



History Curriculum

Intent

Curriculum Vision

History is more than the study of linear events in isolation – through exploring the interlinked web of events that has led to today, students learn to think about the past as experts, and are able to synthesise and evaluate rather than reach simplistic opinions fuelled by emotion or prejudice.

Throughout their course of sixth form study students develop their understanding and skills through a study of Russia 1894-1941, the later Tudors 1547-1603, Civil Rights in the USA 1865-1992 and a non-examined unit (often referred to as coursework). These units build upon the students' understanding of the American Civil Rights movement relating to African Americans, the Tudors and the Soviet Union. Students are also introduced to new content: within the Civil Rights in America unit students study women's rights, trade union rights and the quest for Native American sovereignty. The later Tudors unit introduces students to the theme of unrest and rebellion within Tudor England as well as the influence of the royal court and its impact both internationally and domestically. Students build upon their contextual understanding of how the Soviet Union was formed through a study of new content, such as the fall of the tsar and the rise of Lenin.

Students hone and develop the skills introduced in their previous studies. Through the synthesis of a broad knowledge base students are able to make intricate and complex judgements and support these through an in-depth analysis and evaluation of interpretations, themes and contemporary sources, understanding each within the historical context. This understanding allows them to broaden and deepen their understanding of the world around them. Students are given the opportunity to strengthen their analytical skills, source analysis and their understanding of the ever-changing interpretations of historical events.

Students will be prepared for further academia or employment and able to utilise the full range of finely-tuned historical skills, providing them with the essential skill set necessary to access a variety of opportunities. Students learn about current historical thinking through the use of journals and podcasts, and are introduced to wide reading opportunities. Students identify their own topic of study within a broad research base, and employ a range of independent study activities, enriching their knowledge and understanding.

Concepts and Skills

The overarching concepts for History are:

Significance: assessing the importance of key historical events/individuals.

Change and continuity: assessing the ways societies and attitudes have changed or stayed the same as well as the reasons for this.

Cause and consequences: assessing how events led to other events or an individual's actions.

Similarity and difference: assessing how people or events were similar/different across different time periods.

Diversity: assessing and building respect for the varied nature of experiences, culture and opinions in history.

The overarching skills developed in History are:

A command of a substantial body of detailed historical knowledge: the ability to recall accurate information that is context-specific, with a sound understanding of chronology and appreciation of the complexity and diversity of situations, events and mentalities of the past.

Historical critical thinking and problem-solving skills: the ability to deploy explanation and evaluation in order to analyse the past, engaging in the debates surrounding history through the lens of political, social, economic, military and religious themes, showing empathy and innovative insight relating to the connections between local, national and global communities, race, gender, class, urban and rural themes.

Communication: the ability to communicate ideas coherently, accurately and succinctly in both an oral and written format with clarity and fluency, using critical thinking skills in order to form an argument that concludes with a substantiated judgement that is appropriate to the discipline of History.

Handling contemporary sources and historical interpretations within an academic context: the ability to infer from and analyse sources and interpretations to determine the weight that can be attributed to it; through a critical assessment of the content and provenance, utilising own knowledge and alternative contemporary sources to substantiate conclusions.

Independent historical research: The ability to read around the subject, reflect critically and empathetically on materials, and understand the dynamic nature and theoretical underpinnings of the discipline, exercising self-discipline, self-direction and initiative to enhance the communication of history.

Disciplinary Literacy

Disciplinary approach

In History we support the development of disciplinary vocabulary and the students' ability to read, write and communicate at an academic level so that they master the nuances of the curriculum. The complexity of interpretations and contemporary sources increases greatly; therefore, as well as acquiring the vocabulary required to communicate, students will also develop reading strategies through 'scaffolded' reading activities, allowing them to derive meaning through linking prior interdisciplinary knowledge and their understanding of specialist vocabulary to the text. This will allow students to understand texts in detail and depth and then analyse and compare texts as academics.

Students' knowledge of both tier two and tier three vocabulary enables them to be able to truly explain the relationship between factors and communicate their ideas academically. Tier two vocabulary gives students the language of analysis, whereas tier three vocabulary gives students the disciplinary language required to understand concepts and communicate as a historian. Students spend time studying the language of historical analysis and are provided with resources to improve their disciplinary literacy.

Interdisciplinary approach

In order to support the mastery of key concepts in History, our interdisciplinary approach unites elements of English, Psychology and Theatre Studies. Many of the skills required in History are complementary to those skills used in these other areas. These skills include forming analytical arguments drawing on a range of sources in order to come to a coherent and substantiated

conclusion, as well as analysing the language and accuracy of sources and interpretations whilst ensuring an understanding of them in their contemporary context.

Students of History gain a deeper understanding of themes and concepts that are common across multiple disciplines. Such concepts include the change and continuity of themes in a given period, the civil rights movement, the concept of dictatorship, Marxism, democracy and the suppression of the population. While students in English analyse these themes via the literary output associated with each theme or time period, History students analyse them through the lens of different factors (social, economic or political perspectives, for example), using these to assess how each theme influenced the course of history in different geographical areas.

Intellectual autonomy

In order to develop intellectual autonomy and confidence, we foster the willingness and ability of students in History to comprehend challenging texts, assimilate key concepts and synthesise them with prior learning. Students are equipped to think critically and apply strategies independently so that they can form their own cohesive conclusions and be able to express that in writing.

This is facilitated by the use of a number of academic texts and resources that include, but are not limited to, the recordings of undergraduate lectures, academic journal articles, book reviews, contemporary source material as well as academic texts relating to the course of study.

Students are encouraged to engage in additional independent reading to deepen their historical understanding. Recommended texts include: all resources on the Historical Association website including podcasts, journal articles and book reviews; the department's ever growing range of academic texts on various topics including those the students study, *Russia 1894-1941*, *The Later Tudors* and the *Civil Rights Movement in America 1865-1975*, as well as other topics including the *Cuban Missile Crisis* and the *causes of World War One*. This is in addition to their course readers: Dicken and Fellows, *England 1485-1603*; Lynch, *Russia 1894-1941*; Fellows and Wells, *Civil Rights in the USA 1865-1992*.

Application of Mathematics

The curriculum recognises the need for students to be able to apply mathematics effectively. In History students use and develop their knowledge of currency fluctuation to understand the need and methods governments used to stabilise and increase confidence in the currency, and the effects of inflation and import tariffs. This requires students to have a basic understanding of the gold standard as well as the concept of inflation. In addition, students also use and develop their ability to draw suitable statistical inferences from tables and graphs highlighting contemporary trends which they are then able to use in their argument.

Independent Study

In History students undertake both directed and self-directed independent learning activities that support the strengthening of long-term memory and retrieval. Independent study helps our students achieve mastery in History and prepares students to work at an undergraduate level.

Directed independent learning tasks set in History can include background reading to build knowledge and deeper connections to the existing frame of learning, or responding to interlocking questions on a given topic across more than one text source. Self-directed independent study in History involves retrieval practice which is a crucial component of mastery. As students encounter challenges and learn to wrestle with demanding concepts and texts they develop not only their knowledge and understanding but also resilience through perseverance.

Instead of revision being perceived as something that is crammed into a few weeks, independent study supports spaced practice throughout the curriculum. By repeatedly returning to content covered, students' knowledge has time to 'rest and be refreshed.'

We recognise that not all students process material at the same rate. Students who need extra support to achieve mastery are supported by targeted intervention in History where a staged or 'scaffolded' process is used to enable students to move from being dependent learners to autonomous ones.

All students have access to our Academy library where a wide range of academic texts, journals and other resources are available.

Implementation

Overview Statement

The curriculum in History is sequenced coherently so that knowledge, concepts and skills are rigorously developed over time. This supports all students, including the most disadvantaged, and those with high levels of need, especially SEND. Planning is informed by Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction and Cognitive Theory which support students in building secure schemas.

Interdisciplinary links and the application of mathematics are explicitly referenced and exploited in order to deepen understanding. Vocabulary is developed in History using the principles outlined in the Frayer Model and students are equipped to be able to read, write and speak like a historian. This is done through time being devoted to language acquisition and the development of the language of academic argument, and through the students having access to and engaging with academic works. This engagement begins with the teacher focussing attention on a certain aspect or theme of a text and as students become more adept with academic texts this scaffolding is removed.

Through the use of independent study resources in History, students learn at greater depth so that they can become masters in History and in the skills required to be intellectually autonomous. This is implemented through the use of a range of independent activities including wider reading, responding to feedback and practising source, interpretation and theme analysis which encourage the students not only to study the content strictly necessary, but also to go beyond this in order to add to their wider understanding.

Regular retrieval-based activities strengthen long-term memory and aid fluency, as do our cumulative mid-term and end-of-year assessments. The sequence also aims to build on and strengthen the students' long-term memory with regards to themes, language and technique. Students are required to hone their interpretation analysis skills. In this way students will continually revisit these skills throughout the year whilst new skills are added in smaller steps to avoid cognitive overload.

Technology is employed through the use of online quizzes, podcasts, documentaries and digital access to a range of resources to strengthen learning. Students are also given the option on certain tasks to present their work in a number of ways which can include videos and podcasts.

Learning character is developed through embedding the six learning applications which underpin teaching practice across the school. Students are encouraged to show resilience, empathy, awareness, collaboration, creativity and independence within a History classroom and through their independent work.

- Students develop their awareness of different religions, cultures and traditions through their course of study at A-Level and become more aware of the significance of global and local history to modern life. For example, women's rights in the workplace and its relevance to today.
- Students continue to develop their resilience in History as they progress through sixth form. Students will be expected to take on advice and then improve pieces of work as well as wrestle with abstract concepts such as the differences between Marxism, Leninism and Stalinism.
- Students will develop their independence through wider reading and research on projects including their non-examined assessment (commonly known as coursework), drawing on a broad knowledge base in order to generate and substantiate their own conclusions.

Impact

The Key Stage 5 curriculum builds upon students' initial understanding, extending their knowledge in the areas of change and continuity, similarity and difference, significance, cause and consequence and diversity. Through developing their knowledge of Russia 1894-1941, the later Tudors and the Civil Rights movement in the USA students are able to become proficient in their ability to test the validity of complex historical contemporary sources and interpretations – and synthesise these within their

argument. They will gain a complete command of Russian history from the end of the tsars to the Second World War, the later Tudor period of Edward VI, Mary I and Elizabeth I, and the struggle of minority groups in America (including African Americans, Native Americans, Women and Workers) to gain equality before the law from the end of the Civil War to the 1990s. Students will be able to trace connections within and across these topics, and analyse and evaluate a vast array of individuals, groups, events, concepts and themes. Students will also be able to frame their own historical questions independently, identify and gather sources from reputable historical collections. Through their research, planning and essay writing they will become adept at sharing ideas coherently, accurately and succinctly in both an oral and written format with clarity and fluency. Through this educational journey our students will be ready for tertiary education and employment, as the skills and academic talents they attain will enable them to excel as a History undergraduate, or open up opportunities for study in other subjects at university or in the world of work. Students also develop an understanding of the interdisciplinary nature of their studies and this is supported through explicit cross-curricular links in English and Theatre Studies.

Students use their knowledge of cognitive theory to recognise and use the most impactful methods of revision and retrieval practice.

Academic progress in History is recognised through the A-level History qualification which acts as a benchmark of mastery; this provides students with the national currency needed for access to higher education and apprenticeship courses, and prepares them for a career in any workplace.