archives Slideshow" that focuses on how complex ideas develop over texts ("KAS: Reading and Writing" 358). In this lesson, students are tasked with exploring the history of Ravenna, Kentucky, and the Fitchburg Furnace. The historical narrative presented in the lesson involves multiple complex ideas and a sequence of events, such as the development of the railroad system, population growth, industrialization, and the

history of the Fitchburg Furnace. In their blog posts, students are required to explain their findings and insights based on their analysis of the various sources and documents provided in the lesson. They connect the dots between different individuals, ideas, and events, offering explanations for how these elements interacted and developed over time.

Furthermore, this sequence aligns with an additional position statement from NCTE on what effective writing instruction looks like. The NCTE statement comes from Principle 2.3., which states that "Writers compose using different modes and technologies" and that "It is crucial for writers to be exposed to and gain access to a wide range of technologies and tools and learn about the possibilities of composing with them" ("Understanding and Teaching Writing…"). This assignment model aligns with this statement as students are provided the opportunity to explore a different form of context in their writing. Though they are completing academic research, their writing need not conform to the stricter conventions of academic writing. They are free to use an informal tone and refer back to themselves in their reflections, adding in their thoughts or questions. The audience for these blogs is not the teacher as the academic authority but their greater community, who might be just as knowledgeable of the subject matter as the students when they first began the project.

This assignment incorporates elements of place theory, multimodality, and archival research practices. Jacob's ideas that writing should be process-focused and inquiry-based about the learner's community is reflected in the subject matter and how the research is conducted through student-generated questioning. Though the teacher as a facilitator would be there to guide students through the process and lead them in a

direction if they are stuck, the primary work is placed on the students as the investigators. This element also aligns with Gaillet and Rose's ideas for how students should conduct archival research. Furthermore, Cresswell's thoughts that place is defined by a person's understanding of their world comes into play as students base their reflections on their prior knowledge of their hometown and use the research to refine or expand their newfound knowledge. The lesson also follows Palmeri and Wood's ideas on how multimodality allows room for process since the students are continually reorganizing their research and refining their ideas with each additional archive. The first glance at the 1920's L&N rail yard lacks detail until students read through Treadway's article, in which they must then revisit the photograph to gain a full understanding of the picture. This follows Palmeri's argument that multimodal sources offer students the chance to broaden their inference and questioning skills since they incorporate more dimensions than traditional texts. Finally, this lesson incorporates Osborne's and Hayden's ideas on the importance of students connecting to history and to their research. By delving into the local history of Ravenna and the Fitchburg Furnace, students are not only learning about abstract historical concepts but are actively connecting with the past of their own community.

This assignment effectively integrates place theory, multimodality, and archival research to create a holistic and engaging learning experience. By delving into their community's past, students gain a deeper understanding of the significance of their surroundings and their place within it. They not only learn about historical events but also how these events have shaped the physical and cultural landscape of their town. The assignment embraces multimodality by incorporating various modes of

communication and information presentation. Students engage with different mediums, including textual accounts, images, sketches, and online resources. This diverse range of sources allows students to approach the research from multiple angles, fostering a more comprehensive understanding of the historical narrative. Additionally, the assignment introduces students to the practice of archival research. Through the exploration of digital archives and physical documents, students learn valuable research skills, such as how to locate, assess, and cross-reference historical sources. The assignment encourages students to contextualize their findings and reflect on the historical significance of the materials they encounter. By publishing their research on accessible blogs that are viewable by the public and community, students actively engage with their community. This outreach component extends the impact of their research beyond the classroom, fostering a sense of relevance in their work. It also brings attention to the artifacts and local history, promoting community involvement and awareness.

“Archive Research Posters”

The final assignment for the sequence, titled "Archive Research Posters," represents the culmination of students' journey through the world of archival research. In this phase, students have the opportunity to exercise their newfound skills and demonstrate their understanding of the significance of archives in preserving local history. While I pre-selected archives from the Estill County Historical Society and Genealogy Museum, it's essential to emphasize that educators can easily adapt this assignment to suit their own communities. Local archives, digital catalogs, university collections, or even family artifacts can serve as rich sources for student exploration. It might be possible that local archivists or historians could come to the classroom, instead, and bring a selection of photographs or other small artifacts to be investigated. The key is that the chosen archives should hold relevance to the students and their communities, ensuring a meaningful and authentic learning experience.

By this stage, students should possess a solid foundation in archival research methods and a well-defined perspective on how archives contribute to historical understanding. The "Archive Research Posters" assignment challenges students to put their knowledge and skills to the test. They are tasked with authoring their own investigative research projects based on the archives they select. This assignment encourages students to delve deeply into their chosen archives, ask probing questions, and synthesize their findings into visually engaging and informative research posters. In doing so, they demonstrate their ability to independently navigate the world of archives, extract valuable historical information, and present their discoveries in a compelling and accessible format.

The first day of the project introduces the purpose of this last piece: students should research a local historical topic using archives and create research posters to present their findings. The rest of the class would be dedicated to preparing students to enter the museum and rules about how to handle the materials. The next step would entail exploring archives, whether they be physical or digital. As students explore, they would take notes and gather relevant materials related to their chosen topic. The educator here should encourage students to ask their archivists, historians, or guides questions or seek guidance, and document all of their sources.

After visiting the Estill County Historical Society and Genealogy Museum, there were multiple archives that would suit this project, though more are definitely available. The first is a cider press that according to local curator David was passed around from family to family before finally reaching the museum (see fig. 6). He also noted that the press is supposedly from Garrett Orchard, though there is no way to confirm that fact currently. Nevertheless, they position the press in front of a separately donated sign reading "Garret Orchard" in the tool section of the museum and have styled it with a basket of fake apples underneath. Students interested in this item could investigate the history of cider presses in Kentucky or Appalachian culture. If they are interested in the supposed origins, they could research the Garret Orchard to see when the orchard was in business and how they might have used the press. This artifact offers a fascinating opportunity for students to explore the history of a locally and culturally significant tool and its potential connections to a specific orchard in the area.

Fig. 6: Cider press, n.d, Estill County Historical Society and Genealogy, Irvine, Kentucky.

The next item that I thought would be interesting to explore is a pilot's wheel from a river boat (see fig. 7). The Estill County Historical Society has already typed up a brief description of the wheel and its origins. They explain that the wheel comes from one of two river boats owned by a Mr. Yancy Merrit who used the boats to carry coal and break up log jams before the boat sank around the 1930's and the wheel was discovered in the 1960's ("Pilot Wheel"). In 2008, the wheel was donated to the museum. Students interested in this artifact might investigate the history of riverboat transportation in Kentucky, the role of riverboats in the coal industry, or the specific stories and experiences of riverboat pilots during that era. This item presents an opportunity for students to delve into the fascinating history of riverboat travel and trade in the region, uncovering the stories of those who worked on these boats and the significance of this artifact in local history.

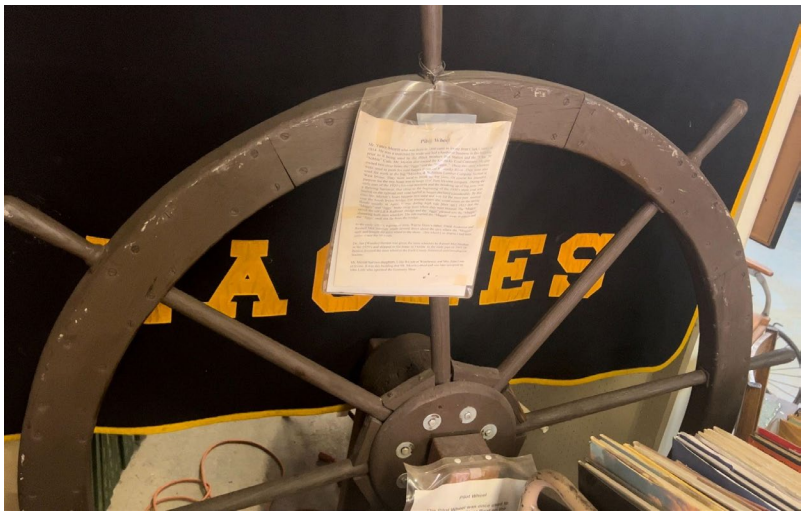

Fig. 7: Pilot wheel from riverboat, n.d, Estill County Historical Society and Genealogy, Irvine, Kentucky.

The final artifacts that students might be interested in looking into are the various military jackets on display at the museum (see fig. 8). These jackets had been donated throughout the years by various families and span many years. Students interested in these jackets could learn the history of military service in Estill County and the broader context of the wars or conflicts associated with these uniforms. They could also research the personal stories behind some of these jackets by tracing the histories of the individuals who wore them and their contributions to military service. Additionally, students might examine the evolution of military uniforms and how they reflect changes in technology, tactics, and society over time. These military jackets offer a unique opportunity for students to connect with the lives of local individuals who served their country and to explore the broader historical narratives of military involvement in the region.

Fig. 8: Collection of military memorabilia including displayed military jackets, n.d, Estill County Historical Society and Genealogy, Irvine, Kentucky.

When all data has been collected, students should spend time looking over the materials to find connections between sources and analyze how the archives change or reinforce their understanding. This phase encourages students to think critically about the artifacts they've chosen and how they fit into the larger historical context of Estill County. They can reflect on the significance of their chosen artifacts, considering what they reveal about the people, culture, and history of the region. Additionally, students should compare and contrast the information they've gathered from different sources, identifying any inconsistencies or gaps in the historical record. This analytical step is crucial in helping students develop a nuanced and comprehensive understanding of their chosen artifacts and their historical significance.

After completing this step, they can begin to design their research posters. Following KAS C.11-12.2, which says that students should “Compose

informative/explanatory texts to examine and/or convey complex ideas, concepts and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization and analysis of content," students will need to format their research following a structured organization, though this need not be a formulaic 5-paragraph essay ("KAS: Reading and Writing…"). Instead, students should think of the mode of their presentation - a trifold presentation board, a digital presentation, or a different, creative option - and organize their writing into at least an introduction, research questions, findings, and conclusion while also using visuals throughout the presentation. Providing this segment of visual design instruction is crucial as it provides students with the chance to experiment with multimodality, allowing them to convey information not only through text but also through images, charts, and other visual elements. The goal is for their posters to be informative and visually appealing, effectively communicating their research findings to their peers and the wider community.

The final component of the project is to present their findings. This segment can be as simple as students presenting their findings in class or as wide as organizing a community event where students can showcase their research posters to a broader audience per students' individual choice. Partnering with a local archive for this segment would benefit both the students and the organization; students receive an authentic audience for their work while the archive receives publicity for their collections. In either case, students should be ready to discuss their chosen artifacts, the insights they've gained, and the connections they've made through their investigation. Students follow this presentation up with a concluding blog post where they reflect on the research process, challenges, and discoveries. In these posts, students should discuss

the importance of preserving local history and the role of archives in that process. Finally, students should consider the impact of their research on their understanding of their community's history.

This assignment model aligns with the overarching ideas of place theory, multimodality, and archival research. First, providing the chance for students to pick their own artifacts connects with how place theorists Jacob's focus on inquiry and Mastrangelo's emphasis on engagement can provide a deeper learning experience for students. Furthermore, Palmeri and Wood's focus on multimodality appears in how students engage with multiple mediums to communicate their findings and thoughts. Shipka would agree with how students are given access to a variety of artifacts to study rather than one or two mediums. Additionally, the archive variety would agree with Schmidt's, Reynolds's, and Gleen and Enoch's work on how researchers should expand their ideas on what an archive is in order to field as many perspectives as possible. Finally, Robbins idea of a "learning legacy" carries over to this last assignment model since by students documenting their research and making it available online, they create a learning legacy for the greater community to access and study.

This presentation aligns with the concept of place theory as students share their newfound knowledge and understanding of their local history with their peers and community members. It also offers them the opportunity to practice public speaking and presentation skills, which are valuable in various contexts. By presenting their findings, students not only demonstrate their understanding of archival research but also contribute to the preservation and dissemination of local history within their community.

The significance of this final assignment model is that it is the culminating form of composition that addresses all means of incorporating place theory, multimodality, and archival research. By allowing students to select and investigate artifacts from their local Estill County Historical Society and Genealogy Museum, this assignment embodies place theory by grounding their research in their own community's history. This not only fosters a deeper connection between students and their surroundings but also emphasizes the importance of preserving and understanding local heritage. Multimodality is another vital aspect of this assignment. Students are not limited to traditional research papers but are encouraged to create visually engaging research posters that incorporate text, images, and other multimedia elements. This multimodal approach equips students with valuable skills for effectively conveying complex ideas to diverse audiences. Furthermore, the assignment emphasizes archival research, teaching students how to explore, analyze, and synthesize information from historical sources. It empowers them to uncover stories and insights from the past, fostering a sense of historical inquiry and critical thinking. By exploring a variety of artifacts, students learn the value of primary sources and gain a deeper understanding of the cultural, social, and technological changes that have shaped their community. This assignment is a powerful educational tool that not only connects students to their local history but also prepares them for the challenges of the digital age through multimodal presentation and fosters a sense of inquiry and critical thinking through archival research.

V. Conclusion

Incorporating place theory, multimodality, and archival research across the three assignment models can enrich the learning experiences for students in many ways. These assignments collectively offer a comprehensive approach to historical exploration, emphasizing the importance of context, varied modes of communication, and the significance of archives in preserving and understanding local history, all while aligning to the rigor of KAS and NCTE best practices.

Place theory plays a pivotal role in these assignments by grounding students in their own communities' history. Whether they are delving into the history of Ravenna, Kentucky, or exploring the archives in the Estill County Historical Society and Genealogy Museum, students are actively connecting with the past of their county. This connection can not only foster a deeper appreciation for their local history but also instill a sense of relevance and personal investment in their research. Place theory encourages students to view their communities as ever-evolving, and this perspective can allow them to continue to uncover stories and layers of history that might otherwise remain unexplored.

Multimodality expanded students' horizons by incorporating various modes of communication. From analyzing historical images to creating visually engaging research posters and blog posts, students learn to convey complex ideas using a variety of mediums. This multimodal approach not only can improve their communication skills but also allows them to explore historical narratives from different angles. It encourages them to think critically, make reasoned interpretations, and engage with historical materials in ways they could not with traditional texts. Multimodality also

emphasizes the importance of visual literacy and the power of combining textual and visual elements to convey narrative effectively.

Archival research practices are at the core of these assignment models, teaching students valuable research skills and reinforcing the significance of documentation. Students learn how to locate, assess, and cross-reference sources, enabling them to become better fact-checking citizens. These assignments also highlight how primary sources provide students with a physical representation of history. By actively engaging with historical artifacts, students gain both insights into their local towns' past and contribute to the preservation of local history.

Though these assignment models offer valuable learning opportunities, several potential issues or challenges may arise during their implementation. Accessing physical or digital archives can be a challenge. Some students may face barriers in accessing archival materials due to restrictions, lack of funding, or limited local resources. Furthermore, when working with archival materials, students must consider ethical concerns, such as privacy, sensitivity, and the responsible use of historical documents and images. Finally, local archives that lack diversity may exclude the experiences and contributions of marginalized or underrepresented groups within the community. This exclusion can contribute to erasing their histories and marginalizing their voices, which can be alienating and disempowering for these communities. Addressing these potential issues and challenges through clear instructions, scaffolding, support resources, and open communication can help students overcome obstacles and have a successful learning experience in these assignments.

Finally, these assignment models could easily be applied to a range of subjects and skill levels. The easiest transfer would be to any History or Social Studies curriculum that wanted a deeper focus on research and perspective. However, there are even further applications for the work listed here. The "Archives Slideshow" template could easily be adapted to Art History where a segment of a painting is shown until the entire picture is unveiled. A Business class could focus on the success of the Louisville Southern Syndicate's advertisement and later the L&N rail yard's development of the town Ravenna. On the other hand, a Business course could also analyze the downfall of the Fitchburg Furnace and the circumstances surrounding its failure. Finally, a JROTC program could be interested in using the military coats from "Archive Research Posters" as a supplemental research project on the history of the military. Regardless of how instructors find use for multimodal, archival research, it offers numerous benefits for students willing to engage with their communities, reflect on their personal perspectives, and investigate local histories because, as Ezmerilla the skeleton says, these archives are hanging around waiting to be discovered and appreciated for their value to our communities (see fig. 9).

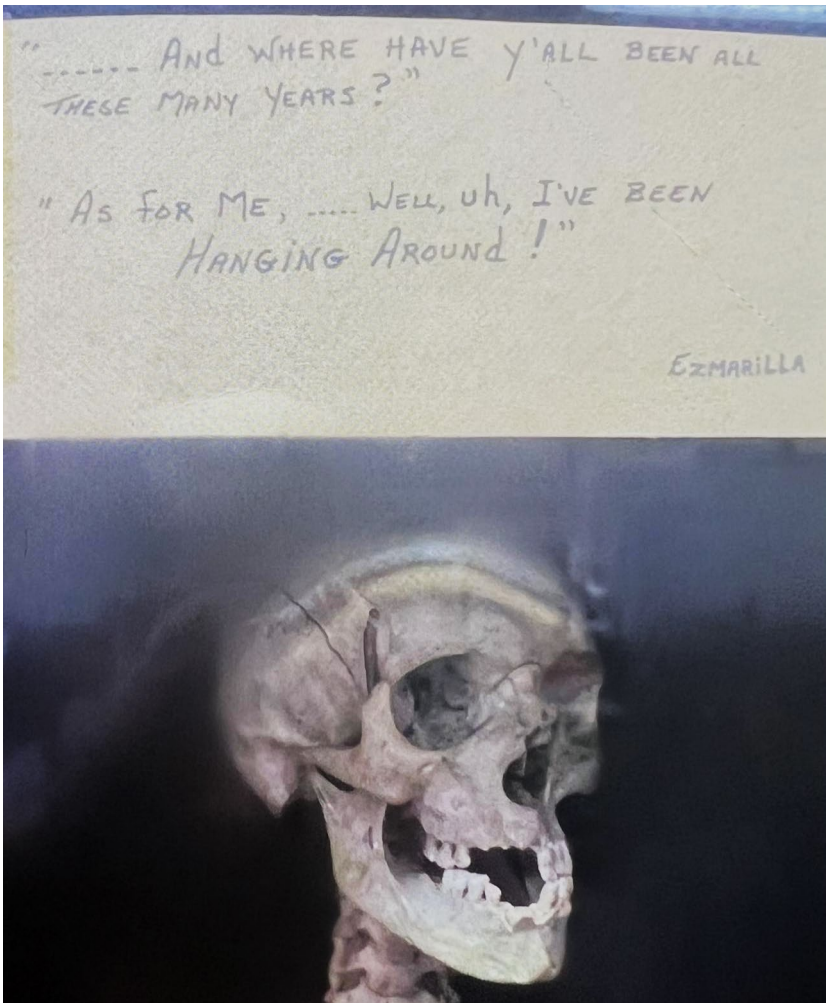

Fig. 9: Skeleton from Irvine High School with note, n.d., Estill County Historical Society and Genealogy, Irvine, Kentucky.

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