

Exploring the learning areas: History

Transcript of video

Online professional development Terms 2 and 3, 2012

This video is available for viewing at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/23155.html.

Speaker: Welcome to Exploring the learning area for History. This presentation will outline the key elements for the Australian Curriculum for History and also include the organisation for this learning area.

The Australian Curriculum: History is found on the Australian Curriculum website at <www.australiancurriculum.edu.au>. The third tab, "Curriculum", once dropped down and select History, will give you the content descriptions for History from the Australian Curriculum. Once you open the History page on the Australian Curriculum, the first tab is the "Rationale and aims".

The rationale and aims for History outline some important information for teachers of History. It states that History is a disciplined approach to inquiry into the past. It outlines that this curriculum generally takes a world history approach, within which the history of Australia is taught and there are clear, specific links to the cross-curriculum priorities: the local priority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures and the regional priority of Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia.

The organisation of History in the Australian Curriculum

There are two strands: the first strand is Historical Knowledge and Understanding. The second strand is Historical Skills. These strands are designed to be taught in an interrelated way. So when planning, and for teaching and learning purposes, the two strands are designed to be taught together.

This curriculum also includes inquiry questions for each Year level and these inquiry questions can set the focus for that particular Year level's topic. In Prep through to Year 6, the content is organised under the two strands Historical Knowledge and Understanding, and Historical Skills, and sits around the topic for that particular Year level.

In Years 7–10, the organisation for History is slightly different in that it has overview content and depth studies. The overview content and depth studies must be taught within the year of learning from Year 7 to Year 10, but how they are taught is up to the teacher in the school. The overview content can be taught separately to the depth studies or may also be integrated into depth study content. The curriculum also includes concepts for developing historical understanding and we will address these further in the presentation.

There are three depth studies in Years 7–10, and for each depth study there are up to three electives. Each depth study is approximately 30% of the total teaching time for the year and the overview content for that Year level equates to approximately 10% of the total teaching time for the year. What this looks like is that some depth studies have some mandatory studies where some depth studies have all electives.

Year 7 has a mandatory depth study called Investigating the ancient past, Year 9's mandatory study is World War I and Year 10 has two mandatory depth studies, being World War II and Rights and freedoms. Year 8 has no mandatory depth studies; all depth studies in Year 8 have electives.

Year 7, for example, Depth study 1 is Investigating the ancient past, which is the mandatory study. Depth study 2 is The Mediterranean world. Teachers may choose to teach either Rome or Greece or Egypt in that depth study. In Depth study 3, for Year 7, it is The Asian world and teachers may choose to teach either India or China.

The curriculum also has some specific elements that are common across all learning areas. The first one being the Year level description. The Year level description for History gives specific information about that particular Year level, including information about the content for that Year level, the historical understandings that would be evident in that Year level, and this is the place to also find the key inquiry questions that may provide a focus for teachers in their planning and in teaching and learning.

The curriculum also provides strands and sub-strands, content descriptions and elaborations. The content descriptions are organised under Historical Knowledge and Understanding, and Historical Skills. For this example, Year 5, the content in the left-hand column under Historical Knowledge and Understanding is content related to the Australian colonies. The right-hand column of Historical Skills are the skills that are designed to be taught in an interrelated way with the Historical Knowledge and Understanding content.

The Historical Skills are taught across bands, that is, the same content for the Historical Skills exists in Prep to Year 2 and then in two-year bands: Years 3 and 4, Years 5 and 6, Years 7 and 8, and Years 9 and 10.

The elaborations that can be found in the Australian Curriculum for History are not mandatory content to be taught. Teachers must teach the content descriptions.

The Historical Skills strand is further organisations into five sub-strands, being:

- Chronology, terms and concepts
- Historical questions and research
- Analysis and use of sources
- Perspectives and interpretations
- Explanation and communication.

These sub-strands run from Foundation, or Prep as we call it in Queensland, through to Year 10.

The Australian Curriculum also includes an achievement standard and a set of annotated work samples. The achievement standard for History is organised by the two dimensions of Understanding and Skills. The first paragraph is Understanding; the second paragraph is Skills. Under the achievement standard at present is a work samples History portfolio. This shows work samples that address the achievement standard.

The Australian Curriculum: History topics from Prep to Year 10

Prep to Year 2 has a family approach to teaching History. Year 3 is then about Community and remembrance. Years 4–6 has a chronology, starting with the First contacts into the Australian colonies in the 1800s, and Year 6 is Australia as a nation. Once we get to Year 7, it starts at the ancient world and works through to the Modern world and Australia in Year 10.

The Australian Curriculum includes concepts for developing historical understanding. These are a part of the Australian Curriculum and are found within the Year level description. They include such concepts as evidence, cause and effect, significance, and contestability, and ACARA has placed these concepts where they best fit within phases of learning. So there are particular historical understandings in Prep to Year 2, in Year 3 to Year 6, and in Years 7–10. For example, in Years 7–10, the concepts of evidence and contestability are introduced. As mentioned, these historical understandings can also be found in the Year level description and here are some provided definitions for these historical understandings. These definitions may assist teachers in teaching these historical understandings and in their planning.

A resource created to support teachers in implementing the Australian Curriculum: History is the mapping documents created by the Queensland Studies Authority (QSA). The first part of this task was to look at the two curriculums to identify similarities in organisation. The Queensland curriculum that was identified was the *SOSE Essential Learnings*. It is organised under Knowledge and Understanding and the Australian Curriculum has the strand of Historical Knowledge and Understanding. The Queensland curriculum also has Ways of working and the Australian Curriculum has Historical Skills as a strand.

The current Queensland History curriculum documents that were used to map against were the *Early Years Curriculum Guidelines*, the Year 1 Learning Statements, the *Essential Learnings for SOSE to the end of Year 9* and the Year 10 Guidelines for History. These mapping documents outline the similarities between the two documents and also identify differences.

Where differences existed within the curriculum, three icons were used. The first one was the flame. This is where new content that is not currently included in the Queensland curriculum at any Year level appears in the Australian Curriculum. The double-headed arrow is where content has shifted from one Year level to another. Where this shift has occurred, the mapping documents address where the shift has happened — where the content has shifted from and to. Where

this shift in content may have implications, an exclamation mark discusses possible bridging learning experiences that may be required.

In mapping, similarities were found between Historical Skills and *SOSE Essential Learnings* in the areas of:

- Historical questions and research
- Analysis and use of sources
- Explanation and communication.

Queensland's implementation framework outlines guidelines and advice for teachers in teaching History. The paper most relevant to History teachers is the paper on History and SOSE, which discusses the teaching of History and the remaining parts of the *SOSE Essential Learnings* for 2013 and beyond.

Resource development

The QSA has provided year plans, unit plans and multiple year planning for History and it is available on the Queensland Studies Authority website <www.qsa.qld.edu.au>.

If you require further information, please contact the Australian Curriculum Branch at the QSA. Their email address is australiancurriculum@qsa.qld.edu.au. The website is also on this contacts page and you can find the resources to support implementing History on that website.