

**Study of Humanities Texas Teacher
Professional Development Programs**

Submitted To:

Humanities Texas

Submitted By:

GIBSON

AN EDUCATION CONSULTING & RESEARCH GROUP

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Study of Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Programs

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Executive Summary

Background

Humanities Texas is a nonprofit, educational organization that provides content-driven professional development (PD) programs for Texas teachers. The organization’s social studies and English-language arts (ELA) programs—which aim to improve the quality of classroom teaching and student learning outcomes throughout the state—are supported by federal and state appropriations, as well as by foundations, corporations, and individuals. Between January 2016 and March 1, 2020, Humanities Texas held 119 teacher professional development programs, serving a total of Texas 3,076 teachers, many of whom attended multiple Humanities Texas programs during that period. These teachers represent 438 of the state’s 1,201 school districts. Programs were conducted in one of two formats: 1) one-day academic-year workshops; or 2) three-day residential summer institutes. All programs, regardless of format, provided intensive, content-specific training in social studies and ELA topics and skills. All program content was directly aligned with Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), the state standards for what students should know and be able to do in each subject and grade level.

Humanities Texas contracted with Gibson Consulting Group, Inc. (Gibson) to conduct a study of educator perspectives regarding the quality, relevance, and impact of the teacher PD programs held from the beginning of 2016 to March 1, 2020. The study also examined ways in which PD attendance may have impacted teachers differently based on the content area they teach, their teaching experience, educational experience, certification type, and the nature of the schools in which they work. Humanities Texas was interested in exploring the following research questions:

- 1) What are the characteristics of teachers participating in Humanities Texas PD programs and of schools at which participants are teaching?
- 2) How do attendees perceive the quality and relevance of the programs?
- 3) To what extent do Humanities Texas PD participants feel that the training has:
 - a. Enhanced their content knowledge in various topics covered in Humanities Texas professional development seminars related to social studies and ELA curricula and instruction;
 - b. Impacted their instructional practices and collaboration with colleagues;
 - c. Impacted measurable improvements in student learning, course grades, and student performance on benchmark tests and state assessments; and
 - d. Impacted teacher attrition by influencing their decision to stay in the teaching profession and remain in their respective school districts?

- 4) Did teachers' experiences with the professional development vary as a function of their level of teaching experience, the level of achievement of their schools or districts, or other background characteristics?

Evaluation Activities

Gibson researchers collaborated with Humanities Texas staff on the development of a survey instrument that included items related to six primary constructs: 1) Quality and relevance of PD attended; 2) Quality and effectiveness of the Humanities Texas PD faculty; 3) Perceived impact of PD on teachers' knowledge; 4) Perceived impact on teachers' instructional practices; 5) Perceived impact on student learning and outcomes; and 6) Impact on teachers' career decisions and promotion opportunities. The survey also collected data related to the background of the teachers who participated in the programs and their reasons for attending. There were also open-ended questions about specific ways in which attending Humanities Texas programs may have impacted participants' ability to resolve instructional challenges, increase their content knowledge, improve student learning outcomes, and enhance collaborative activities at their schools.

A total of 3,076 email invitations to complete the survey were delivered to valid email addresses of program participants. The survey was open between May 11th and June 1st, 2020 and yielded 1,228 completed surveys for a response rate of 40%, a strong response rate for a survey of this nature. Survey data and related PD participation data received from Humanities Texas were merged with Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR) to provide a more robust dataset for analysis. The findings that follow are based on these data.

Key Findings

Characteristics of Humanities Texas PD Participants

- Teachers who attended Humanities Texas PD between January 1, 2016, and March 1, 2020 taught in 438 of the 1,201 school districts in Texas (36%), representing 1,285 different campuses across the state. PD participants teach in school districts located in each of the 36 congressional districts in Texas.
- Teachers attending PD taught in schools where nearly 1.4 million students, or approximately 26% of all Texas public school children, are enrolled.
- Overall, 60% of respondents attended more than one Humanities Texas PD program between January 1, 2016, and March 1, 2020.
- Close to half (47%) of respondents indicated that they were early career teachers with five or fewer years of teaching experience when they first attended Humanities Texas PD, and 70% of the PD participants shared that they had 10 or fewer years of teaching experience.
- One-third of the survey respondents (33%) indicated that they teach Advanced Placement (AP) courses at their school (35% of social studies teachers and 30% of ELA teachers).

- Because the Humanities Texas PD program has been offered to social studies teachers for a longer period of time than it has been offered to ELA teachers, a larger proportion (59% of survey respondents) identified themselves as social studies teachers, while 32% of survey respondents indicated that they are ELA teachers.¹
- Nearly all Humanities Texas PD programs are aimed at secondary-level teachers. Hence, the overwhelming majority of Humanities Texas PD attendees were either teaching grades 6–8 (47%) or grades 9–12 (54%).

Characteristics of Schools Where Humanities Texas PD Participants Work

- A strong majority (83%) of teachers attending Humanities Texas PD over the 2016–2020 period taught at Title I schools.
- Slightly over a third (35%) taught in schools that received a school rating of “C” or lower.
- When compared to the statewide average, a larger proportion of teachers attending Humanities Texas PD programs taught at schools with higher proportions of non-white students (73% vs. 67% statewide).
- When compared to all Texas schools, larger proportions of teachers attending Humanities Texas PD programs were from urban areas categorized as cities (42% vs. 34% statewide), and suburbs (26% vs. 21% statewide).

Quality and Relevance of Humanities Texas Teacher Institutes and Workshops

- Educators who attended Humanities Texas teacher institutes and workshops rated each of the quality and relevance metrics highly, with 95% to 96% in agreement that the PD program was well organized, appropriately paced, an appropriate length, and a good use of their time.

Quality of Humanities Texas PD Faculty

- The overwhelming majority of survey respondents were in agreement that the faculty were experts in the topics they addressed (96%), were responsive to participants’ questions or concerns (96%), were dynamic in their presentations and workshops (96%), and were approachable (95%). This level of agreement was consistently strong across both social studies and ELA program participants.

¹ A small number (9%) of survey respondents noted that they are no longer classroom teachers. This most likely represents former teachers who have changed to instructional coach positions or administrative positions and are no longer teaching.

Reasons for Educators Attending Humanities Texas PD

- For both social studies and ELA teachers, the highest ranked reasons for attending the Humanities Texas program were to improve content/subject area knowledge (which was ranked as one of the top two reasons by 62% of social studies teachers and 52% of ELA teachers), and the organization’s reputation for hosting high-quality PD (ranked as one of the top two reasons by 43% of social studies teachers and 32% of ELA teachers).
- Other top reasons for attending PD include learning from experts in the field, obtaining useful resources and materials, and acquiring new instructional strategies.
- Well over half (58% to 61%) of PD participants indicated that having Humanities Texas provide their school or district with reimbursement for substitute teacher costs and travel cost reimbursements impacted their decision to attend the program to a moderate extent or great extent.
- Having Humanities Texas provide educators with a stipend to attend teacher institutes or workshops was a less important driver for attendance than either school/district reimbursement for substitute teacher or travel cost reimbursements.

Impact of Humanities Texas PD Attendance on Teachers’ Content Knowledge

- The vast majority of survey respondents (93% to 96%) indicated that the Humanities Texas PD they attended had a moderate or great impact on their content knowledge acquisition and mastery.
 - A larger proportion of social studies teachers (77%) indicated that their participation in the program impacted their understanding of the subject matter “to a great extent,” compared to 69% of ELA teachers.
 - ELA teachers (72%) were more likely than social studies teachers (64%) to indicate that they acquired new skills as a result of attending Humanities Texas PD.
- A strong majority (88% of social studies teachers and 83% of ELA teachers) attending PD indicated that they used primary documents shared by Humanities Texas faculty during PD sessions in their lessons. Less than half (44% of social studies teachers and 29% of ELA teachers) reported that they used videos/resources from the Humanities Texas digital repository in their classrooms.

Impact of Humanities Texas PD Attendance on Teachers’ Instructional Practices

- The vast majority of social studies (93%) and ELA (90%) teachers reported that Humanities Texas PD programs had a positive and lasting impact on their teaching, and that the training improved their confidence in teaching (96% of social studies teachers and 93% of ELA teachers).
- Most survey respondents (between 84% and 97% depending upon the item and the content area) reported that the Humanities Texas PD they attended had a moderate or great impact on their

work in the classroom specific to the rigor and delivery of content, instructional strategies, and student interactions.

- Large proportions of teachers attending Humanities Texas programs indicated that the training had a great impact on helping them grow as teachers (73% to 76%), helping them engage students in higher-level thinking (65% to 69%), encouraging them to reflect on instructional practices (64%), and developing their ability to ask high-quality questions to improve instruction (62% to 63%).
- ELA teachers were more likely than social studies teachers to indicate that PD attendance impacted “to a great extent” student interactions with each other (46% vs. 38%) and instructional strategies used in the classroom (48% vs. 40%) .
- Nearly all ELA teachers indicated that PD participation had a moderate or great impact on them in providing new tools to teach reading skills (96%) and increasing the use of critical reading tools in their lessons (94%). Equally high percentages of ELA teachers indicated that the Humanities Texas PD impacted their efforts to help their students become effective readers (93%) and to increase students’ confidence in their reading abilities (92%).

Impact of Humanities Texas PD Attendance on Student Learning

- A large majority of participants (85% to 96% depending upon the area of student learning examined) reported that attending Humanities Texas PD had a moderate or great impact on student learning in their classrooms.
- The percentage of social studies teachers who felt that the PD had “a great impact” on student learning was higher than that of ELA teachers:
 - More than half (53%) of social studies teachers felt that PD attendance had a great impact on student engagement in the classroom, compared to 38% of ELA teachers.
 - A larger proportion of social studies teachers compared to ELA teachers reported that PD participation had a greater impact on student performance on district benchmark tests (39% vs. 32%), state assessments (47% vs. 39%), and students’ understanding of central concepts related to the content (58% vs. 51%).
 - Social studies teachers were more likely (55%) to feel that PD participation had a great impact on their students’ interest level in the subject matter than ELA teachers (39%).
 - A higher percentage of social studies teachers (60%) indicated that PD participation had a great impact on their overall classroom environment than ELA teachers (50%).
- The majority of both social studies (52%) and ELA (54%) teachers indicated that participation in the Humanities Texas program impacted their students AP exam results “to a great extent.”

Impact of Humanities Texas PD Attendance on Teacher Collaboration

- A clear majority of social studies teachers (79%) and ELA teachers (74%) reported that PD attendance impacted the extent to which they felt connected to other educators in their respective content areas to a moderate or great extent. About 40% of social studies and ELA teachers shared that Humanities Texas PD participation has impacted this connection to “a great extent.”
- Most social studies teachers (68%) and ELA teachers (58%) reported that they formally shared ideas, knowledge, and resources with other teachers after attending a Humanities Texas PD. Almost all (97%) reported that they did so informally.
- After attending a PD program, there was slightly less communication with Humanities Texas faculty (38% of social studies teachers and 40% of ELA teachers) compared to communication with other attendees (48% to 51%).
- One of the strongest endorsements of a PD program is having prior attendees recruit or encourage their colleagues to participate in future program offerings. About 90% of teachers shared that they encouraged their colleagues to enroll in future workshops sponsored by Humanities Texas.

Impact of Humanities Texas PD Attendance on Teacher Career Decisions and Promotions

- The program also impacted PD participants’ desire to continue teaching social studies or ELA (81%), their desire to continue working in a K–12 educational setting (71%), and decisions about which courses they wanted to teach in the future (70%). Responses of moderate to great extent were fairly consistent across social studies and ELA teachers.
- A smaller percentage (28%) of survey respondents indicated that attending Humanities Texas PD moderately to greatly impacted their being promoted to a higher position at their school and their decision to enroll in a related graduate program.
- Social studies teachers (52%) were more inclined than ELA teachers (45%) to report that PD attendance had a great impact on their interest in continuing to teach in their content area, and, to a lesser extent, their desire to continue working in a K–12 educational setting (37% of social studies teachers and 32% of ELA teachers).
- A little over a third of social studies teachers (36%) and ELA teachers (38%) indicated that program attendance impacted “to a great extent” their thinking on which courses they wanted to teach in the future.

Differences in Outcomes based on Teacher and School Characteristics

Survey data were disaggregated by various teacher and school characteristics to assess whether differences existed in teachers’ ratings based on any particular grouping characteristics. The overall

finding was that teachers' experience with the Humanities Texas PD was largely consistent. However, there were some notable differences across groups in how teachers rated either the quality or impact of the professional development.

- On several characteristics, teachers who earned their teaching certificate through an alternative certification program rated the impact of Humanities Texas PD significantly higher than teachers who earned their teaching certificate through a traditional certification program:
 - Content knowledge (3.59 vs. 3.50)
 - Instructional practices (3.51 vs. 3.43)
 - Student learning outcomes (3.39 vs. 3.29).
- Teachers working at schools with lower percentages at-risk students had significantly lower mean survey scale scores related to Humanities Texas PD having an impact on career decisions (e.g., continuing to teach in content area, continuing in K-12, job promotion, graduate school decisions) than teachers at schools with higher percentages of at-risk students.

Summary

This study clearly demonstrates that Humanities Texas is providing impactful content-driven professional learning opportunities to a diverse population of teachers across the state of Texas. With 70% of the 2016–2020 attendees in their first ten years of teaching and 47% in their first five years of teaching, it is evident that Humanities Texas is fulfilling its mission of focusing on teachers in the critical early years of their careers.

Teachers overwhelmingly report that:

- The programs are of high quality, well designed, and relevant to their professional needs.
- The faculty are highly qualified, dynamic, responsive, and approachable.
- The programs offer teachers opportunities to expand their content mastery, gain effective resources, and learn new instructional strategies.
- The programs enable teachers to engage students in higher-level thinking and to increase the rigor of their instruction and assignments.
- The programs have a meaningful impact on student learning outcomes (e.g., district benchmark tests, course grades, AP exam scores, and state assessments).

The study also demonstrates that Humanities Texas is serving Texas educators with the greatest need of support: teachers in the critical early years of their careers, and teachers in low-performing and disadvantaged schools.

Participants felt, to a lesser degree, that attending one or more Humanities Texas programs impacted their career decisions (e.g., continuing as a social studies or ELA teacher, deciding which courses they want to teach) and opportunities for promotion.

Findings from this study suggest that the quality and impact of the PD has been consistent across content areas, but differs to some degree when results are disaggregated by teacher characteristics (e.g., years of teaching experience, teacher certification route) and the nature of the school where the teacher is employed (e.g., percentage of economically disadvantaged or at-risk students).

In short, these results highlight that the Humanities Texas program is highly regarded by both social studies and ELA teachers in Texas, and that the wide array of PD offerings is having a deep and meaningful impact on teacher knowledge and practices statewide. A large majority of teachers believe the Humanities Texas experience has profoundly impacted their work in the classroom and has subsequently had a positive impact on student learning.

Section 1: Introduction

Background

Humanities Texas is a nonprofit, educational organization that provides content-driven professional development (PD) programs for Texas teachers. Their social studies and English-language arts (ELA) programs, which aim to improve the quality of teacher instruction and learning outcomes for students throughout the state, are supported by federal and state appropriations, as well as by foundations, corporations, and individuals. Between January 2016 and March 2020, Humanities Texas PD programs were conducted in one of two formats: one-day academic-year workshops or three-day residential summer institutes. All programs, regardless of format, provided a wide array of content-specific training for social studies teachers (e.g., Understanding the Federal Government, Pivotal U.S. Elections: 1800–1876, The Civil War Era, Texas: From Republic to Mega-State, The American Revolution, Teaching the U.S. Constitution) and ELA teachers (e.g., Best Practices in Reading Instruction, Teaching and Understanding Poetry, Teaching Shakespeare, Teaching the American Literary Tradition).

Prior to 2010, these programs were funded primarily through the National Endowment for the Humanities “We the People” initiative. In 2009, the 81st Texas Legislature provided funding to Humanities Texas for the purpose of supporting its teacher professional development program. This program targets teachers in their first or second year of service in geographic areas of the state with low student achievement on state assessments. State funding allowed Humanities Texas to considerably expand its teacher professional development program. The program now provides a range of multi-day summer institutes and one-day workshops held during the academic year, all facilitated by leading scholars in the applicable fields of study.

Study Overview

Humanities Texas contracted with Gibson Consulting Group, Inc. (Gibson) to examine the characteristics of teachers participating in the program, particularly in terms of their levels of teaching experience and the nature of the schools in which they work; and to measure participants’ perceptions of the quality and impact of Humanities Texas PD programs on teacher content knowledge, instructional practices, collaboration, student learning in the classroom, and teachers’ career decisions. The current study was limited to teachers who attended at least one Humanities Texas PD program between January 1, 2016, and March 1, 2020.

Data and Research Methods

In collaboration with Humanities Texas staff, the evaluation team at Gibson developed a survey instrument to capture information from educators (primarily teachers) who attended the Humanities Texas PD program. This included attendees of sessions geared toward social studies teachers (e.g., those teaching Texas History, U.S. History, Government, Geography, and Economics courses) and ELA teachers.

Humanities Texas provided Gibson with data files that contained primary and secondary email addresses, school district names, campus names, and information about the sessions attended by PD attendees. All individuals who attended one or more PD offerings between January 1, 2016, and March 1, 2020, were included in the survey sample. PD participant data were then matched to Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR) data made available by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to obtain more detailed information about the schools where PD attendees teach (e.g., Title I school status, campus urbanicity, campus A-F ratings assigned by TEA, and percentages of at-risk, economically disadvantaged, minority, English learner, special education, and gifted & talented students enrolled).

These two primary data sources -- online surveys of Humanities Texas PD participants and campus level TAPR data -- were used to address four primary research questions:

- 1) What are the characteristics of teachers participating in Humanities Texas PD programs and of schools at which Humanities Texas PD participants are teaching?
- 2) How do attendees of social studies and ELA Humanities Texas PD perceive the quality and relevance of the programs?
- 3) To what extent do Humanities Texas PD participants feel that the training has:
 - a. Enhanced their content knowledge in various topics related to social studies and ELA curricula and instruction;
 - b. Impacted their instructional practices and collaboration with colleagues;
 - c. Impacted measurable improvements in student learning, course grades, and student performance on benchmark tests and state assessments; and
 - d. Impacted teacher attrition by influencing their decision to stay in the teaching profession and remain in their respective school districts?
- 4) What is the relationship between teacher experiences with Humanities Texas PD and teacher/school characteristics?

Survey Methodology

Instrument Development

The Gibson team developed a survey instrument in collaboration with Humanities Texas staff to ensure that the proper terminology was used, that questions were appropriate for PD participants, and that pertinent questions regarding program quality and impact were addressed. Multiple constructs of measurement included the following:

- Quality and relevance of PD attended;
- Quality and effectiveness of the Humanities Texas PD faculty;
- Perceived impact of PD on teachers' knowledge;

- Perceived impact on teachers’ instructional practices;
- Perceived impact on student learning and outcomes; and
- Impact on teachers’ career decisions.

Multiple survey items were developed to tap into each of these constructs. In addition to providing item-level descriptive results by social studies and ELA teachers, the creation of survey constructs allowed responses across multiple items to be combined into a single scale score representing the construct of interest. For example, rather than simply asking respondents to rate the quality of the professional development, several different survey items were developed inquiring about the quality of different aspects of the programs (e.g., organization, pacing, length). The resulting scale score, once computed, provides a more comprehensive view of participants’ attitudes and perceptions about the program’s quality than would the response to any one question. These constructs were then used in analyses that involved the disaggregation of results by various teacher and school characteristics. See Appendix A for individual survey items that were contained in each of the six survey constructs.

In addition to measuring these core areas, the survey also asked respondents pertinent background questions relating to their years of teaching experience, content areas taught, grade levels taught, and their teaching certification route (i.e., traditional or alternative). Teachers were also asked about their reasons for attending the professional development and how various financial incentives may have impacted their decision to attend.

To delve deeper into how the Humanities Texas PD may be impacting instructional and collaborative practices of social studies and ELA teachers, the survey instrument included the following open-ended questions:

- 1) Please provide an example of a specific way in which your knowledge of the subject you teach was expanded by Humanities Texas professional development.
- 2) How have student learning and/or student outcomes changed in your classroom as a result of your participation in Humanities Texas professional development?
- 3) Please provide an example of how Humanities Texas professional development has helped you address a particular challenge in teaching your subject or students.
- 4) Please describe the contributions that you have made to your department, school, or district as a result of participating in Humanities Texas professional development.

Survey Administration

Humanities Texas provided the research team with a list (including contact email addresses) of Texas teachers who had attended their professional development workshops or institutes during the January 1,

2016, to March 1, 2020, period. Invitations to participate in the survey were emailed to Humanities Texas PD participants; 3,076 of the invitations were delivered to valid email inboxes.²

The survey was open between May 11th and June 1st, 2020. To motivate teachers to complete the survey and increase response rates, respondents were entered into drawings for ten \$100 Amazon.com gift cards. During the survey fielding period, multiple methods were used to follow up with non-responders. Eight automated email reminders were sent from the survey system to PD participants who had not yet completed and submitted their survey, and a personalized email was also sent from Humanities Texas. A total of 1,228 completed surveys were received (a response rate of 40%). Responses were received from educators working at 745 different campuses across 317 different school districts in Texas.

Response rates for teachers who participated in professional development (PD) within the last two years were substantively higher than the response rate for teachers who participated in PD in 2016 or 2017. Survey response rates decline the further removed a teacher was from their PD experience – from 60% for teachers participating in PD in 2020 to 23% for those participating in PD in 2016 (see Table 1.2).

Table 1.2. Survey Response Rates, Overall and by Most Recent Year of PD Attendance

Category	Number of Surveys Returned	Number of Surveys Delivered	Survey Response Rate
Overall	1,228	3,076	39.9%
Last Participated in 2016	132	567	23.3%
Last Participated in 2017	144	501	28.7%
Last Participated in 2018	302	802	37.7%
Last Participated in 2019	423	826	51.2%
Last Participated in 2020	227	380	59.7%

Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

Data Preparation and Analysis

Resulting data were downloaded from the Qualtrics survey system and imported into Stata for analysis. Reliability analyses were conducted to examine whether the items created to measure a given construct were appropriately inter-correlated. An alpha coefficient above .80 is generally accepted as strong justification for computing scale scores. Chronbach’s alpha coefficients for all constructs exceeded these minimum standards (see Table 1.3). These high alpha levels provide the justification necessary for

² It is important to note that the status of an email as delivered does not account for emails that were sent to unused email accounts, delivered directly into spam folders, or simply never read.

combining items into scale scores and for conducting further analyses using these scale scores (reported in Section 5), as well as for analyzing individual items.

Table 1.3 Chronbach’s Alpha Coefficients for All Constructs of Measurement

Construct Scale	Mean	Chronbach’s Alpha
Impact on Career Decisions	2.61	0.84
Impact on Content Knowledge	3.52	0.89
Delivery of Instruction	3.71	0.96
Impact on Instructional Strategies	3.45	0.92
Structure and Relevance	3.74	0.98
Impact on Student Learning	3.34	0.96

Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

With scale scores computed, descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were conducted to examine the attitudes and perceptions of participating teachers, and to investigate differences in attitudes and perceptions between groups (e.g., teachers with more compared to less experience, teachers working in higher achieving rather than lower achieving schools, etc.). For open-ended responses, data were coded and thematically analyzed to determine the frequency of themes.

Organization of the Report

Following this introduction, Section 2 presents a profile of the Humanities Texas PD participants who responded to the survey. Section 3 presents information about how PD attendees viewed the quality and relevance of the PD, the quality of the Humanities Texas faculty teaching the sessions, and reasons why educators decided to attend the PD. Section 4 of the report describes how attendees of the social studies- and ELA-related sessions feel their participation in the program impacted their content knowledge, instructional practices, collaboration with fellow educators, student learning, and career decisions. Lastly, Section 5 includes an analysis of survey constructs disaggregated by educator (e.g., years of teaching experience, certification route) and school (e.g., Title I school, TEA accountability rating, demographics of enrolled students) characteristics. Appendix A provides tables which outline the survey items associated with each of the six survey constructs included in Section 5 analyses.

Section 2: Characteristics of Humanities Texas PD Participants and of the Schools at which They Teach

This report section provides a profile of educators who completed the spring 2020 Humanities Texas PD participant survey. This section also includes state administrative data from Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR) to provide a profile of the schools where Humanities Texas PD participants were working when they most recently attended training.

Characteristics of Educators Attending Humanities Texas PD

The reach of the Humanities Texas PD program is broad, with the 3,071 teachers who attended PD between January 1, 2016, and March 1, 2020 having taught in 438 of the 1,201 school districts in Texas (36%), and at 1,285 different campuses across the state (15%). PD participants teach in school districts located in each of the 36 congressional districts in Texas. Teachers attending PD taught in schools where nearly 1.4 million students, or approximately 26% of all Texas public school children, are enrolled.

As Table 2.1 shows, 60% of teachers attended more than one Humanities Texas PD program over the 2016 to 2020 period. The plurality of educators (40% overall, 38% of social studies teachers, and 46% of ELA teachers) attended just one Humanities Texas PD program over this time period. For multiple attendance, 22% of educators attended two PD offerings by Humanities Texas and 15% attended three programs of study. Approximately twice as many social studies teachers (28%) have attended four or more Humanities Texas PD programs than ELA teachers (14%).

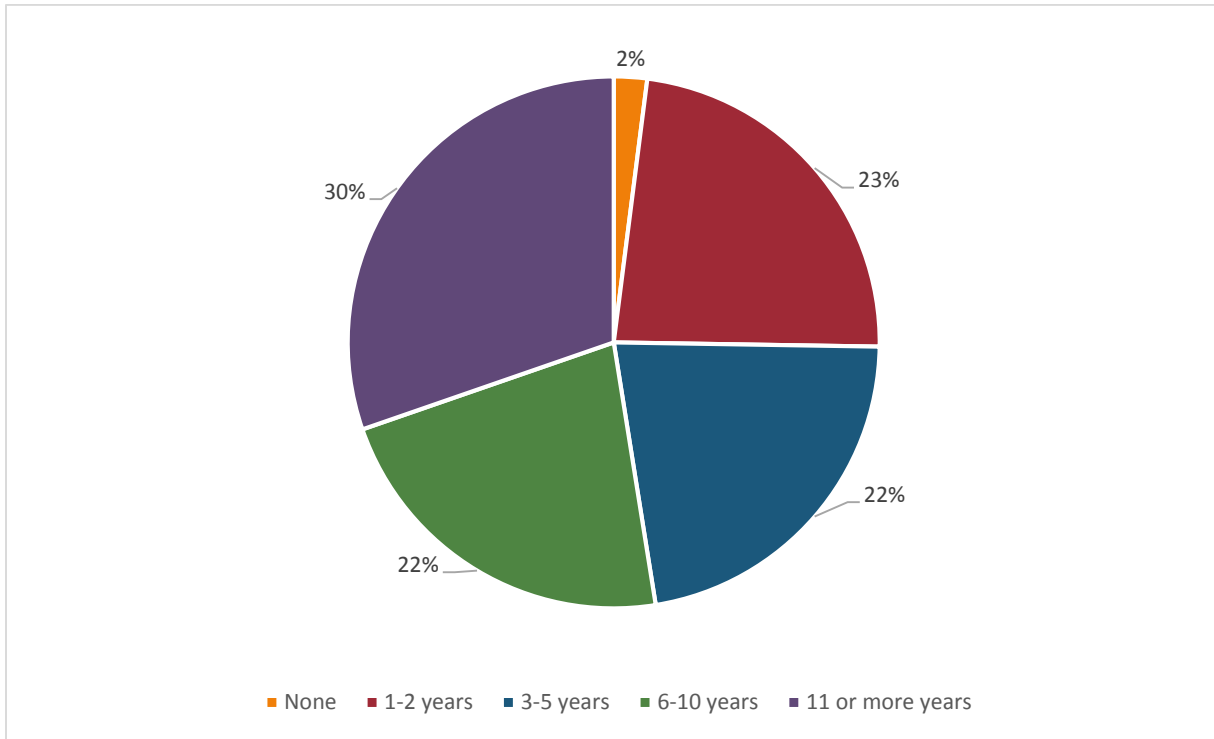
Table 2.1. Percentage of Humanities Texas PD Attendees Participating in One or More Programs, 2016–2020

Category	All Survey Respondents	Social Studies Teachers Responding to Survey	ELA Teachers Responding to Survey
1 Program	40.1%	37.7%	45.9%
2 Programs	22.0%	22.0%	21.4%
3 Programs	15.2%	12.1%	19.1%
4 Programs	8.7%	10.3%	6.4%
5 Programs	5.1%	5.9%	3.6%
6 Programs	3.3%	4.7%	1.5%
7+ Programs	5.5%	7.2%	2.1%

Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

Humanities Texas focuses on serving early-career teachers. Just under half (47%) of teachers attending Humanities PD were in their first five years of teaching,³ and the majority (70%) had 10 or fewer years of teaching experience when they first participated in the PD program. As Figure 2.1 shows, comparable proportions of PD attendees had one to two years (23%), three to five (22%), or six to 10 years (22%) of teaching experience when they first attended. This distribution was consistent for social studies and ELA teachers who participated in PD programs related to their content areas.

Figure 2.1. Number of Years of Teaching Experience at the Time of Humanities Texas PD Attendance



Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

The vast majority of PD attendees were classroom teachers (92%), with 2% identifying as education administrators and the remaining 6% indicating that they are currently employed in another position either within or outside of education.⁴ As Table 2.2 shows, approximately one-third of the survey respondents (33%) indicated that they teach Advanced Placement (AP) courses at their school, which included 35% of social studies teachers and 30% of ELA teachers.

Just over half of teachers attending Humanities Texas PD (51%) indicated that their highest degree earned was a bachelor’s degree, while 47% indicated that they had earned a master’s degree. A higher proportion

³ This includes 2% who indicated that they had no teaching experience at the time they attended Humanities Texas PD.

⁴ It is important to note that those PD attendees who are not currently teaching may have changed from the classroom to instructional coach or administrative positions.

of ELA teachers shared that they had earned a master’s degree (51%) than did social studies teachers (41%) (see Table 2.2).

Table 2.2. Characteristics of Teachers Attending Humanities Texas PD

Category	All Respondents	Social Studies Teachers	ELA Teachers
Teaching Certification			
Traditional (e.g., university program)	55%	54%	56%
Alternative	45%	46%	44%
Highest Degree Earned			
Bachelor’s Degree	51%	57%	47%
Master’s Degree	47%	41%	51%
Doctoral Degree	2%	2%	2%
Advanced Placement Courses			
Teacher Taught AP Courses	33%	35%	30%

Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

As Table 2.3 shows, the vast majority of Humanities Texas PD attendees were either teaching grades 6-8 (47%) or grades 9-12 (54%). Overall, just over 3% of PD attendees were teaching elementary school grades (K-5). Substantial differences were observed in the grades taught by social studies and ELA teachers who participated in the PD program. Over half (58%) of participating social studies teachers worked with students in grades 6, 7, and 8 compared to just 26% of ELA teachers attending the PD. Meanwhile, just 45% of social studies teachers taught grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 courses compared to 71% of ELA teachers who attended Humanities Texas PD.

While still relatively uncommon, ELA teachers were also more likely to have taught upper elementary grades 3-5 (7%) than social studies teachers (1%). Very few teachers (0.2%) who taught lower elementary students (grades K-2) attended the PD programs (see Table 2.3).

Table 2.3. Grades Currently Being Taught by Humanities Texas PD Attendees

Grade Level Taught	All Respondents	Social Studies Teachers	ELA Teachers
Grades K-2	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%
Grades 3-5	3.2%	1.1%	7.2%
Grades 6-8	46.6%	57.9%	25.5%
Grades 9-12	54.4%	45.3%	71.3%

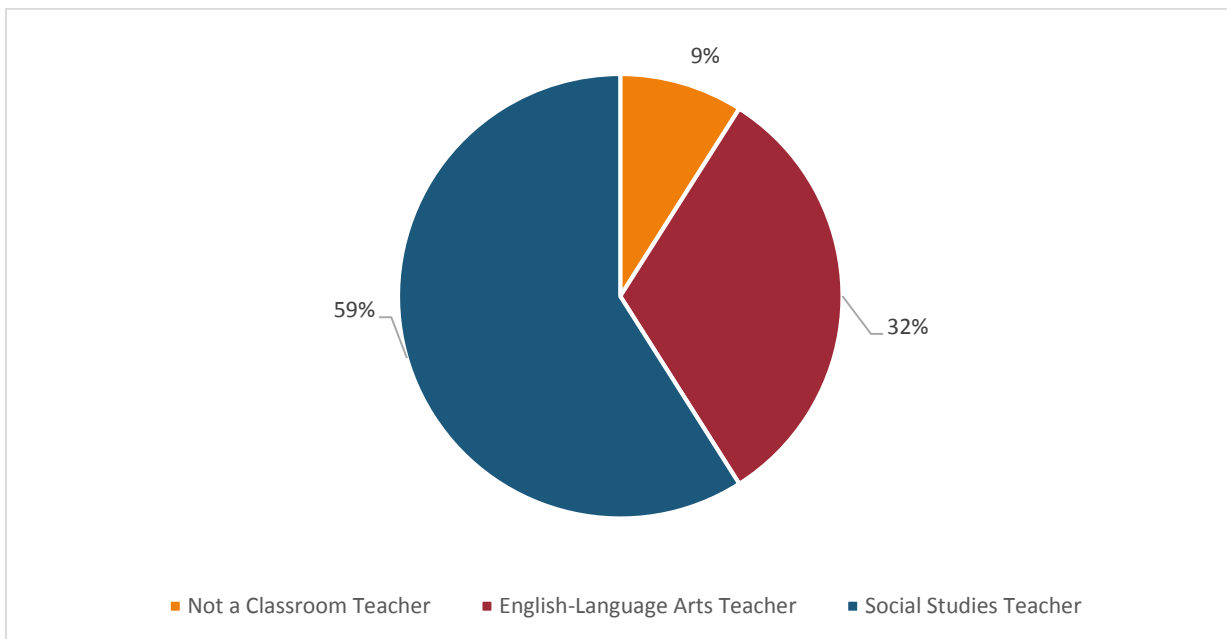
Grade Level Taught	All Respondents	Social Studies Teachers	ELA Teachers
Postsecondary	6.0%	5.2%	7.5%

Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

Note: Percentages do not total to 100% because teachers may have indicated that they are currently teaching classes at different grade levels.

As Figure 2.2 illustrates, 59% of survey respondents identified themselves as social studies teachers, while 32% of survey respondents indicated that they are ELA teachers, and 9% of survey respondents noted that they are not currently classroom teachers. This distribution of social studies and ELA teachers in the survey sample makes sense because the PD program for social studies teachers is larger and has been in existence for many more years than the ELA program.

Figure 2.2. Content Area in Which Humanities Texas PD Participants Principally Teach

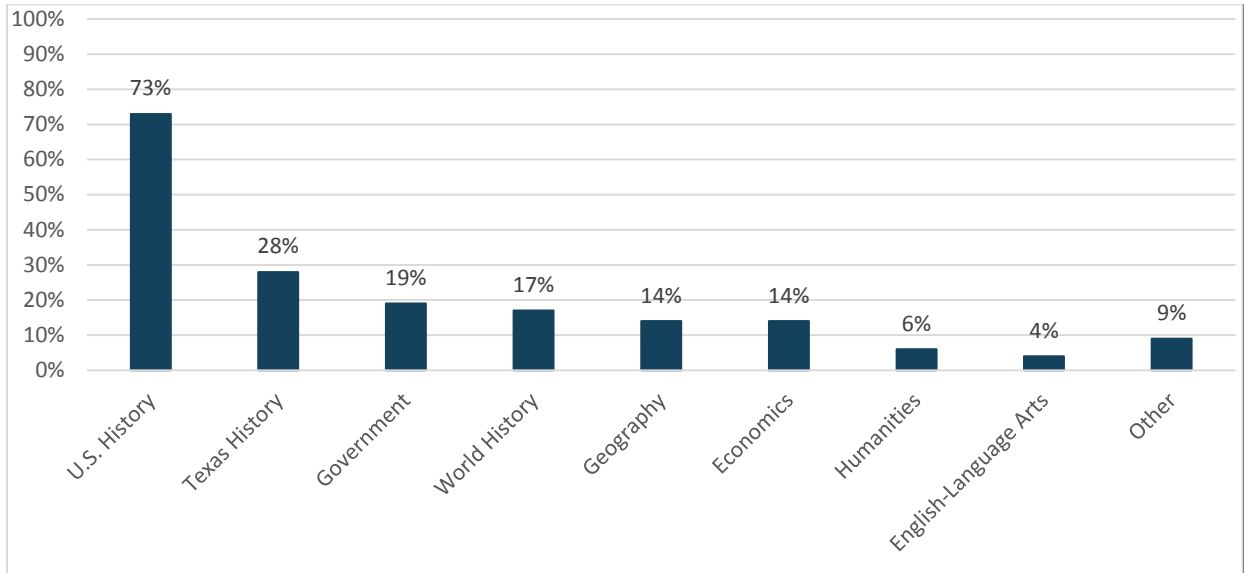


Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

Note: Results based on 928 survey respondents.

As Figure 2.3 illustrates, the majority of social studies teachers who participated in Humanities Texas PD taught U.S. History (73%). Breaking down the remaining subject areas, 28% of social studies teachers indicated they taught Texas History, 19% taught government courses, 17% taught World History, 14% taught geography courses, 14% taught economics courses, and 6% taught Humanities courses. A small number of social studies teachers also taught ELA courses (4%) while 9% indicated that they taught a different subject area.

Figure 2.3. Subject Areas Currently Being Taught by Social Studies Teachers Who Attended Humanities Texas PD

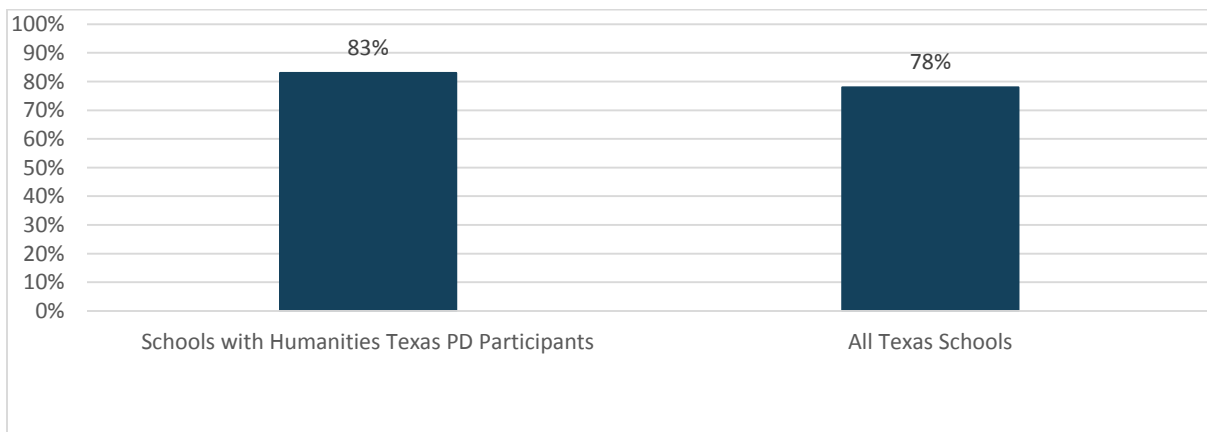


Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

Profile of Schools Where Humanities Texas PD Attendees Teach

Title I schools have large concentrations of low-income students, and they receive supplemental federal funds to assist in meeting the educational goals of their students. As Figure 2.4 illustrates, teachers attending Humanities Texas PD over the 2016-2020 period (83%) were more likely to be teaching at Title I schools when compared to the statewide average (78%).

Figure 2.4. Percentage of Teachers Working at Title I Schools, Humanities Texas PD Participants vs. Statewide

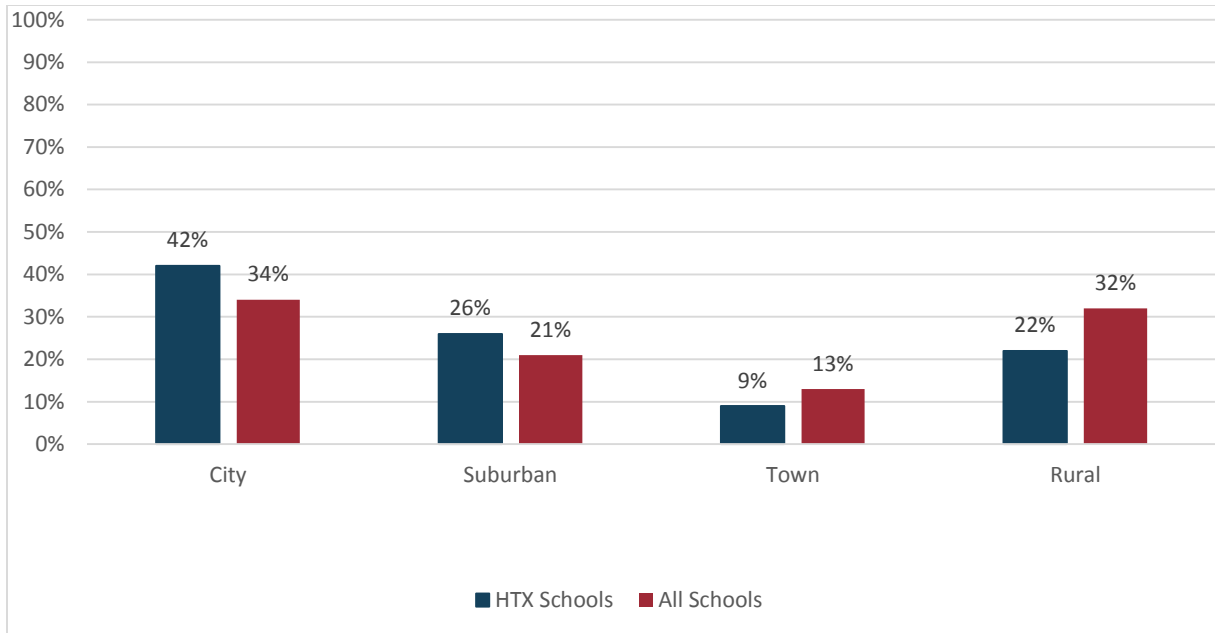


Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

Note: To ensure comparability of results, elementary schools were dropped from the calculation because of the small percentage of elementary teachers attending Humanities Texas PD.

When compared to all Texas schools, larger proportions of teachers attending Humanities Texas PD programs were from cities (42% vs. 34% statewide), and suburbs (26% vs. 21% statewide). In contrast, smaller percentages of teachers attending Humanities Texas PD programs were from rural areas (22% vs. 32% statewide), and towns (9% vs. 13% statewide).

Figure 2.5. Percentage of Teachers Working at Schools Categorized as Cities, Suburbs, Towns, and Rural, Humanities Texas PD Participants vs. Statewide

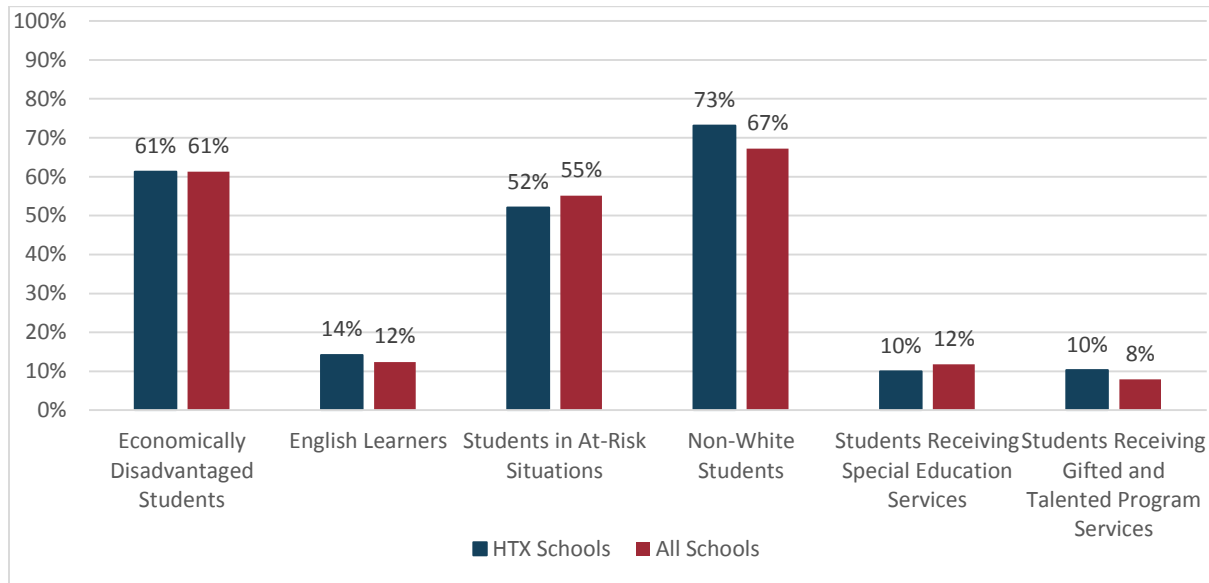


Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

Note: To ensure comparability of results, elementary schools were dropped from the calculation because of the small percentage of elementary teachers attending Humanities Texas PD.

As Figure 2.6 shows, on average, teachers who attended Humanities Texas PD came from schools with 73% of their students being non-white, 61% of their students being economically disadvantaged, 52% being categorized as at-risk, 14% English learners, 10% receiving special education services, and 10% enrolled in gifted & talented programs. For the majority for most student characteristics analyzed (e.g., economically disadvantaged status, English learners, at-risk status, special education status, and gifted & talented program participation), only minor differences were observed between Humanities Texas schools and all schools across the state of Texas. However, a larger proportion of Humanities Texas participants (73%) worked at schools with high proportions of non-white students (i.e., Hispanic, African-American, Asian or Pacific Islander, or Native American) compared to the percent of these race/ethnicity groups statewide (67%).

Figure 2.6. Average Percentage of Enrolled Students by Characteristics and Program Status, Humanities Texas PD Participants vs. Statewide



Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

Note: To ensure comparability of results, elementary schools were dropped from the calculation because of the small percentage of elementary teachers attending Humanities Texas PD.

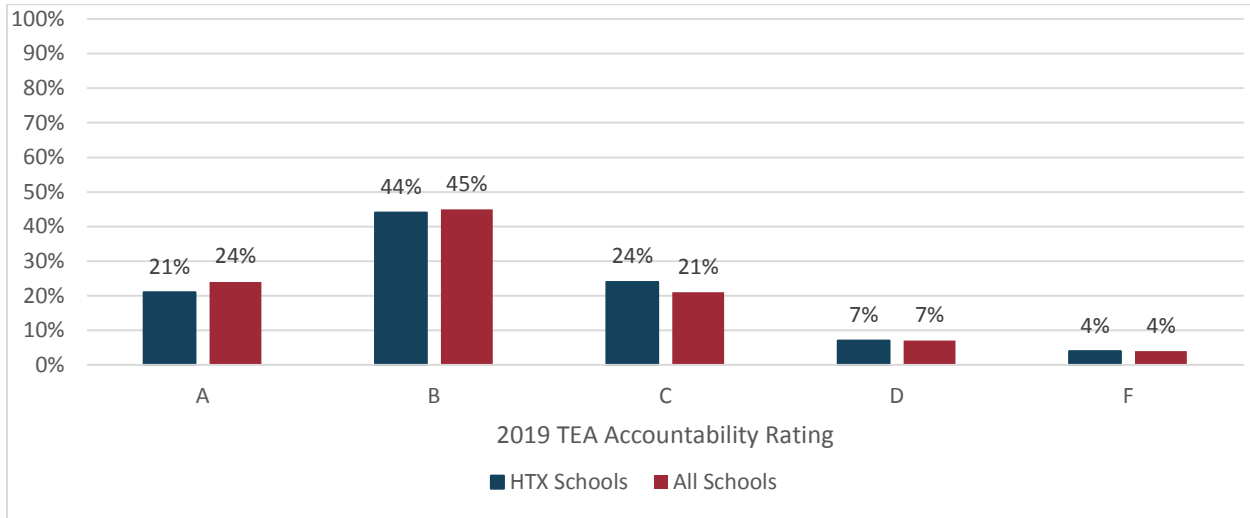
Each year, TEA calculates state accountability ratings for school districts, charters, and schools and campuses across the state. They receive an overall rating of A, B, C, D, or F based on performance in three areas: 1) Student Achievement, which shows how much students know and are able to do at the end of the school year; 2) School Progress, which shows how students perform over time and how that growth compares to similar schools; and 3) Closing the Gaps, which shows how well different groups of students within a school are performing.⁵

As Figure 2.7 shows, a smaller percentage of schools employing teachers who attended Humanities Texas PD received a school rating of “A” from TEA (21%) than all school across the state (24%). Similarly, a larger proportion of schools employing teachers who participated in the Humanities Texas PD received a school rating of “C” or lower from TEA (35%) than all school across the state (32%). The mean grade point average (GPA) for Humanities Texas schools is 2.71 versus 2.78 for all schools in Texas.⁶

⁵ For additional information about the Texas Accountability System, please visit the following TEA website: <https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/accountability/academic-accountability/performance-reporting/2019-accountability-rating-system>

⁶ GPA is calculated based on the following rating system: A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, F=0.

Figure 2.7. Percentage of Schools with TEA School Performance Ratings of A to F, Humanities Texas PD Participants vs. Statewide



Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

Note: To ensure comparability of results, elementary schools were dropped from the calculation because of the small percentage of elementary teachers attending Humanities Texas PD. Schools without TEA ratings were excluded from the analysis.

Section 3: Perceptions of the Quality and Relevance of the Humanities Texas PD Content, Faculty Quality, and Reasons for Attending the Program

This section of the report relies on survey data collected from educators who participated in the Humanities Texas PD program over the 2016 to spring 2020 period. The perspective of PD participants regarding the following areas are described in this report section: 1) the quality and relevance of PD program content; 2) the quality of Humanities Texas faculty; and 3) reasons for attending the Humanities Texas PD program.

Quality and Relevance of PD Program Content

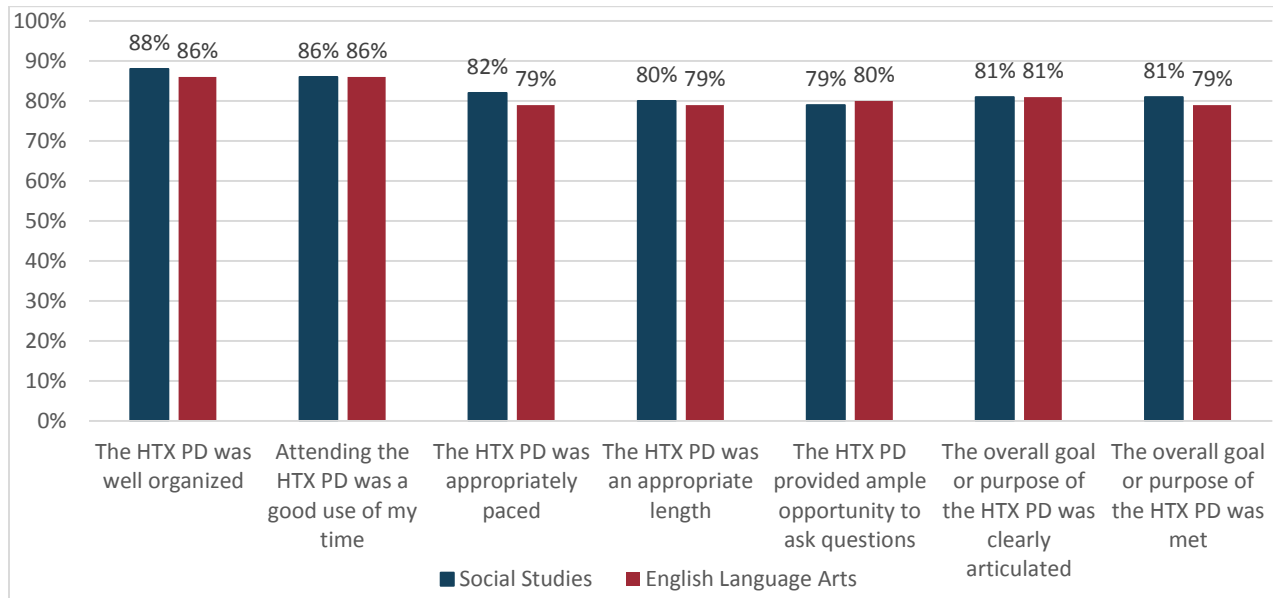
Humanities Texas PD participants rated each of the quality and relevance metrics highly. For each of the items examined, 95% to 96% either agreed or strongly agreed that the PD program was well organized, appropriately paced, an appropriate length, and a good use of their time. Similarly, equally high percentages of survey respondents agreed that the goal or purpose of the PD session was clearly articulated and that the goal was met. Little variation between social studies and ELA program participants was observed.

To assess variation among the relevance and quality survey items, and to measure the strength of teachers' sentiments regarding the Humanities Texas PD, Figure 3.1 displays the proportion of survey respondents who were in "strong agreement" with the various statements. As Figure 3.1 shows, strong agreement was evident across all of the quality and relevance items with little variation between teachers attending social studies or ELA PD sessions. Between 86% and 88% of survey respondents strongly agreed that the Humanities Texas PD was well organized and 86% strongly agreed that it was a good use of their time. Depending on the item and the content area, between 79% and 82% were in strong agreement that the Humanities Texas PD program was appropriately paced, was of an appropriate length, had clearly articulated purpose and goals, and that the goals of the PD were met.

Social studies teachers were asked if primary source materials used were relevant to their learning and teaching. The vast majority of social studies teachers responding to the survey (96%) were in agreement this was true, with 78% in strong agreement.

ELA teachers were also asked whether authors, texts, and resources covered in the Humanities Texas program were relevant to their learning and teaching. The majority (93%) were in agreement that these were relevant to their learning and teaching, and 80% strongly agreed with the statement.

Figure 3.1. Percentage of Teachers Who “Strongly Agreed” with Items Related to the Quality and Relevance of Humanities Texas PD



Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

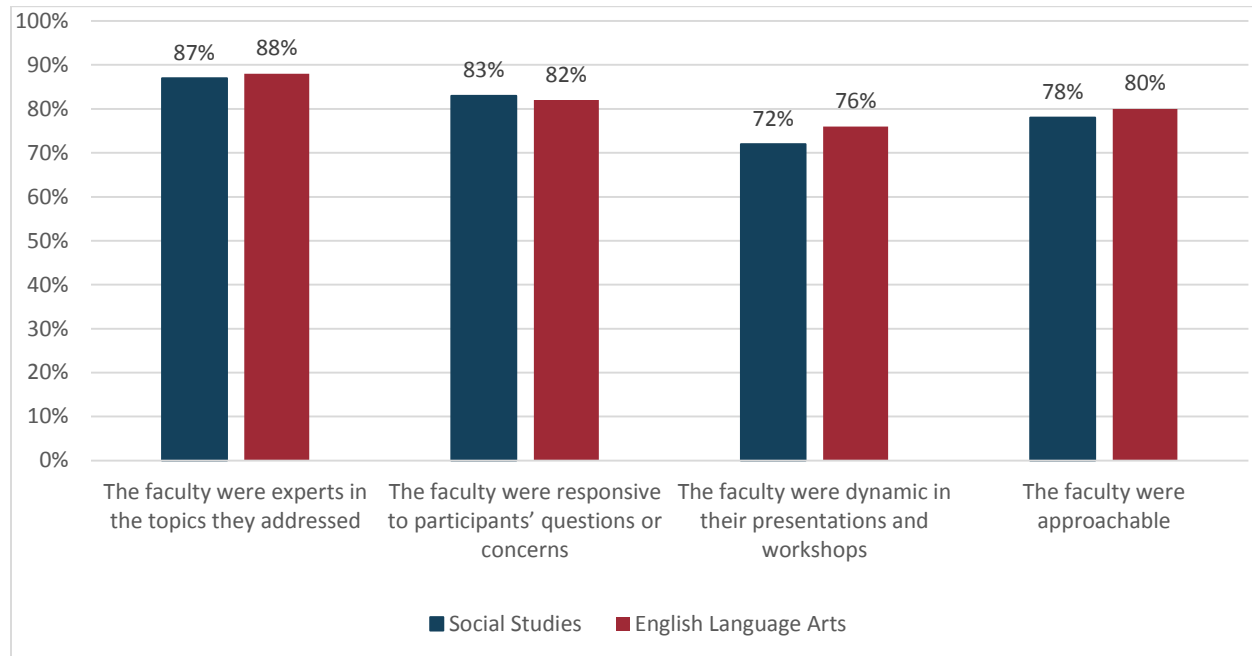
Quality of Program Faculty

Educators attending Humanities Texas PD were also asked to rate the quality of the presenters who led the social studies and ELA-based sessions. Similar to the results for the quality and relevance of PD presented above, the overwhelming majority of survey respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that the faculty were experts in the topics they addressed (96%), the faculty were responsive to participants’ questions or concerns (96%), the faculty were dynamic in their presentations and workshops (96%), and the faculty were approachable (95%). This level of agreement was consistently strong across both social studies and ELA program participants.

In Figure 3.2, the percentage of survey respondents who “strongly agreed” with the presenter quality items are presented for social studies and ELA program participants. As the graph shows, 87% of social studies teachers and 88% of ELA teachers strongly agreed that the faculty were experts in the content they covered, and 83% of social studies teachers and 82% of ELA teachers were in strong agreement that presenters were responsive to questions and concerns posed by PD attendees.

Approachability of faculty is another important measure of presenter quality. A majority (78%) of social studies teachers and 80% of ELA teachers were in strong agreement that the faculty members were approachable for PD attendees. While still decidedly positive, a somewhat lower proportion of survey respondents (72% to 76%) were in strong agreement that the faculty were dynamic in their presentations and workshops. A higher percentage (76%) of ELA teachers strongly agreed that their presenters were dynamic than did social studies teachers (72%) (see Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2. Percentage of Teachers who “Strongly Agreed” with Items Related to the Quality of Humanities Texas PD Faculty



Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

Reasons for Humanities Texas PD Attendance

Survey respondents were asked to rank a series of reasons why they attended the Humanities Texas PD program. Program participants were provided with 12 potential reasons for attending the PD program and were provided guidance to rank only the top four reasons from one to four. Table 3.1 shows the percentage of respondents who ranked each of the 12 items as one of the two most important reasons for attending Humanities Texas PD.

As Table 3.1 shows, regardless of content area, the highest ranked reasons for attending the Humanities Texas program were to improve content/subject area knowledge (which was ranked as one of the top two reasons by 62% of social studies teachers and 52% of ELA teachers), and the organization's good reputation for hosting high-quality PD (ranked as one of the top two reasons by 43% of social studies teachers and 32% of ELA teachers). In fact, social studies and ELA teachers included the same five reasons (although in different orders of importance) for attending. These key attendance drivers included:

- To learn from leading scholars in the field that they teach (ranked as one of the top two reasons by 27% of social studies teachers and 23% of ELA teachers);
- To obtain useful resources and materials (ranked as one of the top two reasons by 24% of social studies teachers and 24% of ELA teachers); and
- To learn new instructional strategies (ranked as one of the top two reasons by 15% of social studies teachers and 25% of ELA teachers).

Other factors having a substantive influence on teachers' decisions to participate in Humanities Texas PD included encouragement to attend by colleagues, to improve student engagement in their classes, and to earn continuing education credits. The desire to improve students' critical reading skills also emerged as an important reason for attending the PD session (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1. Percent of Social Studies and ELA Teachers Ranking the Following Reasons as One of the Top Two Most Important Factors in Attending Humanities Texas PD

Reason for Attending Humanities Texas PD	Social Studies	ELA
To improve my content/subject area knowledge	62% (#1 Rank)	52% (#1 Rank)
Humanities Texas has a good reputation for high-quality PD institutes	43% (#2 Rank)	32% (#2 Rank)
To learn from leading scholars in the field that I teach	27% (#3 Rank)	23% (#5 Rank)
To obtain useful resources and materials	24% (#4 Rank)	24% (#4 Rank)
To learn new instructional strategies	15% (#5 Rank)	25% (#3 Rank)
To earn continuing education credits	12% (#6 Rank)	9% (#9 Rank)
I was encouraged to attend by a colleague	11% (#7 Rank)	17% (#6 Rank)
To improve student engagement	10% (#8 Rank)	11% (#7 Rank)
I was encouraged to attend by my school or district	7% (#9 Rank)	7% (#10 Rank)
To learn about how I can better prepare my students for state assessments	6% (#10 Rank)	4% (#11 Rank)
To improve students' critical reading skills	5% (#11 Rank)	10% (#8 Rank)
To prepare for a course I was scheduled to teach for the first time	4% (#12 Rank)	3% (#12 Rank)

Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

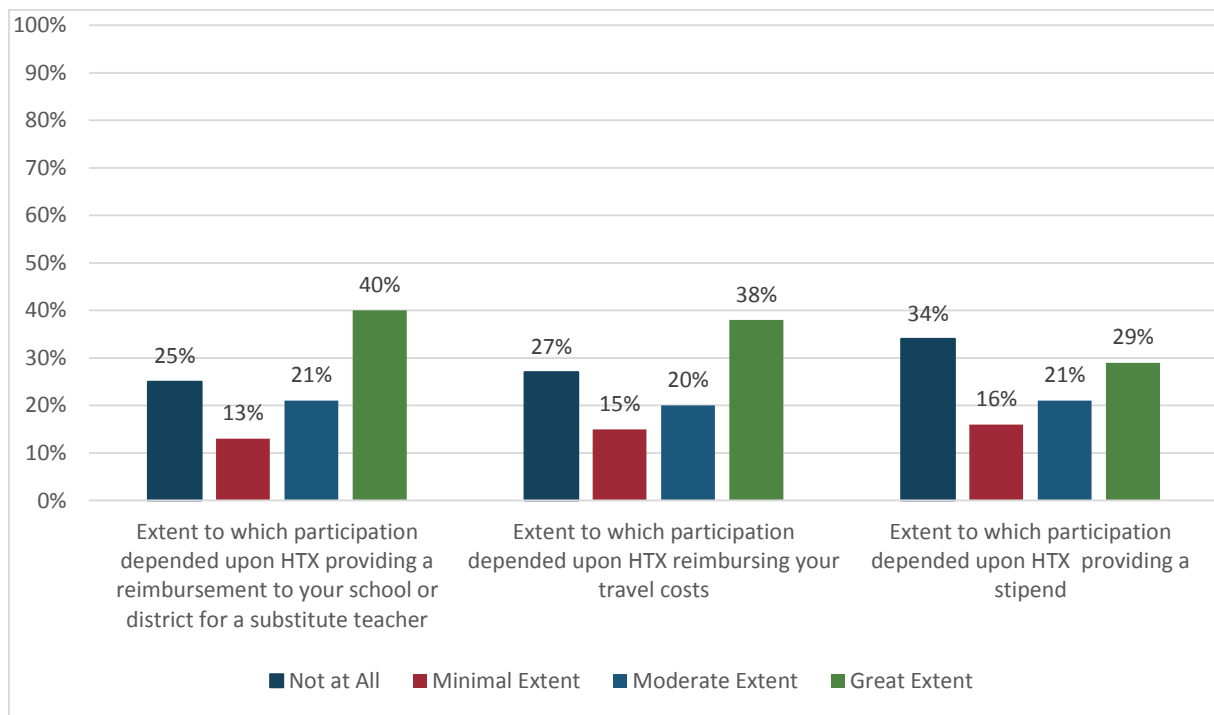
Survey respondents were also asked about the extent to which financial incentives directly impacted their decision to attend the Humanities Texas PD program. As Figure 3.3 illustrates, financial incentives, in the form of reimbursements to the teacher's school or district to pay for substitute teachers, reimbursement of travel costs, and stipends had a moderate or great impact on their decision to attend the program. A

majority (61%) of PD participants indicated that having Humanities Texas provide their school or district with reimbursement for substitute teacher costs impacted their decision to attend the PD to a moderate extent (21%) or a great extent (40%). Similarly, 58% of PD participants indicated that having Humanities Texas reimburse their travel costs impacted their decision to attend the program to a moderate extent (20%) or a great extent (38%).

While still important, having Humanities Texas provide educators with a stipend to attend the PD program was less impactful than either school district or travel cost reimbursements. Half of the survey respondents (50%) indicated that having Humanities Texas provide them with a stipend to attend the PD impacted their decision to attend the PD to a moderate extent (21%) or a great extent (29%). The other half of survey respondents reported that providing a stipend did not impact their decision to attend Humanities Texas PD at all (34%) or it impacted their decision only to a minimal extent (16%) (see Figure 3.3).

When the impact of various financial incentives on Humanities Texas program attendance were disaggregated from social studies and ELA teachers, only minor nonsubstantive differences were observed.

Figure 3.3. Extent to which Financial Incentives Directly Impacted Humanities Texas PD Attendance



Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020.

Section 4: Perceived Impact of Humanities Texas PD Program Participation

This section of the report uses survey responses from educators who attended Humanities Texas PD over the 2016 to spring 2020 period to explore the extent to which program participants feel that the training has impacted:

- 1) Content knowledge related to social studies and ELA curricula and instruction;
- 2) Knowledge acquisition and content mastery;
- 3) Teacher collaboration;
- 4) Instructional practices;
- 5) Student learning; and
- 6) Career decisions and professional promotions.

Similar to the previous sections of this report, the results are presented separately for social studies and ELA teachers who attended Humanities Texas programs with significantly different content and objectives.

Impact on Content Knowledge

During Humanities Texas PD institutes and workshops, presenters regularly provide participants with a wide array of resources that teachers can use to enhance instruction in their classrooms. As Figure 4.1 shows, the vast majority of social studies teachers (88%) reported that they have used primary documents in their classrooms that were shared by Humanities Texas faculty. Approximately 44% of social studies instructors also indicated that they have used videos and primary sources available in the Humanities Texas digital repository.⁷

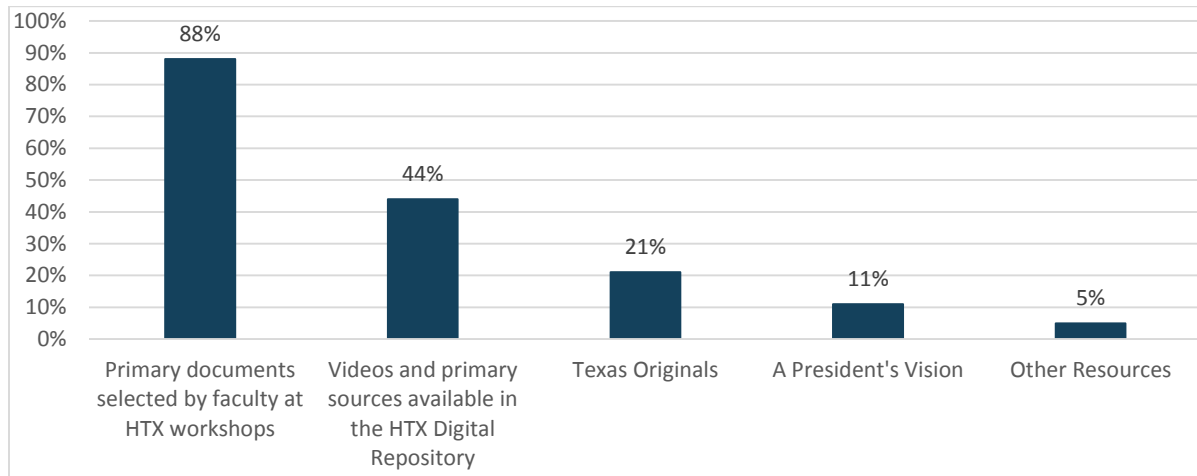
Other resources that may be more tailored to specific course content, such as Texas Originals⁸ (21%), A President's Vision⁹ (11%), and other resources (5%), were utilized less frequently by social studies teachers who attended the program.

⁷ The digital repository is a searchable online collection that includes historical documents, works of art, video recordings of teacher institute faculty lectures, audio recordings, and other resources from Humanities Texas's array of public programs.

⁸ Texas Originals is a weekly radio program profiling individuals who have had a profound influence on Texas history and culture.

⁹ A *President's Vision* is an innovative collection of U.S. history curriculum materials that examine the aspirations of notable U.S. presidents and the programs and initiatives that advanced their personal vision.

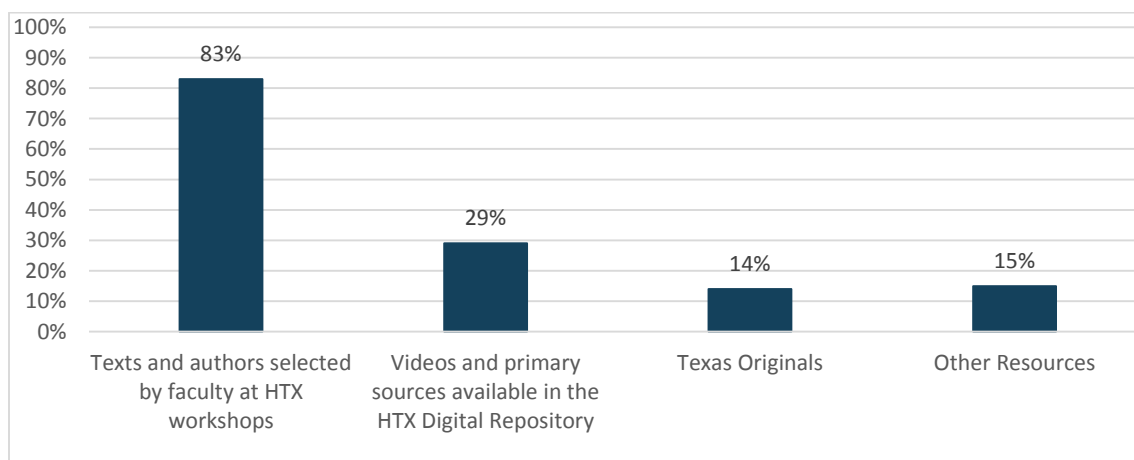
Figure 4.1. Percentage of Social Studies Teachers Using Resources in their Classrooms that were Shared during Humanities Texas Professional Development Programs



Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

As Figure 4.2 shows, the large majority of ELA teachers (83%) reported that they have used texts and authors selected by faculty at Humanities Texas workshops. When compared to social studies teachers, a smaller percentage of ELA instructors (29%) shared that they have used videos and primary sources available in the Humanities Texas digital repository. Just 14% of ELA teachers reported using Texas Originals in their classrooms, and 15% indicated that they used other resources shared during Humanities Texas workshops.

Figure 4.2. Percentage of ELA Teachers Using Resources in their Classrooms that were Shared during Humanities Texas Professional Development Programs



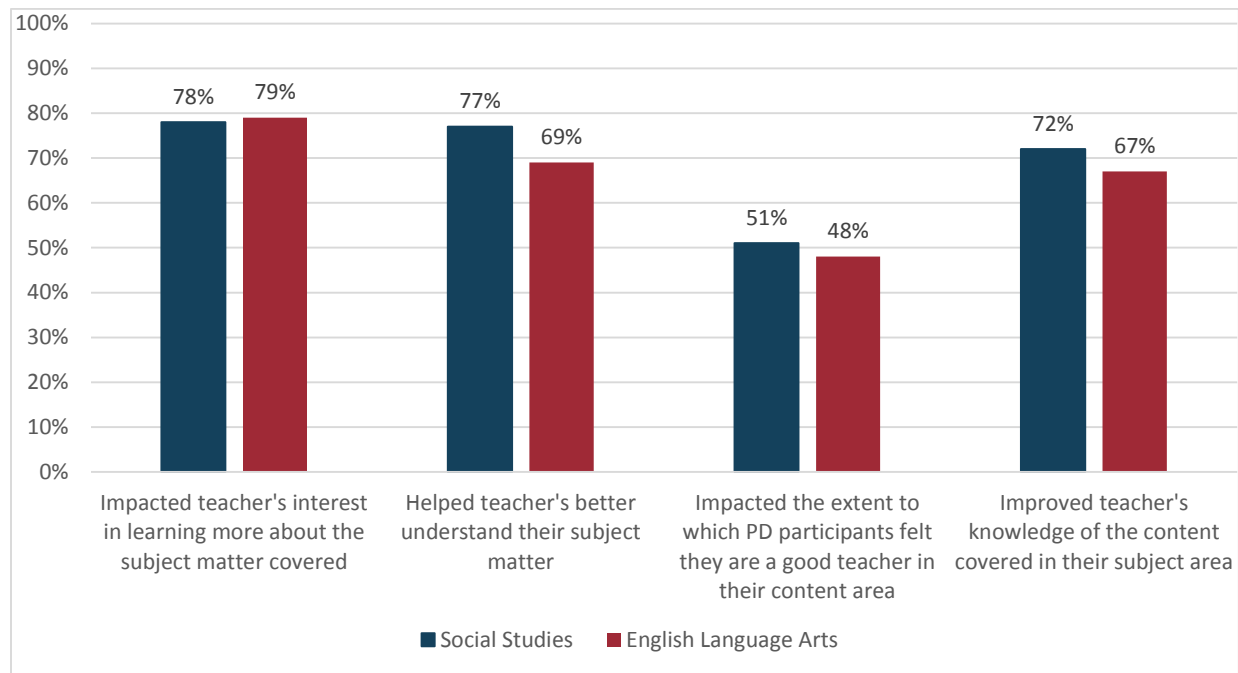
Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

Teachers were asked to rate the extent to which Humanities Texas PD impacted their content knowledge. Regardless of the subject matter covered (i.e., social studies or ELA), the vast majority of survey respondents (94% to 98%) indicated that the PD impacted their interest in learning more about the subject matter covered, their understanding of the subject matter, and knowledge and content covered in their

subject area to a moderate or great extent. Similarly, most survey respondents (87% to 89%) felt that participation in the Humanities Texas PD program impacted the extent to which they felt they were a good teacher in their content area to a moderate or great extent. Very little variation was observed between social studies and ELA teachers.

Comparable percentages of social studies (78%) and ELA (79%) teachers reported that the Humanities Texas PD program they attended impacted their interest in learning more about the subject matter covered “to a great extent.” A larger proportion of social studies teachers (77%) indicated that their participation in the program impacted their understanding of the subject matter “to a great extent”, compared to 69% of ELA teachers. Similarly, more social studies teachers (72%) indicated that participating in the PD program impacted their knowledge and content covered in their subject matter “to a great extent”, compared to 67% of ELA teachers. The impact of the PD on whether teachers felt they are a good teacher in their content area was not as strong as other metrics, with 51% of social studies teachers and 48% of ELA teachers reporting that the PD impacted their feelings on this topic to “a great extent” (Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3. Percentage of Teachers Indicating that Humanities Texas Professional Development Impacted their Content Knowledge “To a Great Extent”



Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

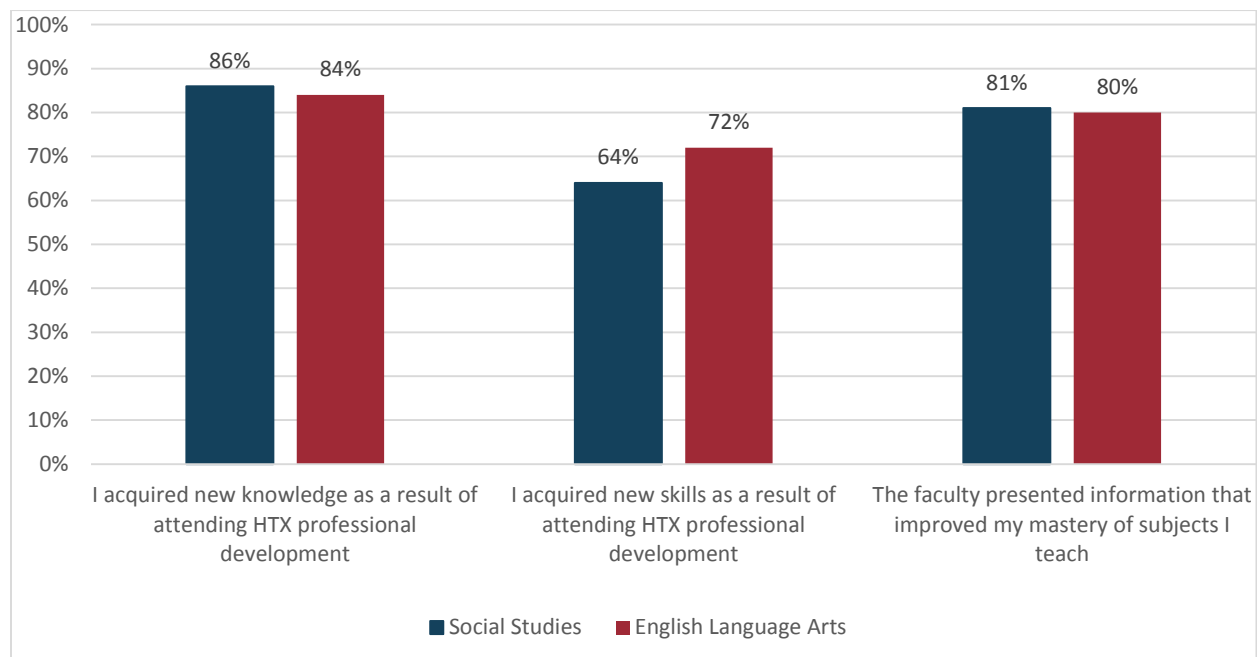
Impact on Knowledge Acquisition and Content Mastery

Teachers were also asked to rate the extent to which participation in the Humanities Texas program impacted knowledge acquisition and content mastery. Regardless of the subject matter covered (i.e., social studies or ELA), the vast majority of survey respondents (93% to 96%) were in agreement that as a

result of attending the PD, they acquired new knowledge, new skills, and that their mastery of the subjects they teach was improved.

As Figure 4.4 illustrates, similar proportions of social studies and ELA teachers “strongly agreed” that the PD program they attended helped them acquire new knowledge (86% of social studies teachers and 84% of ELA teachers) and that they improved their content mastery (81% of social studies teachers and 80% of ELA teachers). ELA teachers (72%) were more likely than social studies teachers (64%) to indicate that they acquired new skills as a result of attending Humanities Texas PD. This may be a result of program design; Humanities Texas ELA programs place greater emphasis on teaching critical reading skills, while the programs for social studies teachers emphasize intensive content coverage.

Figure 4.4. Percentage of Teachers who “Strongly Agreed” that Humanities Texas Professional Development Helped with Knowledge Acquisition and Content Mastery



Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

Survey respondents were asked, in an open-ended question, to provide examples of specific ways in which their knowledge of their subject area was expanded by attending Humanities Texas PD. A total of 858 responses were received by PD participants, accounting for approximately 70% of all survey respondents. Answers were coded into distinct response categories, such as being able to facilitate the use of primary sources. All responses accounting for at least 4% of survey respondents are included in Table 4.1.

As Table 4.1 shows, the most commonly discussed way in which Humanities Texas PD impacted teachers’ knowledge of the subject they teach was through improved understanding of content related to specific social studies or ELA topics covered in the PD workshop they attended (59%). For example, social studies teachers increased their knowledge of the Civil War, the American Revolution, slavery, or the civil rights movement. ELA teachers increased their knowledge of how to teach Harper Lee’s classic novel *To Kill a*

Mockingbird, the poems of Walt Whitman, or the plays of William Shakespeare. An early-career history teacher provided the following example of how the PD attended helped to enhance their knowledge of U.S. History and led to improvements in their instruction and student outcomes.

“When I started teaching U.S. History, I was a novice on the subject. The first workshop I attended, “The Making of Modern America” reinforced my existing knowledge and gave me a great jumping off point to be able to grow in my knowledge and provide dynamic instruction to my students - where I met the campus average, in spite of having never taught U.S. History before AND having co-teach classes.”

An early-career ELA teacher shared that *“The Teaching Shakespeare workshop helped me demystify Shakespeare in the classroom and provided helpful tools, resources, and collaboration for making his works more accessible.”* Another experienced teacher shared the following about how the PD improved her ability to teach *To Kill a Mockingbird* effectively:

“The professional development on TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD provided new and exciting insights into the text. Every presenter added depth to my own understanding.”

Approximately one third (33%) of teachers talked about how the PD they attended improved their ability to present topics in a more sophisticated and complex manner. As an example, a social studies teacher shared the following anecdote:

“Workshops attended helped me add more depth and complexity to teaching. At a presentation of the American Revolution -- the material presented on women of the American Revolution brought new insights I could share with my class that broadened learning and piqued the interest of my students. This led them to more online research of women in the American Revolution.”

As Table 4.1 shows, a substantial portion of teachers also provided examples of how attending Humanities Texas PD increased their knowledge of using primary sources in the classroom (16%), how to engage students (13%), and knowledge of resources they can use to improve their lessons and instructional practices (12%). A teacher with over 10 years of experience in the classroom shared that *“The resources were excellent! Sometimes it is hard for us to find resources so Humanities [Texas] providing resources was a great help!”* An experienced AP teacher discussed how the training impacted her students’ knowledge of primary sources:

“As an AP teacher we have to use primary sources and readings to give our students that knowledge to analyze documents. The readings gave my students a better understanding of the material when compared to the approved textbook.”

Table 4.1. Most Common Ways Teachers’ Knowledge of the Subject They Teach was Impacted by their Participation in Humanities Texas PD

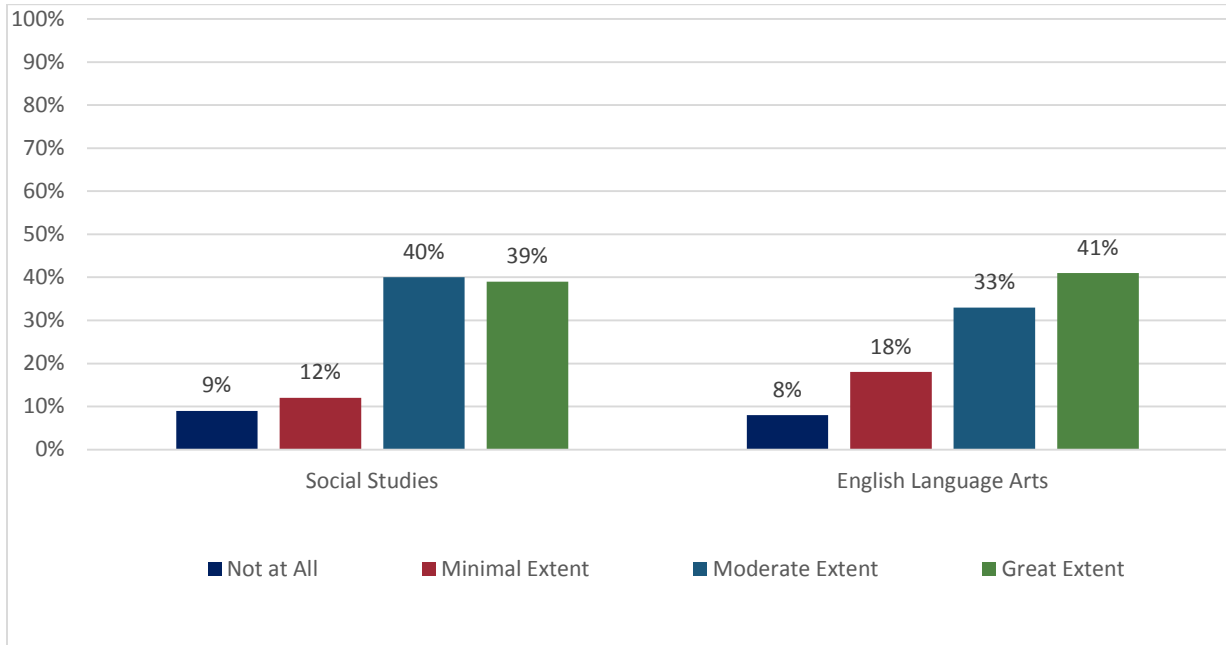
Ways in which Teacher Knowledge was Impacted by Humanities Texas PD	Percent of Respondents
Increased knowledge of a specific social studies or ELA content area (e.g., improved ability to teach civil war content, improved ability to teach poetry)	58.5%
Teachers are able to present topics in more sophisticated, deeper, and complex ways	33.0%
Increased knowledge of primary sources that can be used in the classroom	15.7%
Increased knowledge of how to engage students	12.9%
Provided resources – general	11.9%
Increased teacher content knowledge – general	9.7%
Increased knowledge through learning from PD presenters	9.3%
Teachers were able to teach more diverse, accessible, or culturally relevant materials to student	6.2%
Provided new instructional strategies	5.8%
Increased knowledge of Shakespeare	4.5%
Teacher learns Close Reading Interpretive Tool (CRIT) method	4.3%

Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

Impact on Collaboration with Other Educators

Attendance at an impactful PD workshop can result in teachers returning to their schools and sharing what they have learned with other educators. Teachers were asked to rate how participation in the Humanities Texas program impacted the extent to which they felt connected to other teachers in their content area. As Figure 4.5 shows, 79% of social studies teachers and 74% of ELA teachers reported that PD attendance impacted the extent to which they felt connected to other educators in their respective content areas to a moderate or great extent. Approximately four out of every 10 social studies and ELA teachers shared that Humanities Texas PD participation has impacted this connection to “a great extent.”

Figure 4.5. Extent to which Participation Directly Impacted the Extent to which PD Attendees Felt Connected to Other Teachers in their Content Areas

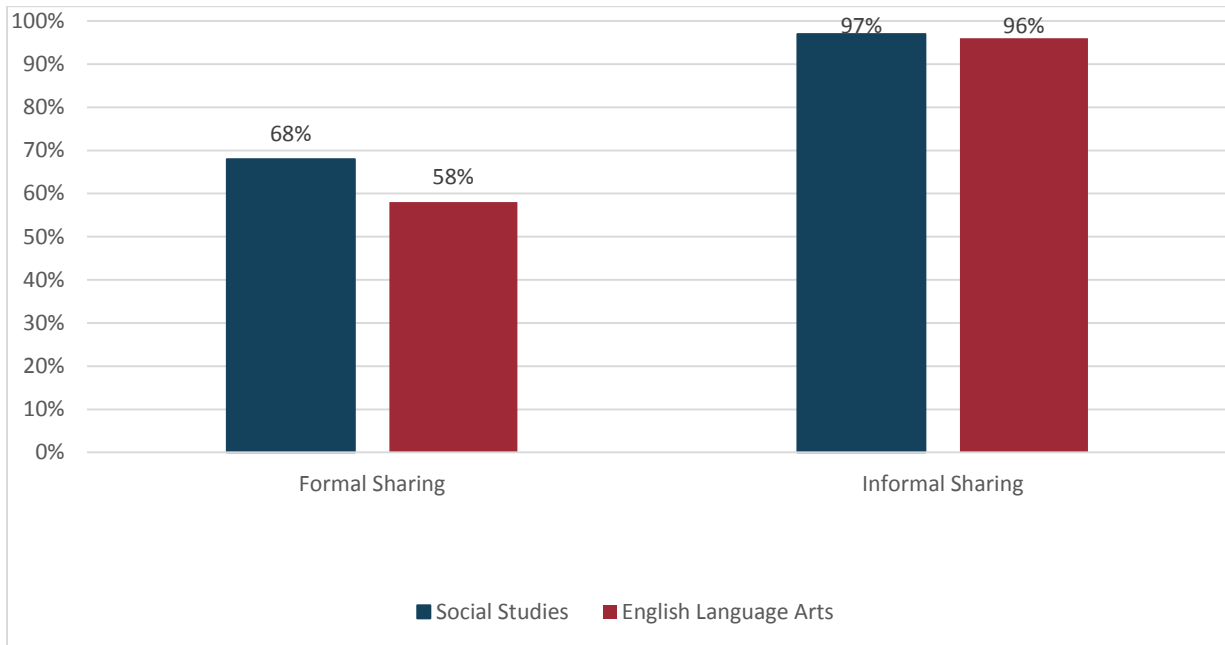


Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

The overwhelming majority of both social studies (97%) and ELA teachers (96%) indicated that they informally shared ideas, knowledge, and resources with other teachers after returning from Humanities Texas PD.

A large proportion of teachers also reported that they formally shared what they learned at Humanities Texas programs through professional learning communities, grade-level meetings, and other presentations to colleagues. Just over two thirds (68%) of social studies teachers and 58% of ELA teacher reported that they formally shared ideas, knowledge, and resources with other teachers after attending PD (see Figure 4.6).

Figure 4.6. Percentage of Teachers Sharing Ideas, Knowledge, and Resources with Other Teachers after Participating in Humanities Texas Institutes or Workshops



Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

When asked to elaborate on the contributions that teachers made to their department, school, or district from Humanities Texas PD, survey respondents commonly shared that they presented information learned at Humanities Texas PD sessions in their grade-level team meetings, departmental meetings, and school wide professional learning communities. An instructional coach who attended training shared the following:

“I am an Instructional Coach for both English and Social Studies. Every time I got to a training I bring back what I have learned and the resources and train my departments on how to use. Then I am able to go into the classrooms and see them put into practice and to help refine what they look like.”

Another teacher reported that they make formal presentations that increased the interest of teachers in attending future Humanities Texas PD offerings:

“I have shared what I have learned and the texts we read and discussed with colleagues and administrators during team meetings. Consequently, teachers were able to take some of what we learned back to their classrooms and have expressed interest in participating in future Humanities Texas PD sessions.”

A large number of educators attending Humanities Texas PD indicated that they shared information related to The Close Reading Interpretive Tool (CRIT) with their colleagues.¹⁰ After returning from Humanities Texas training, an ELA teacher reported how they shared information about CRIT and noted that it has helped to improve instruction at their school:

“I have shared the CRIT interpretive reading tool with my department. We have found it very useful for pre-AP and AP classes and have used it with some modifications for on-level classes. I also shared several of the poetry tools I received with my English II teaching partner. She and I found them helpful in giving students a scaffold for accessing new poems.”

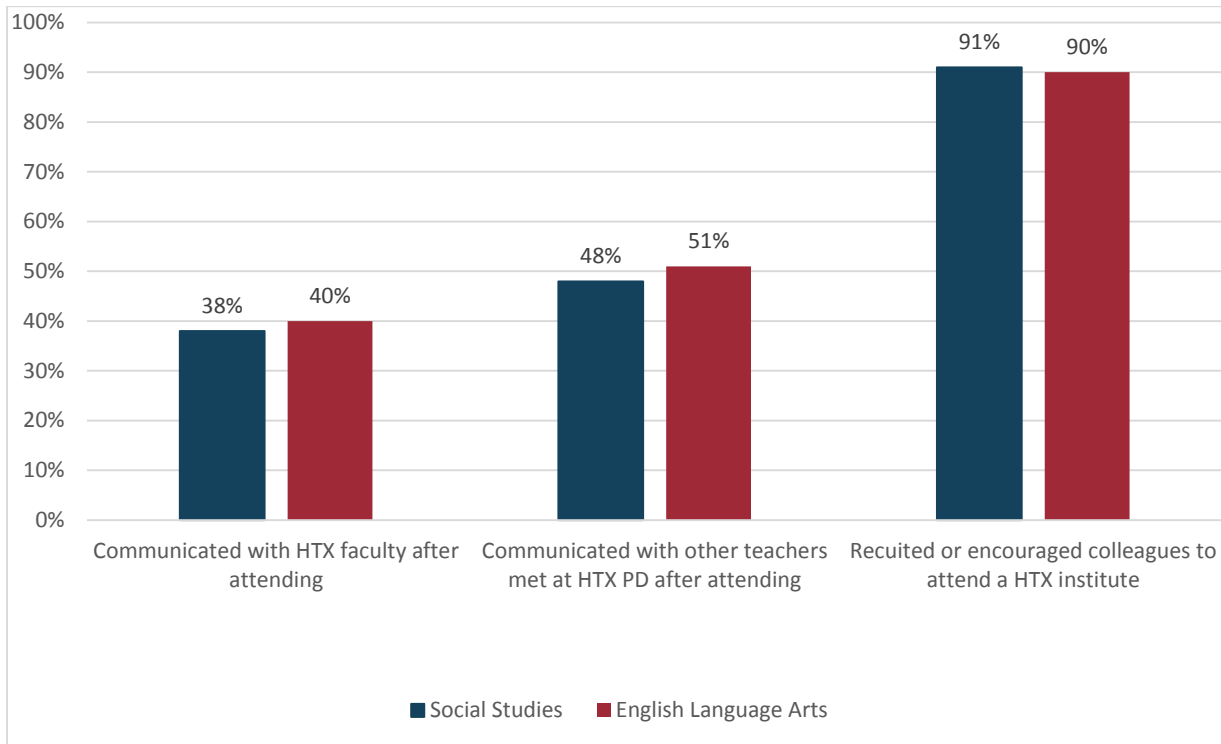
There are additional methods for expanding the impact of Humanities Texas PD participation, including having continued communications with Humanities Texas faculty after the training, continued communications with other educators who attended the same PD, and recruiting or encouraging colleagues to attend the Humanities Texas program.

Over a third (38%) of social studies teachers and 40% of ELA teachers indicated that they communicated with Humanities Texas faculty after attending a workshop, and even higher percentages of social studies (48%) and ELA teachers (51%) reported that they have been in communication with other teachers who attended Humanities Texas program after the workshop concluded (see Figure 4.7).

One of the strongest endorsements of a PD program is having prior attendees recruit or encourage their colleagues to participate in future program offerings. As Figure 4.7 illustrates, the vast majority of both social studies (91%) and ELA (90%) teachers shared that they encouraged their colleagues to enroll in future workshops sponsored by Humanities Texas.

¹⁰ The Close Reading Interpretive Tool (CRIT) is a web-based application that walks students through a systematic process of “close reading” and literary interpretation. Developed in the Department of English at The University of Texas at Austin, the tool is frequently featured in Humanities Texas PD programs for ELA teachers.

Figure 4.7. Percentage of Teachers Communicating with Other Humanities Texas Program Attendees, and Recruiting/Encouraging Colleagues to Attend Humanities Texas PD



Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

Impact on Instructional Practices

Educators attending Humanities Texas PD were asked a series of questions about potential ways in which the workshops may have impacted their work in the classroom specific to the rigor and delivery of content, instructional strategies, and student interactions. For each of the items examined, the vast majority of survey respondents (between 84% and 93% depending upon the item and the content area) reported that the Humanities Texas PD they attended had a moderate or great impact. Little variation in responses was observed between social studies and ELA teachers in this broader metric.

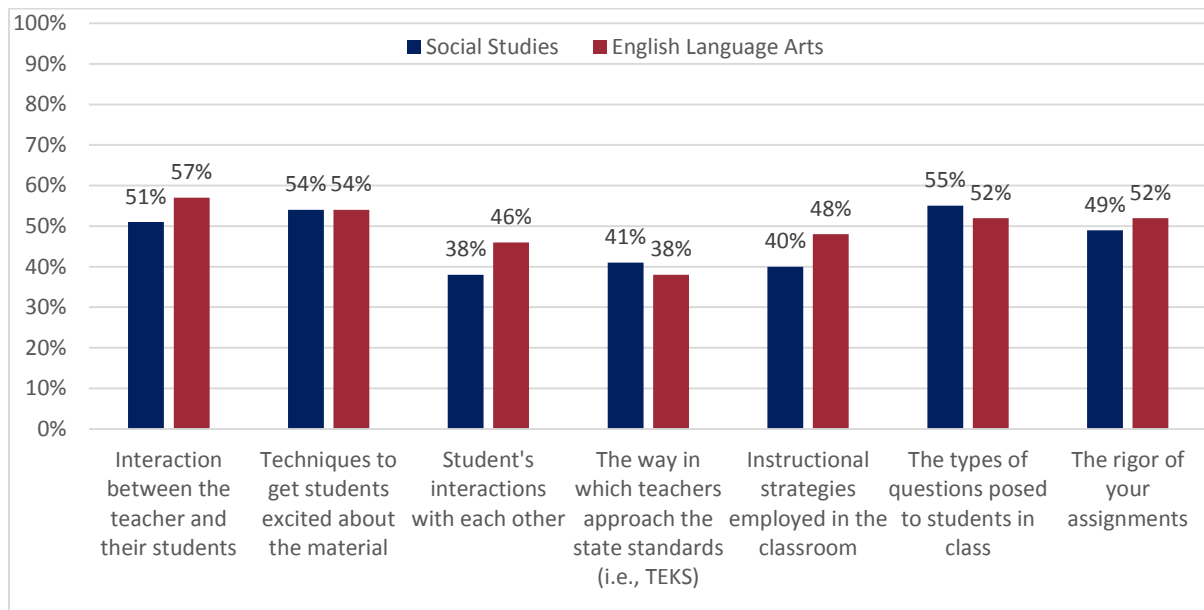
Figure 4.8 displays the percentage of teachers who indicated that PD attendance had impacted the various instructional measures “to a great extent.” Over half of both social studies and ELA teachers indicated this high degree of impact for the following instructional items:

- Interaction between the teacher and their students (51% of social studies teachers and 57% of ELA teachers);
- Techniques to get students excited about the content (54% for both social studies and ELA teachers); and
- The types of questions posed to students in class (55% of social studies teachers and 52% of ELA teachers).

ELA teachers were more likely than social studies teachers to indicate that PD attendance impacted student interactions with each other (46% vs. 38%), instructional strategies employed in the classroom (48% vs. 40%), and the rigor of their assignments (52% vs. 49%) “to a great extent.”

A substantial proportion of teachers also reported that the Humanities Texas program had a strong impact on how they approached the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) standards in their courses. Both teacher groups were similarly impacted (41% of social studies teachers and 38% of ELA teachers) “to a great extent” (see Figure 4.8).

Figure 4.8. Percentage of Humanities Texas PD Participants Who Indicated that their Attendance Impacted Various Instructional Approaches “To a Great Extent”



Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

Survey respondents were asked a second series of questions about additional ways in which the workshops may have impacted their work in the classroom. For each of the items examined below, most social studies and ELA teachers (between 89% and 97%) reported that the Humanities Texas PD they attended had a moderate or great impact on their instructional practices. Again, consistently positive ratings about the impact of the Humanities Texas program were provided by both ELA and social studies teachers.

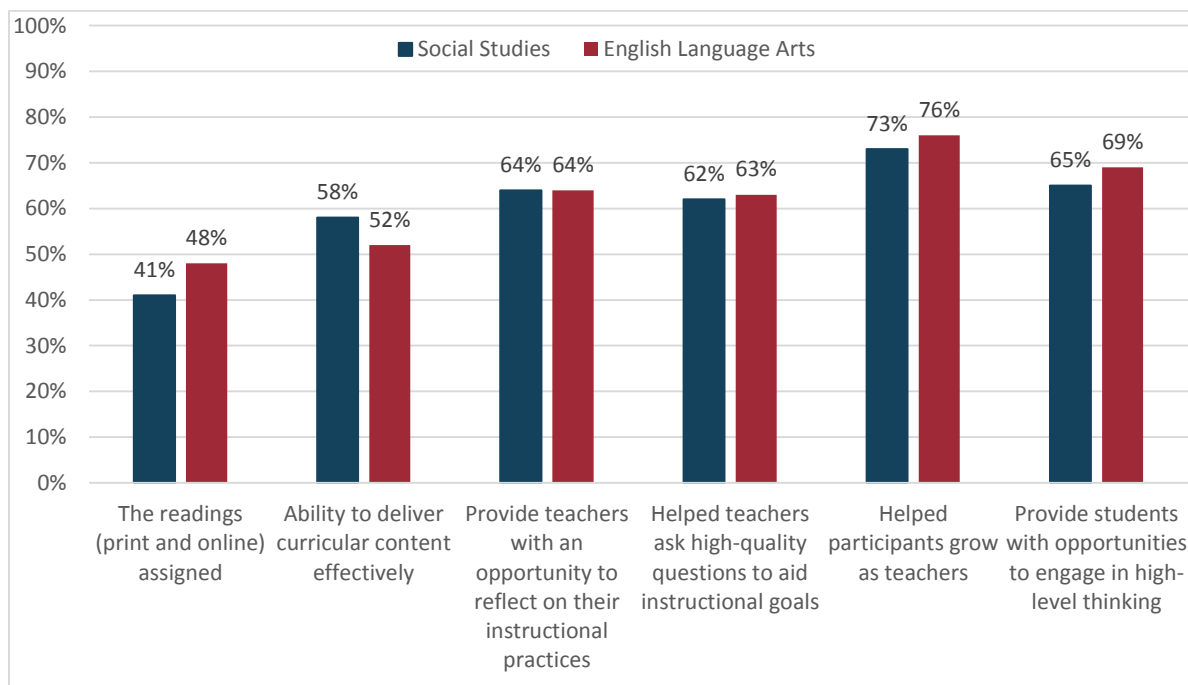
Figure 4.9 illustrates the proportion of teachers (by discipline) who indicated that PD attendance had impacted instructional measures “to a great extent.” The following items yielded the strongest results from teachers:

- Helped participants grow as teachers (73% of social studies teachers and 76% of ELA teachers);
- Provided students with opportunities to engage in high-level thinking (65% of social studies and 69% of ELA teachers);

- Provided teachers with an opportunity to reflect on their instructional practices (64% for both social studies and ELA teachers); and
- Helped teachers ask high-quality questions to improve instruction (62% of social studies and 63% of ELA teachers).

In addition, 58% of social studies teachers and 52% of ELA teachers reported that attending Humanities Texas PD impacted “to a great extent” their ability to deliver curricular content effectively, and 41% of social studies teachers and 48% of ELA teachers reported that PD attendance greatly impacted the readings (both print and online) that they assigned to their students (see Figure 4.9).

Figure 4.9. Percentage of Humanities Texas PD Participants Who Indicated that their Attendance Impacted their Teaching “To a Great Extent” (Continued)

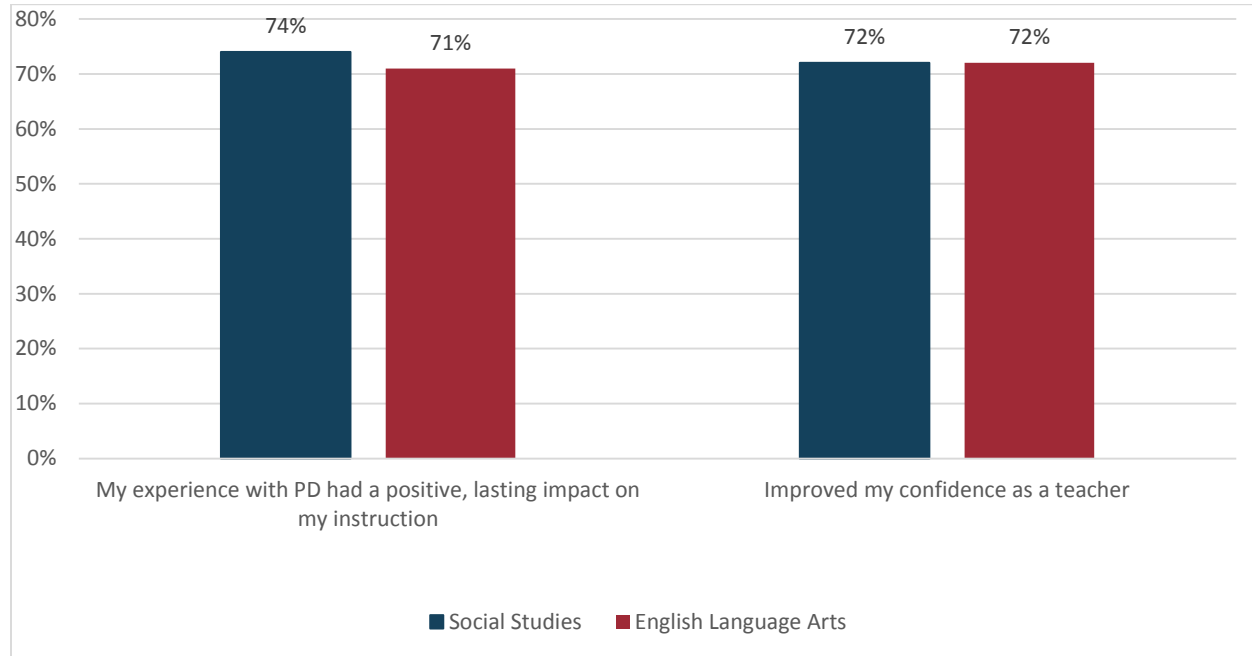


Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

The vast majority of social studies (93%) and ELA (90%) teachers were in agreement that Humanities Texas PD had a positive and lasting impact on their teaching, and that the training improved their confidence in teaching (96% of social studies teachers and 93% of ELA teachers).

As Figure 4.10 shows, these sentiments about the impact of the PD attended ran deep, with 71% (ELA) to 74% (social studies) of survey respondents strongly agreeing that the training had a positive and lasting impact on their teaching, and 72% of survey respondents of both disciplines strongly agreeing that the PD improved their confidence in teaching.

Figure 4.10. Percentage of Teachers Who “Strongly Agreed” that Humanities Texas PD Impacted their Teaching

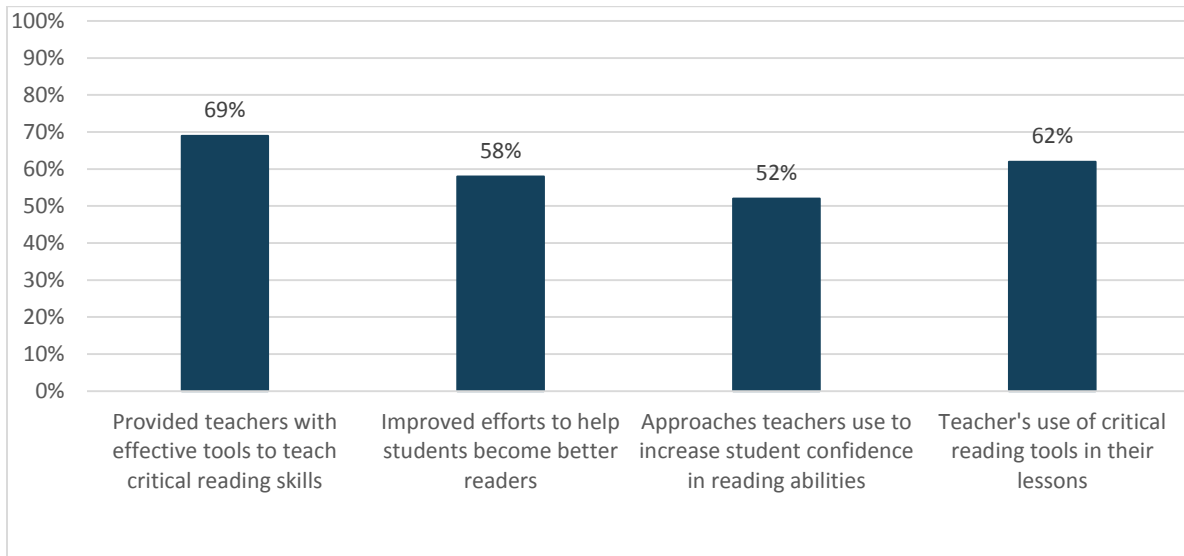


Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

ELA teachers were also asked a number of questions that were specific to their content area and the types of Humanities Texas workshops they attended. Nearly all ELA teachers responding to the survey indicated that PD participation had a moderate or great impact on providing them with new tools to teach reading skills (96%), and on using critical reading tools in their lessons (94%). Equally high percentages of ELA teachers indicated that the Humanities Texas PD impacted their efforts to help their students become effective readers (93%) and learn new approaches to increase students’ confidence in their reading abilities (92%).

As Figure 4.11 shows, 69% of ELA teachers reported that “to a great extent” Humanities Texas PD provided them with effective new tools to teach critical reading skills, and 62% shared that the PD they attended impacted their use of critical reading tools in their lessons “to a great extent.” In addition, 58% of ELA teachers felt that the Humanities Texas workshop they attended impacted their efforts to help students become better readers “to a great extent”, and 52% of survey respondents reported that the training impacted their approaches to increase student confidence in their reading abilities “to a great extent.”

Figure 4.11. Percentage of Humanities Texas PD Participants Who Indicated that their Attendance Impacted Instruction “To a Great Extent”, ELA Teachers Only



Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

Through an open-ended question on the survey, educators were asked to provide examples of ways in which Humanities Texas PD has helped them address a particular challenge in teaching their subject. A total of 677 responses were received by PD participants, accounting for approximately 55% of all survey respondents. Answers were coded into distinct response categories, such as “being able to facilitate the use of primary sources” for example.

As Table 4.2 shows, survey respondents were quick to mention how enhancing their knowledge of a specific social studies or ELA content area (28%) helped in addressing challenges faced in teaching their subjects. Some of the more commonly mentioned social studies content included the Civil War, slavery, the U.S. Constitution, and Texas History, while teaching poetry and Shakespeare were among the most commonly noted ELA content areas. A teacher shared the following example of how to make historical events important and relevant:

“Students have the impression that anything before their birth year is ancient history, but being able to make clear connections between what is happening now and what happened in the 60s or during the Depression has helped many of those barriers (to the understanding of the big picture over time) to evaporate.”

Educators discussed how Humanities Texas PD provided them with tools and methods for increasing student engagement with the content they teach (22%), and increased their ability to provide, explain, or facilitate the use of primary sources by their students (19%). PD participants shared the following examples of how the training they attended provided them with additional tools and ideas to increase student understanding of important content:

“As a white female teaching in a small East Texas school, I was unsure how to introduce Latin and African-American writers in the classroom. Several workshops I have attended have addressed that issue and provided ways to engage students with these important authors.”

“As a reflective practitioner, I constantly grapple with whether I am giving students all they need to be successful not just in their academics but in their lives. English is subjective and students overall, do not care for the subject. I was given a myriad of resources and strategies for my toolbox to help structure more engaging lessons.”

Humanities Texas PD participants also commonly provided examples of how training provided them with new instructional strategies (15%), gave them the ability to present topics in more sophisticated, nuanced, deeper, and complex ways (13%), and added additional resources and materials for use in their lessons (12%). An early-career teacher shared the following example of how the PD they attended has helped improve their lessons through expanded resources:

“Having presenters share with us various documents beyond those that most of us use. Showing us new archives and repositories that we can use, has greatly expanded my use of primary sources which in turn has helped me use them more in my classroom.”

Table 4.2. Most Common Ways in Which Humanities Texas PD Helped Participants Address a Particular Challenge to Teaching their Subject

Ways in which PD Helped Address a Particular Challenge to Teaching their Subject	Percent of Respondents
Increased knowledge of a specific social studies or ELA content area (e.g., improved ability to teach Texas History, improved ability to teach Shakespeare)	28.4%
Provides teacher with tools to increase student engagement	21.6%
Increased ability to provide, explain, or facilitate the use of primary sources by students	19.4%
Provides new instructional strategies	14.6%
Teachers are able to present topics in more sophisticated, nuanced, deeper, and complex ways	13.3%
Provides teacher new resources or materials	11.8%
Increased teacher content knowledge	10.8%
Provides tools for teacher to help students connect or relate to subject	7.2%
Increased teacher confidence	5.8%
Improved ability to teach about poetry	5.0%
Improved ability to teach challenging or controversial subjects	4.7%

Provides teacher tools to teach critical analysis skills	4.6%
Provides tools to help teach critical thinking	4.0%
Provides teacher with CRIT tool to use in the classroom	3.7%

Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

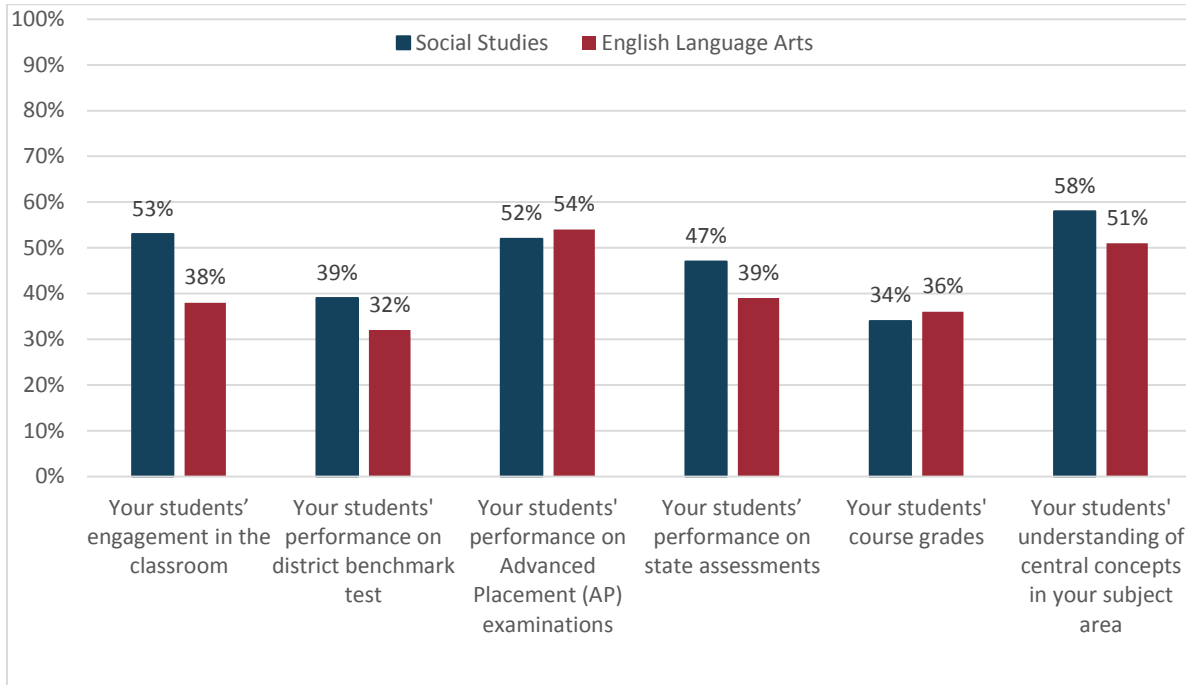
Teachers also discussed how the PD they attended improved their knowledge of how to teach challenging or controversial subjects (5%), teach critical analysis skills (5%), and teach in ways that help to improve critical thinking among students (4%). (see Table 4.2)

Impact on Student Learning

Teachers were asked a series of questions about how they felt their participation in Humanities Texas PD may have impacted their students' learning. The vast majority of social studies and ELA teachers (85% to 96% depending upon the area of student learning examined), shared that attending Humanities Texas PD resulted in a moderate or great impact on student learning.

As Figure 4.12 illustrates, the percentage of social studies teachers who felt that the PD had “a great impact” on student learning was substantially higher than that of ELA teachers. Over half of social studies teachers (53%) felt that PD attendance had a great impact on student engagement in the classroom compared to 38% of ELA teachers. Similarly, larger proportions of social studies teachers reported that student performance on district benchmark tests (39% vs. 32%), state assessments (47% vs. 39%), and students' understanding of central concepts related to the content (58% vs. 51%) was greatly impacted by teacher participation in Humanities Texas PD. Only small differences were observed between social studies and ELA teachers when the impact on course grades and AP exams were explored. However, it is important to note that over 50% of both social studies and ELA teachers indicated that participation in the Humanities Texas program impacted their students AP exam results “to a great extent” (see Figure 4.12).

Figure 4.12. Percentage of Humanities Texas PD Participants Who Indicated that their Attendance Impacted Various Aspects of Student Learning “To a Great Extent”

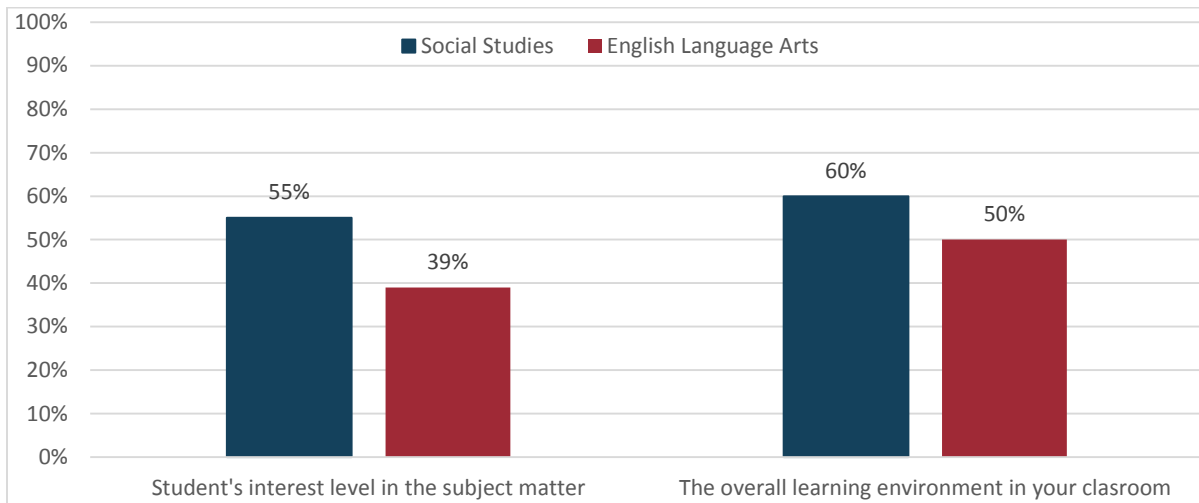


Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

The overwhelming majority of social studies and ELA teachers shared that attending Humanities Texas PD resulted in a moderate or great impact on student interest in the subject matter (94% of both social studies and ELA teachers) and on the overall learning environment in the classroom (92% of social studies teachers and 91% of ELA teachers).

Consistent with the earlier results, social studies teachers were more likely to report that their participation in Humanities Texas PD impacted student interest level in course subject matter (55% of social studies teachers vs. 39% of ELA teachers) and the overall classroom environment (60% of social studies teachers and 50% of ELA teachers) (see Figure 4.13). However, it is important to note that these are relatively high percentages of teachers sharing that PD participation had such a strong impact on student learning and their classroom environment.

Figure 4.13. Percentage of Humanities Texas PD Participants Who Indicated that their Attendance Impacted the Overall Learning Environment in the Classroom and Students’ Interest Level in the Subject Matter “To a Great Extent”



Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

Through an open-ended question on the survey, educators were asked to elaborate on how student learning and/or student outcomes changed in their classroom as a result of teacher participation in Humanities Texas PD. A total of 796 responses were received by PD participants, accounting for approximately 65% of all survey respondents. Answers provided by respondents were coded into distinct response categories, such as “increased student engagement or improved critical thinking skills” for example.

As Table 4.3 shows, 23% of survey respondents reported how their participation in Humanities Texas PD impacted student learning by increasing student engagement in their classrooms. One social studies teacher shared that *“Because I had begun to use more engaging material that I had gleaned from my Humanities Texas Workshops, my students became more interested in Texas History through the lessons prepared.”* Another social studies teacher shared that *“Students become more engaged in history when they can see it as a dynamic story rather than a collection of dates and names, and I am thankful Humanities Texas has taught me some of that story.”* An ELA teacher who attended a “Teaching Shakespeare” workshop shared the following anecdote about how their participation in a Humanities Texas PD offering impacted their ability to engage students with the content:

“We read Julius Caesar this week, and my classes had so much fun using the performance strategy we learned where you have several directors and actors. A group of students acts out a scene, and the directors provide feedback on how to improve the performance. This is such a fun and meaningful strategy that helps student engage with the text and value the importance of stage directions and drama, as plays are ultimately meant to be acted rather than just read.”

Survey respondents indicated that as a result of their attending Humanities Texas PD, students are able to learn about topics in more sophisticated, nuanced, deeper, and complex ways (16%), and are now able to engage with primary sources made available through the Humanities Texas trainings (15%). An educator shared the following about how their participation in Humanities Texas PD and connections to other teachers they have networked with helped students reach a deeper understanding of the content:

“I feel that my students have been exposed to a deeper understanding of topics through different documents. They are able to read and analyze primary sources better because of the strategies that I have learned not only from the workshops and institutes themselves, but also from the other educators that I have been able to network with.”

Table 4.3. Most Common Ways in which Student Learning and/or Student Outcomes Changes as a Result of Teacher Attending Humanities Texas PD

How Student Learning and/or Student Outcomes Changed	Percent of Respondents
Increased student engagement	22.9%
Improved students’ ability to able to learn about topics in more sophisticated, nuanced, deeper, and complex ways	16.0%
Increased student engagement with primary sources	15.3%
Increased student content knowledge/mastery	6.9%
Improved critical thinking skills	6.8%
Increased student’s ability to connect to subject matter	3.6%
Increased student-centered learning or ownership of learning	3.1%
Increased student enjoyment of material or love of learning	3.1%
General improvement in student learning	3.0%
Improved student critical reading skills	2.8%
Improved in-class content-driven discussions	2.5%
Improved student’s ability to learn from more diverse, accessible, or culturally relevant materials	2.3%
Increased student confidence	2.0%

Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

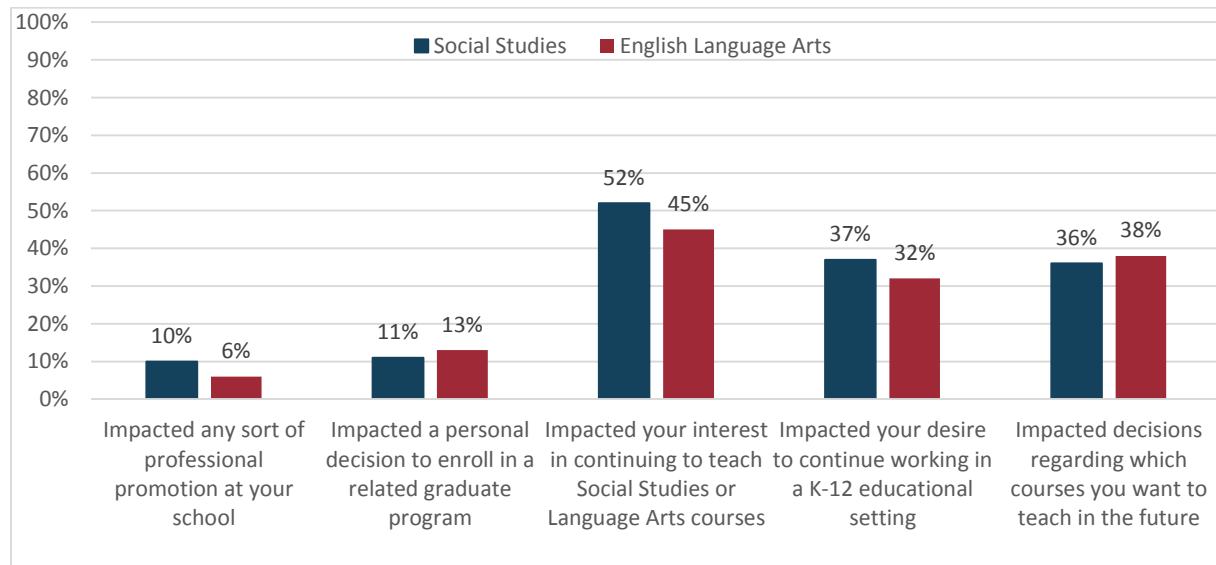
PD participants also shared that they have observed increases in their students’ mastery of the content they teach (7%), improved critical thinking skills (7%), increased ability of students to connect with the material (4%), as well as a number of other key areas of growth, including students’ ownership of learning and love of learning (3%) (see Table 4.3).

Impact on Career Decisions

Humanities Texas PD participants were asked a series of questions about how their attendance may have impacted career decisions or promotions at their schools. Overall, 28% of survey respondents indicated that attending Humanities Texas PD impacted, to a moderate or great extent, their being promoted to a higher position at their school or their decision to enroll in a related graduate program. The program also impacted PD participants’ desire to continue teaching social studies or ELA (81%), their desire to continue working in a K-12 educational setting (71%), and decisions about which courses they wanted to teach in the future (70%). Responses were fairly consistent across social studies and ELA teachers.

As Figure 4.14 shows, a relatively small proportion of survey respondents indicated that attending Humanities Texas PD impacted their being promoted at their school (10% of social studies teachers and 6% of ELA teachers) or their decisions to enroll in a graduate program (11% of social studies teachers and 13% of ELA teachers) “to a great extent.” Social studies teachers were more inclined than ELA teachers to report that PD attendance had a great impact on teachers’ interest in continuing to teach in their content area (52% of social studies teachers and 45% of ELA teachers), and their desire to continue working in a K-12 educational setting (37% of social studies teachers and 32% of ELA teachers). Over a third (36%) of social studies teachers and 38% of ELA teachers indicated that Humanities Texas program attendance impacted “to a great extent” their thinking on which courses they wanted to teach in the future.

Figure 4.14. Percentage of Humanities Texas PD Participants Who Indicated that their Attendance Impacted Various Career Decisions or Promotional Opportunities “To a Great Extent”



Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

Section 5: Relationship between Teacher Experiences with Humanities Texas PD and Teacher/School Characteristics

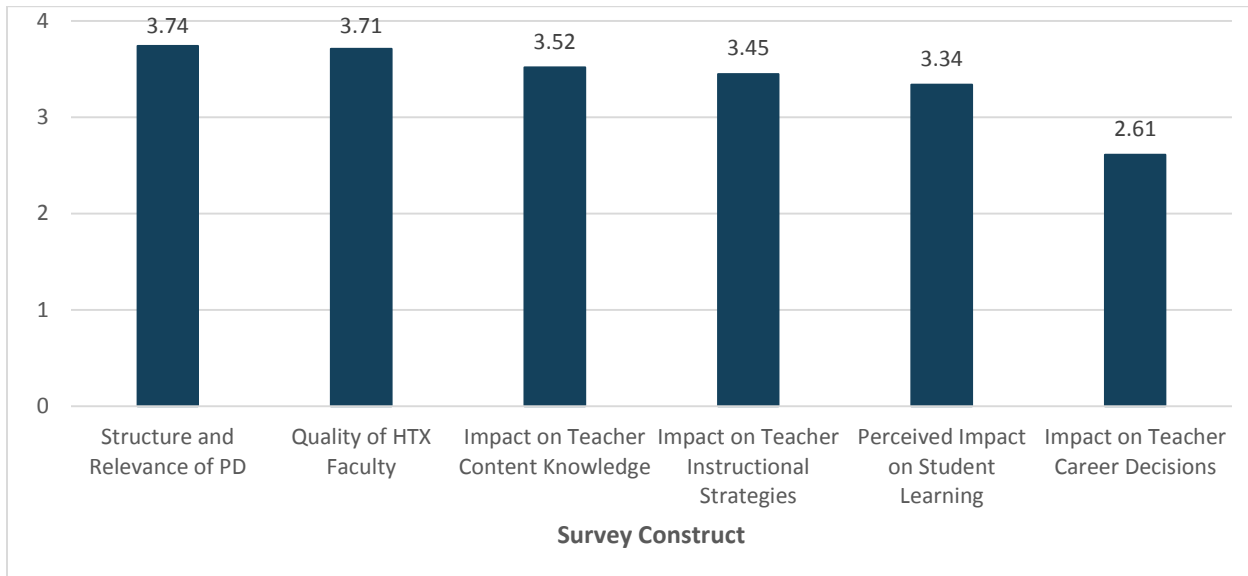
This section of the report explores the relationship between teacher experiences with Humanities Texas PD and characteristics of the teacher and the school at which they work. Because of the large number of individual survey items to assess, we created scale scores for the following survey constructs to facilitate the analyses included in this section of the report:

- Structure and Relevance of PD
- Quality of Humanities Texas Faculty
- Impact of PD on Teacher Content Knowledge
- Impact of PD on Teacher Instructional Strategies
- Perceived impact of PD on Student Learning
- Impact of PD on Career Decisions

Overall Mean Scale Scores for Survey Constructs

“Average scores,” or “mean scale scores,” refer to the average score on a four-point scale across the items being examined, such as “structure and relevance of PD” or “impact of PD on teacher content knowledge” or “impact of PD on career decisions.” Mean scores of 3.0 or higher reflect overall agreement with a set of grouped statements related to the specific survey constructs.¹¹

¹¹ The scale is constructed as follows: 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=agree, and 4=strongly agree.

Figure 5.1. Mean Scale Scores by Survey Construct

Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

Note: Scores are based on four-point scales where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=agree, and 4=strongly agree; or 1=not at all, 2=to some extent, 3=to a moderate extent, and 4=to a great extent.

Differences between Groups of Teachers

Survey data were disaggregated by various teacher and school characteristics to assess whether differences existed in teachers' ratings based on any particular grouping characteristics. The overall picture to emerge was that teachers' experience with the Humanities Texas PD was largely consistent. There were some differences across groups in how teachers rated either the quality or impact of the professional development. Analyses were conducted to determine whether significant differences existed in ratings on the six survey constructs by the following teacher characteristics and school characteristics:

Teacher Characteristics

- Years of teaching experience
- Teaching certification route (i.e., traditional or alternative)
- Education level
- Content area taught by teacher

School Characteristics

- TEA performance rating of teacher's school
- Title I status of teacher's school

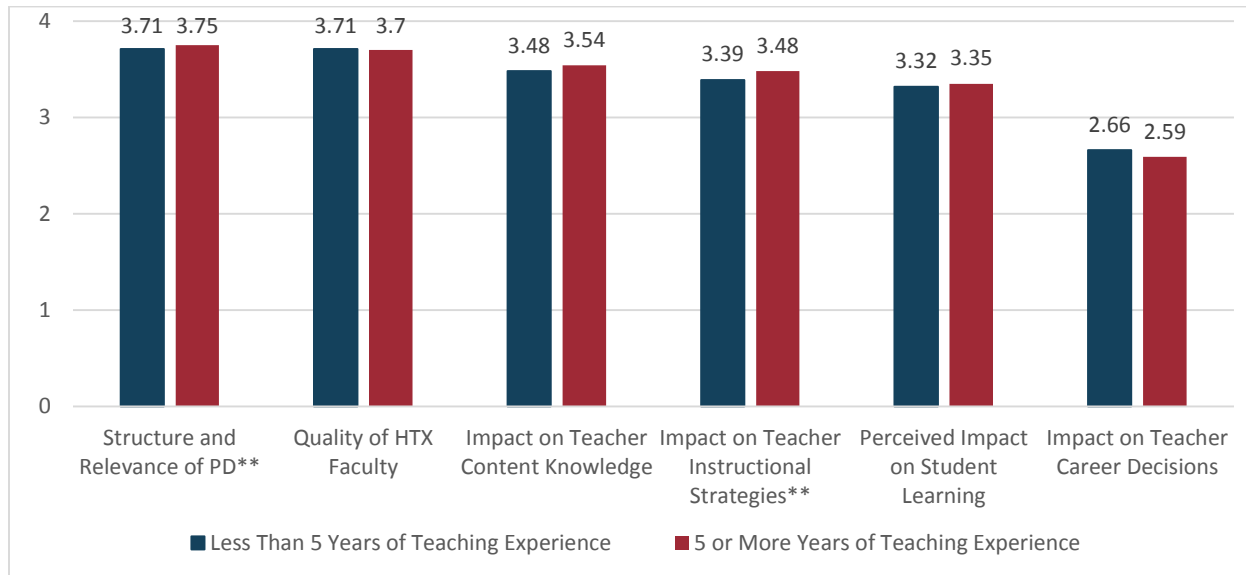
- Urbanicity of teacher’s school
- Percent of at-risk students at teacher’s school
- Percent of economically disadvantaged students at teacher’s school
- Percent of special education students at teacher’s school

Teacher Characteristics

Years of Teaching Experience

When we compared survey responses from early career educators (within their first five years of teaching) with the responses of more experienced teachers, scores for both groups of teachers reflect a high degree of agreement that the Humanities Texas PD was of high quality; presenters were knowledgeable, approachable, and effective; and the training impacted teachers’ content knowledge, instructional practices, and student learning. As Figure 5.1 illustrates, statistically significant differences were observed between early-career teachers with teachers with over five years of instructional experience and more experienced teachers. More experienced teachers rated the structure and relevance of the PD and its impact on instructional strategies significantly higher than did less experienced teachers.¹²

Figure 5.1. Mean Survey Scale Scores by Teacher Experience



Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

Note: Scores are based on four-point scales where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=agree, and 4=strongly agree; or 1=not at all, 2=to some extent, 3=to a moderate extent, and 4=to a great extent. * p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001.

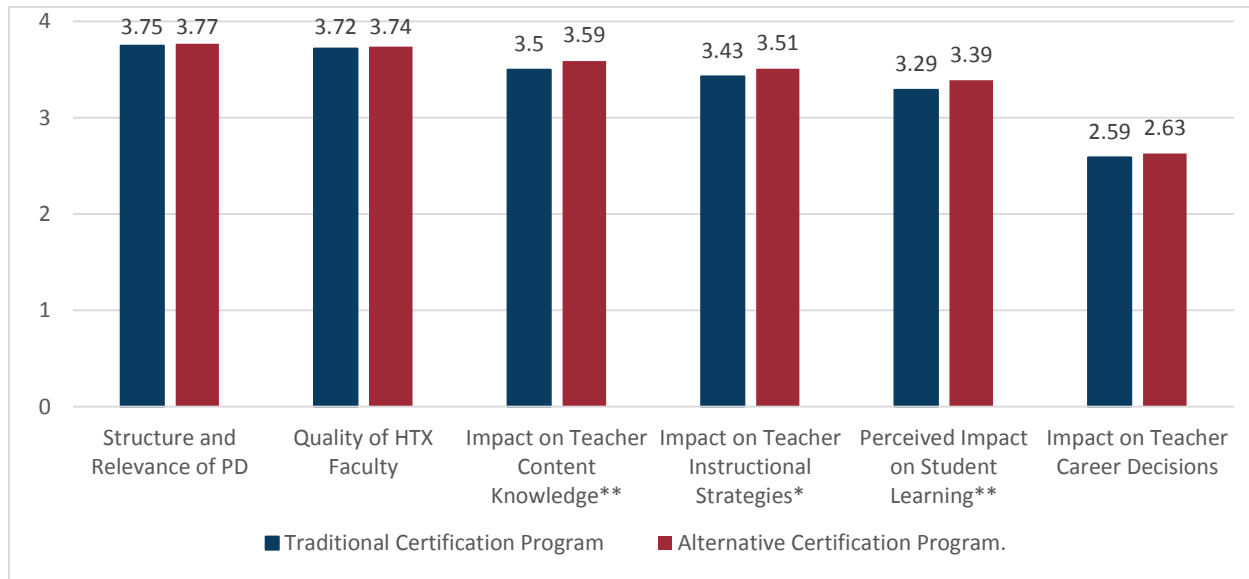
¹² Differences in other survey constructs were observed, but those differences were not determined to be statistically significant.

Teaching Certification Route

As Figure 5.2 shows, regardless of whether teachers became certified through a traditional university program or through an alternative certification program, mean scale scores across five of the six survey constructs were relatively high (3.29 – 3.77), with the exception of the Impact on Career Decisions construct, which ranged from 2.59 to 2.63.

Teachers who earned their teaching certificate through an alternative certification program rated three constructs significantly higher than teachers who earned their teaching certificate through a traditional certification program: the impact of Humanities Texas PD on their content knowledge (3.59 vs. 3.50), the impact on their instructional strategies (3.51 vs. 3.43), and impact on student learning outcomes (3.39 vs. 3.29). This result may be a function of alternative certification teachers having knowledge and/or instructional gaps that needed to be filled through the Humanities Texas program.

Figure 5.2. Mean Survey Scale Scores by Teacher Certification Type



Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

Note: Scores are based on four-point scales where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=agree, and 4=strongly agree; or 1=not at all, 2=to some extent, 3=to a moderate extent, and 4=to a great extent. * p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001.

Teacher Education Level

No significant differences in mean construct scores for any of the six survey constructs were observed between teachers with bachelor’s, master’s, or doctorate degrees.

Content Area Taught by Teacher

No significant differences in mean construct scores for any of the six survey constructs were observed between social studies and ELA teachers.

School Characteristics

Accountability Ratings for Teacher’s School

Each year, TEA assigns an accountability rating to each school district and campus using an A-F grading system. The evaluation team used 2019 accountability ratings to assess whether differences in mean survey construct scores were observed between teachers working at schools with different performance ratings. No significant differences in mean construct scores for any of the six survey constructs were observed between teachers at schools with and A or B ratings and teachers at schools with a ratings of C or lower.

Urbanicity of Teacher’s School

No significant differences in mean construct scores for any of the six survey constructs were observed between Humanities Texas PD participants teaching at schools located in cities, suburbs, towns, or rural areas.

Title I Status of Teacher’s School

The evaluation team also examined the relationship between the Title I status of a teacher’s school and mean survey construct scores.¹³ No significant differences in mean construct scores for any of the six survey constructs were observed between teachers working at Title I and non-Title I schools.

Demographics of Students Attending Teachers’ School

The evaluation team examined the relationship between mean survey construct scores and the following categories of enrolled students: 1) at-risk students; 2) economically disadvantaged students; 3) English learners; 4) special education students; and 5) students enrolled in gifted & talented programs.

No significant differences in mean construct scores for any of the six survey constructs were observed between Humanities Texas PD participants teaching at schools with the most at-risk students (i.e., in the top quartile of the percent of enrolled at-risk students) and teachers at schools with smaller proportions of students in at-risk situations. However, teachers working at schools with the lowest proportion of at-risk students (in the bottom quartile of the percent of enrolled at-risk students at their schools) had significantly lower mean survey scale scores related to Humanities Texas PD having an impact on career decisions (e.g., continuing to teach in content area, continuing in K-12, job promotion, graduate school decisions) than teachers at schools with higher percentages of at-risk students.

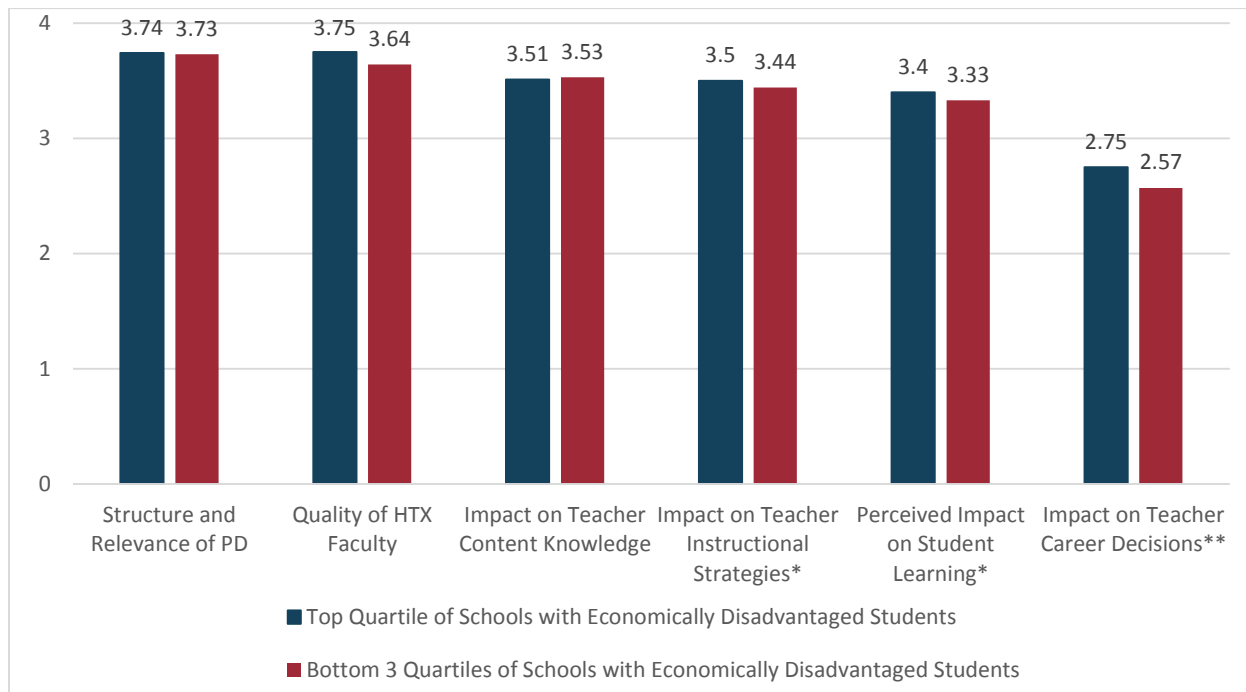
No significant differences in mean construct scores for any of the six survey constructs were observed between Humanities Texas PD participants teaching at schools with the most special education students

¹³ Schools in which children from low-income families make up at least 40% of enrollment are eligible to use Title I funds to operate school-wide programs that serve all children in the school, in order to raise the achievement of the lowest-achieving students.

(i.e., in the top quartile of the percent of enrolled special education students) and teachers at schools with smaller proportions of students receiving special education services.

As Figure 5.3 illustrates, teachers working at schools with the highest proportion of enrolled economically disadvantaged students (i.e., the top quartile) had significantly higher mean survey construct scores related to the impact of Humanities Texas PD on teacher’s instructional strategies (3.50 vs. 3.44), impact on student learning (3.40 vs. 3.33), and impact on teacher’s career decisions (2.75 vs. 2.57) than their teaching colleagues at schools with lower proportions of economically disadvantaged students.

Figure 5.3. Mean Survey Scale Scores by Percentage of Economically Disadvantaged Students



Source: Humanities Texas Teacher Professional Development Program Study, Gibson Consulting Group, 2020

Note: Scores are based on four-point scales where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=agree, and 4=strongly agree; or 1=not at all, 2=to some extent, 3=to a moderate extent, and 4=to a great extent. * p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001.

Appendix A: Humanities Texas Professional Development Participant Survey Constructs

Table 1 displays the items used to comprise each of the measurement constructs. Nine items were used to measure *Structure and Relevance*, five items measured *Delivery of Instruction*, six measured *Impact on Content Knowledge*, eleven measured *Impact on Instructional Strategies*, ten measured *Impact on Student Learning*, and seven measured *Impact on Career Decisions*.

Table 1. Survey items comprising each measurement construct

Construct Items	
Structure and Relevance	
<i>Indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the Humanities Texas professional development (PD) institute(s) or workshop(s) you attended.</i>	
1	The Humanities Texas PD was well organized.
2	Attending the Humanities Texas PD was a good use of my time.
3	The Humanities Texas PD was appropriately paced.
4	The Humanities Texas PD was an appropriate length.
5	The Humanities Texas PD provided ample opportunity to ask questions.
6	The overall goal or purpose of the Humanities Texas PD was clearly articulated.
7	The overall goal or purpose of the Humanities Texas PD was met.
8	Primary source materials used were relevant to my learning and teaching.
9	Authors, texts, and resources used were relevant to my learning and teaching.
10	I acquired new knowledge as a result of attending the Humanities Texas PD.
Quality of PD Faculty	
<i>Indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the delivery of instruction during the Humanities Texas institute(s) or workshop(s) you attended.</i>	
1	The faculty were experts in the topics they addressed.
2	The faculty were responsive to participants' questions or concerns.
3	The faculty were dynamic in their presentations and workshops.
4	The faculty were approachable.
5	The faculty presented information that improved my mastery of subjects I teach.

Construct Items	
6	The faculty selected resources that were appropriate for my students.
<p>Impact on Content Knowledge</p> <p><i>Indicate the extent to which the Humanities Texas institute(s) or workshop(s) you attended increased or improved your knowledge related to the following:</i></p>	
1	Introducing engaging content to your students.
2	Content covered in your subject area.
3	Primary resources which improve the quality of content in your classes.
4	Texts and authors which improve the quality of content in your classes.
5	Effective resources that can be introduced into your courses.
6	Ideas for assignments that require creativity and initiative from your students.
7	Utilizing new strategies or lessons to teach the required TEKS for your subject.
<p>Impact on Instructional Strategies</p> <p><i>Indicate the extent to which the Humanities Texas institute(s) or workshop(s) you attended positively impacted the following:</i></p>	
1	Instructional strategies you employ in your classroom.
2	Techniques to get students excited about the material covered in your courses.
3	The ways in which you approach the state standards.
4	The types of questions you pose to your students in class.
5	The rigor of your assignments.
6	Your use of primary sources in your lessons.
7	The authors, texts, and resources you use in your lessons.
8	Your interest in learning more about the subject matter covered.
9	The readings (print and online) you assign.
10	Your ability to deliver curricular content effectively.
11	Your ability to stretch students' ability to think critically.
<p>Impact on Student Learning</p> <p><i>Reflect on changes in your content knowledge or instructional practices that resulted from participating in the Humanities Texas professional development institute(s) or workshop(s). To what extent have the following been positively impacted?</i></p>	

Construct Items	
1	Your students' engagement in the classroom.
2	Your students' performance on district benchmark tests.
3	Your students' performance on Advanced Placement (AP) examinations.
4	Your students' performance on state assessments.
5	Your students' interest level in the course subject matter.
6	Interactions between you and your students.
7	Your students' interactions with each other.
8	Your students' understanding of central concepts in your subject area.
9	The overall learning environment in your classroom.
10	Your students' course grades.
Impact on Career Decisions	
<i>Indicate the extent to which the Humanities Texas PD has directly impacted the following:</i>	
1	Any sort of professional promotion at your school?
2	A personal decision to enroll in a related graduate program?
3	Your desire to continue working in a K-12 educational setting?
4	Your interest in continuing to teach Social Studies or Language Arts courses?
5	Decisions regarding which courses you want to teach in the future?
6	The extent to which you feel connected to other teachers in your content area?
7	Any sort of professional promotion at your school?