

History in the Primary Classroom

Mary Bracey, Paul Bracey and Sandra Kirkland

Learning objectives

To understand teaching and learning history in the primary school

To appreciate how misconceptions can affect learning

To know of a range of approaches and resources tools to support learning primary history.

Introduction

‘A commonplace ditch may be the thousand –year old boundary of a royal manor; a certain hedge bank may be even more ancient....a certain deep and winding lane may be the work of twelfth century peasants, some of whose names may be made known to us if we search diligently enough’ (Hoskins, 1969, p. 14)

History encourages children ask questions about the past, whether this relates directly to their own lives or the wider world. The above quotation from Hoskins, a historian who pioneered using the outdoor environment to find out about the past exemplifies its open ended qualities. What does this mean for children learning history in the primary classroom? If we start with the child they can develop their understanding of the past by looking at their own past and asking questions to a person from their community. They can also make use of a wide range of material evidence related to the past including objects and pictures, written evidence or music from different times, together with the local environment. A child’s understanding of the content of the past becomes progressively more refined alongside the way in which they make use of a rich array of resources to build up their subject knowledge.

In the classroom: Using artefacts relating to Victorian/Edwardian washdays with children in Year 1 and Year 2.

The children explored washdays in the past using a range of genuine and replica resources including flat irons, cotton clothing, different soaps, two wash boards, range of wooden pegs, photographs and pictures showing women in the scullery/kitchen.

The children began their learning journey by using their senses to investigate the artefacts. They closed their eyes and used their sense of smell with the soaps. None of the children recognised the soaps smell as a washing product. In a later session they used looked at modern clothes washing products and they talked about how the soap could be used. Some of the children were able to suggest adjectives to describe this but again even when they could see the washboard did not recognise this as something for washing clothes. Using the artefacts was a good starting point and stimulated the children's interest. The opportunity to handle the objects such as a flat iron and realise how heavy it was and to rub clothing on the washboard experiencing how quickly their arms became tired enabled children to begin to understand how different and labour intensive washday was in the past. The children used their sense of touch to investigate the washboard which was in a feely bag. One Year 2 child felt the ridges on the washboard and suggested it might be a musical instrument, perhaps an understandable misconception, which was built on in subsequent learning by looking at pictures and descriptions of wash days from secondary sources to establish how the washboard was used.

What misconceptions do children have about the past?

The way in which children learn is complicated and subject to misconceptions when they naturally try to relate their new experiences to their existing knowledge and understanding. The following provide some examples of these in history:

- You've got it all wrong. I have seen pictures of Cavemen fighting dinosaurs (an eleven year old child several years ago having an animated discussion about the emergence of early people).
- Great fire of London. Was that when you were a little girl, Miss?
- The Vikings must have won because they had longboats and spitfires (a drawing in which a child drew of the Saxons being defeated by the Vikings).
- This teddy is older than that one because it is scruffy (Key Stage I child confusing the condition of an object with its age).

These examples raise issues about how the past can be misunderstood. It is possible to pre-empt some misconceptions by the way in which work is structured. For example, contextual and/or visual impressions of Viking and Tudor times can be compared to help develop an understanding of continuity and change. However, issues arise unexpectedly in any topic and used constructively these

moments provide an opportunity for the children to test their misunderstanding and use it to support their learning. For example, the child who thought that spitfires were used by the Vikings was logically applying knowledge of what they know about warfare from the twentieth century. You have the choice of telling them that they are wrong or getting them to investigate aspects of the Vikings in order to test their hypothesis. Arguably the latter provides a means of meaningfully constructing their knowledge of the past.

What is the place of history in the History in the Primary Curriculum?

“History should inspire pupils’ curiosity to know more about the past”. DfE(2013) p.204

Whatever you think we ought to teach into history lessons we imagine that you agree that this statement, which underpinned the purpose both the DfEE/QCA (1999) National History Curriculum and proposals for its replacement in 2014 (DfE 2013) , provides an essential starting point. There is, of course, much more to history in the primary curriculum than this. What is taught as well as how it is taught and the relative importance of content and skills have proved contentious issues which have drawn attention from politicians, the media, academic historians as well as those of us more directly involved in what is taking place in primary classrooms. At the same time it could be argued that there are advantages and disadvantages in teaching history as a discrete subject or as part of a topic which embraces different aspects of a child’s learning. This can provide effective links between curriculum areas and provide an exciting and tightly focused approach to learning which many teachers would argue has advantages over a curriculum taught through discrete subjects.

In the classroom: Creating models of air raid shelters with Year 5/6 children. The children used pictures, diagrams and first-hand historical accounts to support this task in Design and Technology which they used as a prop to explain what life was like during the Blitz.



With thanks to [Tori Shield](#), [Rory Odell](#), [Christin Rabone](#) and [Lucy Greenwood](#) Year 6 pupils at [Yelvertoft School](#)

The rich opportunities which this activity provided for both subjects can readily be matched by linked learning opportunities with other areas of the curriculum. The location of Saxon and Viking place names related to settlement study in geography; historical fiction such as *Goodnight Mr Tom* or fictional stories produced in the past such as *Beowulf* can draw on both History and English skills. However, ill-defined topic work can be problematic. Ofsted (2011) observed that in one school which had been inspected:

Pupils' perceptions of history were unclear in some primary schools where a cross-curricular framework had been introduced.... Including history in a thematic approach did not of itself undermine the integrity of the subject. Integrated work succeeded where the development of the knowledge and thinking of each subject was emphasised (Ofsted, 2011 p.33)

Whether history is taught as a separate subject or a segment within a topic is perhaps not the critical issue. Of critical importance is the quality of planning, teaching and learning which can draw out qualities of the subject.

What is history in classrooms about?

History involves exploring about the past. This raises questions about what is learned, and has implications for what pupils need next. Does this matter? Perhaps it is best to start with the fictional school master Thomas Gradgrind.

Now, what I want is facts. Teach these boys and girls nothing but fact. Facts alone are wanted in life. Plant nothing else, and root out everything else. You can only form the minds of reasoning animals upon facts: nothing else will ever be of service to them (Dickens, 1854 p. 47).

This approach to learning presents knowledge as something contained in a sealed box and it assumes that the ‘facts’ are both pre-determined and meaningful in their own right. It provides no opportunity to question misconceptions as we have suggested above or explore the unknown with the passion demonstrated by the historian Hoskins at the start of this chapter. Even if we just teach facts, we cannot say that what is taught is unimportant or value free. Debates over what should be taught reflect concerns about how this is believed to affect the way in which children see the world. When this includes a canon or list of specified individuals as subjects, and particular events, these may be essentially intended to shore up a sense of national identity. Whether this is an appropriate use of history is debatable, but perhaps of more interest is whether it is effective. Several research studies have questioned the effectiveness of depending on children’s acquisition of dates and events. Research undertaken by Wineberg (2000) found that poor memory of historical events has been a problem since the early 20th century regardless of teaching approaches used. A recent study which investigated how children build up their understanding of the past was initiated by the following concern:

...memory of discreet items of information may be a poor indicator of their ability to use knowledge of the past for orientation in time. We cannot tell from tests of ‘key facts’ whether children leave school with a coherent framework of knowledge linking past, present and future which they can use to make sense of the world (Foster et al,2008, p.2).

This study found no evidence to suggest, beyond family and personal history, that history was a major factor in influencing identity and suggested that it would be wrong to conclude that students need a fixed national identity around which they should unite.

A major concern is how far children are able understand the way in which different parts of the past link together in order to gain an understanding of the past. (Ofsted, 2011). Children may know about

the Vikings and Victorians but they are often unable to locate them into a broader map of the past. For example a study with Year 2 undertaken by Hodkinson (2003) argued that it is not enough to use temporal concepts such as a long ago, or a very long time ago. Both are ambiguous and confusing for children. Precise measures such as decades and centuries need to be used to promote an understanding of the past. Developing a sense of chronology is of particular concern as a means of providing a framework on which children can relate their understanding of the past. Sequencing and timeline activities are commonly used to develop this skill.

In the classroom: Using timelines with Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 children.

A sense of chronology was developed with EYFS and Year 1 children by encouraging them to make a timeline of their own life. This required support from parent/carers who were asked to provide their child with a small range of photographs of them from their earliest baby photographs which was followed by a picture taken in school. The children collected pictures and talked about the photographs with their parent/carers before bringing them into school. During the activity the children tried to put the photographs in the correct order and were supported by the teacher, providing scaffolding when necessary. During Year 1 and Year 2, children learnt about chronology when studying the Fire of London, the events in the life of a famous person or by grouping toys from different periods of time. A class timeline was built up adding events and using vocabulary such as fifty years ago, more one hundred years ago and about four hundred years ago. By using chronology related activities the children were able to deal with number concepts which some of them would have found challenging.

As children progress into Key Stage 2 their understanding of the framework of the past needs to become increasingly sophisticated. Chronology can be taught in a number of ways such as producing timelines on the wall or a History washing line across the room, together with a range of approaches considered later in this chapter. Closely associated with chronology are concepts such as change, causes and effect; and studies of past situations which provide insights into way in which the past has unfolded. The child we noted who felt that the Vikings were helped by Spitfires to defeat the Saxons clearly had misconceptions with respect to change and sense of period. At Key Stage 2 pupils can compare aspects of people's lives such as travel, homes and work at different times to develop an overview of the past. Within specific topics such as *migration* or *treatment of the poor* there is scope to compare and make links between the experiences of groups of people at different times.

The way in which children construct their understanding of the past is critical for learning about this or other aspects of their historical understanding. We argue that this should include consideration of the lives of a diverse range of experiences including rich and poor, people from different ethnic communities and genders (Claire, 1998; Bracey et al, 2011). Cooper (2012) points out that the study of the past can relate to a range of contexts and approaches if they share a common approach:

history may be broad or in depth. It may be about an individual, about social groups, economic or social movements, local, national or global...But history is not just a story or a list of events. Whatever content an account of the past may focus on, it must be investigated through the process of historical enquiry (Cooper, 2012, p.14)

How can children begin to build up their understanding of the past through historical enquiry? We can only try to establish what happened in the past and for this children need time to explore, to observe and discuss what they see (not sure what the mark means here – should there be a punctuation mark?) and think, and then share their possibly incomplete understanding with their teacher and peers. This may appear daunting especially if your own knowledge of the past is limited. As a starting point it is essential that you have researched the period or topic. At the same time it is important to appreciate that you are unlikely to know everything and that you are almost certainly going to develop your expertise through planning and teaching the subject. It is also important that you consider the potential range of resources which you could use – both within the classroom and outside, including members of the community, the locality, museums and sites and re-enactment companies. This provides a menu from which you can develop children's subject knowledge and understanding. It would also be useful to have an insight into history topics which your class has undertaken in the past in order to relate the current topic to how it is being developed across each key stage. You can begin by finding out what the children know, and eliciting any early misconceptions. You can locate what they are learning within a wider time frame. You could begin by locating their new topic on a timeline in the context of previous periods which they have studied and also by making visual comparisons between them.

Through historical enquiry children can find answers to their questions in order to build up a provisional idea of the past without assuming that it is a jumbled mass of dates and facts that can be passively swallowed up.

Turner–Bisset defined questioning as ‘the force that drives historical enquiry...from open, speculative questions which may spring either from the children or the teacher, the children can generate further questions which refine the focus of the enquiry or open up further themes’ (Turner Bisset, 2005 p.26).

This enquiry-based approach requires both a leading key question for the topic followed by six or seven supporting questions as a focus for specific lessons or groups of lessons. Such questions can start with –How? Why? What? or When? This firmly establishes the principle of process at the heart of learning. However, it is useful to consider some ways in which both the questions and the processes can be used effectively to engage children in their learning. For example Riley recommended that teachers should look at how well their key questions not only provided a historical focus, but also engaged children by providing ‘something with a more obvious puzzle element, that can be used to intrigue pupils and connect one set of facts with another’ (Riley, 2000 p.3). This principle could be applied to devising questions a primary level when thinking of both leading questions for topics as well as individual lessons.

Consider the following key questions for medium term plans:

What happened in Tudor times?

What caused the Fire of London?

The Fire of London: Was the baker to blame?

Elizabethan times: All banquets and fun?

We hope that you agree with us that the last two would provide a more intriguing start to a topic! The same consideration would apply to individual enquiry questions within the scheme –with respect to the first –why bother asking the question when you have been given the answer! The second question is intentionally open-ended with opportunities for children to develop their own ideas.

Why was Mary Queen of Scots beheaded?

Why did Mary Queen of Scots have so many enemies?

You may well think of more effective questions. However, the latter questions attempt to introduce a degree of mystery and intrigue which is lacking in the earlier examples. The following set of questions was raised with Year 5/6 children around the cross-curricular topic ‘Enterprise’.

How enterprising were the Victorians?

1. Who were the Victorians?
2. How can we tell that the Victorians were enterprising?
What does the Great Exhibition tell us about the enterprising Victorians?
Why did the Victorians build factories?
3. What impact did enterprise have on the lives of children?
4. How enterprising were reformers?
5. Was George Cadbury enterprising?
6. How enterprising were the Victorians? What was the effect of this on their lives?

Approaches to primary history

With younger children you will find that history tends to be broadly based, asking and answering questions about personal, family and local contexts, together with stories, events and people in the recent and distant past from Britain and around the world. As children’s knowledge becomes more refined they explore and draw links between different times and spatial contexts. They should also consider how the past has been represented and interpreted in different ways such as in museums, films, souvenirs and books.

Key questions provide the focus of your enquiry and from this the children develop their knowledge and understanding through focusing on historical objectives drawn from the list below. Any question

will inevitably include many of these different aspects of history but one or more will usually stand out as a focus for your work. By developing subject knowledge through historical objectives children are able to look for answers to questions in a more systematic way. These provide the driving focus for selecting activities and represent what you want the children to achieve. They are based on the following :

Chronological understanding – with younger children this includes placing events, pictures or objects such as toys in chronological order and using simple words related to time such as before and after. The use of timelines related to their lives or those around them, together with people and events studied also provides a means of supporting their development of the past. Similarly, having read through the life story of a person the children can be given cards with key events from which to sequence the key events in their lives. For example this exercise was used by Claire (2008) to enable children to gain an over view of the life of Walter Tull, a footballer and the first Black Officer in army during World War 1. However should timelines be in straight lines? A thinking skills technique can be used to encourage children to think of the high and low points in Walter Tull’s life. A smiley face can be put at the top of a piece of sugar paper and a sad face at the bottom with the original timeline down the middle. By moving the cards towards the top of the page they were able to produce a wavy timeline which provided opportunities to consider Walter Tull’s changing fortunes and concepts of changes, situations as well as chronology. As children progress particularly into Key Stage 2 they need to relate events, people and changes to different times in the past. A number of studies have argued for the use of timelines around rooms and school halls, and developing them with children as they learn topics. Measuring duration and changes both between and within periods provides a sense of the significance of different periods, events and individuals. It is useful to locate periods within a broader picture of the past by having timelines using pupils as human markers for a large timeline. (Sossick, 2011; Wallace, 2011).

Understanding events, people and changes – this includes finding out why people did things or why things happened and a sense of what it was like to live at different times in the past. At Key Stage 1 this could include topics such as –‘Why should we remember Walter Tull?’ or ‘The Fire of London:

Was the baker to blame?’ It could also include looking at life at different times – comparing living in a castle with a home today. As children progress into Key Stage 2 the objectives become increasingly demanding requiring them to find out about the specific features of different times, including the lives of men , women and children the social , cultural, religious and ethnic diversity of societies within them, together with the reasons and results for events, situations and changes within and across periods.

Historical interpretation – this relates to how people look back at the past and is perhaps the way in which most children and their parents encounter the past. An example is the following English Heritage Living history event at Kenilworth Castle.



Queen Elizabeth 1st and Robert Dudley,
the Earl of Leicester

This can include, for example, the perceptions presented in films such as costume dramas, school textbooks, museum displays, souvenirs, travel catalogues, or role play enactments or historically based adverts. Many of these are difficult to miss and will be encountered naturally even by young children. However, as children progress they should be encouraged to question why people, periods

and events have been represented as they have, and not take things at face value. This can provide a wonderful basis for a topic. For example, by starting a topic with an image of Victorian times in a Christmas card, costume drama, re-enactment, or a visit to Cadbury World, then studying aspects of Victorian life including slums, children's working conditions and the workhouse, before discussing why these more relevant depictions do not find a place on the front of the card! Depictions of Luxor at Las Vegas provide a comparable if more contentious representation of the Egyptians, while York goes some way towards challenging stereotypical perceptions of the Vikings.

Historical enquiry –this is at the heart of the process of learning history in which children ask and answer questions from a wide range of sources. Cooper (2000) draws on the work of Piaget and Bruner to argue that young children tend to draw randomly from their experiences from home and school, but progressively children relate this to information about the natural world before moving onto abstract propositions. Therefore we need to provide relevant experience and information as children move through the key stages. The following exercise demonstrates how a group of older primary pupils are able to link their direct experiences to a deeper knowledge and understanding of context and enquiry related to a specific time in the past.

Out of the classroom: Using a walk through Yelvertoft village as an enquiry. A group of Year 5/6 children were asked - What evidence can we look for to find out what Yelvertoft was like in World War 2? They began by comparing a map of the village from the war period with a recent map to identify the buildings that still exist from the war and coloured these in. Following this they were asked how and where they might find evidence of the war. They suggested looking at building styles, dates on buildings, the war memorial, gravestones, a plaque in church and one child mentioned a building which housed prisoners of war. This was followed by an investigative walk through the village, helped by a long standing member of the community who was able to add extra information. The knowledge some children had about the property they lived in also supported their enquiry.

Organisation and communication - the key consideration here is that children of all ages should be involved in selecting and communicating their ideas in different ways including, for example, discussions, drama, displays, drawing, extended writing, using ICT skills to create a film or making models based on researching the past.

The above need to be taught within a broadly based framework of the past covering the recent and distant times from Local, National European and world history, which becomes increasingly complex as their knowledge and understanding develops.

Getting started: Stimulating interest and building on what the children know

When starting a new topic you as the teacher will have insights into the questions which you want to be explored, together with the context of the topic. What about the children? They may well have existing ideas that are grounded in their own experiences and images of people, places and topics from outside the classroom and it may well be that some of these ideas are historically inaccurate or only partially understood. These misconceptions need to be identified and either discussed or used to support targeted planning. It is therefore important to begin with reference to the children’s prior learning when beginning a new topic or lesson.

Sharing the key question and objectives, whether created for or developed with the children provides them with a focus for their learning and what is expected from them. Equally, Turner –Bisset argued that it is important to spend time devising creative approaches to inspire children, meet their needs and encourage their own creativity. This takes time for ‘shuffling of ideas and repertoire to devise the best possible teaching approach for what is to be learned’ (Turner –Bisset, 2005 p.174.). Table 1 provides examples of starter activities which can provide a creative hook for learning about the past

Table 1: Some stimulating starter activities to encourage creative approaches to learning.

Well known stories and nursery rhymes	The Three Little Pigs – materials used for houses at different times in the past - straw, wood or brick. Mary, Mary, Quite contrary – Mary Tudor’s persecution of Protestants. Ring a Ring o’ Roses –the impact of the plague.
Pictures	Raising questions from a picture of Victorian Working children as the basis for an enquiry; using a local postcard as a basis for comparing past and present.

Film or TV extracts	Using archive government propaganda films encouraging parents to evacuate their children in World War 2 or the opening scene of the film <i>Gladiator</i> (2000), with parent's consent, could provide an introduction to Roman warfare.
A story as a stimulus	An extract from <i>Coming to England</i> (1995) by Floella Benjamin can provide an introduction to the experiences of people migrating to this country.
Letters and diary extracts.	A letter based on Beatrix Potter's book can be used as a starting point for studying her life. Similarly extracts from Samuel Pepys or Anne Frank's diary can be used to promote enquiry questions.
Artefact	Using a Viking bone mug or 16 th century reed lamp related to stimulate questions about their use.
Visits/visitors	E.g. a visit to a local castle, local or national museum, and member of the community or role play enactment. These can take place at the start, middle or end of a topic but as a starter can be used to encourage children to generate questions.
Drama	Freeze framing a picture such as a depiction of the Fire of London or the Irish potato famine/hunger followed hot seating a character in it by the teacher in order to initiate an enquiry!

In the classroom: From stimulus to enquiry. Comparing the how a photograph of the Victorian Seaside.

A PHOTOGRAPH OF THE ESPLANADE AND BEACH, DORSET COULD BE PUT HERE BUT THIS NEEDS TO BE DISCUSSED GIVEN THE COST! PERMISSION IS NEEDS TO BE GIVEN –DISCUSSED AND DETAILS SENT TO YOU WITH INTIAL DRAFT.

We used a Victorian photograph of the *Esplanade and Beach, Weymouth* (English Heritage n.d.) from the digital National Monument Record with both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 children and it is

interesting to see both similarities and differences in approaches, allowing for progression in pupil needs:

At Key Stage 1: As a starting point before using the picture children were reminded of basic question words they could use which had previously been covered in Literacy sessions. Children then had prompts of the question words and those in Year 2 worked with their learning partners looking at the photograph (A3 sized) and were asked to think of some questions they would like answering about the photograph. By using talk partners the children formulated and developed questions together and supported each other with some questions naturally leading to others. Having a partner and sharing a question that they had thought of gave some of the less confident children an opportunity to share questions either with their partner reading the questions together to the rest of the group or being able to use a question they had thought of together. Working with the teacher the children in Year 1 could be directed to try to think of questions starting with different question words. The teacher also worked as scribe and was able to help them to compose questions when necessary... Following this introductory lesson the children used photographs, pictures, books and teacher sharing information in order to try to answer the questions and to learn more about Victorian holidays. The exercise also involved putting the Victorians onto a class time line with Victorian times being described as more than 100 years ago.

At Key Stage 2: As a starting point the children were shown the picture and given a copy to share with their talk partner to discuss what it told them about going to the seaside in Victorian times. Some children showed very good observational skills and paid great attention to the details such as the writing on the adverts. This included children across the ability range as it helped that the picture gave them a focus and the responses were open ended. The children then worked in pairs to raise questions about the photograph which they wanted answers to using the details which emerged from the picture. We discussed as a class and used the working wall for words to begin a question with. After devising their own research questions the children used both textbooks and the internet to answer them. Examples of the questions raised include-Did the Victorians ever sit down and relax on the beach? What is a bathing machine? Some children found that they had to refine their questions by linking the question to a broader theme in order to support their research. The children evaluated the process and some indicated once they had a starting point to find information this acted as a catalyst for further research. The children were aware as a class the questions being researched and also helped each other.

This exercise shows how children's understanding is developed through enquiry, which becomes increasingly complex as children progress through Key Stages 1 and 2. The key point which these activities have in common is that they show how children can use as a stimulus, process based skills, together with speaking and listening to help construct their knowledge of the past. Several different approaches can be used within a lesson, or group of related lessons around a topic. For example, the research task related to Year 5/6 children looking at a picture of the seaside made use of a range of processes – observing, questioning and reflecting,. It also made use of all aspects of speaking and listening for learning in history. We would like to end by focusing on the value of talk as a means of learning about the past.

In the classroom: Learning history through Talking about the past

The opening two paragraphs of *The Story of Walter Tull* (2008) were used with a class of Year 1/2 children as a starting point along with the illustration on page 5 of the book. The children talked to their talk partners about what they thought was happening and what they had learnt from listening to the reading and looking at the picture. Children in Year 2 recorded this on the reverse of the photograph and children in Year 1 worked in a group with the teacher to use the clues. The classroom was moved around with the tables placed into straight lines and adults took on the roles as Head of orphanage and Housekeeper. Very thin porridge was presented to the children as gruel – they did not have to eat it but were reminded (in role) that if they did not they would only be getting bread and cheese for tea and there was a lot of work to do before then. The children were expected to be very polite to teachers – to sit in silence and to listen to instructions and follow immediately. The children were split into groups and given some chores such as ironing (using cold) but authentic flat irons, cleaning using rags and cold water to clean some areas of the classroom, and dusting using rags to dust around the room. After lining up in silence the children were given a short playtime and played some traditional playtime games. Following the playtime hot-seating was used to encourage the children to think and talk about the experiences that Walter Tull and the other children in the Children's Home. They asked the adults questions such as why did we only have cold water for washing? Why could we not have sugar on our gruel? The children were also given the opportunity to sit on the hot seat themselves and talk about their experiences.

The lesson began with teacher-directed talk, then children were given the opportunity to develop and share questions and responses in a follow up hot seating activity. In the second activity, children had opportunities to share their learning through talk and collaboratively build this up into a class discussion related to continuity and change across periods.

Many of the activities which we have mentioned in this chapter including freeze-framing, questioning objects and artefacts, involve various forms of talk in order to share and promote learning. The links between talk, thinking and learning across all subjects in the curriculum are clear. Alexander (2010) argues that dialogue can support children's development and learning through five ways – **collectively**, with teachers and children addressing learning tasks together; **reciprocally**, where teachers and children listen to each other and share ideas and alternative viewpoint; **supportive** where children feel free to share their ideas; **cumulative** where teachers and children build on their own and one another's ideas; and **purposeful** where teachers steer classroom talk to meet specified educational goals.

Summary

This chapter provides you with an introduction to the nature of historical enquiry as a means of enabling children to construct their understanding of the past. This includes developing an

appreciation of a framework of the past as well as exploring different stories, events and people within it. Accessing this through challenging and intriguing questions, together with appropriate teaching and learning processes can make history meaningful, valid and rewarding. We are aware that this is a brief introduction to how history is taught and learned and we trust that you will find things to reflect on and develop for yourself, in this chapter and in our recommended reading.

Reflective questions

How can I engage children in their study of the past?

How can I use historical sources effectively?

How can I deal with children's misconceptions about the past?

How can I help children to develop their framework of the past?

What activities can I use as hooks for children in learning about the past?

How can I use talk promote learning in history?

Recommended reading.

Cooper, H. (2012) *History 5-11. A guide for teachers* London: David Fulton.

This provides a first rate appreciation of the nature of history in the primary school together insights into current thinking and research.

Davies, I. (Ed) (2011) *Debates in History Teaching*. London: Routledge,

This text considers a range of issues in history teaching and provided a good basis for exploring these in depth.

Foster, S, Ashby, R., Lee, P. and Howson, J. (2008). *Usable Historical Pasts: A study of students' frameworks of the past: Full Research Report* ESRC End of Award Report, RES-000-22-1676.

Swindon: ESRC.

This critical study provided insights into the way in which children construct the past. Available from: <http://www.esrc.ac.uk/.../RES-000-22-1676/.../52833c3a-4adb-4929> [Accessed 27 November 2012]

Ofsted (2011) *History for all. History in English schools 2007/10*. Manchester: Ofsted.

Available at: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research/Browse-all-by/Documents-by-type/Thematic-reports/History-for-all> [Accessed 27 November 2012]. This is essential reading in order to consider the strengths and key issues in history teaching.

Turner-Bisset, R. (2005) *Creative Teaching. History in the Primary Classroom*. London: David Fulton.

This combines a very good insight into theoretical issues associated with historical knowledge and creativity with practical application.

References

Alexander, R. (2010) *Children, Their World, Their Education: Final Report and Recommendations of the Cambridge Primary Review*. London: Routledge.

Benjamin, F. (1995) *Coming to England*. Harmondsworth: Puffin.

Turner-Bisset, R. (2005) *Creative Teaching. History in the Primary Classroom*. London: David Fulton.

Bracey, P., Gove-Humphries A, and Jackson, D. (2011). Teaching diversity in the history classroom, ed. Davies, I *Debates in History Teaching*. London: Routledge, pp.172-186

Claire, H. (1999). *Reclaiming our pasts. Equality and diversity in the primary history curriculum*. Stoke: Trentham.

Claire, H. (2007). *Walter Tull: Sport War and challenging adversity (Key Stage 1)* Northampton: Northamptonshire Black History Association

Claire, H. (2007). *Walter Tull. Professional Black Footballer and First Black Officer in the British Army*. Story Book Northampton: Northamptonshire Black History Association

Cooper, H. (2012) *History 5-11. A guide for teacher.(s)* London: David Fulton

Dickens, C. (1854) *Hard Times*. London: Penguin

English Heritage (n.d) *Esplanade and Beach Weymouth National Monument Record*. English Heritage. Available at: <http://www.heritage-explorer.co.uk/web/he/search.aspx?crit=esplanade&start=1&cid=26&tid=269&rt=0> [accessed 30 November, 2012].

Foster, S, Ashby, R., Lee, P. and Howson, J. (2008). *Usable Historical Pasts: A study of students' frameworks of the past: Full Research Report* ESRC End of Award Report, RES-000-22-1676.

Swindon: ESRC. Available at: <http://www.esrc.ac.uk/...esrc/.../RES-000-22-1676/.../52833c3a-4adb-4929> [Accessed 27 November 2012]

Gladiator (2000) Directed by Scot Ridley. 2 hours 51 mins. Hollywood: Universal .DVD.

Hoskins, W. (1969) *The Making of the English Landscape*. London. Hodder and Stoughton

Hodkinson, A. (2003) The Usage of subjective temporal phrases within the National Curriculum for History and its schemes of work. Effective provision or a missed opportunity? *Education 3-13*. No 31(3), pp.28-34.

Ofsted (2011) *History for all. History in English schools 2007/10*. Manchester: Ofsted. Available at: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research/Browse-all-by/Documents-by-type/Thematic-reports/History-for-all> [Accessed 27 November 2012].

DfEE/QCA (1999) *The National Curriculum Handbook for primary teachers in England key stages 1 and 2*. London: HMSO P102-108QCA/DfEE (1999)

DfE (2013) *The National Curriculum in England. Framework Document July 2013*. London: Department for Education.

Riley, M. (2000) 'Into the Key Stage 3 history garden: choosing and planning your enquiry questions'. *The Historical Association*. No 99. pp.8-13.

Sossick, M. (2011) Big timelines, Bigger pictures: Supporting Initial Teacher Trainees to think big about chronology. *Primary History* p.31.

Wallace, N. (2011) A living timeline: Getting Knebworth House's visitor to understand where the distant past is No. 59 *Primary History* pp.36-37.

Wineberg, S. (2000) 'Making historical sense'. In: Stearns, P, Sexias, P., Wineberg, S. (eds) *Knowing Teaching and Learning History*. New York: New York University Press.