Resources for courses:

some illuminating ideas for your history curriculum, and where to find them

Helen Crawford and Rebecca Iddon

In times of tight budgets and with the new financial year on the horizon in April, now might be a good time to look at different ways to resource your history curriculum effectively. Alongside all the resources for teachers available from Primary History and the HA website, the following list gives some additional ideas – many of which are free or low cost.

People – inviting visitors into the school is an excellent way of strengthening links with your local community, and it gives pupils an opportunity to appreciate the value of oral history as a way of learning about the past. 'Changes within living memory' within Key Stage 1 is an obvious example of how using oral history can contribute towards NC programmes of study. Other themes such as remembrance or local history often come to life when pupils hear first-hand accounts and personal or family narratives.

Maps – a particularly good subscription website is Digimaps, developed by the University of Edinburgh https://digimapforschools.edina.ac.uk/ Digimaps gives pupils online access to Ordnance Survey, aerial and historic mapping from the early twentieth century to the present day. Maps can be used to explore change and continuity over time and are, of course, great for developing connections with skills work in geography.

Museums – visiting a museum is one of the most memorable ways to give pupils first-hand access to resources. If your school is in a rural area, making transport expensive, consider virtual taught sessions. The British Museum, for example, offers free online learning sessions, where you can connect your classroom to one of its museum educators for a virtual lesson based on objects from its extensive collection www.britishmuseum.org/learning/samsung_centre/schools.aspx

Collecting artefacts from your school community.

The local environment – both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 programmes of study include a requirement to teach local history. A local history walk or a focus on a particular street or building can help children make connections between a locality they know well and the recent or distant past. Learning outside the classroom helps children to learn that history is all around them, and that every place has its story to tell.

Artefacts – objects provide a multi-sensory way of giving children opportunities to handle objects from the past. Some artefacts you might find in second hand shops, car boot sales or simply by putting out a notice in your school newsletter. Most museums operate loan boxes for schools which are linked to NC programmes of study. You can also buy or borrow replica artefact boxes from a range of companies. The former might be worth an investment if you know that a particular topic will be revisited every year.
www.tts-group.co.uk/primary/history/
www.starbeck.com/
http://historyboxes.com/

Images – many museums have an excellent visual archive which you can draw upon. The V&A Museum of Childhood, for example, has hundreds of images of toys and games from the past www.vam.ac.uk/moc/about-us/finding-buying-images/ My Learning https://mylearning.org/ offers free National Curriculum-linked resources for teachers and learners, inspired by the collections of arts, heritage and cultural organisations. Finally, 'Teaching History with 100 Objects' consists of one hundred resources based on objects selected from The British Museum and other museums in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. www.teachinghistory100.org/

Documents – the National Archives have a dedicated education section with a range of free resources and activities for primary schools www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/ Local archive offices are also a great place to begin a focus on a local history study, with access to documents such as parish records, electoral registers and census data. The Commonwealth Graves Commission www.cwgc.org/ provides a wealth of information appropriate for exploring empire, conflict or remembrance. Older pupils will be able to navigate this

website independently and gain first-hand experience of undertaking historical research.

If you do not have a school archive, it might be worth starting one. Begin to keep a record of key events in your own school's story. Involving your existing pupils in this selection process is a good way to engage learners in the idea that some events, people and changes might be more significant than others. What would we want children in the future to know about our school today?

The following lesson plan, by Rebecca Iddon, gives an excellent example of how using a range of quality resources can support good teaching and learning in history.

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Key Stage 2 Lesson Plan: Can you be a History Detective?

Resources

- A selection of images to show the difference in lives between rich and poor children during the Victorian era.
- A trunk filled with replica Victorian clothing, depending on their class in society.
- Copies of a nineteenth-century census document.

NC programmes of study:

- Develop a chronologically secure knowledge and understanding of British, local and world history.
- Use more than one source to piece together information about a period in history.
- Identify differences between ways of life at different times.

Success criteria:

- I can describe life as a child in Victorian Britain from different classes in society.
- I can use sources from history – photograph (LA/MA) or census (HA) – to act out an interpretation using historical facts for validity.

Introduction

Explain to the class that today we are going to be History Detectives! Display slideshow of various detectives – Scooby doo, Sherlock Holmes – and explain what a detective's job is: to find clues that reveal a bigger picture.

Ask children to work with a partner on their table to become a detective and use a magnifying glass to look at two contrasting images.

Ask them to use their whiteboards to write down what they notice from each photograph.
Engage in a class discussion from pupil's prior knowledge of Victorians and observations of the two pictures.
What are the differences between the two photos?
How can you tell whether someone was rich or poor in the Victorian times?

Resources/timings

Two contrasting images of Victorian life
Whiteboard and pens
Magnifying glasses

(15 minutes)

Key vocabulary
Street child, orphan, coal miner, chimney sweep, workhouse, poverty, upper class, wealthy, poor, worker.

(10 minutes)

Watch short video on life as a child in Victorian times for the rich and poor: www.youtube.com/watch?v=djKzhSBEbX4

Explain that looking at old photos is like a window into the past and can reveal a lot about history. They provide us with lots of questions to research and find out exactly what happened.

Main teaching

Independent group work

Provide children with a range of Victorian photos. Ask children to select a photograph and use their detective skills to interpret who the people were (rich or poor), their age, what they were doing, what life may have been like for them.

Children may use tablets and history books to research and provide validity to their assumptions.

In their group create a drama scene to re-enact the photo, using props from the Victorian Clothing trunk.

Teacher focus group: higher ability

Explain to the group that they will be using similar detective skills to the starter activity. However, they will be using a census to investigate the history and interpret the past. Show children an original census from the nineteenth century. Demonstrate how it can be used to create a picture of what a household may have been like in the Victorian times.

Provide the group with a different census to examine the information about the family's life.

Children may use tablets and history books to research and provide evidence for their assumptions.

Use this to create a drama scene relating to the information from the census. Children can use props from the Victorian trunk to support acting.

Assessment: Can children correctly interpret historical events from an old photograph or census and select accurate props and clothing fitting to the scene?

Resources/timings

A range of Victorian images
Census document
Magnifying glasses
Trunk of replica Victorian clothing
iPad

Key vocabulary

Census
Enumerator

(30 minutes)

Plenary

Recap children's learning by allowing groups to present their role play to the class. Children will explain their chosen photograph and how they interpreted Victorian life from the photo.