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How Can We Plan for Progression in Primary School History?*

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ABSTRACT
This paper addresses issues concerning planning for and assessing progression in children's thinking in primary school history. It argues that it is necessary to assess progression within the framework of constructivist learning theories, applied to the processes of historical enquiry. First, it discusses early research into children's ability to understand concepts of time, historical sources and interpretations. Next, it describes the structure of the English National Curriculum, introduced in 1989, in which pupils are required to apply the processes of historical enquiry to content, in increasingly complex ways. The problem of what is meant by progression in history led to a large-scale research project attempting to identify patterns of development. It is argued that this proved problematic, and the level descriptors for the English History Curriculum have subsequently been removed. The article concludes that, at the moment, progression can be best planned for based on small-scale case studies, which apply constructivist theories to historical enquiries. Finally, suggestions are given for how teachers can plan and evaluate both their own practice and their pupils' progress.

KEY WORDS
History, primary school, progression, enquiry.

¿Cómo podemos planificar la progresión en historia en Educación Primaria?

RESUMEN
Este trabajo aborda la planificación y evaluación de la progresión en el pensamiento de los niños en la enseñanza de la historia en Educación Primaria. Es necesario partir de las teorías constructivistas del aprendizaje aplicadas a los procesos de investigación histórica. En primer lugar se abordan las investigaciones sobre la capacidad de los niños para comprender los conceptos de tiempo, el uso de fuentes históricas y la realización de interpretaciones. A continuación se describe la estructura del Currículum inglés, introducido en 1989, en la que se requería que los alumnos aplicaran los procesos de investigación histórica de una forma cada vez más compleja. El problema sobre el significado de la progresión en historia llevó a un proyecto de investigación a gran escala que trató de identificar patrones de desarrollo. En este trabajo se plantean las problemáticas de los resultados de este proyecto, ya que posteriormente se han eliminado los descriptores de nivel para el Currículo Inglés de Historia. Se llega a la conclusión de que, por el momento, la progresión se puede planear mejor con base en estudios de caso a pequeña escala, donde se aplican las teorías constructivistas en las investigaciones históricas. Por último se ofrecen sugerencias de cómo los profesores pueden planear y evaluar tanto su práctica como el progreso de los alumnos.

PALABRAS CLAVE
Historia, educación primaria, progresión, indagación.

* This paper is based on a long-term study of methods of identifying progression in history in the UK and worldwide. The small-scale case studies have some communality in that the authors regularly present their research at the annual conferences of the History Educators' International Research Network held in cities as varied as Curitiba, Istanbul, Yaroslavl, New York and Capetown; selected papers are published in *The International Journal of Historical Learning, Teaching and Research*, published by the Historical Society of Great Britain (www.history.org.uk; www.cumbria.ac.uk).The author co-organizes the conferences and co-edits the journal with Dr. Jon Nichol.

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Como podemos planejar o progresso no ensino da história no primário

RESUMO
Esta pesquisa aborda o planejamento e avaliação do progresso no pensamento das crianças no ensino da história no primário (ensino fundamental). Para isso, é necessário partir das teorias construtivistas da aprendizagem aplicadas aos processos de pesquisa histórica. Primeiramente, abordam-se as pesquisas acerca da capacidade das crianças para compreender os conceitos de tempo, o uso de fontes históricas e a realização de interpretações. Em seguida, descreve-se a estrutura do "Curriculum inglês", introduzido em 1989, na qual se requeria que os estudantes aplicassem os processos de pesquisa histórica de uma forma cada vez mais complexa. O problema acerca do significado da progressão em história levou a um projeto de pesquisa de grande escala, tentando identificar patrões de desenvolvimento. Neste trabalho se apresentam as problemáticas dos resultados desse projeto, devido a que posteriormente se eliminaram os descritores de nível para o "Curriculum inglês" de história. Conclui-se que, no momento, a progressão pode se planejar melhor em base a estudos de caso em pequena escala, nos quais se aplicam as teorias construtivistas nas pesquisas históricas. Finalmente, oferecem-se sugestões de como os professores podem planejar e avaliar tanto sua prática como o progresso de seus estudantes.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE
História, ensino fundamental, progressão, indagação.

Why Is Learning History in Primary School Important?

Maitland Stobart (1996) has said that identity is a complex concept that covers language, religion, shared memories, a sense of identity, and sometimes of historical grievance and injustice... battles lost and won...songs and poetry. But there is the problem of whose identity we are talking about and, as Bruner (1966, 41) has said, it is not easy, however multicultural your intentions, to help a ten-year-old create a story that includes him in the world beyond his family and neighbourhood, when he has been transplanted from elsewhere. So, looking at history in terms of identity can be problematic. I suggest that the way around this is to take a constructivist approach to history, to ensure that children are involved in the processes of historical enquiry from the very beginning. The key to the process of enquiry is dialogue. In discussing sources or accounts of the past, children need to learn to develop arguments, defend them, listen to the views of others and perhaps change their own ideas as a result. This process, as it becomes more complex with maturation and increased knowledge, is fundamental to social development, emotional development, cognitive development, and participation in a democratic society.

The Processes of Historical Enquiry

Early Research into Children's Thinking in History

Tables 1 and 2 outline research into children's understanding of history between 1953 and 1996. This offers little insight into progression, as it was piecemeal and not linked to pedagogy. It also suggests the many variables involved in thinking historically: language, mathematics, social and cultural differences, different rates of maturation, and teaching styles.

In the 1970s, the deadening, didactic teaching of history in English primary schools was challenged by two pamphlets: *Educational Objectives for the Study of History* (Coltham and Fines 1971) and *The New History, Theory into Practice* (Rogers 1979). Sheldon (2010) critically analyses ways in which said pamphlets drew on generic hypotheses about progression from the work of Elton (1967), Bruner (1963 and 1966) and Bloom (1954), and gave rise to such strategies as asking questions, working on sources, understanding reasons for differing viewpoints and interpretations. These pamphlets initiated the complex task of analysing what is involved in learning history. Schulman's (1986) "discovery" of procedural knowledge

and school history permeated both these pamphlets; they claimed that school history, at appropriate levels, can be linked to the processes used by academic historians, if it is grounded in theories of learning and the philosophy of history, a claim not understood by all European countries. Links were then teased out between constructivist theories developed from the work of Piaget on deductive reasoning (passim), Vygotsky (1962) on concept development and learning through discussion (the zone of proximal development 1978), and Bruner (1963), who claimed that the concepts and enquiry processes at the heart of a discipline can be understood by pupils at any level, if presented in appropriate ways, placing emphasis on *doing* and on appropriate imagery and graphics (Cooper 1991). Piaget, Vygotsky and Bruner all posited ways in which knowledge and understanding progress through building on, as well as through challenging what is already known. The English National Curriculum reflects these principles and the case studies described below explore this hypothesis through practice in different contexts.

Table 1. Outline of Early Research into Time Concepts among Children at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2

Key Stage 1		Key Stage 2
Chronology and sequence	Children begin to order past events into *earlier* and *later* (Jahoda 1963).	8-year-olds still have difficulty understanding: a short/long time; often equate length of time with number of events occurring within it (Smith and Tomlinson 1977). Children begin to construct a coherent system involving duration and succession; start to order events chronologically (Friedman 1978). 7- to 11-year-olds see change only as result of a direct action; see one thing as following another (Crowther 1982).
Time vocabulary	4- to 6-year-olds order daily routines chronologically (Thornton and Vukelich 1988). Children need to learn special concepts through trial and error (Vygotsky 1962). Children begin to use words such as *yesterday*, *today*, and *tomorrow* (Jahoda 1963).	Concepts learned through verbal labeling, storing images/experiences, and discussion of language (Klausmeier 1979).
Similarity and difference between periods	Children can explore new concepts kinesthetically (artefacts, visits), iconically (images, models) and symbolically (stories, rhymes, orality) (Bruner 1966).	
Causes/effects of changes	7-year-olds can distinguish between cause for action and reasons for outcomes; distinguish between several causes (Lee, Dickinson and Ashby 1996).	Children can differentiate between what is probable and what is certain (Piaget and Inhelder 1975). Children can use *because*, *although*, and *therefore* (Piaget 1926).
Motive	Some 6-year-olds can retell a story about the past from different viewpoints (Knight 1989).	
Social, cultural differences	Children living with several generations of adults or with adults who lived in the same community over several generations are more aware of time beyond living memory; time permeates the stories of all cultures (Bernot and Blancard 1953).	Concept of time is cultural (e.g., concept of the 1847 Irish famine is more recent to Irishmen than to Englishmen (Jahoda 1963).

Table 2. Outline of Research into Historical Enquiry at Key Stages 1 and 2

Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
Young children are not likely to contradict their teachers. However, teachers are more likely than parents to encourage by making suggestions and offering alternative interpretations rather than correcting (Maclure and French 1986). Children can learn to look at pictures in an organized way; describe a picture as a whole; identify principle features; explore details; decide whether it tells a story; guess what might have happened before/after (Arnheim 1974). Young children are capable of deductive reasoning if the context interests them; teachers need to focus on language (Donaldson 1978).	Research into children's thinking in the 1960s found different levels of response in children of same age because of variables in material, and questions, and classification in Piagetian terms. Lodwick (1958) asked questions about visual sources and found gradual development in logic, supporting evidence, and probabilistic thinking. Booth (1969) found most divergent thinking and flexibility in oral questioning and class discussion, and when using sources. Hallam (1975) worked on experimental problem-solving strategies with experimental problem- solving classes, and found that questions such as *Why did Henry V111 abolish the monasteries?* significantly improved levels of thinking among 9-year-olds. Rees (1976) found that historical thinking developed if children were taught to explain rather than to describe and to be aware of uncertainty and motive when switching perspective. Dickinson and Lee (1978) began by defining historical thinking and making a distinction in understanding behavior from the perspective of people in the past. Shawyer, Booth and Brown (1988) noted a greater use of sources than in the previous decade.

Moreover, in the 1970s the alternative notion that there could be a single master narrative in history was challenged by philosophers (Lyotard 1979; White 1992; Olafson 1980), in response to the increasing variety of writing by historians. They analysed the reasons why history as a "Grand Narrative" consisting of a sequence of stories about a society's emerging identity and unquestioned values, was simplistic, realizing that the past is complex and controversial and that understanding it depends on debate and dialogue.

The English National Curriculum: Historical Enquiry Applied to Content

Three influences on history education (i.e., pedagogy, the changing scope of academic historians, and the changing philosophy of history) informed the structure of the National Curriculum for History in England (Education Reform Act of 1989) which continued, with modifications (e.g. the Department for Education (DfE) in 1999), until 2012 and is developed in the National Curriculum (DfE 2013). Each of the three curricula, i.e., Key Stage 1 (5- to 11-year-olds), Key Stage 2 (8- to 11-year-olds), and Key Stage 3 (12- to 15-year-olds), sets out the processes of historical enquiry through which children must learn the specified content, in increasingly complex ways. In the 2013 curriculum, pupils must:

- Work with sources: at KS1 they should understand some of the ways in which we find out about the past and ask and answer questions, choosing parts of stories and other sources to show that they know and understand key features of events (p. 189); at KS2 they should understand how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources and construct informed responses that involve thoughtful selection and organization of relevant historical information (p. 189);

- Use and understand time concepts: at KS1 pupils should use common words and phrases related to the passing of time, know where the people and events they study fit within a chronological framework and identify similarities and differences between ways of life in different periods, using a wide vocabulary of everyday historical terms; at KS 2 they should establish clear narratives within and across periods they study, note connections, trends and contrasts over time and develop appropriate use of historical terms. They should both address and devise historically valid questions about change, cause, similarities, differences and significance (p. 189);
- Understand why interpretations may differ: at KS1 children should identify different ways in which the past is represented; at KS2 they should understand how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources.

Assessing Progression

Attainment Targets were set in the 1989 National Curriculum and Curriculum Level Descriptors were given in 1999 for teachers to monitor and assess progression in each of the processes that are embedded in the way that the content is learned. This applies to the 2013 curriculum as well, but assessment is now to be decided by teachers, based on the skills and knowledge that has been taught, and there are no level descriptors in the 2013 curriculum. This paper explores ways in which progression can, nevertheless, be monitored.

Attempts to Identify Progression in Historical Thinking

Concepts of the Teaching and Learning Approaches Project (Chata)

The central task of the Chata Project (1991-6), a large-scale project funded by the Economic and Social Research Council of Great Britain and led by Peter Lee, was to map changes in students' ideas about history, between the ages of 7 and 14. It is based on the belief that concepts of evidence and explanation produce the key to progression. It investigated pupils' understanding of the following sub-strands: evidence, accounts, cause, rational understanding and explanation. It is only possible to give a flavour of the research here. This study was not rooted in constructivist pedagogy.

Sample

The sample consisted of 55 Year-3 pupils and 75 Year-6 pupils in three primary schools, as well as 100 Year-7 pupils and 90 Year-9 pupils in six secondary schools.

The Tests

The questions in the first set of tests were related to the conquest of Britain by the Romans; in the second test, they were related to the departure of the Romans; in the third test they were related to the arrival and settlement of the Anglo Saxons.

Children's Understanding of Explanation

Test Set 1: Children's understanding of explanation (Lee, Dickinson and Ashby 2001)

Question: Why were the Romans able to take over Britain?

Task 3: This task focuses on children's understanding of "because," and looks at whether children can distinguish between the language of explanations and that of information.

The children were given two A4 sides of information: one about the Roman Empire and the lifestyle of Britons before the Roman invasion in 43 BC, and the other about the invasion. Both were presented mainly in cartoon form. They were also given two boxes. One stated that, "The Romans took over Britain. The Romans had good weapons." The other stated that, "The Romans were able to take over Britain because their army had good weapons." Children were asked, "Is there any real difference between these boxes, or do they say the same thing really? Explain why you think 'yes' or 'no'."

Analysis of Task 3

Space only allows for an extract of the analysis of Task 3.

A pattern of responses was found, showing a significant relationship between age and response categories and between age and the reasons given. Analysis showed that in Year 3, 18% said that the boxes were the same, and there was little increase in the percentage of those who said they were the same in Year 6, but 42% of those in Year 7, and about 65% of those in Year 9 said they were different.

Discussion of the Chata Project

The Chata Project was broad in scope and very detailed in analysis. Ashby and Lee caution us about how the Chata project findings are interpreted in planning for progression. Children do not perform at the same level in each strand of enquiry, nor in the sub-strands within each strand, and patterns varied from school to school in different strands. Furthermore, there are some examples of 7-year-old children responding to some questions at a higher level than some 12- and even 14- year-olds. Furthermore, in practice, the strands of historical thinking, asking questions about sources, time concepts and interpretations of accounts are all integrally related, not separate. It is accepted that the link between teaching and learning is very strong, yet these assessments were not linked to pedagogy. It may also be that, as in the case of Piagetian research, the language used and the emphasis on logic was confusing, since it was not embedded in the children's deep learning. Donaldson (1978) showed that when children are interested and the question seems relevant and related to familiar experiences, they operate at a higher cognitive level.

Constructivist Learning Theories

Small-Scale Case Studies Investigating Strategies for Progressing Children's Historical Thinking Based on Constructivist Principles

Each of these case studies reflects aspects of the constructivist theories of learning initiated by Piaget, Vygotsky and Bruner. There are similarities in the work of Piaget, Vygotsky and Bruner, but an important difference is that Bruner's, and to some extent Vygotsky's, modes are not sequential. Whilst one mode may sometimes dominate in usage, they usually coexist. Bruner states that what determines the level of intellectual development is the extent to which the child has been given appropriate instruction, together with practice or experience, so the right way of presentation and the right explanation will enable a child to grasp a concept usually understood only by an adult. His theory stresses the role of education and the adult.

The following section describes case studies firmly based on pedagogy, that seek ways of accelerating progression in the learning of history. They provide fascinating insights into ways in which children's thinking in history can be progressed. Common factors emerge, e.g., the importance of engaging with sources, working with others, discussion, working with a variety of types of resources, questioning, teacher interventions and relating an enquiry to pupils' interests and previous knowledge. However, it is impossible to posit a broad pattern of progression because, as explained above, many variables are inevitably involved in historical enquiries.

These case studies were undertaken with children in a variety of different countries but all of them have been published in English. The researchers have worked with Penelope Harnett (Yosanne Vella), Hilary Cooper (Gulcin Dilek Yapici and Sunjoo Kang), or with Isabel Barca, in Braga, Portugal, and each of these case studies reflects constructivist approaches to learning.

Strategies to Accelerate Children's Understanding of Time Concepts

Hodkinson's research (2004a) used a sample of four parallel Year-4 classes of 8- to 9-year-old children. Additionally, one Year-5 class of 9- to 10-year-olds was also selected to act as an age control. A total of 150 children were chosen. The research sought to provide empirical evidence of patterns of temporal cognition in young children and to establish whether understanding time concepts can be accelerated by the use of special teaching strategies. Two Year-4 groups were taught the same history units using special teaching strategies for two terms, one Year-4 class was taught with the same strategies for only one term, and one class was taught using "traditional methods." The special teaching strategies used were the following:

- Children worked cooperatively and were agents of own learning (social constructivism),
- Activities invited open-ended discussion of temporal vocabulary (Vygotsky),
- Multi-sensory teaching tasks were used to promote the teaching of challenging temporal concepts, at increasingly complex levels (Bruner).

Findings

A key finding was that, while all the groups could organize dates, those in the "traditionally taught" group could not manipulate them. The Special Teaching Strategies groups improved and were significantly better than the other groups at answering the questions: "Who came first, the Romans or the Vikings?" and "How long is it since the Vikings arrived in Britain?" for example.

It was also interesting that the National Curriculum assessment levels were found not to work effectively, because they underestimated children. The knowledge and teaching methods advocated in the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) Schemes of work to model teaching of the curriculum were restrictive, and the assessment methods also proved problematic.

No other variables were found to be significant.

Hodkinson (2004b) investigated whether the understanding of temporal concepts among the 120 eight-year-old children tested was influenced by social class, cultural capital, parents' interest in history, or children's intrinsic motivation to learn history.

Findings suggested that the development of concepts of historical time is not affected either by a child's social class, or social capital. Hodkinson concluded that, while a child's enjoyment of history and parental support may be influential, children's development is affected, at any one time, by a combination of internal and external factors and results, but his study provided no robust evidence that any of these variables was significant.

Progressing thinking through handling sources

Vella's research investigates 5-, 7- and 10-year-old-children, working with primary sources, with and without teacher intervention. A synopsis of her work (Vella 2004, 2005, 2006) is given below.

Vella (2010) investigated the ability of 5-, 7- and 10-year-olds to make inferences about sources. Handling sources, (objects, writing, and pictures) involved observation skills: using a magnifying glass, dividing a picture into sections, tracing photographs, creating maps from written sources, and picking out particular words or numbers (Bruner). This also reflects what Piaget calls the stage of concrete operations, at which a child is able to take in information about the tangible and visible world, adjusting it to accommodate new information and store it in order to use it to solve problems, to form a reasoned premise and support it with a logical argument.

Findings

The application of both quantitative and qualitative methods to assess children's comments show that manipulating sources and studying their appearance helped pupils develop their reasoning and deductive skills. Other research (Cooper 1995; Nulty 1998; Smith and Holden 1994; Blyth 1994; Durbin 1991; Hawkes 1996) substantiates the claim that the actual process of using primary sources helps children's thinking.

Progression

After an initial unguided session, an adult intervened to model the processes of making inferences from the sources. Pre- and post-intervention results showed that this modeling enhanced children's thinking. The skills learnt in the intervention session with the researcher were absorbed by the pupils and reused in the other sessions that followed. Vygotsky (1978) showed how interacting with a "more able other" enhanced children's conceptual understanding.

Group discussion

Group discussion also accelerated children's thinking. Analysis of pupils' talk showed that they were not only sharing the materials, they were also sharing ideas. They were using their peers' talk to support their own thinking; in other words, they were using each other as a learning resource. Research into peer collaboration supports this conclusion. The learning in the groups happened for various reasons; one suggestion is that learning is occurring because of cognitive reorganization caused by cognitive conflict (Perret-Clermont and Schubauer-Leoni 1981), or that peer interaction is aiding individuals to integrate various perspectives when viewing a situation and this results in superior cognitive reasoning (Lomov 1978; Inagaki 1981). Like Hodkinson, Vella found the greatest acceleration in historical thinking amongst those who were generally considered the "lowest achievers".

Social and cultural factors

Hodkinson's research posited but did not confirm that children's thinking in history is influenced by family interest in history. Vella's studies suggested that social and cultural factors in life outside school contribute to children's thinking in history, which tallies with Barton and Levstik's findings (1996) that family stories and activities and popular culture, especially television, were the important sources their pupils drew from when asked to place sets of pictures in chronological order,

and West (1981) reported that historical background knowledge of young children was quite extensive. Vella (2011, 96) concluded that, "comparing the 5-, 7- and 10-year- olds, one can almost imagine Bruner's (1966) spiral diagram and scaffolding process, and Vygotsky's (1978) theory of a zone of proximal development unfolding."

"Reading" Objects, Buildings and Sites

Pinto (2013) explores the role of Heritage sites (monuments, landscapes, sites) in engaging 12- and 14-year-olds in the process of constructing their identities, as individuals and as members of communities. Like Vella (2010), she suggests that ideas in history may be grounded in everyday understanding, and that heritage sources and sites can provide challenging evidence to help students make sense of the past (Cooper 2012; Nakou 2001; Levstik, Henderson and Schlarb 2005; Barca and Pinto 2006; Harnett 2006). Pinto argues that students should learn to relate evidence in sites and buildings to their own ideas, perspectives, and questions (Barton and Levstik 2004, 121) to "connect what they see, do and feel with what they already know, understand and acknowledge" (Barton and Levstik 2004, 153), in constructivist ways, enriching their appreciation of the cultural, social and economic contributions of diverse groups to the communities. She argues that knowing how to "read" heritage sites helps children to perceive the linkage between local and international events and trends and to find out about differences and similarities in local and in more international or European heritage. In heritage contexts, she says, students engage in the process of historical inquiry, and with regard to the questions they find significant, which is not always the case in history.

In this study (Pinto 2013), 40 twelve-year-olds, 47 fifteen-year-olds and their six teachers were given tasks related to the development of history-learning skills, to complete at a series of points on a walk around the city of Guimarez, in order to look for a model of conceptual progression in the way they made inferences from evidence. Constructs also appear to have some connections with results of other studies (Cooper 1991, 2004; Nakou 2001; Seixas and Clark 2004; Ashby, Lee and Shemilt 2005; Barton and McCully 2005; Apostolidou 2006) which were found to be relevant for this research field.

Data analysis, using a grounded theory approach (Strauss and Corbin 1998), identified categories related to evidence. The categories emerging for making inferences from evidence were: evidence as an alternative idea; inference from existing details; inference from context and questioning. For example, in the category denominated "inference from existing details," most of the students regarded written and heritage sources as sources of direct information. They described a site, either briefly or more extensively, but based on a superficial interpretation. The conjectures of several students related to factual or functional details. In the category called "questioning," some answers revealed personal inferences, questioning the context in terms of evidence and time relations, hypothesising on diverse possibilities, articulating political, social and economic elements in the same context, or even making conjectures about several contexts in terms of time relations. This developmental sequence reflects Piaget's progression from concrete operations to formal operations when a student can think in abstract terms, positive and negative propositions (if ... then ..., either ... or ..., when ... is not..., both ... and ...) and weigh all the possibilities and variables in the argument. Pinto, like Hodkinson and Vella, suggests that students' references to heritage evidence are rooted in their cultural and educational backgrounds and that teachers have a role to play in enhancing students' ability to 'read' objects, sites and buildings by using a systematic approach (Bruner, Vygotsky).

Forming Inferences About Historical Paintings

Kang (2010) explored how 9-year-olds in Korea formed historical inferences using pictures of historical paintings and, if they could, how they made plausible inferences about the lives of the people depicted. The pupils had not studied the Chosun period before and the task required close observation and substantial knowledge. However, she found that most of the children demonstrated some general, or even detailed, knowledge of the period acquired from different sources, and combined this with their life experience to develop their own ideas about the pictures, thus suggesting that they already shared some common culture, again illustrating Piaget's Concrete Operational Stage. Kang's study builds on previous work on children's ability to make reasonable historical inferences about pictures (West 1981; Blyth 1994; Harnett 1993) and contests the findings of American researchers (Brophy and VanSledright 1997; Foster, Hoge and Rosch 1999) who found that children were constrained in such a task by limited historical knowledge and life experiences. In this study Kang, like Lee, Pinto and Hodkinson, found that children had knowledge about a period that was acquired from a variety of different sources.

Children's Inferences and Deductions from a Variety of Sources

This study (Cooper 1991; 2012, 197-235) investigated the ability of 56 eight- year-olds to develop arguments about a variety of historical sources that included artefacts, pictures, plans, maps and writing (Bruner 1966). An experimental group was matched with a control group that was taught using didactic methods. Teaching strategies for the experimental groups involved discussion of key evidence, differentiating between what you could know "for certain," what reasonable "guesses" you could make, and what you would like to know. The discussion involved selected key concepts at different levels of abstraction, such as arrow, weapon, and defense (Vygotsky 1962). Each of the four-week-long units of study involved one visit to a local area where there was evidence of settlement in each period and one visit "further afield," that extended beyond the limits of the locality. At the end of each unit, all three groups took five "written evidence tests," consisting of work with previously unseen artefacts, pictures, plans, maps, and written sources relating to the period. The aim was to discover whether they found "concrete" evidence more difficult to interpret than symbolic maps and writing. The experimental groups were also given an oral "evidence test." In small groups, the children made tape-recordings of their discussion of each piece of evidence (Vygotsky 1962). During the first year, the teacher led the groups. During the following year no adult was present. An assessment scheme based on a ten-point scale was devised that was developed from patterns for analyzing group discussions of reasoning defined in cognitive psychology and in previous history-related research. A system for analyzing group discussions was also devised on the basis of the same scale.

Findings

Evidence Tests

The experimental groups' written evidence tests, in which they wrote an archaeologist's report on each source (making distinctions between "knowing", "inferring" and the impossibility of knowing) were more varied than those of the control group and more closely related to the evidence. In contrast, the control group repeated the given information, which was not rooted in the evidence, and displayed more anachronisms and stereotypes. The experimental groups' written responses reflected the processes modeled in whole-class lessons. The analysis of variance tests to compare matched groups and the Scheffe test of multiple comparisons showed that the experimental groups were able to differentiate between certainty and "good guesses" with almost equal ease, although they found the third question (What would you like to know?) mores difficult, perhaps because it is too open. In comparing responses, according to types of evidence across the tests throughout the four units of study, there was a significant difference between the level of responses to the artefact and picture tests when compared with the diagrams, maps and written sources, but by unit four, there was no significant difference. The children had learned to apply the same processes of enquiry to all the sources. They had learned, to varying extents, to spontaneously use concepts which they had learned in Unit 1, and were thus able to transfer them to a new context, at each level of abstraction in Test 4 six months later.

Discussion

Discussion was similar in the led and unled experimental groups and was mainly concerned with how the evidence was made and used and what it may have meant to the people who made and used it. Both groups developed, contested and corrected each other's arguments. However, the unled groups' discussions were more vivid, since they often explained their ideas through stories and images.

Both the led and unled groups improved the extent and range of their discussions over the four units. Both the control and experimental groups improved their scores on the written evidence tests for all three questions over the four units. The control group had become familiar with the test format, but the scores for both experimental groups improved far more than those of the control group, suggesting that if children are taught consistently, they learn patterns of thinking that can be transferred to new material.

Many other case studies of 3- to 7-year-old children, that explore their concepts of time, use of historical sources, and construction and understanding of different interpretations, can be found in Cooper (1998, 2002 and 2006). Case studies investigating creative approaches to learning how to interpret sources, time concepts and interpretations, in primary schools, can be found in Cooper (2013b).

Assessment of Historical Thinking Based on Analysis of Pupils' Drawings

Yapici Dilek (2010) asked 12-year-old pupils to draw pictures of scenes and events, based on visual and written primary and secondary sources they had studied (Bruner 1966). The drawings were analysed based on the processes of historical and visual thinking, to understand how the process of visualization relates to the process of learning history. Dilek Yapici found that when pupils did not employ historical thinking skills in their drawings, they constructed anachronistic images. However, other students constructed historically sound interpretations. For example, a pupil drew a man (king) and a woman (queen) side by side, to indicate equal participation in government. They drew images of men above women, or women in domestic backgrounds, when they referred to gender inequality and superiority of men in the past. They added captions and used metaphors to describe past times. Other studies by Yapici Dilek (Cooper 2006, 25-29; Dilek and Yapici (2012, 61 -72) similarly investigate analyses of pupils' drawings to assess their level of historical understanding.

Learning Concepts of Historical Enquiry By Writing History

Recreating Histories

In their project entitled "Recreating Histories," and Schmidt and Garcia (2005) encouraged 8- to 9-year-old children to collect documents, photographs and oral accounts of their family histories and analyze them with the help of teachers, in order to write their own illustrated narratives about their family and community (Bruner 1963 and 1966). The results were collated and published as a book (Schmidt and Garcia 2003), which was then used, along with additional activities, for teaching other children of the same age (Schmidt and Garcia 2008). These authors analyzed both the initial narratives and the narratives of the children who used the textbook.

Findings

They found that both groups developed the following concepts in writing their narratives: causality, continuity, changes, incorporation of previous knowledge, use of temporal concepts and sequential narrative. In some instances they identified differences between received information and the information in their documents, thus revealing a real understanding of the processes of historical enquiry. Schmidt (2010) examined children's understanding of historical consciousness in terms of personal identity and concluded that the current pattern of history pedagogy in Brazil neither develops in pupils' an understanding of their own identity through personally conducted national or world narratives, nor provides the conceptual tools that would enable them to do so themselves.

Comparing Interpretations

Different Interpretations of a Story

Hoodless (2004) discussed two versions of an historical story dating from different periods in the 20th century, with 10- and 11-year-olds in two socially different English Primary Schools, to see if they could identify and explain the different thoughts, attitudes and values in each period and spot the agendas of authors of historical stories. Both stories were about about the rebellion of the British Celtic queen, Boudicca, against the Romans. The earlier one (Sarson and Paine 1915) is a detailed, didactic, and patronizing transmission of information, while the more recent account of Boudicca's revolt (Deary 1994, 40-41) is a humorous story that invites children to engage in critical thought. There has been a growing interest recently in the use of stories as well as sources in learning history. Barton and Levstik (1996) and Bage (1999) argue that deep understanding can be achieved through narrative, if a teacher guides children carefully.

Findings

Hoodless found that children in both groups recognized the differences in style. Some were able to analyze the authors' preconceptions about what was suitable for children and the dominant social attitudes in 1915 and 1994, and to appreciate the different values and attitudes of the two periods concerning death, war, suicide and respect for royalty. They also understood how history changes with retelling according to the agendas of the time. Furthermore, because of the skills developed in source analysis in one school, the pupils seemed able to treat the stories as sources and applied considerable evaluative skill in discussing them.

Children's Awareness of Time and Chronology

Hoodless (1998) acknowledges that in earlier research children's understanding of time concepts was thought to be achieved at about the age of 14, but her analysis of the discussion of parallel time concepts in relation to stories among children at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 challenges this. She discussed *Come Away from the Water Shirley* (Burningham 1992) with 5- to 7-year- olds. In this story, the left-hand pages record the banal experiences of parents on a trip to the seaside, lasting two or three hours, while the right-hand pages simultaneously describe Shirley's imaginative adventures which take place over the course of a day and a night. They also discussed *Where the Wild Things Are* (Sendak 1970), a story in which a young boy named Max travels into an imaginative world of wild adventures lasting over a period of several weeks, and then returns to his bed the very same night.

Findings

Hoodless found that open questions involving "seem" rather than "how long?" and group discussion revealed the full range of the children's perceptions about these stories at quite a sophisticated level. They were aware, for example, that while Shirley's parents were on the beach for two or three hours, her adventures seemed to last several days. Furthermore, in discussing Shirley's adventures on board a pirate ship, they showed awareness of historical periods and historical conventions, incipient awareness of broad chronological sequence, perception that time can appear to vary depending on how it is experienced, and the need to measure time and chronology.

Hoodless read *The Capricorn Bracelet* (Sutcliff 1973) to children in Years 4, 5 and 6. This is a series of short stories set in different moments during the Roman occupation of Britain, all of which revolve around a bracelet that is passed down from generation to generation. The children had studied this historical period. She found that those in Years 3 and 4 were aware of dates but could not manipulate them (for example, to calculate the length of time between two periods) and had difficulty handling large numbers. They needed to have their attention drawn to dates, whereas they could easily discuss the passing of time in relation to illustrations. Children in Years 5 and 6 were aware that it was a chronological narrative, although not always expressed in sequential stories, and discussed similar strategies in stories in film and on television, demonstrating that they were aware that history is a form of "time travel," although most of the older children also found the manipulation of dates problematic.

Hoodless (2010) has produced an excellent on-line resource showing teachers how to progress children's time concepts.

Planning for Assessment and Progression

The following section describes the ways in which teachers in England are advised to plan for progression across the curriculum. More detailed information can be found in Cooper (2014a).

Long-Term Planning and Assessment

Whatever the statutory content, schools must translate it into whole-school plans for their school, having in mind the philosophy of the school, its locality and available resources, as well as the personal skills, interest areas and knowledge of the teaching team. A long-term or whole-school plan for progression establishes an expected pathway of progression of study units and thinking skills for each year-group.

Medium-Term Planning and Assessment

A medium-term plan for each study unit links clearly to the long-term plan, makes it clear what is to be taught and when over the course of the year. It is based on prior attainment, rather than on what year-group the pupils are in, contains differentiated teaching objectives, addresses process as well as content, gives clear links to rich and interesting activities and resources, indicates teaching approaches that will engage and interest the pupils, contains a schedule for various assessment items in line with school policy, and reflects the school's vision and national priorities.

Short-Term Planning and Assessment (Lesson Planning)

Lesson planning links directly to the medium-term plan, making clear what is to be taught, encouraging the teacher to plan a sequence of lessons rather than "stand-

alones," and providing guidance for a range of teaching approaches to be used within the sequence of lessons. In writing a lesson plan, a teacher must:

- Know what children have previously done, and whether they remember and understand this;
- Know exactly what you want children to achieve and have a target that reflects this;
- Plan for differentiation;
- Know what resources are available;
- Plan and manage the length of each stage of a lesson and what you and any other adults in the classroom will be doing at each stage.
- The Planning Cycle
- The linkage between statutory requirements, whole-school plans, medium-term plans for each unit of study within a year-group and lesson plans should ensure progression in each child's knowledge, understanding and historical thinking throughout the primary school. The continuity in planning lessons is illustrated in image 1.

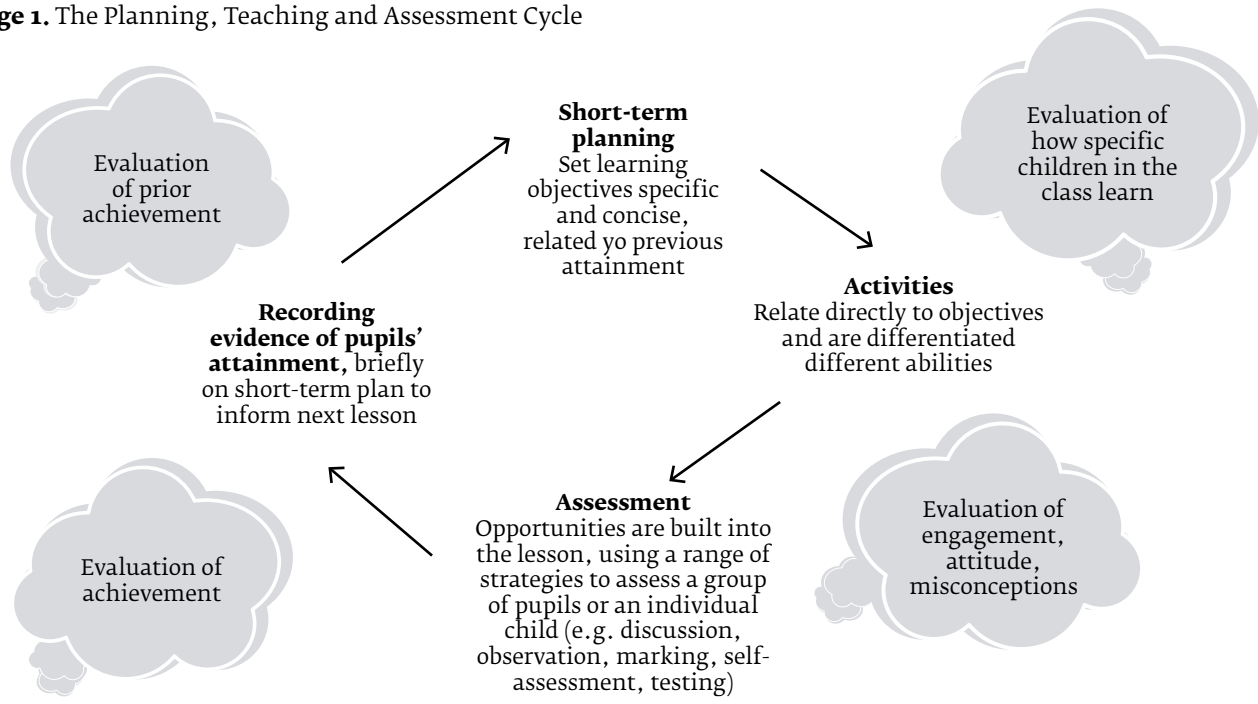
Formative Assessment

Each lesson must be assessed through formative assessment. The teacher must use evidence from observing the children and questioning them individually, in groups or as a whole class, and through products, the work they produce in undertaking the activity. Formative assessment is important for the teacher to understand what children have or have not learned, and for the pupils to know what they have already learned and what the next step may be. This requires dialogue and trusting relationships. Children can learn to take ownership of their progress by learning to self-assess and to make suggestions about activities for doing so. Formative assessment may be recorded in brief notes or tick boxes based on the learning objectives, or simply retained in the heads of teacher and learner. Image 1 shows how assessment is a cyclical process.

Summative Assessment

The teacher and parents and other stakeholders also need to understand what each pupil has already achieved. This can be determined through summative assessment at the end of each unit of study, which involves looking at the formative assessments of teacher and child as well as at the work produced over the course of the unit in relation to the learning objectives for the sequence of lessons on the medium-term plan in order to form an overall judgment based on this evidence about what each child knows, understands, and can do in the different interrelated strands of historical enquiry.

Image 1. The Planning, Teaching and Assessment Cycle



Conclusion

It has been argued that it is important for primary school children to learn history, from the beginning, and in increasingly complex ways, through the processes of historical enquiry, which contributes to their social, emotional and cognitive development and sense of identity. Since no robust, sophisticated pattern of progression has yet been found, and arguably never will be, given the variables involved, the best guidance as to what children at different ages "can do" has been found in small-scale case studies. Teachers can best accelerate pupils' thinking in history by using the cyclical method of planning and assessment outlined above, informed by, and perhaps contributing to small-scale case studies which show what children "can do" and how their learning may be progressed by using teaching methods which engage them in creative activities (Cooper 2013a) based on strands of historical enquiry, through peer collaboration (Vygotsky 1978), and through scaffolding their thinking (Bruner 1966), thereby leading to writing accounts of their findings in genres which interest them (Cooper 2014b). An online resource (Cooper and Nichol 2010) suggests how primary school teachers can plan for progression in history. Further international case studies relating to constructivist approaches to primary history education can be found in *Education 3-13* Vol. 38, Issue 3.

Agreed criteria are needed for assessing history in public examinations at the secondary school level. Nevertheless, there have been criticisms that these tests inhibit the quality of students' thinking because they are "taught to the test" and the stakes are too high to take risks or exercise initiative (Hibbert 2006). However, case studies across the secondary-school age range (Cooper and Chapman 2009) demonstrate that a variety of teaching styles based on a constructivist approach which develops metacognition, promotes rigorous historical enquiry and both independent and collaborative learning, is inclusive, makes history relevant, and accelerates pupils' thinking at any level. There is therefore a continuum of good practice in teaching that progresses pupils' thinking about history throughout primary and secondary education. Furthermore, a dynamic, multi-perspectival understanding of the past is essential in a democracy, a goal to which formerly communist and fascist countries, and countries where history has been a controversial subject, aspire. *

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