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Primary History: Mission Impossible?

Michael Maddison

Education consultant, inspector and trainer

Deputy President, Historical Association

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Outline

Primary History: Mission Impossible?

- Why does it appear to be impossible?
- How can we make great history not just possible but inspiring?



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Why does it appear to be impossible?

Five principal issues:

- Curriculum freedom and how best to plan learning
- Meeting whole school curriculum requirements
- Resources
- Teachers' subject knowledge
- Assessment

Curriculum freedom and how best to plan

- Aims
- Preamble for each key stage
- Subject content

Subject Content KS1

- **changes within living memory.** Where appropriate, these should be used to reveal aspects of change in national life
- **events beyond living memory that are significant nationally or globally** [for example, the Great Fire of London, the first aeroplane flight or events commemorated through festivals or anniversaries]
- **the lives of significant individuals in the past who have contributed to national and international achievements.** Some should be used to compare aspects of life in different periods [for example, Elizabeth I and Queen Victoria, Christopher Columbus and Neil Armstrong, William Caxton and Tim Berners-Lee, Pieter Bruegel the Elder and LS Lowry, Rosa Parks and Emily Davison, Mary Seacole and/or Florence Nightingale and Edith Cavell]
- **significant historical events, people and places in their own locality.**

Subject Content KS2

- British history from earliest times to 1066
 - changes in Britain from the **Stone Age to the Iron Age**
 - the **Roman Empire** and its impact on Britain
 - Britain's settlement by **Anglo-Saxons and Scots**
 - the **Viking and Anglo-Saxon struggle** for the Kingdom of England to the time of Edward the Confessor
- a **local history** study
- a study of an **aspect or theme in British history** that extends pupils' chronological knowledge beyond 1066
- the **achievements of the earliest civilizations** – an overview of where and when the first civilizations appeared and a depth study of one
- **Ancient Greece** – a study of Greek life and achievements and their influence on the western world
- a **non-European society** that provides contrasts with British history



Meeting whole school requirements

- Subject leader's annual report to governors, 2012:

 - ‘History is now used more as a vehicle for developing literacy’

- **The issue:** T and L in history has been hijacked by too many senior leaders as an opportunity for developing literacy.

- Developing pupils' historical knowledge, understanding and thinking have been replaced by:

 - merging history into generic themes and topics

 - an emphasis upon writing which focuses almost exclusively on literacy

 - a focus on marking primarily for spelling, punctuation and grammar.

It is time to reclaim our subject.



**How can we make great history
not just possible but inspiring?**

How can we make it possible?

Five principal issues:

- Curriculum freedom and how best to plan learning
- Meeting whole school curriculum requirements
- Resources
- Teachers' subject knowledge
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Inspiring teaching and learning in history (*History for all*, Ofsted 2011)

■ Inspiring pupils' subject expertise

- Knowledge matters, as does why topics are worth studying

■ Inspiring pupils' learning

- The most effective subject pedagogy = well-structured enquiries

■ Inspiring pupils' historical thinking & understanding

- The best learning in history = developing pupils' historical knowledge and historical thinking = ability to investigate, consider, reflect and review the events of the past.

■ Inspiring pupils' progress through accurate assessment

- which** enables teachers to refine their practice and pupils to build securely on their learning.



The curriculum

History and Geography – traditionally seen as Humanities.

Problem: they are profoundly different.

Fact: The closest subject to history is **not** Geography.

It is **English Language**.



The curriculum

Progress in history depends on progress in literacy.
They are inextricably linked.

Without excellent speaking and listening and without excellent reading and writing, pupils will not be able to make progress in history because they will be unable to access history.



The curriculum

It is up to teachers to:

- reclaim history's identity and integrity within the primary curriculum
- restore its importance as a subject in its own right
- re-establish its role as a time and place where pupils' literacy skills are developed as a bonus when they study historical topics and themes

It is up to the history community to help you to do this

■ Ofsted

The broad and balanced curriculum inspires pupils to learn. The range of subjects and courses helps pupils acquire **knowledge, understanding and skills in all aspects of their education, including the humanities** and linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technical, social, physical and artistic learning. (*Grade 1 for L&M*)

■ Ofsted

More weight will be attached to the **current progress of all groups across all subjects and all year groups** and less reliance on the historic published data. (*Outcomes for pupils*)



Literacy in history ground rules

- **Speaking and listening precede writing** – so create time for historical debate, discussion and reflection prior to writing
- Develop pupils' **historical questioning** – the 5Ws+1H
- **Embed the language of history** – use historical terminology regularly
- Focus on **analytical and discursive writing** in history as well as descriptive and narrative writing
- Ensure there are **clear success criteria** which emphasise the history and the literacy
- Remember: a **history piece of work deserves a history comment**

Case Study: examining cultural, economic, military, political, religious and social aspects

- How will you ensure that you have a balance between all of these aspects in your schemes of work?
- **Case study: Why was the Battle of Solferino (1859) so important?**
- **Answer:** Jean-Henri Dunant – Geneva Convention – International Red Cross



Case Study : the partition of the Indian sub-continent 1947

- Opportunity to promote British values and tackle radicalisation and extremism
- It is not just what is being taught but how it is being taught which matters
- **Remember**: history focuses on enabling pupils to make balanced judgements

Beginning to explain			
Because ...	Therefore ...	This shows that ...	Indeed ...
As well ...	This suggests that ...	This implies that ...	This means that ...

Building your explanation			
In addition ...	Moreover ...	Furthermore ...	Subsequently ...
Consequently ...	Additionally ...	Also ...	Besides ...

Backing up your explanation			
Undoubtedly ...	Without doubt ...	Clearly ...	This proves that ...
Unquestionably ...	Certainly ...	Undeniably ...	Definitely ...

Balancing your explanation			
Perhaps ...	It is possible ...	Possibly ...	Whilst that may be true ...
Maybe ...	It is doubtful ...	However ...	On the other hand ...

Strengthening writing – some prompts

Before

1. Stimulus
2. Discussion
3. Type of writing
4. Success criteria
5. Modelling
i.e. preparation

During

1. Climate
2. Sufficient time
3. Literacy
prompts
4. Historical hints
5. Intervention

After

1. Editing
2. Marking
3. Feedback &
Reflection
4. Follow up
5. Disseminate,
display & save

Geography and History: Year 5 Overview

Key Features		GEOGRAPHY			HISTORY	
		Human	Physical	Anglo Saxons, Settlements and kingdoms	Early Civilizations	A Study of an aspect or theme in British history, beyond 1066
Year 5		<p>Brazil</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trade and growing economy Fair Trade 	<p>Rainforests of the Amazon</p> <p>Brazil – physical features</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Art and Culture Christianity conversion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ancient Egyptians Ancient Sumer Indus Valley Shang Dynasty of Ancient China 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The execution of Charles 1 Hitler's invasion of Poland and its impact on Britain
	Possible Learning Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> locate the world's countries, using maps to focus on Europe and North and South America and concentrating on their environmental regions, key physical and human characteristics, countries, and major cities <p>Why is Brazil in the news again? or What's so special about the USA?</p>	<p>Why should the rainforests be important to us all?</p>	<p>Were the Anglo-Saxons really smashing?</p>	<p>How can we re-discover the wonder of Ancient Egypt?</p>	<p>Why should gunpowder, treason and plot never be forgotten? Or How could Hitler have convinced a nation like Germany to have followed him?</p>

Year 5 Geographical and Historical Knowledge, Skills and Understanding requirements for the National Curriculum

- Were the Anglo-Saxons really smashing?
- How can we re-discover the wonders of Ancient Egypt?
- Why should gunpowder, treason and plot never be forgotten?
- How could Hitler have convinced a nation like Germany to follow him?

Resources: improving subject knowledge

- Historical Association
 - <http://www.history.org.uk/resources/primary.html>
- Schools History Project Primary Hub
 - <http://www.schoolhistoryproject.org.uk/Teaching/Primary/Index.htm>
- Thinking history
 - <http://www.thinkinghistory.co.uk/index.php>
- British Museum
 - <http://www.teachinghistory100.org/>
- Museum of London
 - <http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/explore-online/pocket-histories/>
- English Heritage
 - <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/stonehenge-teachers-kit/>



Resources

■ Maya archaeologist

- <http://mayaarchaeologist.co.uk/index.php/teachers/teacher-resources>



Heritage Schools



ENGLISH
HERITAGE



Historic England

- Established 2012 with £2.7m grant from DfE to EH
- Project to run from 2012-2015; now extended to 2016
- Involves clusters of schools in 8 regions
- Local Heritage Education Managers work with schools

Gove tells schools to think local in history lessons

(Guardian, 02.03.12)



Heritage Schools: What can we learn from this project?

- Heritage Schools are including more pupils, teachers and schools in using local history
 - as a central spine for much of their work in history and cross-curricular
 - to link local, regional, national and international events and themes
- **Result: improved historical knowledge, understanding and engagement – improved attitudes, personal development, SMSC – improved literacy**
- Key learning point: the types of projects being undertaken
 - E.g.: people – gravestones (Bristol, WW1)
 - E.g.: buildings – the Hippodrome (Great Yarmouth, 19thC), school (Manchester, 20thC)
 - E.g.: settlement – archaeological dig (Bristol, Anglo Saxon)

Historic England

Heritage Guide

Coming soon!

- How to plan a heritage study
- Top tips on devising enquiries about people and memorials, and buildings and sites and on creating a heritage trail
- Linked case studies with video clips
- <https://vimeo.com/127407426>



Pupils and chronology

- Use timelines regularly and accurately throughout the school
- Ensure each timeline develops an understanding of the key features of chronological understanding, namely:
 - **Sequence** – events in the right order
 - **Interval** – the distance between events
 - **Duration** – how long each event lasted



Examples of good practice included ...

- creating a **timeline in reverse** in the EYFS
- constructing a **cumulative timeline** from Y1 to Y6
- displaying a **'school timeline'** in the main hall or on corridors
- painting a timeline in **the school playground**
- using a pre-assembled **'chronology kit'** – the washing line
- ensuring **each topic links with previous topics**
- making **comparisons between topics as a matter of course** – change and continuity, similarity and difference.

Expectations

Overall in England, primary schools underestimate:

- what pupils can learn, understand and do
- the resources pupils can access
- the complexity of historical ideas pupils can understand

Case study: teaching significance

The 5 Rs for assessing significance:

- Remarkable (an important and notable event/person)
- Resulting in change
- Revealing (tells us a lot about a person's time)
- Remembered (ways that it is remembered today)
- Resonant/'ripples' (having an effect on future generations)

Activity:

Use the 5 Rs to judge the significance of one of the following:

- Edith Cavell
- William Caxton
- Elizabeth I
- Ancient Greece
- Vikings
- Great Fire of London

The lessons of inspection

- **Historical knowledge** is important
- Teachers must do more to strengthen pupils' **chronological understanding**
- Pupils have better knowledge and make better progress when **history is taught as a discrete subject**, with links made to other subjects as appropriate
- Always consider: ***Why** are we teaching, **what** we are teaching, **how** we are teaching it, **when** we are teaching it?*
- Never plan before you have answered: *What do we want pupils to **know, do and understand** at the end that they didn't know, couldn't do and didn't understand at the beginning?*

Seven top priorities – dispelling the myths

- Ofsted expects a particular **style of teaching**.
- Ofsted expects teachers to undertake an explicit exercise every few minutes to demonstrate that **pupils are making progress**.
- The faster the **pace**, more hectic the activity, better the learning.
- Overly detailed **lesson plans** support more effective teaching.
- Giving pupils few opportunities to **read, think, discuss and debate** helps them to develop their ideas and become more thoughtful learners.
- Constant **teacher talk** helps pupils to concentrate when they are working.
- **Peer assessing** limited pieces of work written in a short period of time helps strengthen pupils' knowledge and understanding and makes for **effective assessment**.

Never forget to enjoy your teaching – make history

- Accessible
- Meaningful
- Coherent
- Achievable

**We can make great history
possible and inspiring.**



Prompts for evaluating the effectiveness of history: curriculum

Inspiring History: Mission Possible

Michael Maddison

mike@maddisoneducation.co.uk

