**Substantive or disciplinary?**

**History:**

*Substantive* = all substantive knowledge content – narratives, dates, names, people, substantive concepts, etc

*Disciplinary* = second-order concepts / historical thinking / historical reasoning/ historical argument

Does this distinction work in…

**English?**

Where literature is concerned, yes, definitely. The study of English literature works in strikingly equivalent ways to the study of history. Beyond that – e.g. creative writing – it is more disciplinary than substantive. Grammar is tricky though – you could say grammar is substantive and linguistics is disciplinary, but the latter is not normally taught. English is a very complex hybrid subject!

**Geography?**

Yes, definitely, but be careful: geographers don’t have any commonly shared equivalent of our ‘second-order’ concepts and although there are various geography efforts to talk about its concepts, many of those often deemed equivalent to our *second-order* concepts definitely don’t do the job of our second order concepts (e.g. ‘sustainability’) and are definitely just substantive concepts. But geographical thinking /geographical skills / geographical enquiry are all equivalent to our disciplinary dimension in history.

**Science?**

Yes, definitely, but the curricular and teaching balance between them is quite different, and the disciplinary dimension is not *quite* equivalent because the scope for genuinely divergent judgement making is much less and quite different. The balance between what is ‘given’ and what is ‘up for grabs’ is completely different in history and this is why conversations about pupils ‘thinking for themselves’ often don’t translate between history and science, and lead to profound confusions wherever blanket, whole-school policies on learning or what constitutes a ‘good lesson’ come into play. This means that science teachers are often (though not always) talking about *pedagogy or learning* when they say ‘independent thinking’, ‘thinking for themselves’, but if history teachers are (say) setting up a paired argument in which pupils will argue for prioritisation of the causes of WWI, they are talking, first and foremost, about *curriculum,* that is, a curricular object. The act of causal reasoning isn’t just – or even chiefly - a learning process for learning some content. Also, it comes with a genuine expectation that pupils will legitimately arrive at quite different causal arguments (what is ‘up for grabs’). Pupils are learning to reason causally, not just using an argument technique to embed some facts or trying out some substantive definitions through ‘doing’ or ‘active learning’.

**MFL?**

Not really, at least not in ways relevant to most teaching pre-16. Of course, there is a distinction between language and linguistics that is more akin to substantive and disciplinary. And there is a distinction of substantive and disciplinary, akin to English literature, within literature of other languages, and that *does* amount to substantive content and disciplinary thinking. But if you tried to bolt the substantive/disciplinary distinction onto most KS3 MFL teaching, you’d be forcing an unhelpful distortion.

**Maths?**

Definitely not. Skill and knowledge merge in maths in ways they don’t in other subjects.

What about **music, art, RE?** Over to you for the SLT test…