Leading Australian Curriculum

history
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Why are we here?

This session aims to provide you with:

- An outline of the structure of the Australian Curriculum: History
- A familiarity of the key components of the Australian Curriculum: History
- A range of resource ideas and strategies
- An understanding of implications for assessing Australian Curriculum: History
- The links between Australian Curriculum: History and current teaching practises
Group Norms

1. Adopt a sense of responsibility in and for the group
2. Attend to others and listen
3. Cooperate in good faith
4. Aim for consensus and decision-making
5. Confront problems respectfully
6. Allow and give no put downs
7. Accept where others are at
8. Suspend judgements
What is History and Why Teach it?

- History is a study of the past, based on the interpretation of evidence and promotes the development of analytical skills.
- History is values based and is dependent on an individual’s personal perspective and background.
- History is an active process of inquiry and debate.
- History is about connecting our past to our present and helps us to map our future.
Research shows that topics are often repeated as teachers have their ‘favourite’ topics.

Content is now sequenced chronologically and each unit of study builds on its predecessor.

As a result, teachers must concentrate on the ‘focus’ for their year level.

History is organised into Historical Concepts, Skills, Knowledge and Understandings, with some flexibility as to content.

Knowledge and Understandings provide the content through which we develop Historical skills and Concepts.

Each level has key inquiry questions to guide the process.
History Within the Australian Curriculum

- Encompasses the general capabilities – Literacy, Numeracy, ICT, Critical Thinking, Personal & Social Capability, Ethical Behaviour and Intercultural Understanding.

- Embedded within are the cross curricular priorities – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and culture, Asia and Australia’s engagement with Asia and Sustainability.
Aims of the Australian Curriculum: History

- The curriculum aims to ensure that students develop:
  - Interest in, and enjoyment of, historical study for lifelong learning and informed active citizenship;
  - Knowledge, understanding and appreciation of past and forces that shape and change societies;
  - Understanding and use of historical concepts;
  - Capacity to undertake historical inquiry including the analysis and use of sources and explanation and communication.

*In order to achieve these aims, history needs to be relevant.*
The Historical Content

- Foundation – Personal and Family Histories
- Year 1 – Present and Past Family Life
- Year 2 – The Past in the Present
- Year 3 – Community and Remembrance
- Year 4 – First Contacts
- Year 5 – The Australian Colonies
- Year 6 – Australia as a Nation
- Year 7 – The Ancient World
The Historical Content

- Each year level features:
- A general overview of the unit;
- The Concepts used to develop historical understandings.
- Suggested inquiry questions. Teachers who wish to, can choose to develop more of their own.
- History content involves two strands – Historical Knowledge Understanding and Historical Skills.
- Within each strand are Content Descriptions and Content Elaborations e.g. Considering notable individuals in Australian public life across a range of fields.
- An Achievement Standard which indicates the quality of learning students should demonstrate and are supported by student work samples.
The Historical Concepts

The key concepts used to develop historical understandings are:

- Evidence
- Significance
- Cause and Effect
- Continuity and Change
- Empathy
- Contestability
- Perspective
Group Participation

1. Historical Concepts.
2. Australia Day.
A. Information obtained from sources that is valuable for a particular inquiry (for example, the relative size of historical figures in an ancient painting may provide clues for an inquiry into the social structure of the society). It can be used to help construct a historical narrative, to support a hypothesis or to prove or disprove a conclusion.

B. Occurs when particular interpretations about the past are open to debate, for example, as a result of a lack of evidence or different perspectives.

C. Aspects of the past that remained the same over certain periods of time are referred to as continuities. It is also evident in any given period of time and concepts such as progress and decline may be used to evaluate continuity and change.

D. Used by historians to identify chains of events and developments over time, short term and long term.

E. A point of view, the position from which they see and understand events going on around them. People in the past may have had different points of view about a particular event depending on their age, gender, social position and their beliefs and values.

F. An understanding of the past from the point of view of a particular individual or group, including an appreciation of the circumstances they faced, and the motivations, values and attitudes behind their actions.

G. The importance that is assigned to particular aspects of the past. For example, events, developments, movements and historical sites. It includes an examination of the principles behind the selection of what should be investigated and remembered and involves consideration of questions such as: How important were the consequences of an event? What was the duration of the event? How relevant is it to the contemporary world?
The Historical Skills

- The skills promoted within the Historical Inquiry Process are:
- Chronology. Terms and Concepts
- Historical Questions and Research
- Analysis and Use of Sources
- Perspectives and Interpretations
- Explanation and Communication
Questioning and the Inquiry Process

Historical Inquiry is about

1. Posing questions;
2. Locating and analysing sources;
3. Using evidence from sources to develop an informed explanation of the past.

Developing inquiry questions is an integral part of the historical process and links with classroom Literacy practices.
HISTORICAL INQUIRY

1. Topic
2. Focus questions
3. Locate sources (primary, secondary)
4. Evaluate sources
5. Identify and organise relevant information
6. Analyse and evaluate Information
7. Form opinion interpretation based on evidence
8. Develop Historical Narrative
9. Reflect and apply findings (Active Citizenship)
It is imperative that we provide students with a range of evidentiary sources.

There are two types of evidence –

1. Primary – evidence that was created at the time of the event.
2. Secondary – evidence that was created after the event and with the benefit of hindsight.

It is essential that we teach students to question the validity and effectiveness of historical evidence.
Assessment – It’s not an exact science, but rather an art form…

- Each year has an Achievement Standard, which is typical of a student at that year level.
- However this is not intended to be a checklist of student skills and understanding.
- There is currently no ‘grading’ system.
- Initial work samples are available through the AC Website.
- Avoid grading each piece of work – rather take an ‘on balance view’ of a student’s entire work portfolio.
- Continue to assess using the K-10 Syllabus ‘C’ Grade Descriptors.
The DET Portal is a virtual goldmine for historical resources.

It has recently been updated for a more proficient search.

DET Portal
Where can I find Historical Evidence Online?

- Australian Screen Online
- Trove
- National Trust
- Northbridge Project
- State Library Service

Think about creating ‘banks’ of topic based resources within Learning Teams.
Resources – Types of Historical Evidence?

- Paintings
- Cartoons
- Songs
- Maps
- Photographs
- Local place names
- *Diary entries – however be cautious about context*
Year Level Discussion

How can you link Australian Curriculum: History to what you are already doing?
(Hint: Think S&E and Literacy)
A country without a memory is a country of madmen.
George Santayana

History teaches everything including the future.
Lamartine

History is something that happens to other people.
Anonymous

History is a myth that men agree to believe.
Napoleon

History repeats itself because no one was listening the first time.
Anonymous

The supreme purpose of history is a better world.
Herbert Hoover
History never repeats...

...so ask your questions now!

Thank you!