With the onset of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the shift to “text-based evidence,” I looked to the NSRF for protocols aimed to support learning via written text and oral communication. After introducing NSRF text-based protocols into middle school classrooms in the Los Angeles Unified School District as a literacy coach, I witnessed profound results: deep, authentic classroom discussions. The marriage of CCSS and NSRF text-based protocols has been uncomplicated, deep, and powerful. As I pondered the possibilities of promoting text-based discussions through structured protocols in secondary classrooms across all content areas, it was love at first sight.

NSRF protocols support the CCSS Literacy Capacities flawlessly. Students are able to construct their own ideas, think from multiple perspectives, examine text closely, and engage discerningly about academic content. These critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity skills come to life with the structure of a protocol. In workshops I presented throughout California over the past two years, participants have engaged in three protocols to experience the magic authentically. Block Party, Text Rendering, and Four A’s have been powerful examples for making text come to life.

In middle school history classes with an average of 36 students, I demonstrated how Text Rendering could succeed with a non-fiction secondary source. The challenge of getting students to engage in academic discourse respectfully and productively was overcome with the simple structure of the protocol. The structure serves as a reminder for how the Gradual Release of Responsibility can work seamlessly to promote independency whereby students internalize the language of authentic academic discussions. While there is still much work to be accomplished in this marriage, it is clear that promoting classroom discussions through the use of text-based protocols is a promising recipe for a honeymoon in the 21st century classroom.
Variations on the Four A's Text Protocol for different subjects, suggested by Mary Funaoka, CFG Coach in California

The 4 Cs of Mathematics
Clarify
What terms in the problem need to be clarified?
Construct
How would you construct or set up the problem?
Calculate
Calculate or solve the problem.
Communicate
Explain or justify your answer

The 6 Cs of Art/Art History
Content
Describe in detail what you see.
Citation
Who is the author/creator? When was this created?
Context
What was going on in the world, the country, the region, or the locality when this was created?
Communication
What does the artwork depict and who is the intended audience for the piece?
Connections
Link the artwork to other works that you already know or have learned about.
Conclusions
How does the artwork contribute to our understanding of ______?

The 4 Cs of Science
Clarify
What words or ideas would you like to have clarified?
Content
Summarize the content you have just read.
Connect
How does this content connect (or add to) what you have already learned about ______?
Conclude
Does this new information change your thinking about ______? If so, how?

The 6 Cs of History/Social Science
Content
Describe in detail what you see.
Citation
Who is the author/creator? When was this created?
Context
What was going on in the world, the country, the region, or the locality when this was created?
Communication
What does the document say and who is the intended audience for the piece?
Connections
Link the primary source to other things that you already know or have learned about.
Conclusions
How does the primary source contribute to our understanding of ______?