

The role of the primary history subject leader



Aims

- To offer guidance on the expectations of National Curriculum for history;
- To provide an overview of the subject manager's role;
- To guide subject leaders through planning and resourcing history to ensure progression ensues and assessment is in-built;
- To introduce the six step approach to historical enquiry
- To help new subject leaders feel confident in both managing and leading the subject.



The primary history curriculum aims to ensure:



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- Children's **knowledge** is coherent
(the old KS2 curriculum was episodic)
- Children's **chronological understanding** grows
- Children develop ability to **make links across and between eras**
- **Teaching is consistent** across a school
(history teaching was becoming increasingly variable)
- History is **planned well and taught preferably in blocks of time**
- Any cross-curricular framework does not dilute the subject's identity



National Curriculum primary history

- What are we trying to do in History?
- History education is not just about knowing ‘stuff’ – it should help children to ‘see and think like historians’ (and talk and write like historians).
- Human beings think (and talk and write) with important concepts.
- Historians work with (at least) two kinds of concepts:
First order concepts - such as civilization, parliament, sovereignty, monarchy.
Second order (or process) concepts such as change, continuity, significance, interpretation.
- History teachers have to help children grasp both kinds of concepts.



National Curriculum primary history

Purpose of study

A high-quality history education will help pupils gain a **coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past** and that of the wider world. It should inspire pupils' curiosity to know more about the past. Teaching should equip pupils to ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgement. History helps pupils to understand the complexity of people's lives, the process of change, the diversity of societies and relationships between different groups, as well as their own identity and the challenges of their time.



National Curriculum primary history

The National Curriculum for history aims to ensure that all pupils:

- **know and understand** the story of these islands: how the British people shaped this nation and how Britain influenced the world
- **know and understand** British history as a coherent, chronological narrative, from the story of the first settlers in these islands to the development of the institutions which govern our lives today
- **know and understand** the broad outlines of European and world history: the growth and decline of ancient civilizations; the expansion and dissolution of empires; the achievements and follies of mankind



National Curriculum primary history

Aims

The national curriculum for history aims to ensure that all pupils:

- know and understand the history of these islands as a **coherent, chronological narrative**, from the earliest times to the present day: how people's lives have shaped this nation and how Britain has influenced and been influenced by the wider world
- know and understand significant aspects of the history of the wider world: the nature of ancient civilizations; the expansion and dissolution of empires; characteristic features of past non-European societies; achievements and follies of mankind



National Curriculum primary history

- gain and deploy a historically grounded understanding of abstract terms such as **‘empire’, ‘civilisation’, ‘parliament’ and ‘peasantry’**
- understand historical concepts such as **continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance,**
- and use them to **make connections, draw contrasts,** analyse trends, **frame historically-valid questions** and **create their own structured accounts,** including written narratives and analyses.



National Curriculum primary history

- understand the **methods of historical enquiry**, including how evidence is used rigorously to make historical claims, and discern how and why contrasting arguments and interpretations of the past have been constructed
- **gain historical perspective** by placing their growing knowledge into different contexts, understanding the connections between local, regional, national and international history; between cultural, economic, military, political, religious and social history; and between short- and long-term timescales.



Planning your curriculum

What skills and processes do you need to cover alongside the statutory historical content teach?



History skills and processes



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- Chronological understanding
- Characteristic features of periods/societies studied
- Continuity and Change
- Cause and Consequence
- Historical Significance
- Historical Interpretation
- Historical Enquiry
- Making connections between local, national and international history

Developing **all** these skills helps children **gain historical perspective.**



Historical skills and processes

- Each skill needs to be visited at least TWICE across the key stage so progression can be measured.
- The higher up the key stage, the higher the level of challenge should be for the children's understanding.



Subject leader's role in long term planning

- Your role is to ensure that the matters, skills and processes in the history curriculum are being taught progressively.
- Children should learn increasingly complex ideas and develop more sophisticated historical skills and processes during a key stage.
- Progression should be embedded in long-term and medium-term planning.



Your long-term planning needs to...

- Demonstrate clearly how the school will teach in a thoughtful and coherent way, the requirements of National Curriculum history and other school requirements
- Develop clear links between key stages, building on chronology
- Map the coverage of skills and processes, to enable progression in skills over a key stage.



- Does your curriculum map/ long term planner map historical skills against National Curriculum units/ studies?
- If not, how will you ensure historical skills are taught alongside the historical content?



Your medium term planning needs to include...

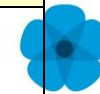
- **Expectations relating to the skills to be promoted** – those you have identified as **key** to the topic/unit on your coverage overview;
- **Content to be covered** - detailed notes about the understanding children are expected to acquire;
- **Evidence for progression** in each of the above;
- **A key question** to drive the study to promote progression in the focus skill(s) **and** content.



Six step enquiries

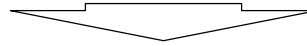
- This approach was initially developed to help children produce carefully thought out and argued written outcomes.
- Enquiries should be driven by a key question.
- The steps ensure children are actively exploring, interrogating and transforming information as they work towards their answer for the key question.
- By Step 5/6 pupils should be able to answer the key question.





Step 1: Teacher motivates pupils to want to learn and scopes the enquiry

- Hooking them in, whetting the appetite
- Setting the puzzle, making it real, exciting, a problem that needs sorting/laying down a challenge... Do you think WE can..?
- Scoping the enquiry
- Slow reveal
- Under the cloth
- Predict the story from the cover
- Left luggage mystery



Step 2: Children collect information in interesting and varied ways:

- Picture or text sources
- Artefacts
- Interviews
- Visits
- Timeline stories
- Information run
- Treasure hunt
- Gallery



Step 3: Children make sense of ideas and process the information by:

- Filling in grids,
- Sequencing cards or pictures
- Sorting, grouping, rejecting/retaining
- Venn diagrams
- Big point little point
- Spectrums



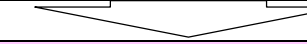
Step 4: Children draw their own conclusions, *making their own meaning*

- They advance reasons, perhaps linking and prioritising them
- They begin to recognise what is significant
- They shape their ideas
- They demonstrate understanding, perhaps through:
 - Role play
 - History Mystery
 - Living graph
 - Post-it challenge



Step 5: Their understanding is checked, developed or refined by:

- Introducing new ideas, materials, perspectives
- Curve ball
- Hall of Fame
- Across the Ages



Step 6: Pupils create their final, imaginative product

- Pupils demonstrate their understanding in imaginative ways
- Stamp collection
- Pop-up museum
- Commemorative plaque

