‘But why then?’

Chronological context and historical interpretations

When Michael Fordham was introduced to Dr Seuss’s *Butter Battle Book* he immediately recognised its potential value in the classroom as a popular interpretation of the Cold War. Wanting his Year 9 pupils to explain how and why the past has been interpreted in different ways he shows the potential pitfalls inherent in asking pupils to explore how one period sees another, and how he addressed these challenges when planning his enquiry. In this article he demonstrates that if pupils are to explain why interpretations were produced they need to have secure knowledge of multiple periods, both of the period being interpreted and the period doing the interpreting.

Michael Fordham
Michael Fordham is a Senior Teaching Associate at the University of Cambridge.

Introduction

This is a period of considerable curriculum reform in England. Every stage of a child’s history education in secondary school has been reviewed, including the National Curriculum (typically for children 11-14) and subsequent public examinations in the subject (including the GCSE, the AS-Level and the A-level for ages 14-18). These changes have received a great deal of attention in the media, but perhaps what is most interesting is the level of continuity from previous iterations of the National Curriculum and examination specifications. This continuity exists substantively, where the requirements to teach certain periods of history in the new curriculum are similar to the 1995 and 2000 curricula, but, perhaps more subtly, in how the 2014 iteration sets out the conceptual structure of the discipline of history and the kinds of questions it expects pupils to address. As in all previous versions of the curriculum, pupils are expected to learn about the construction of historical interpretations, and the new versions specifically state that pupils must learn how and why the past has been interpreted in different ways (Figure 1).

I intend to use this article to explore a little further what this stipulation might mean when examining ‘popular’, or ‘non-academic’, interpretations of the past, and I want to draw together a number of existing threads in the literature which help us, as history teachers, make sense of the curriculum. In particular, I seek here to show that (a) a distinction needs to be made between ‘academic’ and ‘non-academic’ interpretations, (b) pupils need secure knowledge of both the period being interpreted and the period of the interpretation in order to explain why it was constructed and (c) pupils need their own chronological framework which shows them *when* an interpretation was made is an important tool in understanding why it was produced. When I first encountered Dr Seuss’s *Butter Battle Book* as an interpretation of the Cold War, I saw the potential in the classroom, but recognised too the various problems that its use might entail. The principles that I set out in this article were those that guided me in constructing a scheme of work that got pupils to explain why this interpretation was constructed.

The place and problem of interpretations

The requirement that pupils study different interpretations of the past has been on the National Curriculum since it was first taught in 1991. From the outset, this caused confusion. Did this mean that pupils should form their own interpretations? Or criticise the interpretations of others? Did this mean examining scholarly interpretations of the past, or more popular interpretations? History teachers have, since the 1990s, done a great deal of work in order to define and sustain this idea of teaching ‘interpretations’ in the classroom. McAleavy, in a tradition-defining piece, set out the key principles of studying interpretations as understood by the group who constructed the 1991 National Curriculum.[1] Crucially, he argued, the study of interpretations needs to be understood as being distinct from forming one’s own interpretation of the past. Pupils are, in some form or another, forming and expressing interpretations of the past most of the time in their history lessons. In a curricular sense, analysing interpretations means looking at the interpretations of others. Further, there needs to be a clear distinction between studying what someone wrote about something *at the time* with what people *subsequently* wrote, which McAleavy called ‘conscious interpretations’ of the past. In history, the contemporary sources that survive from the past are used *as* evidence in the construction of *subsequent* interpretations, such as those written by academic historians. Although maintaining this distinction has been something of a challenge, it is nevertheless important and fully recognised in current curriculum reforms in England (Figure 1).

In following McAleavy, history teachers have taken up this curriculum-defining mission and sought to tease out the curricular properties of 'historical interpretations'. Much of the recent work by history teachers has focused on the use of academic scholarship in the classroom, particularly in terms of moving pupils away from simplistic analyses of interpretations which place too great an emphasis on who the author was, and not on the process by which his or her argument was constructed. Chapman, for example, found 'that many students think too much about who historians are and not enough about the decisions that historians make.'[2] At A-level, teachers have for some years now explored ways in which they can move pupils away from pigeon-holing historians (traditionalist, revisionist, American, Russian, and so on) and towards examining the process by which arguments are constructed.[3] Even at Key Stage 3, teachers have found ways to show pupils how a scholarly argument is constructed, even to the point of beginning to introduce pupils to the basic principles of historiography.[4] In finding ways to teach how and why academic historians have produced interpretations about the past, there is therefore a wealth of work that history teachers have produced.

The study of non-academic interpretations (sometimes called 'popular' interpretations) has also received some attention from history teachers. Banham and Hall, for example, got their pupils to examine the ways in which a film is constructed as an historical interpretation; Brown and Wrenn subsequently went on to show that primary school children (aged 10-11) were capable of understanding why the interpretation produced in a film might differ from that of an academic historian.[5] Mastin and Wallace looked at both academic and non-academic interpretations to begin raising questions about what it might mean to get better at understanding how and why the interpretations were constructed in the way that they were.[6] In other cases teachers have examined popular interpretations such as memorials and songs.[7] If nothing else, what such work reveals is that there exists a considerable variety of historical interpretations which are worthy of study which would nevertheless not be understood as *academic* interpretations.

Distinguishing between academic and non-academic interpretations is not always a straightforward process, yet some important distinctions can be made. Academic interpretations, for example, are produced as *contributions* to knowledge which might, for example, give new examples, identify previously unexplored trends or challenge another academic interpretation of the past. For academic historians, there are relatively clear disciplinary rules about what is and is not acceptable concerning the historical method and a defined process, via peer-review, for determining whether or not a work counts as a contribution to knowledge. Producers of non-academic interpretations, however, have far fewer structures and restrictions shaping their construction. A film director can play with truth in a way that an academic historian cannot; a writer of historical novels can invent characters in a way that would be unacceptable in works of scholarship; a painter has no need to show the evidence base on which his or her interpretation was constructed. In order to answer the question of how the past has been interpreted, it may not be necessary to distinguish between an academic and a non-academic interpretation; in answering such questions pupils would need to concern themselves only with the form the interpretation took, rather than the rationale or justificatory process underpinning it. In answering *why* an interpretation was constructed, however, the distinction between an academic and a non-academic interpretations becomes far more important. To answer such a question, pupils might address issues such as the purpose of the author, the intended audience of the interpretation, the influences that acted on the author, the sources on which the author drew and the relationship between what one author wrote and what prior authors had written. In order to do this for a non-academic interpretation, pupils need to be able to see the relationship between the construction of an interpretation and the period in which it was constructed: they have to be able to see one period through the lens of another.

Figure 1: References to the study of interpretations in the 2014 National Curriculum and the 2016 GCSE Subject Content.

> "The national curriculum for history aims to ensure that all pupils… 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."
>
> *2014 National Curriculum for History*

> "GCSE specifications in history should enable students to… develop an awareness of why people, events and developments have been accorded historical significance and how and why different interpretations have been constructed about them."
>
> *2016 GCSE Subject Content*

Seeing one period through another

For pupils to explain why a popular interpretation is constructed, they need to hold knowledge of two periods in their heads, making the study of interpretations doubly difficult. Not only do pupils need to have a good knowledge

of the period being interpreted, but also of the period doing the interpreting; arguably, pupils also need some knowledge of how interpretations of the period changed over time, for this affects the manner in which that period is received by those doing the interpreting. As Skinner argued in his study of the history of ideas, an author 'must have meant the work as an attack on, or a defence of, as a criticism of, or as a contribution to, some particular attitude or line of argument'.[8] On such an argument, it is simply impossible to work out the meaning of an interpretation unless one has sufficiently good knowledge of the *context* into which the interpretation was introduced. For pupils, this means that they need to know about the time when an author was writing, and what the author was trying to achieve in that period by producing his or her interpretation.

This difficulty, of seeing one period through the lens of another, has been written about by Card who summarised this challenge well using the example of Paul Delaroche's painting of the execution of Lady Jane Grey, a good example of a non-academic interpretation.[9] In order to understand why this painting was produced, pupils need not just knowledge of Lady Jane Grey and the events surrounding her execution; they also need knowledge of nineteenth-century society and culture and how this influenced Delaroche in his work. It helps, further, to have some grasp of what happened in between, especially knowledge of how the story of Jane Grey was retold up to the point where it was received in the nineteenth century. This need, to handle knowledge of multiple historical periods at once, is what makes the study of historical interpretations so demanding for pupils.

The key here has to be secure knowledge. There have been times when I have moved too quickly to getting pupils to try to answer questions about why an interpretation was constructed *without* the secure knowledge they needed of both the period being interpreted and the period doing the interpreting. Instinctively, as a teacher, I do not want to make something too difficult for pupils. I want what I teach, to pupils of mixed ability, to be manageable and accessible and the temptation to reduce content is therefore strong.

There is, however, good reason for thinking that this is the wrong approach. In order to explain how and why a popular interpretation has been constructed, pupils need to hold knowledge of various things in their heads; they need to have some degree of mastery over the period being interpreted, the period doing the interpreting, and the relationship between the two. If pupils are struggling to remember information about these two periods – or they are learning about them for the first time – then they are likely to find it very difficult indeed to complete the more demanding task of studying the construction of an interpretation.[10] This need, for chronological fluency and period mastery, suggested to me that three key principles need to inform the planning of a sequence of lessons studying why a non-academic interpretation was produced. First, pupils need sufficient time in order to learn the events being interpreted. Second, pupils require a clear grasp of the context in which an interpretation is produced, particularly relevant trends that influenced the author. Finally, it is necessary to provide pupils with some kind of a chronological framework that shows the relationship between the period being interpreted and the period in which the interpretation was produced. These three principles informed the construction of the following scheme of work.

Dr Seuss and the *Butter Battle Book*

Interpretations of the past crop up in the strangest of places. I am grateful to Matt Stanford – with whom I was working at the time – who introduced me to the *Butter Battle Book*, written by Dr Seuss in 1984.[11] Like all Dr Seuss books, it is aimed at young children – perhaps six or seven years old – and it tells the story, in his characteristic rhyming verse, of two peoples, the Zooks and the Yooks, who live divided by a wall. The story, told by a boy's grandfather, runs through the history of the tension between the Zooks and the Yooks. The main difference between them is the side on which they butter their bread (the Zooks on the down-side and the Yooks on the up-side). They patrol the wall dividing them carefully and gradually build up more and more powerful weapons until, finally, both sides create a weapon capable of wiping out the other side. The story ends on a cliff-hanger where Grandpa brandishes the weapon on the wall. 'Be careful! Oh gee! Who's going to drop it? Will you…? Or will he…?' shouts the grandson. The final words are Grandpa's: '"Be patient," said Grandpa. "We'll see, we will see."'

The story is, of course, an allegory of the Cold War, told in a way that a young child might understand, making it comparable, in this sense, to stories such as George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. The story is moralistic in its subtext, setting out clearly the logic and yet the madness of building more and more powerful weapons and the growing risks that this escalation entailed. The cliff-hanger at the end of the story leaves open multiple possible endings. Will both sides wipe each other out? Will they back down? Will they reach an agreement? These questions are left unanswered. It struck me, reading the book, that it is now rather dated. The Cold War, at least as it is normally understood, came to an end with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Although the risk of nuclear conflict remains in the twenty-first century, we now worry about 'rogue states' and terrorism, and less about a clash between superpowers. If one wants to understand a period, then one can do worse than study the stories people in that period tell their children: Dr Seuss's *Butter Battle Book* is a story of its time.

It is this which makes the book an interesting interpretation. It is, clearly, an interpretation of the history of the Cold War. It is also a book that tries to convey a particular message about that period: Dr Seuss did not simply want to make complex events and ideas understandable for children, but also to raise moral questions that children would encounter in their future. Dr Seuss wrote this book in the early 1980s, at a time when the apparent de-escalation of détente in the 1970s had paused. In 1979 the Soviet Union had invaded Afghanistan, and the USA was funding those in the country resisting the occupation. Ronald Reagan swept to power in the 1980 presidential election and went on to support the development of new technologies, particularly the 'Star Wars' missile defence system, despite widespread opposition from organisations such as the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. A large rally – attended by a million people

Figure 2: Outline of a scheme of work

Enquiry question:
Why did Dr Seuss write the Butter Battle Book in 1984?

Lesson	Lesson Title	Example Tasks
1	Dr Seuss and the Cold War	Read pupils the story of the *Butter Battle Book* (this takes around 15-20 minutes). Identify the key features of the story, and discuss the story's moral and main audience.
2	The Cold War begins	Build on prior knowledge of the end of the Second World War and ideological differences between the USA and the USSR. Teach key terms and ideas such as 'nuclear war', 'mutually assured destruction' and 'arms race'. Pupils to read information sheets on the end of the Second World War, Truman Doctrine, Berlin Airlift and the Korean War, and to plot changing tensions on their graph. These should be annotated for homework.
3	Crisis and Détente	Recap the early events of the Cold War and the changing tensions between the USA and the USSR. Pupils to read about the Berlin Wall, the Cuban Missile Crisis and Détente; some time can be given to explaining the precise issues of the Cuban Missile Crisis, or this could be a separate lesson. Pupils to continue their graph of tension and to annotate this.
4	The End of the Cold War	Recap again on the prior events of the Cold War and how tensions between the USA and the USSR were changing. Pupils to read information sheets on Reagan's policies and the end of the Cold War. Additional teacher explanation here useful on opposition to Reagan, such as the 1982 Central Park protest. Pupils to complete their graph. For homework, pupils can write an account of how tensions changed over the course of the Cold War; this piece of writing serves as a draft for part of the outcome task.
5	Changing tensions across the Cold War	Complete a whole-class version of the graph representing the ebb and flow of the Cold War, and test pupil knowledge on change across the period. Pupils to then complete a worksheet in which they link the main events of the Cold War to how these were represented by Dr Seuss in the *Butter Battle Book*. Final discussion on what purpose Dr Seuss had with this book and what he was trying to convey to his young audience.
6-7	Why did Dr Seuss write the *Butter Battle Book* in 1984?	Two lessons to complete the outcome task: a Foreword to the 30th Anniversary edition of the *Butter Battle Book*. The main audience of this Foreword is parents who may not understand the historical events behind the story, and why Dr Seuss wrote the book in the way that he did.

Figure 3: Example information sheets given to pupils on different periods. There were ten sheets in total, with other events including the Berlin Airlift, the Vietnam War and Détente.

1947 – Marshall Plan and Truman Doctrine

Tension between the USA and the USSR continued to rise in the late 1940s. In 1947 the USA began investing heavily in rebuilding Europe through the Marshall Plan. The USSR, with some good reason, believed this was an aggressive move by the USA designed to make European countries ally with the USA rather than the USSR. Further tension was created with the announcement of the 'Truman Doctrine' where US President Truman decided upon a policy of 'containment', meaning the USA would act to stop other countries from becoming Communist or falling under the influence of the USSR. In 1948 the USSR detonated its first atomic bomb meaning that both the USA and the USSR were now capable of making nuclear attacks on one another.



Truman signing in the Marshall Plan



President Truman announcing the 'Truman 'Doctrine'



American nuclear test in 1948



First Soviet atomic bomb in 1949

1950 – 1953 – Korean War

Korea had been ruled by Japan until defeat in the Second World War. After the war Korea was effectively divided into a communist north and capitalist south. Attempts to unify the two failed. War broke out when the north invaded the south in 1950. The war reached a stalemate despite American support for the south and Chinese communist support for the north. The US leader General MacArthur wanted to use nuclear weapons to break the stalemate, but President Eisenhower disagreed, believing this would lead to a nuclear conflict with the USSR. Eventually an uneasy agreement was reached dividing Korea into north and south along the 38th Parallel, a line across the middle of the peninsula.



US soldiers in the Korean War



Over 1 million died in the war



Anti-Communist propaganda in the USA



Anti-US propaganda in the Soviet Union

1962 - Cuban Missile Crisis

Following a revolution, Fidel Casto took power in Cuba. He allied Cuba with the Soviet Union, a major threat to the USA as Cuba was one of the country's closest neighbours. In 1963 the USA discovered that the USSR was putting missiles on Cuba that would be able to make a pre-emptive strike against the eastern USA. The US military pressed for an invasion, but President Kennedy decided to blockade the island, resulting in a tense stand-off between the USA and USSR. Both countries prepared to launch their nuclear weapons at one another. Eventually a last-minute deal was struck between the two powers whereby the USSR withdrew its nuclear weapons. A direct phone line was created between the USA and USSR to avoid future showdowns.



Photographs of missile sites in Cuba as taken by US spy planes



Range of missiles on Cuba



Cartoon representing stand-off between Khrushchev and Kennedy



The world watched believing nuclear war was imminent

1983 - Star Wars

When Ronald Reagan became President of the USA in 1981 he focused on putting across a strong front to the USSR. He raised spending on the US military and began developing what would later become the 'stealth bomber'. Most controversial, however, was his plan, called the Strategic Defence Initiative, to invest in a network of orbital satellites that would be used to shoot nuclear missiles out of orbit if launched by the USSR. The plans verged on scientific fantasy, and the programme was labelled 'Star Wars' after the recent successful film. This was a significant threat to the USSR as, if built, it would provide the USA with the ability to launch an attack without threat of retaliation. The USSR faced a number of internal difficulties in the 1980s including an embarrassing withdrawal from Afghanistan.



Reagan's programme was controversial



Soviet troops leave Afghanistan



Reagan announces the Strategic Defence Initiative

– was held in Central Park in New York in 1982, protesting against Reagan's policies. For those living in the 1980s, it began to seem likely that the relative calm of the 1970s was a hiatus, and that a return to the tensions of the 1950s and 1960s was on the cards.

This was the context in which the *Butter Battle Book* was published. When the book came out, it proved controversial. Some libraries in the USA refused to stock it for fears that it was unpatriotic and Dr Seuss cannot have been unaware of the politically sensitive nature of his publication. There can be no doubt about the debate towards which this publication was – in at least a small way – a contribution. It is here that a clear chronological framework is vital in order to position the book in relation to the earlier events of the Cold War. The book is, clearly, an interpretation of the Cold War, though its status as an interpretation – in the technical, curricular sense – is clouded by the fact that it was produced at a time when the Cold War was continuing. In using this interpretation as the basis for a sequence of lessons, I was clear in my mind that I was not using the text as a source for learning about attitudes towards the Cold War in the 1980s; instead, I was using the text *as* an interpretation of the period from 1945 up to 1984. The proximity of the interpretation to the period being interpreted does not change the fact that it is a conscious and subsequent interpretation of the period. For pupils to see this, however, I needed to provide them with a clear overview of the period which allowed them to situate the interpretation in relation to the period being interpreted.

Teaching the enquiry

This scheme of work (Figure 2) was created by the history team at Cottenham Village College for pupils in Year 9 (aged 13-14). By this point, pupils had already studied the rise of the Soviet regime – and so had some mastery over concepts such as 'communist', 'socialist' and 'capitalist' – and had studied the causes and course of the Second World War, meaning they knew about the relationship between the USA and the USSR in 1945. This new scheme of work had several aims. First, we wanted pupils to gain a broad overview of the events of the Cold War. In particular, we wanted them to get a sense of the 'ebb and flow' of tensions during the period. In order to do this they needed knowledge of particular events – such as the Berlin Blockade and the Cuban Missile Crisis – and they needed to zoom out in order to see these events in the context of the whole period. Second, we wanted pupils to learn that periods of the past – such as the Cold War – can be interpreted in different ways and for a specific purpose. In order to understand this one interpretation – the *Butter Battle Book* – pupils needed in-depth knowledge of the period in which the book was written, so as to better understand the purpose towards which it was put.

It is also worth being clear at this point about what this scheme of work is not. It is not, first, an attempt to teach the history of the Cold War through a children's book. In simplifying the past in the way that he did, Dr Seuss introduced a number of distortions, such as the idea that the differences between the USA and the USSR could be reduced to something as simple as the side on which one butters one's bread. It would be quite impossible to teach the Cold War through this story. This scheme is also not an attempt to get pupils to tell the story of the Cold War by recreating a children's story. History teachers have – and in some cases with justification – been accused of 'infantilising' history; our intention with this scheme was that period knowledge would be foregrounded, that students would leave with a clear sense of how the Cold War developed and that they would be able to give precise examples of events in the period.

Following Riley's model, this sequence of lessons was designed with one, overarching 'enquiry question' guiding the pupils through the sequence of lessons.[12] The question adopted was 'Why did Dr Seuss write the *Butter Battle Book* in 1984?' The scheme began with a lesson on the *Butter Battle Book* itself. It takes around 15 minutes to read the story aloud to the class, and even at this stage a few pupils began to pick out some of the comparisons being made. The rest of the first lesson involved a discussion of the key points of the story, the purpose of a children's book and the kinds of context in which the story would be read. The next three lessons focused on building up knowledge of the Cold War. Numerous approaches might be acceptable here, but I divided my lessons chronologically with three lessons focusing on (1) the origins of the Cold War and tensions of the late 1940s and 1950s, (2) the Cuban Missile Crisis and its aftermath and (3) the 1980s and the end of the Cold War. Information sheets (Figure 3) were provided to pupils on each of the periods, and, at the end of each lesson, pupils plotted and annotated a graph to represent the changing tensions in the Cold War (Figure 4).

Following this, Lesson 5 brought together everything the pupils had studied. Pupils were asked to recall the events from the Cold War, and, as a class, we redrew the graph showing the changing tensions of the Cold War on the board. At this point I asked pupils to link the different aspects from the *Butter Battle Book* story to the events of the Cold War. This proved a relatively easy task. Pupils easily identified the wall in Dr Seuss's story with the Berlin Wall; some sensibly suggested that it did perhaps represent the Iron Curtain. Dr Seuss's representation of the arms race and the creation of a weapon of mass destruction was also easily recognised, and some pupils picked up on references to propaganda and ideological differences in the story. As a class, we then recreated the tension graph of the whole period. Both of these activities gave me the opportunity to assess the extent to which the pupils had understood the course of events that constituted the Cold War. We then placed the *Butter Battle Book* in its context in 1984. The lesson concluded by asking pupils to comment on why the book was published in 1984, and most were able to comment on the context of the 1980s, including Reagan's administration and the rising tensions of the period following the end of détente.

There are numerous ways in which one could design an outcome task for this sequence of lessons. One possible way would be to get pupils to write an essay explaining why Dr Seuss wrote the book in 1984; indeed, this would be an excellent opportunity to do some meaningful interdisciplinary work with your English department. For our purposes, we decided to get pupils to write something that would make the idea of the book as an interpretation explicit. This year is the 30th anniversary of the book's publication,

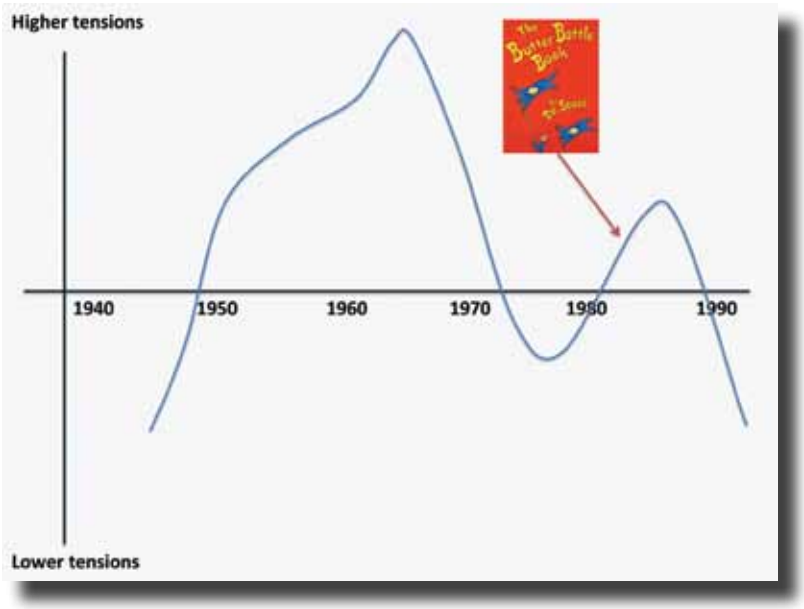
and so we asked pupils to write a Foreword to the book to be included in an anniversary edition. Of course, the world has changed a great deal since the book's publication; the collapse of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s and early 1990s would probably have been unimaginable to most people living in the early 1980s. For parents in their thirties, reading this book to their young children, the precise purpose of the book and its moral might well be lost. Our pupils were, therefore, asked to write a two-page Foreword that explained to parents the history behind the story and the reasons why Dr Seuss chose to write it.

Conceptual clarity and avoiding the traps

In some ways, the *Butter Battle Book* is an easy interpretation to handle, at least substantively. It is not difficult to see the points that Dr Seuss was making (the book is aimed at young children, after all) and the links between the events that pupils studied and the different features of the book are fairly obvious. On this level, the interpretation is quite accessible, though this raises the risk that pupils might take the book to be a rigorous account of the Cold War, which it clearly is not, and teachers need to make clear the process of (often gross) simplification that is involved in taking a complex period of history and turning it into something that a very young child might understand. Its simplicity, however, should not cloud the complex question of why it was produced in 1984. The chronological proximity of the interpretation to the period being interpreted raises additional conceptual challenges for pupils that require teachers to maintain a careful distinction between sources and interpretations. This distinction is not as clear as it would be with, for example, Victorian depictions of early-modern England. This said, it certainly is easier with the *Butter Battle Book* to show pupils the chronological relationship between the period being interpreted and the time in which the interpretation was produced.

There are a number of potential traps, therefore, that need to be avoided in teaching this sequence of lessons. After having taught it a number of times, however, I think the *Butter Battle Book* has some merit as an interpretation to be used to help pupils meet the curriculum requirement of studying why the past has been interpreted in different ways. Conceptual clarity here is vital. For this scheme to be successful, a teacher must keep the following distinctions clear throughout the sequence of lessons. There is, first, a need to maintain conceptual difference between a source and an interpretation. The *Butter Battle Book* might well be used as evidence of an anti-Cold War mind-set among some people in the early 1980s, but in this scheme of work it is being treated as a subsequent, conscious interpretation of the past. Maintaining this distinction requires that chronology is prioritised: pupils have to be able to see the relationship between this period in which the book was written and the period it is describing. Finally, conceptual clarity for pupils here depends on their having sufficiently secure knowledge of the period being interpreted and the period in which the interpretation was created.

Figure 4: Graph constructed by pupils over the lessons. Pupils would plot the line and add annotations linking particular events to the wider trends. In the whole-class construction of the timeline a line such as the one plotted here normally emerged.



REFERENCES
Fordham REFERENCES
[1] McAleavy, T. (1993) 'Using the attainment targets in Key Stage 3: AT2, interpretations of history' in *Teaching History, 72*, pp. 14-17.
[2] Chapman, A. (2011) 'Twist and shout? Developing sixth-form students' thinking about historical interpretation' in *Teaching History, 142, Experiencing History Edition*, pp. 24-33.
[3] Howells, G. (2003) 'Interpretations and history teaching: why Ronald Hutton's Debates in Stuart History matters' in *Teaching History, 121, Transitions Edition*, pp. 29-35; Ward, R. (2005) 'Duffy's devices: teaching Year 12 to read and write' in *Teaching History, 124, Teaching the Most Able Edition*, pp. 9-16; Fordham, M. (2007) 'Slaying dragons and sorcerers in Year 12: in search of historical argument' in *Teaching History, 129, Disciplined Minds Edition,* pp. 31-38; Richards, K. (2013) 'Avoiding a din at dinner or, teaching students to argue for themselves: Year 13 plan a historians' dinner party' in *Teaching History, 148, Chattering Classes Edition*, pp. 18-27; Laffin, D. (2013) 'Marr: magpie or marsh harrier? The quest for the common characteristics of the genus "historian" with 16- to 19-year olds' in *Teaching History, 149, In Search of the Question Edition*, pp. 18-25.
[4] Hammond, K. (2007) 'Teaching Year 9 about historical theories and methods' in *Teaching History, 128, Beyond the Exam Edition*, pp.4-10; Foster, R. (2011) 'Passive receivers or constructive readers? Pupils' experiences of an encounter with academic history' in *Teaching History, 142, Experiencing History Edition*, pp. 4-13.
[5] Banham, D. and Hall, R. (2003) 'JFK: the medium, the message and the myth' in *Teaching History, 113, Creating Progress Edition*, pp.6-12; Brown, G. and Wrenn, A. (2005) '"It's like they've gone up a year!" Gauging the impact of a history transition unit on teachers of primary and secondary history' in *Teaching History, 121, Transitions Edition*, pp. 5-13.
[6] Mastin, S. and Wallace P. (2005) 'Why don't the Chinese play cricket? Rethinking progression in historical interpretations through the British Empire' in *Teaching History, 122, Rethinking History Edition*, pp. 6-14.
[7] Nemko, B. (2010) 'Are we creating a generation of 'historical tourists'? in *Teaching History, 137, Marking Time Edition*, pp. 32-39; Allsop, S. (2009) '"We didn't start the fire": using 1980s popular music to explore historical significance by stealth' in *Teaching History, 137, Marking Time Edition,* pp. 52-59.
[8] Skinner, Q. (2000) *Visions of Politics. Volume 1: Regarding Method*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.100.
[9] Card, J. (2004) 'Seeing double: how one period visualises another' in *Teaching History, 117, Dealing with Distance Edition*, pp. 6-11.
[10] Debates about the contribution that cognitive psychology can make to pedagogy are currently on-going, hindered by the fact that some cognitive psychologists have become – quite unfairly – associated with a certain political position. For two accessible introductions see Brown, P.C., Roediger, H.L. and McDaniel, M.A. (2014) *Make it Stick*, Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press and Willingham, D. (2012) *Why don't children like school?*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
[11] The *Butter Battle Book* is currently out of print, but it is possible to find cheap, second-hand copies on the Internet. A cartoon film was made of the story, but I cannot recommend it as (a) it is of poor quality and (b) it takes too much time to watch it.
[12] Riley, M. (2000) 'Into the Key sSage 3 history garden: choosing your enquiry questions' in *Teaching History, 99, Curriculum Planning Edition*, pp. 8-12.