

Disciplinary knowledge progression – Opening Worlds KS2

Ensuring that pupils use all this substantive knowledge within an expanding grasp of disciplinary knowledge

The disciplinary requirements of the National Curriculum for history are currently summarised in its Aims 4 and 5:

- understand historical concepts such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance, and use them to make connections, draw contrasts, analyse trends, frame historically-valid questions and create their own structured accounts, including written narratives and analyses
- understand the methods of historical enquiry, including how evidence is used rigorously to make historical claims, and discern how and why contrasting arguments and interpretations of the past have been constructed.

Continuity and change, causation, similarity and difference, and historical significance are terms for capturing the distinctive problems that historians tackle – problems which derive from interpreting the world in terms of time. Pupils need to learn about the distinctive types of question that historians therefore ask and the distinctive types of account that these questions command. Evidence and interpretation refer to major processes (analysing and evaluating primary sources) that historians deploy and the products that result (secondary accounts which contain argument and interpretation).

We aim to feed the progression of pupils' cumulative encounters with:

- A growing variety of types of historical problem within each category (for example, yet more causation problems, worded in different ways, with different analytic demands, so that pupils start to recognise a causation question and know what to do with it, what 'shapes' of argument they require, while also being ready to encounter its many variations)
- A growing variety of primary sources, namely diverse records (for example, law codes, chronicles, letters, paintings, sculptures, inscriptions) and diverse relics (coins, buildings, the landscape, pottery). Just as with vocabulary, these accumulate, so that pupils recognise familiar sources or argument shapes which they've seen before and are able quickly to discern contrasts between prior encounters and new ones. In other words, **just as with substantive knowledge, when it comes to knowing how the discipline works to establish and test truth claims (including reasoning, judgment and argument against standards of evidence) the curriculum is the progression model.**
- Alongside this, over time, the challenges of reasoning and argument become more demanding because that demand is chiefly determined not by a false hierarchy of verbs (such as 'evaluate', 'analyse', 'identify') but by the depth, range and complexity of substantive content that pupils are dealing with and the vocabulary that they need for it. **So increased demand in disciplinary questions is profoundly enabled by pupils increased substantive knowledge.**





The Opening Worlds curriculum systematically arranges these successive encounters, with deliberate revisiting of old types and controlled introduction of new types, in two main ways.

- The first way is highly visible and trackable. It is present in the synoptic tasks.
- The second is continuous and immanent. It can be seen on almost every page in the text of the booklets. We will now illustrate each of these.

Synoptic tasks


Year 3, Term 2, Cradles of civilisation synoptic task:

In what ways were Egypt and Sumer the same... and in what ways were they different?

same?	same?		same?
			different?
different?			different?
			
same?	same?		same?
			different?
different?			different?
			

Year 4, Term 1 Roman Republic synoptic task:

How much power did the senate have in the Roman Republic?

- What did the senate do when Rome had kings?
Look at Page 4 in your Roman Republic booklet to help you write about this. We have started a paragraph for you.
According to legends about the founding of Rome, Romulus chose one hundred 'fathers' to
- How did the senate change when Rome became a republic?
Look at Pages 10 and 11 in your Roman Republic booklet. Make sure you use the words below in your answer.
make laws
rule Rome
senate, senator
people of Rome
represent
SPQR

- Could the senate make any laws that they wanted?
Look at Pages 11, 25 and 27 in your Roman Republic booklet to help you write about this. Use these words in your answer.
consul
lead
patrician
plebeian
tribune
- What sorts of things did the senate do?
Find examples on Pages 19 and 24.
- So how much power did the senate have? What could and couldn't they do?
Write a sentence to sum up what you think!

- familiarity with the problem type
- variation of argument structure (comparing many more things, judging how much power one of these things had)
- much more complex disciplinary content, which is possible as a result of pupils' cumulative substantive knowledge about governments and peoples, gained across units

References to disciplinary in the reading booklet

Pick up any booklet and you will see a constant, embedded stream of the following, all integrated into the substantive content:

- accounts of historians or archaeologists solving problems
- examples of primary sources and the challenges of their interpretation
- tentative historical judgments offered, such as judgements about much something changed, how different two things were, how two phenomena were connected, how sure we can be about inferences from different primary sources, and so on
- the modelling of disciplinary rigour through the language of certainty and uncertainty ('historians are not sure. '), through correct use of the word's 'source' and 'evidence' ('in these sources, archaeologists have found evidence to support...'); through the language of inference, ('they could have been...'; 'they would have been...').

Overview

	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5 (beginning Autumn 2023)	Year 6 (beginning Autumn 2024)
Change and continuity	How much did Ancient Egypt change over time? (Autumn 1)	What changed in Roman Britain? (Spring 1)	How did Angles, Saxons and Jutes change Britain? (Autumn 2) How did Christianity change as it travelled? (Summer 1)	How much did London change between the Saxons and the fifteenth century? (Autumn 1) How did London change during the 17th century?
Similarity and difference	How similar and how different were Ancient Egypt and Ancient Sumer? (Autumn 2) What did Greek city-states have in common? (Spring 2)	How did rulers change Christianity? (Spring 2) How did worlds come together in Cordoba? (Summer 2)	How did the Vikings change England? (Spring 1) What connections* and similarities did the Norse peoples have with other peoples? (Spring 2)	Who were the Tudor Londoners? (Autumn 2) How did migration change Liverpool and London in the twentieth century? (Summer 2)
Evidential thinking	How do we know about the Indus Valley civilisation? (Spring 1) What can historians learn from the sources from Ancient Greece? (Summer 1)	What can sources reveal about Roman ways of life? (Autumn 2)	How is Baghdad connected to the rest of the world? (Autumn 1) How do we know about the ancient civilisations of central America? (Summer 2)	How do historians continue to build knowledge about Benin? (Spring 1)
Causation	How did Alexander the Great conquer so much land? (Summer 2)	How did Rome become so powerful? (Autumn 1) Why did Islam spread so far and so fast? (Summer 1)		What connected London with the rest of the world in the 18th and 19th centuries? (Spring 2)