

Inspector Curriculum Stage Two Training History



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Pre-reading: History in schools

Context

The position of history in schools, particularly primary schools, was precarious for some time. Recent developments, including the new National Curriculum and the work of Ofsted, have begun to re-establish the place of history in schools.

There is a well-developed history education community with a series of well-attended conferences, strong subject associations and a professional publication. However, there are many secondary schools and even more primary schools which do not regularly access support through these channels.

At primary school in particular, there is a lack of subject expertise to support curriculum design.

At all phases, unclear thinking about progression continues to be a barrier to curriculum development and pupil progress. The most common issue arises when leaders approach history as a set of 'skills' which pupils need to develop. This leads to the content which pupils need to learn being given a lower priority.

In our training, we will explore in depth the kinds of knowledge pupils need to build to get better at history.

The National Curriculum in history

The National Curriculum sets out a programme of study with clear and ambitious aims for pupil knowledge. The aide-memoire which accompanies this training summarises the requirements of the National Curriculum for History as:

- 'Areas of study' which define the scope of a broad and balanced curriculum. These are divided by key stage.
- 'To develop a knowledge of' statements which define the scope of ambitious end-points for pupils' knowledge. These are really end-points for the end of KS3, but of course we would want to see pupils progressing towards these end points across their study from the early years.

Areas of study KS1:

- Changes within living memory
- Significant events beyond living memory and the lives of significant individuals
- Significant events, people or places in their locality

Areas of study KS2:

- Changes in Britain from the Stone Age to Iron Age
- The Roman Empire and its impact on Britain
- Britain's settlement by Anglo-Saxons and Scots
- Viking and Anglo-Saxon struggle for control of England
- A local history study

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- An aspect or theme extending beyond 1066
- An overview of the earliest civilisations and a depth study of at least one early civilisation
- Ancient Greece
- A non-European society

Areas of study KS3:

- The development of Church, state and society in Medieval Britain 1066-1500
- The development of Church, state and society in Britain 1509-1745
- Ideas, political power, industry and empire: Britain, 1745-1901
- Challenges for Britain, Europe and the wider world 1901 to the present day
- The study of an aspect or theme in British history that consolidates and extends pupils' chronological knowledge from before 1066
- A local history study
- At least one study of a significant society or issue in world history and its interconnections with other world developments

To develop a knowledge of (by the end of KS3):

- A coherent narrative of British history from 1066
- The interrelationship between British and wider world history; the connections between local, regional, national and international history
- The complexity of people's lives, the diversity of societies and the relationships between different groups
- Cultural, economic, military, political, religious and social history; short- and long-term timescales
- Key substantive concepts such as trade, empire, tax, parliament
- The second-order concepts: cause and consequence; change and continuity; similarity and difference; historical significance; sources and evidence; historical interpretations

Progress in history

By the end of KS3, pupils should have a secure knowledge of these areas. As they build their knowledge of this content, they are learning and remembering more about different places and periods in the past. This is progress.

There are some kinds of knowledge which are *particularly powerful* for helping pupils to make sense of new content in history. If a curriculum is well-planned to secure these components for pupils, then they will be supported to learn new content more readily and therefore make progress.

We will look at these important components in a lot more depth in the training.

To help us consider how the curriculum helps pupils to make progress, we will be talking about particular 'categories' of knowledge in history.

Categories of knowledge in history

Substantive knowledge is the 'stuff' (or substance) of history. It is history content, like what happened in the Battle of Hastings.

Disciplinary knowledge is knowledge of how historians find out about the past, and how they shape their arguments.

Categories of substantive knowledge

Pupils progress in history by learning and remembering more history content, by studying specific historical contexts in detail and also by building their knowledge in overview.

But through these specific contexts, pupils can also learn knowledge which is particularly powerful and transferable to new contexts. To help us consider how effectively this is being done, it is helpful to consider three categories of substantive knowledge which is taught:

Category of substantive knowledge	Summary
Knowledge of immediate topic/period	The aspects of the immediate topic which the school emphasises. Careful selection and emphasis here can help to determine what pupils learn of the other categories.
Substantive concepts	Abstract concepts like 'empire', 'tax', 'trade' and 'king'. They are encountered regularly in history and if pupils have a secure schema for these then they are better prepared to learn new material.
Chronological/ period knowledge	Knowledge of chronology both as an overview (i.e. where does the Battle of Hastings 'fit in' with what I already know) and features of periods (e.g. 11 th century warfare, problems of travel).

In all phases the emphasis should be on building secure and rich substantive knowledge across a wide range of time periods.

As pupils move through their education, they will also begin to engage with how historians find out about the past.

Disciplinary knowledge

The National Curriculum specifies the following knowledge of the discipline which pupils must learn in history. History teachers often call these the six **second-order** concepts. They are the ways that historians think or operate.

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Pupils need to build up knowledge of how historians do this across the curriculum. Crucially, these are not skills. Pupils cannot simply 'practice' doing what historians do. Usually, pupils do not know enough about the topic they are studying to make the kinds of judgments which historians make. Or they don't know enough about the complex rules and conventions which govern how historians make claims.

Second-order concepts (categories of disciplinary knowledge)	Summary
Cause and consequence	How historians construct arguments about the causes and consequences of events
Change and continuity	How historians construct arguments about the nature, pace and extent of change in the past
Historical significance	How historians and others attribute significance to past events or people, deeming them worthy of study or attention
Similarity and difference	How historians construct arguments about the extent of similarity and difference between places, people and groups in the past
Sources and evidence	How historians use sources as evidence to answer a question
Interpretations	How historians construct their accounts of the past, including how and why these differ

When they are lacking this important knowledge, pupils' attempts to do what historians do will not lead to valid or reasonable conclusions. They are very likely to build misconceptions about how historians work.

Instead, pupils need to be taught about real examples of how historians study the past. Over time, this will build up their knowledge of, for example, how historians use sources to study the past.

Pupils will be building knowledge into schemata for each of the second-order concepts listed above.

Training aims

Welcome to this inspector curriculum stage two training.

The overall aims of the training are as follows:

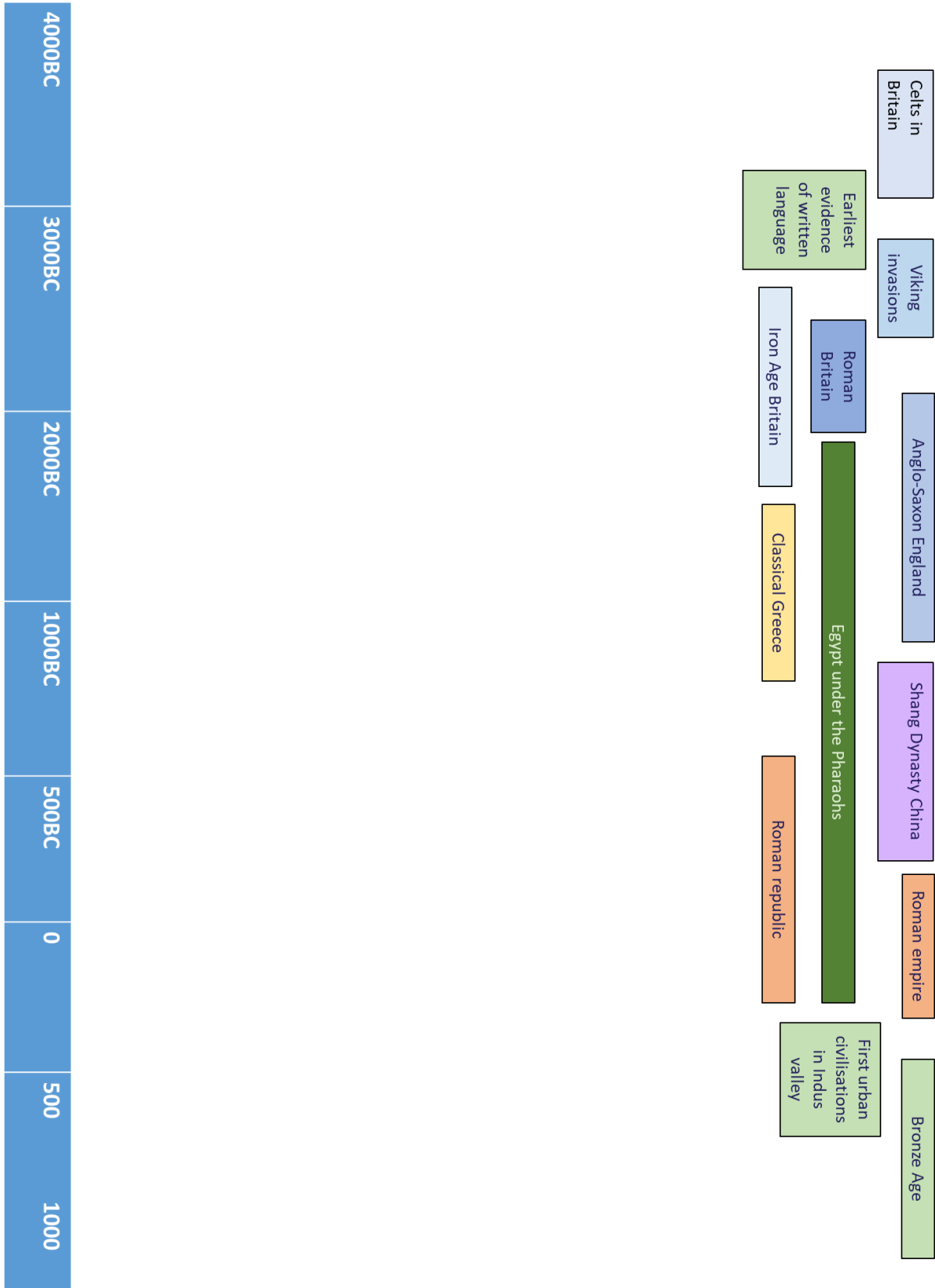
- Understand the categories of knowledge which make up progression in history.
- Develop familiarity with the content and exemplification within the history subject guidance, and the summary of these in the aide-memoire.
- Be able to make a more detailed evaluation to support improvement.

Training agenda

10.00-11.45	Session 1 – History subject principles
11.45-12.00	Break
12.00-13.20	Session 2 – Deep-dives in primary history
13.20-13.50	Lunch
13.50-14.30	Session 3 – Deep-dives in secondary history

Activity 1 – chronological knowledge

Place as many events/periods as you can roughly on the timeline.



Activity 2 – Conversations with curriculum leaders

Below are two examples of conversations with teachers with responsibility for history in primary schools.

2a) Read through these examples and underline/annotate any suggestions of stronger or weaker practice based on what we have discussed in the previous session.

School 1:

I: How is your curriculum designed to help pupils get better at history? What are they getting better at as they progress through your curriculum?

SL: We want pupils to be able to think like historians, and to do this they need to build up their historical skills. So, in our curriculum we teach them how to sift through evidence and evaluate evidence in lots of units, like in the Stone Age in Year 3 and then again in the Egyptians in Y4, so they get better at those skills.

I: What does it mean for pupils to 'get better' at evidential skills? What does that look like?

SL: They can make better judgements and do more sophisticated things with sources, like they can tell if sources are reliable and maybe compare multiple sources.

I: Thanks, so in the Stone Age unit you mentioned, what do pupils learn about sources which they use in the Egyptians unit?

SL: They learn about how to tell if sources are reliable or not in Y3, and then they apply those skills in Y4.

I: Thanks for that. And how have you organised your curriculum as a whole? How did you decide what to include or leave out?

SL: It is chronological, and we have organised it by second-order concepts, so pupils get lots of practise at coming up with their own judgements about sources for example, and they develop this skill over time.

I: And why did you organise it chronologically?

SL: It just makes sense... I guess because pupils then have some of the context of what they go on to study.

I: That's helpful. What other ways are pupils prepared for what they go on to learn? Let's take this Y5 unit on Vikings which you are teaching

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today, for example. How has your curriculum prepared pupils for what they are going to learn?

SL: They need to know about England and Britain and how it is an island, and about invasion, and we have done a lot of that when we did the Romans. And also in geography they know about the North Sea. So all of that means that this idea of Vikings coming over by sea to invade is not so complicated.

I: That's very clear, thanks. And what do you want them to learn from these lessons on the Vikings?

SL: Obviously about who the Vikings were and also about the changes they made in England. We really want them to connect that with the rest of what they have studied on Britain and changes, so they sort of have the whole story in their head. We keep going back to the rest of the story to sort of connect it up. And then we've also started thinking about some really key vocab which they can learn in each unit, so we have picked out some really important history words and we will try to make sure all of the pupils really get these. So in this unit the words are invasion, settler, chronicle, culture and also empire because this is a different kind of empire to the Romans.

I: Great. Can I just ask a bit more about what you study across the curriculum? You have mentioned Egyptians, do pupils learn anything else about early civilisations?

SL: At the moment they just do the Egyptians, but one of our teachers did some CPD which talked about how you could teach an overview as well and so pupils can kind of see the whole development big picture and then have case studies within it, so we have just bought a couple of books on Babylon and the fertile crescent and we are sort of rewriting that.

School 2:

I: Thanks for this document, so I can see all of the topics you teach in KS1 and KS2. It seems that the content areas on the National Curriculum are covered here – is that what you based your planning on?

SL: Yes, we used the National Curriculum and then each of us took a unit and we planned that by adapting a scheme we got as a school.

I: Thanks, that's helpful. So maybe we can talk about a few of these units. Let's take the Bronze Age in Y3, for example. What do pupils learn in that unit?

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SL: Well they don't do a whole unit on the Bronze Age – we have a big topic on 'people and places' which covers the Stone Age and the Bronze Age and up to the Romans. We look at how different people lived in Britain and what their life was like. We think about what was good and

bad for people and try to get pupils to think about others and imagine what their life would have been like then.

I: OK, and what do they learn about each of those periods?

SL: The houses, the tools they use and what people wore.

I: That's helpful, and how does the curriculum across Y3 help pupils to progress? What are they getting better at?

SL: Well they are becoming more creative thinkers because, for example, when we do the Romans they have to think about how to get water into the cities and come up with an idea about how to do it, and in the Iron Age they have to come up with how you might build a house with just wood and mud.

I: And what about things which are specific to history? How do they get better at the subject?

SL: Well obviously we have all of the concepts in the National Curriculum, like causes and change and interpretations. We do lots of interpretations, because we really want pupils to see that everything is an interpretation and that their ideas are really important and they can be historians themselves.

I: Can you give me an example of where you teach about interpretations?

SL: Well in the people and places unit for example pupils have to decide which period was the best to live in and they have to give a proper argument for why their interpretation is correct.

I: And what else connects pupils' learning across topics? What else do they learn about the Romans which they need to know to understand a later topic?

SL: Well they know about invasions and then they learn about other invasions later. And they learn about sources and interpretations and we do both in the Anglo-Saxons as well.

I: And what do you think most pupils know about invasions at the end of the Roman topic?

SL: I guess they know that they happen and what they are?

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I: Thanks. And can you tell me how it has been introducing these new schemes? How have teachers got on with teaching new content?

SL: It has been really successful because all of the resources are provided for each unit and so each teacher has only had to use a couple of new units.

I: And how have you been able to check the impact of the curriculum? How do you know what pupils have learned?

SL: Each unit has a list of 'I can' statements and teachers tick these off for each pupil. We use what they do in lessons as well as their final pieces, so when they do Roman viaducts lots of pupils can show that they can design a solution to a problem in the final piece, but also they show that they can weigh up different options when they are thinking about which design is best.

I: And how were these 'I can' statements designed? Can you talk me through what is expected across Year 3?

SL: They are across the whole school, so they can be more creative in history, but obviously in art and music and other subjects. And then we give them a level of developing, secure, excelling for each of the areas like creativity. And then this is tracked across the school and so we have interventions for pupils who are falling behind.

I: And are there any parts of the curriculum which you would like to develop further?

SL: Not really, we just need to embed all of the new units.

2b) What further questions might you want to consider as you carry out further inspection activities in these schools?

School 1:

- Do pupils have secure knowledge of named components (e.g. for Vikings)?
- Do pupils have the 'whole story' in their head – mental timeline?
- Are any misconceptions about the discipline encouraged by the approach to teaching disciplinary knowledge?
- Are teachers clear on what pupils need to learn in individual topics – does this match the leader's statements?

School 2:

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Activity 3 – Lesson visits

School 1 – Y5 lesson – the Vikings

Upon entry the pupils are working quietly to fill in a blank timeline of events they have already studied relating to the invasion and settlement of Britain. Some pupils can do this very confidently, although there are a few who struggle or have events out of order. The teacher circulates but doesn't intervene. The teacher praises the pupils and then they review the timeline together. The teacher seems aware of where there were misconceptions and spends some time explaining these further. The teacher does this by, for example, guiding pupils to recall how bronze technologies led to other advancements and so help to explain some of the features of later periods.

The teacher then shows a map of Britain and Scandinavia, and asks pupils to recall any locations they can remember. One pupil offers 'North Sea' but none recall 'Scandinavia'. The teacher shows the pupils the location of Holy Island, Lindisfarne, and also uses the term 'North Sea' to explain its location. The teacher spends some time on Scandinavia and emphasises its proximity to England across the North Sea. Pupils see a dramatic picture of Holy Island surrounded by sea.

The teacher tells a powerful story of the first Viking attack on Holy Island in 793. Pupils are asked to think about why the Vikings might have attacked this island, and their suggestions include 'money', 'rich objects', 'religious objects were expensive' and 'to show off how powerful they are'.

Pupils are then shown a short extract from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle which relates the events they have just heard about. The teacher shows an image of an original copy of the chronicle, and describes how it was produced by monks. Pupils are confident on what a monk is. The teacher explains that 'this is one of the sources which historians can use to piece together how the Viking invasions affected England' and pupils are asked to consider what it suggests. Their suggestions include 'people were scared' and 'it damaged lots of stuff'. The teacher explains that historians often ask questions about the *impact* of events. They are going to look at a historical question – How much did the Vikings change England?

School 2 – Y4 lesson – the Romans

Upon entry the teacher is explaining the learning objectives. They are differentiated, with all pupils to 'describe how useful sources are' and some pupils to 'evaluate sources about the Romans'.

The teacher shows pupils an image of the Coliseum, labelled source A. Pupils are asked to think-pair-share what this tells us about the Romans. The teacher takes responses, which include 'they are rich' and 'they are powerful'. The teacher then reminds pupils of their previous work on reliability. The pupils are asked 'how reliable is this source?'. Pupils offer a range of responses, some suggesting it is very reliable and others suggesting it is not. The teacher praises all responses.

Across the lesson, pupil responses suggest misconceptions e.g. one pupil suggests that 'it would be hard for the Romans to take over because they would have to fight the King'. When asked, pupils are unclear about where the Romans sit in time relative to other topics they have studied.

Pupils are then given 3 more sources on the Romans. One is a diagram of a Roman soldier from a textbook, one is a short sentence about Julius Caesar from a contemporary description, and one is an historian describing the Romans as violent and bloody and talking. One of these extracts uses the word 'empire' which a few pupils are familiar with but very few can explain.

Pupils write down their ideas about the Romans from these sources. As an extension question, some explain which source they think is most reliable. Pupils are then told some more information relevant to each source (about the Roman army, Caesar and gladiators).

Pupils are then asked to use all of this information to answer a question. The teacher introduces this as an interpretations question – 'Were the Romans good or bad for England?'. The teacher explains that the Romans invaded Britain and pupils have to write about whether this would be a good or bad thing. To develop their creative writing, they are to write from the perspective of an Iron Age Briton who has seen the changes the Romans have made. This piece of work will count towards their assessed grade – a mark scheme is provided which shows that it will be assessed using criteria from English and alongside other creative writing pieces from other subject areas.

Activity 4 – Work scrutiny and pupil discussions

School 1 – Year 5 - pupil discussion

I: It was great to see what you were learning in the lesson earlier today. Can you tell me what you found out in that lesson?

P: We found out about the Vikings and how they came to England, and how people were scared of them and what they did.

I: And this was a new topic I think? Have you learned anything like this before?

P: No it is new.

I: Does it have any similarities to anything you have learned before?

P: It is a bit similar to other people who came to England.

I: In what ways?

P: Well we are actually learning about lots of people who came to England and what changed when they came. We have learned about the Romans as well.

I: Ah yes, so when the Romans invaded – have you come across that word?

P: Yes it means attacking, but like with an army to take over.

I: That's a lovely definition. So what did you learn about the Romans?

P: Well they invaded too. And it was also a big attack. But also some things they did were better and helped the country.

I: What kinds of things?

P: Well they built roads and there were more big towns. And more trade.

I: What do you mean by trade?

P: More stuff was buying and selling and so there was more money.

I: Have you got any idea why the Romans were able to make those changes?

P: They had money because of the big empire, and they could bring all the ideas and things from all over the different countries to places they came to. Like stuff from Italy and even from parts of Africa.

I: That's really nicely explained, thank you. And what else have you learned about how Britain changed?

P: Well before we learned about the Stone Age and then the Bronze Age and things were different because they had technology.

P: And then the Iron Age, and there were these smaller sort-of like towns, but not as big. And then the Romans came into that.

I: Great, thank you. Also I think you have learned about how historians find out these things about the past. What do you remember about that?

P: They look at sources.

I: What do you mean by sources?

P: Like stuff or what people wrote back then. And they sort of look at it and think 'what does this mean?'.
I: Can you think of any examples of sources?

P: Yes we have looked at lots. So like with the Iron Age you can see in the ground where the wood for the houses was and also what else is in the ground and see how they used the houses.

P: And another one was writing. Like the Romans really started writing. Well not started it because of Egyptians. But they wrote all of the things they did and so they use those as well to work out what happened.

School 1 – Year 5 – work scrutiny

Pupils' topic books from the observed class are seen. You begin by looking at what pupils wrote later in the observed lesson. Pupils have made notes about 'changes Vikings made to England'. Some pupils have written lots of ideas, others have written 4 or 5. They include things like: 'people were afraid', 'there was less trade'. Some have written 'Vikings took over' and many have qualified this further with 'in the north' or 'in the 800s'.

Looking back in books you can also see that pupils have added notes about the Vikings to a timeline in the front of their book.

The topics covered match those on the planned curriculum for Y5. You can see that pupils have had several lessons on each topic.

Pupils' notes suggest they are learning lots of specific details about the topics they are studying. For example, when they studied Rome most pupils have notes which include 'Claudius' '43AD'. Pupils have highlighted the words 'invasion' and 'empire' in these notes. There is clear evidence of pupils drawing on prior learning – for example before studying the Romans, pupils have revisited content on Iron Age Britain from Year 4.

There are differences in the detail in some books, and one of two pupils with SEND has fewer notes in his book. However, all pupils have notes which reflect the key content of each topic studied. Where pupils have limited notes, these are highly relevant.

School 2 – Year 4 – pupil discussion

I: You have been learning about the Romans, what can you tell me about the Romans?

P: They were really powerful, and they took over Britain.

I: And I think you were looking at the changes which happened when the Romans came to Britain? What do you remember about that?

P: They had Julius Caesar and he was really powerful, so he ruled Britain now. And they built the Coliseum and other big buildings. And before people lived in small houses but now they lived in massive buildings like that.

I: And have you learned about other changes to Britain in topics you have studied before?

P: Yes, we learned about how they farmed, and the houses changed, and there were more people.

I: Do you remember what we call any of those other periods?

P: Yes, Bronze Age and Stone Age.

I: So, can you remember any changes and which of those periods they happened in?

P: Maybe the Bronze Age was when they had different houses and then the Stone Age was when they started farming.

School 2 – Year 4 – work scrutiny

Pupils' topic books from the observed class are seen. In most books, written work is very intermittent, but when written work is present pupils have written a lot. In many books pupils have written the same or very similar information.

Books are very well presented, and diagrams and drawings are of a high quality, suggesting pupils have had plenty of time to work on these. Much of this work relates to the historical topics studied, but in some cases it is not obvious how it is linked. In some cases pupils have very detailed historical notes, e.g. on the kinds of food which people ate in the Bronze Age and the Stone Age. They also have notes on the food which Romans ate in a later topic.

Reflecting on the kinds of historical information pupils have recorded, it appears that there is very little information which makes it clear when or where events and processes occurred, such as dates or locations.

There is high-level vocabulary in many of the books, and in some cases it has been emphasised. Words which feature in all books include 'analysis', 'evaluation', 'injustice' and 'slaughter'.

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There are written tasks where pupils have given their own judgements. By comparing several responses to the same task about whether the Iron Age was a good time to live, you can see that pupils have used widely varying criteria for making this judgement, e.g. one pupil has written 'I am a vegetarian and so I wouldn't like the Iron Age because you might have to eat meat'.

Activity 5 – A secondary deep dive in history

Below are some extracts from a deep dive in history. Read through each inspection activity and use the aide-memoire to form some emerging reflections which you might consider as you read through the rest of the evidence.

Conversation with subject lead

Checked the overall curriculum plan and topics seem to broadly match scope of the National Curriculum. The curriculum leader (CL) talks clearly about the process of designing the curriculum, and the complex decisions the department took around content selection. For example, they included a unit on Baghdad because the CL read Peter Frankopan's 'Silk Roads' and wanted to build in the medieval Islamic world more strongly. Also Baghdad would help pupils to build stronger ideas about empire, and it would set the context for later units. I asked for an example of this and CL gave European Renaissance as an example and gave examples of specific concepts pupils would use from the earlier topic to make sense of this. CL identified some areas where the department hope to bring more depth e.g. women in the medieval period.

Q: How does the curriculum prepare pupils with the knowledge they need to make sense of new content? E.g. current Y7 unit on King John?

CL suggests range of knowledge pupils need from previous units – concepts such as empire, tax, understanding of kingship.

Q: How do you know if pupils know this?

Curriculum leader explains that low-stakes testing gives a picture of pupils' security of knowledge in these areas. Shows me assessments which check pupils' knowledge of exactly these components.

Reviewed some other assessments, questions seem generally well focused on intended knowledge. Some questions where relevance is less clear.

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Lesson visit

Curriculum leader gave the context for the lesson – pupils are learning about John’s problems. They already know about the start of John’s reign and his problems with the Church. This lesson is about understanding how England is part of an empire, how kings raise money and armies, and how John struggled to do this effectively.

Lesson starts with a recap of what made a medieval king successful. Pupils note down ideas from memory. Most pupils have lots of ideas. On closer inspection many of these are quite specific, e.g. ‘north of the country was harder to control’, ‘barons on both sides of the Channel who could be loyal to different rulers’.

A few pupils who were asked gave clear definitions of a baron.

Teacher carefully introduces the Angevin empire using maps and a clear and well-pitched background story which seems to draw upon chronological knowledge which pupils are familiar with (e.g. ‘the Anarchy period’). Conversations with pupils show they do know what this is, and most can give a good account of the period. All pupils spoken to can place it in time.

Pupils read a text, written by the teacher, which explains why the empire was a problem for John. Language seems fairly challenging, but pupils quizzed have a generally good knowledge of some of the more specialist vocabulary.

In a questioning phase, a pupil has apparent misconception about the King of France. They appear not to have understood that France is another kingdom with its own king and that there are disputes between kings. Teacher goes back to map and reviews with pupils some content from Normans topic. Spends a good deal of time clearing this up, which seems to help some pupils unlock the meaning of the text further.

Pupils are introduced to a disciplinary question they will answer over several lessons – Why did John struggle to control his kingdom? Lesson content is closely linked to this. At the end of the lesson, pupils focus on problematising what ‘kingdom’ meant in this specific context. They note down their initial ideas about why this was difficult to manage.

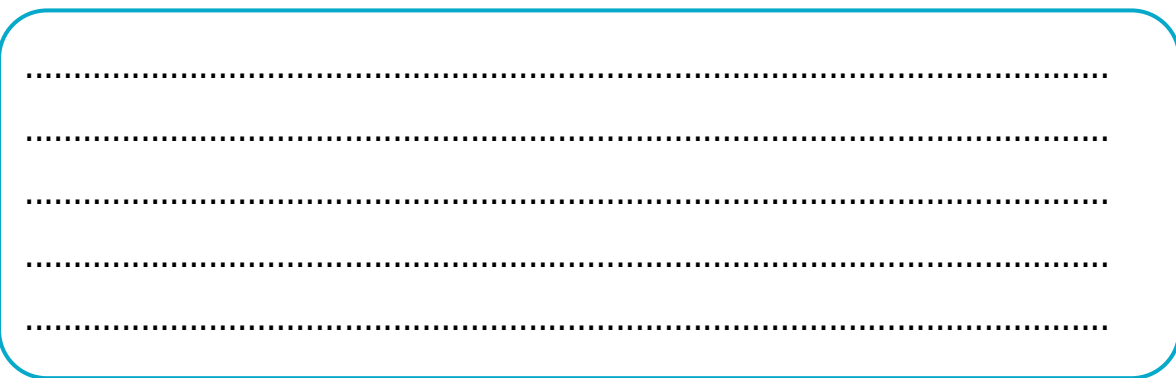
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Work scrutiny

Curriculum coverage matches the statements of curriculum leader. Evidence of repeated encounters with terms used in the lesson – empire, king, baron, land, tax.

Lots of work in books suggests efforts to secure coherent narrative over time, e.g. timelines, reference to previous material.

There are differences in pupils’ notes, although there seems to be a ‘core’ which all



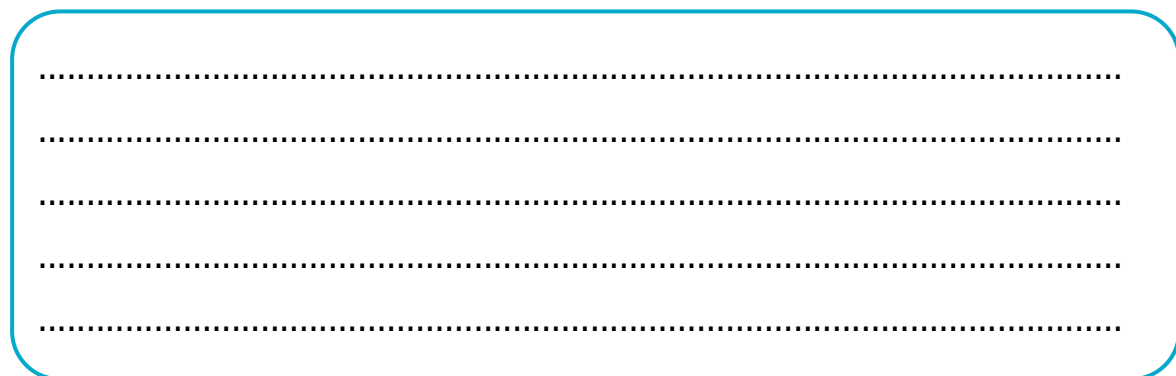
pupils have notes about, and this appears to match curriculum leader statements.

Pupil discussions

Pupils security with key concepts is very strong. Asked about king, barons, land, tax. Some were less secure on monastery, which was seen in books. They recall significant details of previous topics.

Asked pupils an open question about the medieval period. Depth of knowledge is impressive. They can order events within the period and seem to have coherent knowledge across it.

Pupils are very positive about history lessons. They say that their teachers (two different classes represented) help them to understand new material, and that they often go over stuff they have learned which helps them to remember it. They find



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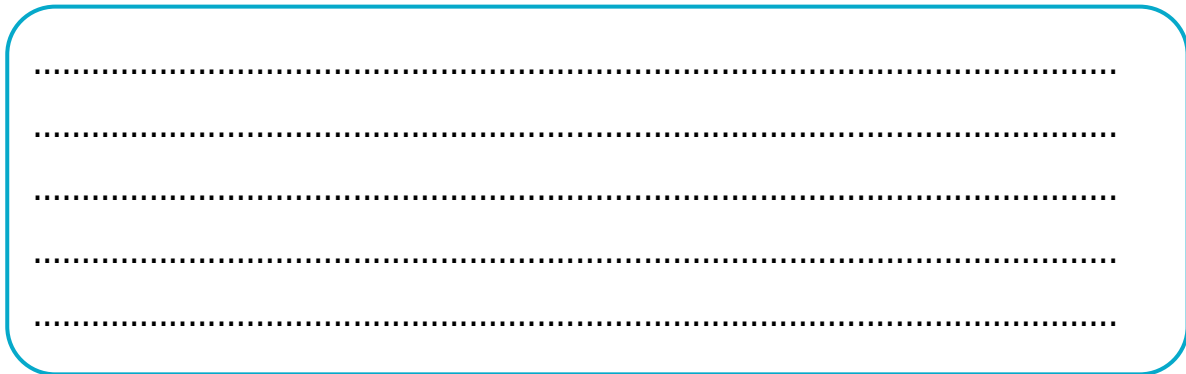
lessons very interesting. They say it can be hard, especially in new topics, but that the topics 'then start to make sense as we go through them more'.

Discussion with teachers

Q: What have you done as a department or as teachers to support all pupils making progress in history?

T: We have thought about what they need to know, and cut some of this down and thought about core content. Shows example for topic. And we have spent department meetings refining this and identifying opportunities to build up this knowledge earlier. Particular focus on vocabulary and historical terms. We are refining our assessments over time to get better at focusing on this core knowledge.

We have made some changes to the curriculum from these assessments. One



example is that most pupils were pretty shaky on how England was connected to other countries and so we have brought this to the foreground in our unit on King John.

Summary points:

- Pupils get better by learning and remembering more history learned in specific contexts or topics (e.g. the Anglo-Saxons).
- Pupils should build their knowledge of a wide range of historical places, events and periods.
- Schools should be able to identify 'core' content which they want pupils to know and remember from particular topics.
- Some knowledge is particularly important because it is transferable. It can be learned in one topic and then used to learn more readily in later topics.
- One type of knowledge which is transferable is knowledge of substantive concepts like 'king', 'empire', 'trade' and 'tax'. Another is chronological knowledge.
- Pupils cannot learn complex concepts like 'king' on their first attempt. Over time, in a well-sequenced curriculum, they will build more secure and more sophisticated schemata for these concepts.
- Disciplinary knowledge also needs to be learned in this way. Pupils need to study specific examples of how historians study the past. Over time, they will build the security and sophistication of their schemata for the six second-order concepts (cause and consequence, change and continuity, similarity and difference, historical significance, sources and evidence, and historical interpretations).

Consolidation task

When our inspection work resumes, we will invite you to reflect on how you have used this training to influence the deep dives you undertake in history. We will contact you soon with more details.

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Appendix 1 – Broad chronology of KS2 areas of study

