TH 183 | June 2021

TEACHING HISTORY

The secondary education journal of the Historical Association



In this issue

Inventing race? Year 8 use early modern primary sources to investigate the complex origins of racial thinking in the past

Putting black into the Union Jack: weaving Black history into the Year 7 to 9 curriculum

Decolonise, don't diversify: enabling a paradigm shift in the Key Stage 3 history curriculum

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Race Edition
Issue 183 / June 2021

TEACHING HISTORY

in this issue

REGULARS

EDITORIAL 02

HA SECONDARY NEWS 03

HA UPDATE 04

WHAT HAVE HISTORIANS BEEN ARGUING ABOUT... 27
the impact of the British Empire on Britain?
Liam Liburd

WHAT'S THE WISDOM ON... 44
extended reading?

CUNNING PLAN 58
... to teach a broader Britain, 1625–1714
Helen Snelson

MOVE ME ON 84

MUMMY, MUMMY... 88

ARTICLES

08 **KERRY APPS**
Inventing race? Year 8 use early modern primary sources to investigate the complex origins of racial thinking in the past

20 **HANNAH CUSWORTH**
Putting black into the Union Jack: weaving Black history into the Year 7 to 9 curriculum

32 **JOSH GARRY**
The underdevelopment of Africa: broadening and deepening narratives of Benin for Year 8

50 **DAN LYNDON-COHEN**
Decolonise, don't diversify: enabling a paradigm shift in the Key Stage 3 history curriculum

62 **THEO WOODS**
Diversifying the curriculum: one department's holistic approach

72 **AFIA CHAUDHRY**
In pursuit of shared histories: uncovering Islamic history in the secondary classroom

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Race

Collectively, the articles in this edition say something profound about the joy and privilege of being a history teacher. In our intellectual journeying, none of us can ever stand still. Conversations within and across societies and cultures never stop. Such conversations interact with the work of historians through the questions they ask, the methods they pursue, the new truths they seek, the accounts they produce and the way in which they sustain or renew the very standards to which they hold themselves to account. The curricular work of history teachers must interact with all of these. History teachers constantly make choices about which content to teach, how to arrange and blend it and how to frame questions through which to teach historical method. Over the past eighteen months in particular, the topic of race has newly challenged history teachers' historical imagination, scope of analysis, breadth of knowledge and ethical responsibilities. History teachers everywhere have been responding both to broader cultural conversations and to new works of historical scholarship. As we shape our curricular journeys, we find ourselves asking, with respect to race, what are we revealing? What are we concealing? How can we notice where we have inadvertently ascribed significance or silence?

These questions show how intricately interwoven all aspects of the intellectual work of history teachers are. In the What's the Wisdom On of *Teaching History 181*, as we editors sought to summarise history teachers' work on historical significance, we found ourselves showing its relationship with new work on historical silence. Thus the way we frame the disciplinary dimension and relate it to the substantive is ever changing too.

Kerry Apps begins this edition by sharing how she linked substantive knowledge and disciplinary thinking in her teaching about the origins of racial thinking. Her account moves steadily and intriguingly through the journey of a workscheme in which Apps slowly peeled back layers of source material. Bit by bit, Apps's pupils were enabled to make their own inferences as they discerned the ways in which changing attitudes to African origins began to affect the lives of indentured labourers.

Hannah Cusworth then shares a very personal journey. She charts her own experience as a mixed-race pupil, as a student of history and as a teacher who belatedly realised that there were many more stories with which she and others could identify, but which she had not heard. Cusworth's piece is fired by passion for broadening all pupils' interests, curiosities and assumptions, but the seam running through it is the intensely powerful effect of history on a pupil's sense of identity. Cusworth writes about feeling 'out of place' as a teenager. Sharing her later discovery about Aina Forbes Bonetta, the Yoruba princess, she writes:

> *One thing that did not separate us was distance. In fact, where Aina lived in Brighton is four minutes' walk from where I went to secondary school. I was 30 when I found that out. I cried. Knowing of her presence made me feel different. It made me think differently about where I grew up. It turned out that being Black in Brighton was not as new as I had thought. I wonder how differently I would have felt if I had known that as a teenager.*

In Liam Liburd's *Polychronicon* we gain a useful overview of sometimes fierce debates among historians about the impact of the British Empire on Britain. Many historians have explored the ways in which modern Britain has been constituted by her global connections but their preoccupations, scope of concern, response to recent events and use of sources all differ. This has consequences for curricular choices that we might make concerning when and how to introduce such debates to pupils.

Josh Garry shares how he introduced one such debate, but this time a sixty-year-old one generated by the activist and historian Walter Rodney and his thesis concerning the 'underdevelopment' of Africa. Garry explains his planning journey, showing how his growing knowledge of the kingdom of Benin, wide reading of scholarship and discussion with other history teachers on an HA fellowship programme shaped his planning. Dan Lyndon-Cohen likewise shares a planning journey. Already proud of a richly diverse curriculum which he had written about in this journal, Lyndon-Cohen and his colleagues concluded that there was still something missing. They decided that that more radical change was necessary – the very lens through which they were viewing the past was a colonial one. Thus they moved further into content choices and journeys that were designed to change pupils' ways of viewing the past, including a challenge to the discipline of history itself for marginalising indigenous voices.

Both Helen Snelson's Cunning Plan and Theo Woods's article continue the theme of communities of history teachers saying 'Hold on, I think we can do better'. Working with Ruth Lingard, Helen Snelson designed new resources that would radically broaden seventeenth-century content into diverse lived experiences. Meanwhile, Woods and her department embarked on a substantial process of curriculum review and development addressing the full seven years of students' secondary experience and pulling it away from its former reliance on 'traditional, White and Eurocentric' topics.

Finally, Afia Chaudhry considers the teaching of Islamic history from two perspectives, that of Muslim students themselves and that of students not of Muslim heritage who nonetheless hold a range of assumptions about modern Muslims. Drawing on varied research on the experience of Muslims in British schools, and her own small study of all her students' perceptions, Chaudhry sustains the twin themes of the needs of Muslim and non-Muslim students, with an ultimately inspiring vision that is a fitting conclusion to this thought-provoking edition – how the histories we teach allow everyone to feel that they belong while also interesting everyone in one another's heritages. Thus they make possible a new 'sense of community among all pupils'.

Christine Counsell
Rachel Foster
Katharine Burn
Tony McConnell
Editors



HA Secondary News

I have always been sad to work in a school education system where Ofsted is a powerful lever for change. Systems exist where educational development occurs through a focus on the quality of initial teacher education and teachers' continuing professional development. This has always seemed to me to be a more positive, creative and sustainable model. What a contrast to a system based on fear with goalposts that change quite frequently. However, as Charles de Gaulle once said, 'Il faut se marier a son temps'.[1] And thanks to Ofsted's 2019 Education Inspection Framework (EIF) those of us teaching in England find ourselves in times with strong system support for all things subject-specific, especially subject curriculum. Indeed, while England's other recent frameworks (ITT Core Content Framework and Early Career Framework) remain oddly generic in comparison, the EIF is enabling more colleagues to gain support from their schools to join the HA and to take part in the positive and creative development of history teaching. The HA is embracing these times to build as sustainable a future as possible.

This edition of TH is part of ongoing work to support colleagues to teach better, more diverse, more inclusive history. It will provide food for much thought and inspire you to adapt ideas to work with your pupils and in your classrooms. It was wonderful to see so many of you at the HA's second online conference last month and you will have noticed from the sessions how many colleagues have been engaged with the effort to improve all our curricular work. The HA is really grateful to everyone who volunteered to share their thinking and expertise through leading a session, and to the people who helped to host networking sessions so as to create moments of less formal contact despite the constraints of the online world. If you did not get the chance to join 'live' during the week, do not worry. All recorded sessions will be available until the end of the first week in September. Why not (re-) watch one or more sessions and then schedule some department or local network time to discuss and plan using the thinking that emerges? You may also like to join one of the forthcoming GCSE diversity webinars, which will explore how to teach a more diverse past within the framework of the most popular current GCSE units. And please, please do complete the annual HA Secondary Survey. This year the survey has a strong focus on diversity. The more respondents, the more the HA can influence future policies and approaches to education in schools across the UK, hopefully ensuring that the systems and frameworks we work within become more, rather than less, supportive.

A few years ago the HA introduced the Chartered History Teacher scheme and began to offer Teacher Fellowship programmes for developing teacher knowledge. These are open to colleagues who have been teaching history for four or more years. The first part of this year has seen more specific career-stage developments. Hugh Richards has skilfully and creatively led a team of experienced colleagues to pilot the new HA programme for Subject Leaders. This is now embedded in the HA CPD calendar, with new courses starting, and it is wonderful to read about the positive impact this is already having. The HA is also pleased to launch re-curated and edited resources for history teachers at the beginning of their careers, and for the colleagues who work with them. Please do explore these resources that are now available under the 'Beginning teacher' tab of the Secondary section of the website and look out for more developments over the course of the year. Some of these may also be useful for colleagues at any stage feeling they need a quick 'back to basics' refresher of an aspect of practice. Meanwhile, if you are eligible, why not consider applying for Chartered History Teacher status, or browse the outcomes of the 'Exploring and Teaching the Korean War' Fellowship, or sign up for the forthcoming 'The People of 1381' Teacher Fellowship Programme? A wealth of CPD available to all HA members can be found on the secondary CPD calendar and through branches.

The HA is delighted that the History Teacher Education Network (HTEN) is reinvigorated and is organising events for teacher educators, including events which enable all history teacher educators to be research informed. You can get in touch with the provisional committee via htenuk@gmail.com. Being part of this network is another sustaining source of support and continuing development for all colleagues working in initial teacher education as it enters another period of challenge and change.

The pandemic and its legacy are going to be with us for a while and we will need to work together as history teachers to keep each other positive and creative, and to counter some frankly bizarre ideas for recovery and building back. Also, after another very tough year, we need to work together to make sure we still make progress with our development of the broad and ambitious curricula that we want to teach. But meanwhile – rest! Every best wish for an enjoyable and restorative summer, wherever you are spending it.

REFERENCES
[1] quoted in, Anderson, P. (1992) *A Zone of Engagement*, London: Verso



Helen Snelson
Chair, HA Secondary Committee

HA Update

CPD, projects, resources and competitions

At the time of writing, teachers across the country are busy putting together and entering what have for this year's cancelled examinations become TAGs rather than CAGs. We still do not yet know whether any alternative arrangements will be put in place for those due to sit examinations in 2022.

In the midst of all of the upheaval Covid has caused, we were delighted to welcome over 550 of you to our virtual annual conference in May. It was a wonderful conference with many session highlights, including keynotes from Professor Peter Mandler and Professor Michael Wood. Ofsted National Lead for history Tim Jenner also provided reassurance regarding deep dives in history.

As you begin to turn your attention towards planning for the next academic year, why not take a look at our roundup of what the HA has to offer and how you can get involved.

Trainers and new teachers

As we are sure you're aware, the ECF will be with us from September and many of you will also be working with new trainees in your schools. We have recently launched a brand-new section of the HA website specially for beginning teachers. Whether you are a programme co-ordinator, a school-based mentor, or a beginning teacher yourself, these resources will be useful to support colleagues in the training year and the first years in post. We have also been continuing to add short films to our Beginning Teachers series. These are short films on a series of different issues and aspects of history teaching aimed directly at beginning teachers. Recently published were films on planning lessons across a sequence and reflective practice. This autumn there will also be a short CPD webinar series aimed at mentors of early career teachers. Look out for these on the autumn CPD calendar.

Subject Leader Development Programme

Following a successful pilot, we are pleased to launch the full roll out of our Subject Leader Development Programme. There are three cohort opportunities for the 2021–22 academic year and you can book now for any one of them. Places are however limited and will be allocated on a first come first served basis. You can find further details on pages 46 and 47 of this journal or in the CPD section of the HA website. Whether you are a new subject leader, an aspiring subject leader or an experienced subject leader in need of some direction, this course is for you.

Resources

We have again been adding to our What's The Wisdom On...films. Recently published is the latest film that sees Dr Katharine Burn, Christine Counsell and Helen Snelson discussing consequence. We have now published a number of the outcomes produced by participants on our Britain and trans-atlantic Slavery Teacher Fellowship. You can now view four different enquiries that were produced www.history.org.uk/go/TransatlanticSlavery

Spotlight on GCSE diversity networks

We are working with academic historians and examination boards to offer a series of network sessions on popular GCSE topics. An academic historian will explore recent research and debates within a topic, followed by presentations from teachers who have been working to include greater diversity in their teaching within the remit of current specifications. This will be finally followed by breakout sessions to discuss this further with representatives from each examination board. We are pleased to announce a third session in this series, on the history of medicine, which will take place in September. Booking will open in July. Look out for further details.

Competitions

Our Great Debate competition for 2022 is launched! Next year is the Queen's platinum jubilee. To mark her 70 years on the throne, the focus of the Great Debate competition will be upon change over the past 70 years in your own local area. You can find further details of the competition and how to enter on the HA website.



CPD

All of our CPD is still currently online due to the pandemic. You can check out any remaining sessions for the summer term by checking our CPD calendar: www.history.org.uk/go/CPDsummer2021

The autumn CPD calendar will be published in July so don't forget to check the HA website and get your sessions booked to avoid disappointment. We will retain webinar-based CPD for your convenience, but we also hope to return to some face-to-face CPD opportunities this autumn. We will send out details when we know what will be possible. We are unable to hold a Yorkshire forum before Spring 2022, but we still hope to be able to hold a forum in London and in the Midlands and possibly the North West. We also offer a monthly on-demand recording which is another chance to see a recent webinar that you may have missed. Across any given academic year, HA members get access to a wide range of free CPD webinars in addition to our paid sessions. A reminder that corporate members can use their code to gain access to one free webinar (usual cost £30) per year.

Teacher Fellowship Programme

We are delighted to announce that applications for the postponed 'People of 1381' Teacher Fellowship Programme have now re-opened. The course was postponed due to the Covid pandemic but is now expected to go ahead starting with a residential in January 2022. You can find further details about the Fellowship and how to apply here: www.history.org.uk/secondary/module/8757/teacher-fellowship-programme-the-people-of-1381

HA Secondary Survey 2021

The HA Secondary Survey for 2021 is launched! This year the survey is looking at curriculum content. There has been much discussion recently about what is taught in schools and how it is taught, and this survey intends to create a true picture of what is happening on the ground rather than the image created by commentators. We know that many schools have reflected upon their curricula at Key Stage 3 and it is hoped that the survey will provide a picture of what changes have been made, how change has been addressed, barriers to change and the appetite for change beyond Key Stage 3 across the UK. This research will be vital in feeding back to awarding bodies and policy makers so please do complete it and spread the word to colleagues in other schools. www.history.org.uk/go/HASecondarySurvey



Quality Mark

A reminder that the deadline to apply for one of our Quality Mark bursaries is approaching in July. The Royal Historical Society has kindly agreed to fund bursaries for secondary schools to undertake the Quality Mark. In addition, a kind legacy from Barrie Greaves, a history teacher from East Anglia, will be used to fund a number of schools in that region to undertake QM. Don't forget to get your applications in. If you'd like to know more about the impact of the QM, why not take a look at the report from the first round of RHS bursary schools? www.history.org.uk/go/QMFundedBursaries

Get in touch

As always, let us know what you'd like to see from the HA. Contact Mel Jones on melanie.jones@history.org.uk

HA Update

History for all? A wider view

In this update, I plan to share ideas and practice from colleagues who lead and teach history in special schools in the northeast of England. Ten years have passed since the publication of *History for All* and this therefore seems a good moment for reflection.[1] By 2011, in many of England's schools, history had become the domain of the 'top set'. It was perceived as simply too challenging for many pupils to study through to public examination at 16+. In this short update, I plan to share perspectives and experiences from two subject leads in two special schools in the northeast of England, Jamie Hall and Sarah Perry. Jamie and Sarah shared with me their experience of teaching history to all pupils across the last decade. Curriculum planning, adaptations, specialist history professional development and meeting pupil needs are the key themes.

At the time of writing, the number of pupils in state-funded special schools has now reached 128,100.[2] These schools are very diverse. They range from highly specialist secondary settings focused on social, emotional and mental health provision to cross-phase schools educating pupils with a wide array of special educational needs.

Many special schools run a range of parallel curriculum pathways, allowing highly personalised provision for pupils. Sarah oversees the place of history in seven different curriculum pathways – including a sensory-based programme, an immersive curriculum approach and more familiar structures which include National Curriculum 'Key Stage' provision, Entry Level accreditation and GCSE courses. Unlike their mainstream colleagues, teachers of history in a special school may have secondary age pupils working at development levels ranging from 36 months to 13 years, all in the same class group. Adaptive practice and secure long-term planning are crucial.

Both Sarah and Jamie are passionate about the place of history in the curriculum and its role in developing pupil knowledge and cultural capital, as well as fuelling the development of vocabulary, reasoning and an understanding of historical causation and consequence. Although the two schools are in different counties, the importance of local history across the years of compulsory schooling is emphasised in both their curricula. Sarah has seen the impact of pupils rendered unable, by Covid-19, to experience the historic environment. Virtual visits do not give the sensory experience which is key to many of her pupils' development. Absence has made the heart grow fonder, however, and opportunities to return to the castles, trains, museums and walls of the north east are eagerly awaited.

Our colleagues working in these settings have immense knowledge around planning, adapting the curriculum and meeting pupil needs. The bulk of their work would be familiar to all teachers of history: designing a curriculum that allows pupils to benefit from the unique contribution that the subject makes to learning and development. Yet the great diversity of starting points in special schools adds a dimension of complexity. As Jamie observes, 'Ensuring all pupils are provided with the opportunity to engage with and explore history in accessible ways, depending on needs and interests, can be a challenge.'

When talking to subject leads and coordinators in special schools and settings, the importance of subject knowledge and access to specialist history professional development to their work comes across strongly. Finding high-quality subject knowledge support has been crucial for our special school subject leaders. Many colleagues cite the value of a small group of subject coordinators from other special schools in a cross-regional network, facilitated by the Local Authority history specialist. It enables development of the curriculum and of the wider teams of professionals teaching the subject.

Just as for any other group of history teachers, the review and development of the curriculum has been an ongoing focus of work throughout the last decade. For Jamie, evaluating the narrative and resources of the school's history curriculum through the lens of equality and diversity has led to significant developments over the last year and a redefinition of the key knowledge pupils should gain. Jamie and the team have worked to develop a chronology informed by local history and linked to historical sites that pupils can visit. They have linked this to an inclusive British

history overview, encompassing differing experiences of rich and poor, different genders, people with disabilities and ethnically diverse communities. Sarah has reviewed the introduction and development of substantive concepts so as to enable pupils to evolve their knowledge of such terms as 'empire', 'migration' and 'civil rights'.

A successful strategy trialled both by Jamie and by Sarah has been using a unit 'launch day', which introduces pupils to an overview of what will be studied over the coming half term. Each launch day brings key vocabulary to the fore. So as to support recall and memory, such days also make visual or multi-sensory links with relevant prior knowledge. Engagement and curiosity have flourished. If your school's stairwell were transformed into a World War I dressing station overnight, questions would certainly be flying!

High levels of aspiration for all are the hallmarks of excellent practice in special schools. Both schools contributing to this update have seen reading develop significantly over the last five years, resulting in more pupils coming into the secondary phase and moving into Years 10 and 11 with the reading confidence to tackle more complex historical texts and sources. Personalised provision may mean developing an Entry Level History course for six pupils one year or a GCSE course for one passionate student of World War II the next. The loss of several accreditation options has been felt keenly by colleagues in special settings and there is much discussion of the options that pupils need at 16+. The loss of coursework from England's GCSE examinations has also been felt keenly by pupils whose motivation was underpinned by deep enthusiasms for one aspect of the past.

Like all teachers of history, Sarah and Jamie assess closely the aspects of the subject which pupils find challenging. Most of these tricky areas will resonate with teachers in mainstream schools. Jamie finds that time and chronology are often challenging for her pupils. She has worked with staff across the school to build consistent approaches to the use of timelines and vocabulary to support progression. Sarah is currently doing much work supporting pupils identified with Autism Spectrum Disorder to make inferences from primary sources and to develop other essential disciplinary understandings.

Curriculum thinking and subject passion are thriving in special schools. A local network of subject expertise and senior leadership teams ensure the opportunity for teachers to develop expertise both in history and in supporting pupils with additional needs. Most subject leads in special schools do not start their careers as history specialists but, perhaps more than any other subject, history becomes these teachers' passion. In their hands, history is truly 'for all'.

With thanks to Jamie Hall, Subject Coordinator, Villa Real Special School and Sarah Perry, Subject Leader, Beaumont Hill Academy.

REFERENCES

[1] *History For All* was a report published by England's Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) in 2010: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/413714/History_for_all.pdf

[2] https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/special-educational-needs-in-england

Useful sites for following up ideas in this update:
https://historicengland.org.uk/research/inclusive-heritage/disability-history/1914-1945/the-right-to-education/
www.history.org.uk/secondary/resource/1224/helping-pupils-with-special-educational-needs-to-d

Gabrielle Reddington is an Adviser in County Durham's Education team, working with mainstream and special schools across the north east of England.

The schools use local history as the spur to find out more. A visit to the local war memorial supported the development of key vocabulary and fuelled curiosity about the dates and lists of names.



Building pupil interest: revisiting the main events of twentieth century by studying a timeline of the life of the Duke of Edinburgh.



To support a focus on the role of women in World War I and to spark curiosity and rich discussion, a member of staff volunteers to wear full nurse's uniform.



Inventing race?

Year 8 use early modern primary sources to investigate the complex origins of racial thinking in the past

Having been given some additional curriculum time, Kerry Apps and her department made decisions about what had been missing in the previous curriculum diet. Building on an existing enquiry (already published in *Teaching History 176)*, Apps decided to focus on how and when the idea of race in its modern sense developed in early modern Britain and the British Atlantic. This article sets out how she planned and taught the sensitive and highly nuanced topic of the invention of race. Apps explains how she enabled her Year 8 students to use primary source material to begin to build their own understanding about how race, as a term, came to be used.

Kerry Apps
Kerry Apps is Head of History at St Thomas the Apostle College (11–18 comprehensive), Peckham.

In 2018 I moved schools and stepped up to the role of head of history. With this role, I had an opportunity to consider the curriculum as a whole and the scale and scope of history taught. An area into which I was interested in breathing new life was the teaching of the early modern period, a particular interest of mine. Bolstered by a 'Teaching Black Tudors Day', a development day led by Jason Todd and Miranda Kaufmann, and by Kaufmann's research into African presence in Tudor England, I decided to develop an enquiry that would place Tudor and Stuart England within a global context.[1] This enquiry became a labour of love, blending the work of a range of historians and my own undergraduate study of the early modern period and the Atlantic world.[2] It developed into a causation enquiry investigating the factors leading to England's expansion and her growing connections with the wider worlds of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Using a similar approach to that used by Dennis and by Lyndon, I chose to illustrate wider themes by weaving into the enquiry some people who had come to London having originated from cultures outside the British Isles.[3] These individuals included:

- the African musician John Blanke, who had arrived in England possibly with the retinue of Catharine of Aragon and had been employed both by Henry VII and by Henry VIII (Figure 1)
- Abd el-Ouahed ben Messaoud, the Moroccan ambassador to the court of Elizabeth I (Figure 2)
- Diego, who had been enslaved in the Iberian Atlantic world before becoming a member of Sir Francis Drake's crew
- Matoaka (Pocahontas) whose conversion following her abduction during the first Anglo-Powhatan war in Virginia saw her brought by the Virginia Company to James I's court.

I shared this enquiry in *Teaching History* in September 2019.[4] The enquiry, now slightly shortened, can be seen in Figure 3, alongside its place in our Year 8 curriculum.[5]

Through a series of stories, students come to understand how religion, ideas of morality and civility, trade and diplomacy, all contributed to developing connections to the wider world both at home and in a burgeoning colonial context. My colleagues and I have also found that key figures such as Diego and John Blanke stick within students' memories for some time after completing the enquiry. Our students engage well with this enquiry and write strong causation essays answering the question, 'Why was the world "opening up" to the Tudors and Stuarts?'

Shaping a new enquiry to build on the old

Despite the success of this enquiry, I became increasingly aware that my Year 8 curriculum left a gap of understanding. My students were completing their studies of Tudor and Stuart expansion and then moving on to the slave trade and the resistance of enslaved peoples. There was no explicit, deliberate point within my curriculum where I was helping my students to understand what had changed within society between the freedom of the historic characters of Kaufmann's *Black Tudors* and the experiences of the enslaved peoples whom we would meet within our next enquiry. Students were arriving at stories

Figure 1: The musician John Blanke, from the Westminster Tournament Roll (1511)



Figure 2: The Moroccan ambassador Abd el-Quahed ben Messaoud



of resistance in the British Isles and the Americas with something missing.

I wanted to use some curriculum time to build a bridge of understanding between these two topics. To do this I would need to introduce my students to the following:

- how European attitudes to peoples of Africa shifted;
- how the status of slavery was developed and codified;
- how this led in the long term to the development of ideas of races – 'whiteness' and 'blackness';
- the legacies and impacts of this process on both colonial society and society in the British Isles.

Powerful knowledge of the construction of race

By filling this gap in our curriculum, I sought to give my students a window into the historiographical debates about when ideas of race appeared, developed and hardened. I wanted my students to understand that race as a way of understanding difference was a concept constructed at a particular point in history. In the words of the sociologist Stuart Hall, race is a 'narrative, a story, a history' that is powerful (in that it still affects thought and society today) but also fragile (in being a construct that has not always existed).[6]

By allowing a window into the construction of race, I hoped to provide a greater understanding of later topics too. Understanding the origins of race would give my students new power that would enable them subsequently to understand how ideas of race affected:

- the development of the later British Empire and subsequent decolonisation processes;
- the experiences of soldiers of Empire in WWI;
- aspects of local studies planned for Year 9.

Our school is located between Peckham and New Cross. Our Year 9 local history topic picks up on the Pan-African activist physician and medical philanthropist Harold Moody, who lived at the top of our school's road from 1922 to 1947. It also picks up on the anti-racist activism that arose in the wake of the New Cross fire of 1981. It would provide context, moreover, for our students' GCSE studies on the civil rights movement in the USA and their A-level studies on the experiences of indigenous and African-American communities in the period 1865–1992. The enquiry created to achieve this, intended ultimately for all our students, was initially piloted in my Year 8 nurture group, a small group designed to provide short-term focused intervention to address specific literacy or other needs.[7]

Figure 3: Year 8 curriculum plan prior to the changes described in this article

Half term 1	Half term 2	Half term 3	Half term 4	Half term 5	Half term 6
What should be remembered about the witch hunts? *Significance*	Why was the world opening up to the Tudors and Stuarts? *Causation*	How was enslavement resisted? *Evidence*	Was William Wilberforce the driving force behind abolition? *Interpretations*	What can the lives of 'the Five' reveal about Victorian London? *Evidence*	What is our story of migration? *Change and continuity*

Enquiry 2:
Why was the world opening up to the Tudors and Stuarts?

		Title	Content
TUDOR	1	Who lived in Tudor London?	• John Blanke, Westminster Tournament Roll as hook • case studies from Kaufmann's *Black Tudors*, the Converso/Marrano community, Italian and Flemish merchants • May Day riots and xenophobia
	2	Why did Diego need rescuing?	• Sources about Diego which are quoted in *Black Tudors* • contextualising Diego's rescue and journey as a window into privateering, Spanish colonisation and empire building, development of European trades in enslaved people, foreign policy, the career of Drake
	3	Why did the Reformation cause an empire?	• recap of the Reformation from Year 7 • extended reading on the intersection of the Reformation and Tudor foreign policy
	4	Why were Arabic coins discovered in Devon?	• Salcombe Moroccan coins as a starter • Elizabeth I's connections to Morocco and the Ottoman Empire • investigation of the workings of the 1600–01 Moroccan delegation • Jerry Brotton, *This Orient Isle*
	5	Recap lesson and formative assessment	• creation of causation diagram explaining why the world was opening up in the Tudor era • homework to revise for a low-stakes knowledge test and formative essay
STUART	1	Why did people travel to the Americas?	• Richard Frethorne's 1623 letter home from Virginia • recap back to Elizabeth's place within the wider world • overview of why colonists went to the Americas (indentured servants, family groups, gentlemen 'adventurers', the planto-crats) • draw upon differences between company seals, diaries, letters and excerpts of promotional literature
	2	Why did Pocahontas become Rebecca Rolfe?	• 1617 engraving of Pocahontas/Matoaka • Virginia Company and the Powhatan people • reasons for Matoaka's kidnap and embassy to London • her visit as an attempt to promote the stability of Virginia (trade/wealth) and success of conversions
	3	Why did Puritans migrate to Massachusetts?	• link back to Hugh Parson's 1651 witch-trial • Anne Hutchinson and her trial • discuss the Wampanoag people, Pequot, etc
	4	Recap and consolidation lesson	Students add to causation diagram explaining why the world was opening up in the Tudor and Stuart eras. What was the reason – trade, moral mission / religion, diplomacy, a mix?

Race in the early modern period

To build a bridge between enquiries about the causes of Tudor and Stuart global expansion and resistance to enslavement, I would need to introduce my students to the knotty, complex historiography of race in the early modern period.

The study of race in the early modern period is a rapidly expanding field inhabited both by historians and by literary scholars. Scholars of this area have a rich, expansive and often contradictory literature to draw upon. Race as we think of it today did not exist in the early modern period. Even applying the term to the period is, in historiographical terms, contestable. Furthermore, to talk of someone's race or being part of a race would have been taken to mean stock, family or kin – it was not directly tied to ideas of difference based upon skin tone.[8]

Despite this, the primary sources from the early modern period reveal an increasing interest in difference and in finding explanations for difference. As Europeans came into contact with wider cultures and geographical locations, writers began to theorise skin tone, physical difference, and possible meanings and causes that might lay behind that difference. Through scientific and medical texts, geographical works and promotional literatures pushing for colonisation, we can see that the people of the early modern period had begun to seek out metaphysical, theological and geohumoral arguments as a way to understand and explain differences between the world's peoples.[9] Theories of differences in character alongside physical differences then began to be thrown into the mix in the early modern period.

As colonisation of the Americas moved towards the development of slave societies (colonial societies in which enslaved peoples begin to outnumber other settlers), differences in status were hardened into the language of 'black' and 'white' and became tied to colonial structures of law and power. This process is exemplified by the creation of the slave codes of Barbados and Jamaica in the 1660s. These codes spread through the English Atlantic world and contributed to the racialised thinking and racism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and beyond.[10] It was this journey towards a hardening of language that I wanted my students to understand.

Rationale for the enquiry

I set aside four lessons to investigate this process. We would seek to answer the enquiry question, 'When was race "invented"?' Students would consider at which point people began to think within the racial terms that still pervade modern society. That is, when did people begin to codify humanity into skin tone, but also when did this come to be tied to ideas of power and begin to have negative implications?

Considering the methodologies of historians in this field, for whom early modern texts are often a key source of analysis, I decided that an evidential focus would serve our students best. They would taste the work of historians in this field by reading a range of early modern texts. From this basis we would debate when ideas of race developed, and whether we could even approach a consensus over a precise date at all.

Getting a sensitive topic right

In terms of subject knowledge for this enquiry, I felt that my grasp was strong. I had written essays at undergraduate level upon the origins of slave codes and English perceptions of enslaved and indigenous peoples in the early modern Atlantic world. I was also in the process of researching the area again ahead of embarking on an MPhil investigating English involvement in slave trading prior to the settlements of Barbados and Jamaica.

I was not, however, without nerves. In approaching the planning of this enquiry, apart from the work of Robin Whitburn and Abdul Mohamud of Justice2History and their enquiry into the extent to which 'New World slavery turned Africans into Negroes', I had not found many prior attempts at deconstructing the origins of race.[11]

In seeking to investigate the construction of race, I was aware that we would need to read material which could prove uncomfortable. I teach in Peckham. Our school is predominantly made up of students of West African and Caribbean heritage. While this topic is very important for all students, teaching (and having grown up) in an area that is regularly subject to Section 60 'stop and search' orders, I am very aware that, for my students, race is not so much an historical concept to be deconstructed as a reality be lived with daily.[12] Moreover, I did not want my enquiry to replicate the discomfort that my own friends had experienced during our own history lessons at school about the slave trade.

I decided to be selective in my primary material, first, so as not to overwhelm students with too much sensitive material and, second, so as to provide time for discussion, thought and contextualisation. Each fifty-minute lesson would revolve around no more than four excerpts. This would provide students with enough time and space to question material and to develop independent conclusions.

The enquiry also needed careful positioning within the curriculum. I decided that front-loading knowledge of the development of colonies in the Tudor and Stuart periods would be useful. In addition, I wanted our students to learn not only that organisations, leaders and movements have fought against racial categorisations, oppressions and inequalities but also that such work is still ongoing. This could not be a one-off topic, done and then not referred to again. That would not do this topic justice.

The enquiry

Curriculum time for students aged 11–14 varies in English schools. In the 2019–20 school year, our department had had its curriculum time doubled. We had moved from history being optional *after* Year 8 (ages 12–13) to its being compulsory until the end of Year 9, and we had our time from ages 11–14 increased from one period a week to two. With this increased time available in the 2020–21 school year, I really began to consider our enquiries, their length and their ordering. The period between October and Christmas of Year 8 would provide us with an opportunity for around ten to twelve lessons which had previously been taken by a 'swelled up' version of our expanding Tudor and Stuart world enquiry (see Figure 3). This would be replaced by three enquiries of shorter lengths, each covering a different scope of content.

Figure 4: Our new Year 8 curriculum

Half term 1	Half term 2	Half term 3
Stuarts in Ireland ***Interpretations***	Why was the world 'opening up' to the Tudors and Stuarts? ***Causation***	How was enslavement resisted? ***Evidence*** Was William Wilberforce the 'driving force' behind the abolition of the slave trade? ***Interpretations***
What should be remembered about the witch-hunts? ***Significance***	How did the people of Tsenacommacah resist colonisation? ***Change and continuity*** When was 'race' invented? ***Evidence***	What can the lives of 'The Five' reveal about life for ordinary people in Victorian London? ***Evidence***

Our students would first gain an overview of Tudor and Stuart expansion with a shortened version of our original enquiry. This would provide a window into:

- the African community in Britain;
- Spanish, Portuguese and early English involvement in slave trading;
- colonisation attempts under the later Tudors and the Stuarts.

This enquiry is labelled Enquiry 2.1 in Figure 4.[13] Our students would then delve into a depth understanding of English colonisation of Virginia through the actions of the Powhatan people and their leaders in the period 1607–46 (Enquiry 2.2 in Figure 4). These two prior enquiries would then provide a powerful context to the evidence-based enquiry seeking to come to an answer to the question 'When was "race" "invented"?' covering the period c.1509–c.1700 (Enquiry 2.3 in Figure 4). To enable students to reach a judgement on this question, our lessons would break the source material down into three roughly chronological phases:

1. developing ideas and interest in difference
2. impacts of colonisation and of increased interactions with wider cultures
3. hardening attitudes and the shift towards more distinct racial categories

How my selected primary material falls into this rough chronology and fits with prior knowledge from previous enquiries is illustrated in the multi-layered timeline of Figure 5.

Lesson 1

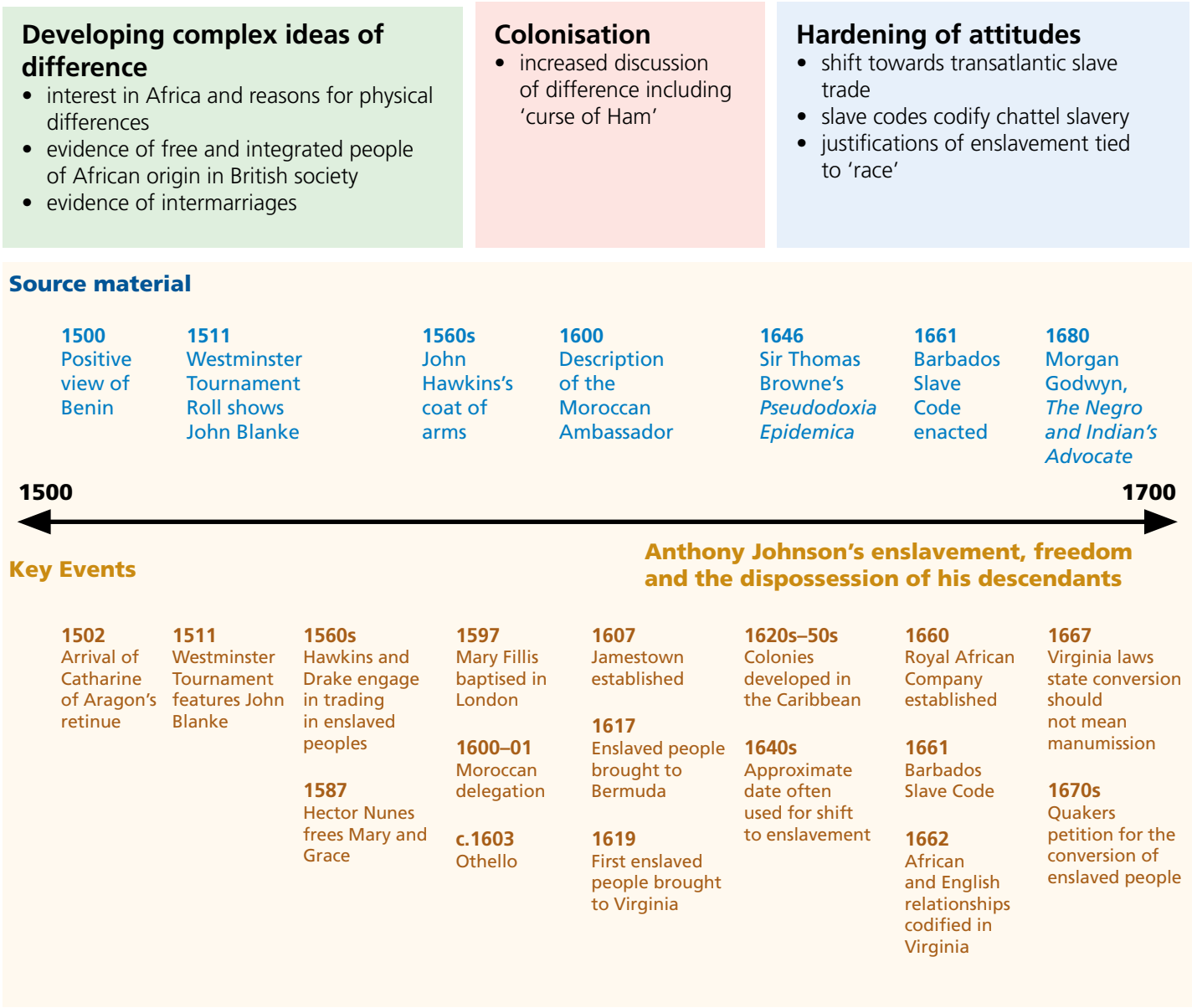
The first lesson of the enquiry, labelled Enquiry 2.3 in Figure 4, was designed to develop an understanding of English and European interactions with Africa and people of African descent prior to the establishment of English colonies in 1607. The first lesson of this enquiry involved recalling our understanding of the position in society of people of African descent we had encountered at the start of this half-term's unit (Enquiry 2.1 in Figure 4). We began with the image of John Blanke from the Westminster Tournament Roll (Figure 1) and discussed what we remembered about him. Students' residual memory was good. They remembered that he was a musician, that he had arrived with Catharine of Aragon, that he was valued by Henry VIII and most importantly that he was not enslaved (a misconception which students had previously evinced when first encountering him).

A description of Abd el-Ouahed ben Messaoud from an English merchant in Morocco was then used to remind students of the Moroccan delegation and Elizabeth's diplomatic connections to North Africa (see Figure 6, Source 1; see also Figure 2). Descriptions of Gao and voyages over the 'sandy sea' allowed discussion of the trade in salt and gold, a grasp of Morocco's 1591 seizure of Songhay, a look back to West African kingdoms and an understanding of the significance of mathematics and science in Africa. This set of sources, rather positive in their presentation of African culture, was then complemented by a positive description of Benin written by a Portuguese visitor in the early 1500s and accompanied by images of the Oba's palace and bronzes (see Figure 6, Source 2). My purpose behind using these sources was to get students to understand that positive images and descriptions of Africa existed in this period. I also needed to complicate these ideas. I used Sir John Hawkins's coat of arms to remind students of nascent English involvement in the trade in enslaved people (see Figure 6, Source 3). Hawkins's involvement in slave trading is written about in detail within Richard Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations* (1589). Aware of source material overload, I opted instead to use the coat of arms for a visual representation which the students could then analyse with my guidance.[14]

Figure 4: Our new Year 8 curriculum (continued)

Enquiry 2.1 Why was the world 'opening up' to the Tudors and Stuarts?	1 Who lived in Tudor London?	• Case studies from Kaufmann's *Black Tudors* – John Blanke, Mary Fillis • the Converso community and foreign merchants • Mary and Grace, Hector Nunes's servants – window into impacts of Spanish and Portuguese slave trading
	2 Did the Reformation cause colonisation?	• Sources about Diego which are quoted in Black Tudors • Drake, Hawkins and Raleigh and the impacts of Anglo-Spanish rivalry and the Reformation on exploration and colonisation • homework – Moroccan segregation reading
	3 Who went to the Americas?	• overview of Stuart colonisation and the development of colonies • religion and the duty of bringing 'civility', personal religious motives (i.e. Puritans) and trade and wealth
	4 Why was the world 'opening up' for the Tudors and Stuarts?	• short piece of writing on causation • tensions with Spain (foreign policy), religion and trade as motivators for Tudor and Stuart expansion
Enquiry 2.2 How did the Powhatan people resist English settlement?	1 Who were the Powhatan people of Tsenacommacah?	• culture, society and sophistication of Powhatan people's trading networks • Wahunsenacawh's consolidation of power
	2 How did the Powhatan use diplomacy?	• initial interaction with the English (e.g. John Smith's capture on the Chickahominy River) • times of starvation, developing tensions, first Anglo-Powhatan war
	3 How did Opechancanough seek to protect his people?	• reaction to English expansion and abandonment of diplomacy • attempts to force the English to abandon colonisation
	4 How did Powhatan resistance change over time?	• differences between Powhatan and Opechancanough and the situations they faced • survival of Powhatan testimony and oral history of the colonial era among the Mattaponi, etc.
Enquiry 2.3 When was 'race' invented?	1 What were attitudes to Africa and people of African descent 1500–1603?	• link back to Kaufmann's *Black Tudors* but also African kingdoms • source material relating to attitudes prior to English involvement in the transatlantic slave trade • descriptions of Benin, the Moroccan delegation and sources upon ideas of difference and early involvement in slave trading (see Figure 6)
	2 How did the transition to enslavement have an impact on attitudes towards people from Africa?	• link back to colonisation • explanation of the shift towards the use of enslaved labour • section of *Pseudodoxia Epidemica* showing developing explanations of difference, Genesis 9:10, Barbados Slave Code excerpt, Morgan Godwyn's call for conversion (see Figure 7)
	3 What can Anthony Johnson's story tell us about colonisation's impact on attitudes to people of African descent in the colonies?	• link back to Virginia • introduction of 1619 as date of initial arrival of enslaved peoples from Angola • Anthony and Mary Johnson's story through snippets of colonial records – enslavement, freedom, building of a large estate and descendants' loss of land (see Figure 8)
	4 When was 'race' 'invented'?	• looking back over prior material – when did ideas of difference or interest in Africa (positive and negative) shift to a hardening into concepts of 'whiteness' and 'blackness'? • a card sort through which pupils order the material and try to establish when 'race' developed

Figure 5: Illustrative timeline of key developments in the invention of race



Consequently, I elected to use this image of Sir John Hawkins's coat of arms as a stimulus to questioning. I reminded students of the stories of Diego, Mary and Grace who had come to England following enslavement in the Iberian world.[15] I then also used the exploits of Hawkins and Drake to get students to begin to question attitudes to Africa and people of African descent in English thought as well. Students had remembered that Mary and Grace had been freed from enslavement in Elizabethan London following a petition from their master Hector Nunes to the Queen. However, this addition of Hawkins's coat of arms with its bound African figure made them question sixteenth-century English attitudes to Africa.

When asked at the end of the lesson if this constituted the beginnings of an awareness of race, the students were unsure. It became clear that when thinking about early modern views of race, my students saw the development of race as being intrinsically tied to negative impacts for non-white people. Students for example seized upon latent ideas of race and racism in Mary and Grace's enslavement in the Iberian world. However, they questioned the existence of those ideas when reminded of Mary and Grace's freedom in England and positive descriptions of Africa within the source material they had read.

Lesson 2

Our second lesson would take us onwards into the period of English colonisation.

In 1578, the sailor and explorer George Best wrote down his accounts of the voyages in which he had been involved. Within them, he referred to 'an Ethiopian' who in England married an English woman and had a child. Works such as Best's provide evidence of African communities in Britain and of intermarriage. They also show an emerging concern with difference, including skin tone.[16] During the Tudor and Stuart period, a range of explanations for differences were discussed. These included maternal impression, geohumoralism, the heat of the sun and the curse of Ham.[17] These theories are discussed in Sir Thomas Browne's *Pseudodoxia Epidemica*. Lesson 2 begins with a very heavily edited excerpt (see Figure 7, Source 1).[18]

We then recapped our understanding of English colonialism from our prior topic, discussing Jamestown and attitudes towards indigenous peoples. From this base, Lesson 2 then built on this history with an explanation of the development of the use of enslaved labour in the colonies, *via* teacher talk and a timeline.

Figure 6: Some sources used in the first lesson

Source 1:		**Source 2:**		**Source 3:**	
Thomas Bernhere, an English merchant, describes the Moroccan ambassador to Britain, c. 1600.	The Ambassador is well learned and has an interest in experiments mathematical he is much delighted in the study of astronomy and astrology… your magnetical instrument of declination would be commodious for a yearly voyage, which some make for the King over a sandy sea (wherein they must use needle and compass) to Gao.	A Portuguese visitor to Benin in the 1500s writes about what he saw.	Great Benin, where the King resides, is larger than Lisbon, all the streets run straight and as far as the eyes can see. The houses are large, especially that of the king which is richly decorated and has fine columns. The city is wealthy and industrious. It is so well governed that theft is unknown and the people live in such security that they have no door to their houses.	John Hawkins's coat of arms, c.1560s	

Students then read the excerpt of Genesis which covers the curse of Ham (Figure 7, Source 2).[19] I stressed that the identity of Ham's descendants is not defined in the Bible. Furthermore, ideas about who might be Ham's descendants changed over time, the curse being placed on different othered groups in society, from peasants to the Jewish community and then, in the context of the slave trade, on the peoples of Africa. Students considered why placing the curse upon the peoples of Africa might occur in the context of involvement in the trade in enslaved people.

We then read an excerpt of the Barbados Slave Code (Figure 7, Source 3). This is the text in which many historians of the English Atlantic world place the origins of racialised society stratified as 'white' and 'black'. This text tied the status of slavery to African heritage and made enslavement a perpetual, inherited status. In the section of the text shown in Figure 7, see enslaved people described as 'brutish' and we see the development of differences in treatment and access to justice delineated on racial lines.

Once they had read these excerpts and Morgan Godwyn's call for conversion (Figure 7, Source 4), my students were able to think back to Lesson 1. I asked them whether the sources used in Lesson 1 (see Figure 7) provided evidence that a sense of race had developed in the seventeenth century as opposed to in the sixteenth century. I asked the students to justify their decisions. There was a general consensus within the class that the Barbados Slave Code illustrated a shift in thinking and a hardening of attitudes.

Lesson 3

By Lesson 3, our students had considered the position of people of African descent in Tudor society and had become aware that the early modern English were becoming interested in Africa, and in cultural and physical differences. In Lesson 2, students traced the shift to the transatlantic slave trade. They noticed how the trade deepened interest in explanations of difference and how justifications began to be developed for the large-scale enslaving of the peoples of Africa. .

In Lesson 3, I wanted students to begin to think deeply about the material that they had read. I wanted them to consider the way in which the construction of race in that material was changing over time. I then wanted to consolidate their thinking and challenge it by getting them to consider the life of a colonist that I had encountered at university – Anthony Johnson. The life of Anthony Johnson and his family cuts perfectly across this period and is illustrative of how shifting ideas of 'race' and status developed and affected real people. Johnson conveniently appears in a range of snippets from colonial records such as the records of the General Assembly of Virginia. A summary of his life can be found in Figure 8.[20]

Johnson's story represents the complexity of the community of African servants and planters who arrived in Virginia from 1619, found freedom and then found themselves subject to reduction of rights and to colonial laws developed in tandem with shifts towards increasingly enslaved populations.[21]

As we read about the life of Anthony Johnson, we placed his life events, together with wider key events, onto a timeline. Students commented upon his experience of enslavement and, with questioning, came to understand that prior to the development of the Barbados Slave Codes, to be a slave could be an amorphous status, transmuted into an indenture with an end term. Fortunately, students had previously encountered the system of indentured labour and its significance in the early English colonies. We then discussed the point at which Johnson's African origin came to affect himself and his family.

From their thinking about Johnson, students came to the conclusion that attitudes towards people of African origin had hardened by the time the Johnson's land in Virginia was seized by white neighbours in the 1670s. The students saw this event as an extension of the shift created by the Barbados Slave Code of 1661. At the end of Lesson 3, the class unanimously placed the development of race in the period between 1661 to 1670, seeing it as developing when African status in the Americas became tied to ideas of perpetual enslavement.

Figure 7: Some sources used in the second lesson

Source 1:
Excerpt from *Pseudodoxia Epidemica* by Sir Thomas Browne (1646)

…[W]hy some men, yea and they a mighty and considerable part of man-kind, should first acquire and still retain the gloss and tincture of blackness? … there arising [theories of] cause which are but two in number; that is the heat and scorch of the Sun, or the curse of God on Ham and his posterity.

The First was generally received by the ancients … It hath been doubted by several modern writers, particularly by Ortelius, but amply and satisfactorily discussed as we know by no man; we shall therefore endeavour a full delivery [discussion] hereof.

Secondly, if we affirm that this effect proceeded, or … may be advanced and fomented from the fervour of the Sun, or intemperate heat of clime did solely occasion this complexion, surely a migration or change thereof might cause a sensible, if not a total mutation; which notwithstanding experience will not admit.

Source 2:
Genesis 9:18–27

And the sons of Noah that went forth of the ark were Shem, and Ham and Japheth: and Ham is the father of Canaan…

And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him. And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. And he said Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.

Source 3:
Barbados Slave Code, 1661

If any … slave whatsoever shall offer any violence to any Christian by striking or the like, such … slave shall for his or her first offence be severely whipped by the Constable. For his second offence of that nature he shall be severely whipped, his nose slit, and be burned in some part of his face with a hot iron. And being brutish slaves, [they] deserve not, for the baseness of their condition, to be tried by the legal trial of twelve men of their peers, as the subjects of England are…

Source 4:
Morgan Godwyn (1680) *The Negro's and Indians Advocate, suing for their admission into the Church*

Their objections against this [allowing enslaved people Christianity] are poor and trivial… condemned to contradictions, they make them [enslaved people] the posterity of the unhappy son of Noah, who, they say was together with his whole family and race, cursed by his father… from thence, they'll … justify their reduction of them [enslaved people] under bondage [slavery], disable them from all rights and claims, even to religion themselves, [and] pronounce them reprobates…

Student responses

Unfortunately, my teaching of this enquiry was interrupted by Covid-19. The rate of new cases in London was particularly sharp between November and December. This pause was then lengthened with the announcement of post-Christmas lockdown.

In this period from November 2020 to March 2021, we pursued an enquiry into resistance to enslavement and then abolition (see Figure 9). On our return to face-to-face teaching, just before Easter, we returned to our main enquiry. I re-started the enquiry, reducing some content and shifting our opening lesson to link back to what we had covered in lockdown. In order to link 'lockdown learning' to this enquiry, I asked students to use their existing knowledge to speculate as to what might have happened in contemporary notions of race in between the periods in which John Blanke and Olaudah Equiano had lived. The students had by this point encountered both these figures.

As you can see from examples of their initial thoughts in Figure 10, students' residual knowledge of John Blanke was good. Without prompting, students displayed some maturity in their historical thinking. For example, they were able to note that the societal shift which occurred between the lives of John Blanke and Olaudah Equiano was the involvement of the English (and by the time of Equiano, the British) in slavery.

From there, we moved through a slightly sped-up version of Lesson 2 and on to Lesson 3. Students really engaged with the life of Anthony Johnson. Their engagement in this lesson allowed them to link back to and build on prior learning about the Powhatan, Jamestown and Virginia. The students also came to understand that enslaved peoples had begun to arrive in the English colonies during the period that they had previously studied.

Figure 8: Summary of the life of Anthony Johnson, free man of Virginia, used in Lesson 3

Anthony Johnson had been captured and enslaved by the Portuguese in Angola. From there he and his future wife Mary appear to have become entangled in the web of English privateering related to the colonial network of the Earl of Warwick, Robert Rich. It is possible they were taken from a wrecked Portuguese ship and bought to England prior to being taken to Virginia aboard *The James* arriving in 1621. Rich, who had also been involved in the arrival of the first enslaved peoples to Virginia in 1619, appears to have then sold the group on to a member of his colonial network, a fellow Puritan called Edward Bennett. He owned a large tobacco plantation called Bennett's Welcome.

Anthony was present and became one of only five survivors of 57 at Bennett's Welcome during the Powhatan attack on Virginia colonists on Good Friday 1622. From thence, we pick up his life in snippets of records. It appears that at some point Bennett transmuted Anthony from enslaved person to indentured servant and then free man and that he married Mary. In 1641 Anthony was referred to as 'free' and had come into possession of an enslaved person called John Casor. In 1645 he again appears in the records stating, 'Now I know myne owne ground and I will work when I please and play when I please.'

By 1652 he appears in the records again, having built a tobacco estate which was damaged by fire. Having become a valued member of the community and having created a network of patrons with connections, Anthony was provided with a tax exemption for himself, his wife Mary and two daughters to help him recover. The Johnsons' ownership of 250 acres in Virginia alongside hogs and cattle showed them to be a prosperous family. However, from the 1650s 'race' and the codification of slavery began to have an impact upon the Johnsons. John Casor was manipulated by Johnson's neighbours to sue him for the ending of his servitude. He left to work for another planter before being returned to the Johnsons as a 'servant for life' when the Virginia Assembly ruled in Anthony's favour.

It was around this time that the Johnsons' bought a new estate in Maryland. They sold some of their land in Virginia to their neighbours. As a series of laws made enslavement perpetual (1661), intermarriage and relations between Africans and English illegal (1662) and Christianity *not* a justification of manumission (1667) in Virginia, it may be that the Johnsons had begun to see their position in Virginian society shift.

Around 1667 Anthony Johnson died. Anthony left 50 acres in Virginia to his son Richard. A Virginian jury ruled that Anthony Johnson as an African 'was a Negroe and by consequence an alien'. His lands were seized by white planters. Anthony had been a prosperous planter, he had thrived in the gaps prior to the codification of 'race' in slave codes, however by the end of his life attitudes towards race had disinherited his family. It is hard to trace what happened to the Johnsons as the seventeenth century shifted into the eighteenth.

Students' arguments about the emergence of racial thinking

As we began to plan our final written piece, two arguments now appeared to be developing within my class's conversations:

- 'Race' was invented by the slave codes and developed from there, as evidenced in the Barbados code and Johnson's life.
- 'Race' was nascent through the Tudor period and hardened through colonisation.

We then put our ideas together in a final written response which sought to explain when racial thinking came to exist. As this was a short enquiry bookended by two enquiries culminating in lengthy essay outcomes, I did not push for a prolonged essay. Instead, I simply sought evidence of their reasoning using the primary source material that we had read.

As shown in Figure 11, my students had clearly been able to use the source record to discern a distinct shift between 1500 and 1700. The students perceived that the initially positive reaction of the English to African people such as John Blanke ultimately gave way to the negative implications of the slave codes. Considering the disruption to their learning, especially having to complete the lessons in a rush prior to the Easter holidays, I was impressed at how much students drew from the sources. While not explicitly referencing or quoting, Student 1 in Figure 11 is forming an argument based on inferences drawn from descriptions of Ahmad al-Mansur, the leader of Morocco, from descriptions of the Moroccan ambassador from 1600, from John Blanke and the Westminster Tournament Roll and from the Barbados Slave Code. Student 2 also touched on these sources, together with information about the life of Anthony Johnson gleaned from records of the colony of Virginia. The students were combining inferences from multiple sources to form their own conclusions.

Conclusion

Looking back, I would have liked more time to work with the students on these final pieces. Their nascent work shows the potential. In future, I will carve out a whole lesson to craft our final answers to the enquiry question. I will also specifically push students to quote and refer to specific primary material

Figure 9: Enquiries taught over lockdown

Enquiry 1	**How did the enslaved resist?** • forms of passive resistance and the survival of African cultures • legal resistance • violent resistance, uprisings and the Haitian Revolution
Enquiry 2	**Was William Wilberforce the driving force behind abolition?** • changing interpretations of the causes of the abolition of the slave trade • the work of women and formerly enslaved peoples such as the Sons of Africa and the writings of Mary Prince • the impact of uprisings • the work of white abolitionists such as William Wilberforce
Enquiry 3	**What can the lives of 'The Five' reveal about Victorian London?** • impacts of industrialisation on London • work and life in the East End • the lives of poor, attitudes towards poverty and women

Figure 10: Students' initial thoughts on race in the early modern world

Student 1

Between the time of John Blanke and Olaudah Equiano a great change occurred in society. Initially, people from Africa had been able to be wealthy. Africa was also viewed positively. For example the African (people) could make something and sell it all of the time and would become wealthy when their parents died. However in the 1600s England began to develop colonies. As a consequence slavery was in place for any child whose parents were enslaved and would be treated as if they were useless.

Student 2

Between the life of John Blanke and Olaudah Equiano a great change occurred in society. England began to become involved in the slave trade. This caused a change in attitudes towards Africa and people from Africa.

Initially, in the time of John Blanke people of African origin could hold high positions in society. John Blanke was a musician for Henry VIII. Also Africa and Africans were considered positively.

From the 1600s onwards England got colonies. This led to enslaving people and led to codes such as the Barbados Slave Code of 1661. This meant people like Olaudah Equiano were enslaved.

as opposed to merely alluding to it. They also need to be pushed to add a further thought about *how* their chosen date for the formation of racial thinking illustrates its beginnings and implications.

Despite these Covid-induced limitations, I was impressed with my students' engagement with the source material, especially given that they managed to decode the original language. I feel much more confident about the prospect of teaching this sort of history in the future. Students engaged well and showed maturity and insight as we interrogated the source material.

I think it likely that in future, scholars and activists such as Dabiri, Akala and Olusoga will continue to bring these histories to the fore. All three have recently referenced, the Barbados slave codes as roots of racial thinking in texts or interviews.[22]

I wanted my students to understand that as historians we can trace when ideas of race – 'whiteness' and 'blackness' – were constructed and calcified. Even though their final pieces need some feedback and work, they did grasp this. Understanding the historic roots of these ideas is powerful knowledge both because it gives pupils power in understanding subsequent

Figure 11: Students' thoughts (at the end of the enquiry) on the development of attitudes around race in the early modern world

Student 1

In 1500 attitudes towards Africa and people from Africa were positive. Ideas of race or difference did not really exist or affect people. For example John Blanke was Henry VIII's musician and was very wealthy. Another example is Ahmad al-Mansur who was the King of Morocco, him and the queen were signing a treaty.

However, attitudes began to change in the 1620's when Africans were being brought to Barbados. And then in the 1660's there was a slave code created. This changed how people of African origin were treated in the colonies.

Student 2

In 1500 attitudes towards Africa and people from Africa were positive. Ideas of race didn't really exist or affect people. For example, Diego who escaped slavery or John Blanke who became Henry VIII's musician. Another example to back up my statements in is Ahmad al-Mansur who was the King of Morocco. He sent an Ambassador to England. People said that he was clever and Africa was a place of mathematics.

However, attitudes changed during the 1600s. One date when things changed was 1661 when the Barbados Slave Code was announced. Another date which backs this up is when Anthony Johnson escaped from slavery. He became an indentured servant, yet when he died in 1670 his family lost his land.

periods and because it equips students to discern and deal with the modern consequences of these ideas.

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Putting black into the Union Jack:

weaving Black history into the Year 7 to 9 curriculum

Making a passionate case for teaching Black British history in the secondary school curriculum, Hannah shares here the personal journey she has travelled in planning for Black British history in her curriculum. She cites her inspirations and offers striking examples to illustrate her rationale and approach to teaching this history. Hannah considers the challenges Black British history presents to teachers and students in the classroom, and suggests ways in which these can be overcome.

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A very personal story

There are many ways I could begin this article. It draws heavily on the first of two videos I made as part of Curricularium: a webinar series organised by history teacher-educator Will Bailey-Watson in the summer of 2020.[1] Much of what is contained within this article is borrowed. In fact, even the title has been used before, for an event at University College London in 2014 looking at how Black Britons could be better incorporated into our national history. I imagine the organisers of that event had, in turn, borrowed it from Paul Gilroy's seminal work *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack*.[2] To my shame, I did not know very much about teaching Black history then.

I did, however, know a reasonable amount about post-war Black British history, having written my undergraduate thesis on the relationship between the Metropolitan Police and Black community groups in the 1970s and 1980s. So when I arrived at my new school in 2018 and offered to plan a new enquiry about the end of empire, my thoughts naturally turned to what I had researched as an undergraduate. In order to help me with the planning, my line manager kindly booked me onto a professional development course entitled 'Migration and the Making of Modern Britain'.

My world was about to be turned upside down. Before 4 December 2018, I hadn't come across the remarkable *Our Migration Story* project, nor had had the good fortune to meet Martin Spafford, Dr Malachi McIntosh or Dr Sundeep Lidher.[3] When Professor Gavin Shaffer reminded us that the history of the Black presence in Britain didn't begin with the arrival of migrants from the Caribbean on the SS *Empire Windrush* in 1948, my mind was blown. If you had been there, you probably would have seen a little lightbulb going off just above my head.

The Windrush narrative of a dramatic rise in post-war migration, made up primarily of people from the Caribbean, was deeply embedded in my understanding of British history. It was part of the story I told myself about my identity as a mixed-race Brit, with a grandma who came over from the Caribbean as part of what has become known as the Windrush Generation. I so strongly believed, for so long, that Black British history only really began after World War II. This was despite the fact that, the previous summer, I had read, and loved, *Black Tudors*, by Miranda Kaufmann; so I did know that the Black presence in Britain went back to the sixteenth century.[4] Yet hearing Professor Shaffer state it so unequivocally really shook me. Why was that? How could I already know something to be true, and yet be so surprised by it?

I quickly realised that the power of the Windrush narrative, and the reasons why it has such a central place in the story Britain tells about itself, would make a powerful enquiry. It could tie together much of the content that we wanted to teach about post-war Britain. Yet it could do more. If treated as an interpretation to be questioned, students might not only explore seminal events in post-war Black British history which shaped the Windrush narrative, but also examine much earlier developments in Black British history. During his talk, Gavin Schaffer quoted this line from Peter Fryer's seminal book on Black British history, *Staying Power*: 'There were Africans in Britain before the English came here.'[5] This

Figure 1: My three reasons for illuminating the Black presence throughout history

Reason 1	Reason 2	Reason 3
The Black presence is there throughout	The Black presence is connecting	The Black presence is is challenged

line has since informed so much of our curriculum. It became imperative, for me, that our curriculum should illuminate the Black presence that has existed throughout history.

But why is it so important to do this? Since that CPD, I have reflected in depth on the rationale for teaching about the Black presence throughout history. I can express that rationale in three main reasons (summarised in Figure 1).

The Black presence is there throughout

The Black presence is so clearly there, throughout British history. Yet it has often been ignored, marginalised and hidden. Reading books such as *Staying Power* or *Black and British*, the continuity of Black presence, across time, becomes clear.[6] When researchers sequenced the genome of Cheddar Man, the oldest complete skeleton found in Britain, the results suggested he had been dark-skinned. I was shocked when I found this out, and our students are shocked when we show them. From the evidence we have, it is possible to conclude that Roman York was more ethnically diverse in the Roman period than it is now.[7] From Black Tudors at Henry VIII's court to Black Georgians such as William Davidson, Black people, while sometimes few in number (as is the case in many parts of Britain today), were very clearly there. More recently, my interest sparked in part by historians such as David Olusoga and James Walvin, and in part by Sian Ayling's recent One Big History Department blog, I've become preoccupied with how central the Black presence was to Britain's industrial revolution.[8] Not to teach it, therefore, does not seem good history.

The Black presence is connecting

History has the potential to bolster that sense of belonging which all humans need to feel. In my experience, however, this sense of belonging is often contested and denied to Black people in Britain. Figure 2 shows Aina (also known as Sarah) Forbes Bonetta. There are many things which Aina and I do not share. She was a Yoruba princess whose parents were killed, and who was then brought to England and became a favourite of Queen Victoria. I was a 12-year-old mixed-race kid whose mum worked in HR (Figure 3). I felt so out of place in my new school. Perhaps, at times, Aina felt the same way.

One thing that did not separate us was distance. In fact, where Aina lived in Brighton is four minutes' walk from where I went to secondary school. I was 30 when I found that out. I cried. Knowing of her presence made me feel different. It made me think differently about where I grew up. It turned

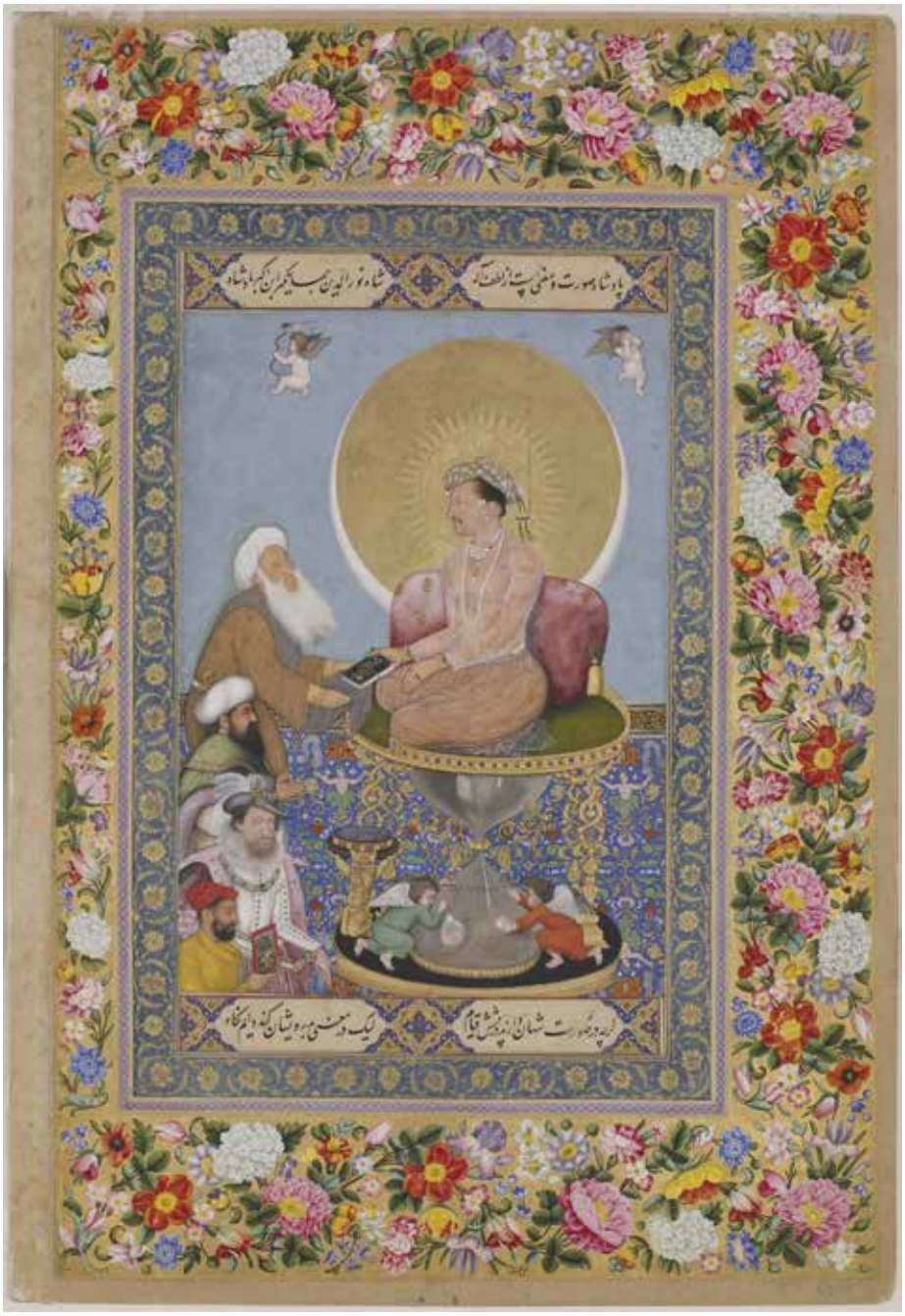
Figure 2: Aina, also known as Sarah Forbes Bonetta



Figure 3: The author, aged 12



Figure 4: *Jahangir preferring a Sufi Shaikh to Kings*, painted by Bichitr for Emperor Jahangir, gives a sense of the status accorded to James I by the Mughal Court.



out that being Black in Brighton was not as new as I had thought. I wonder how differently I would have felt if I had known that as a teenager.

The demographic of my current school strongly informs the design of our history curriculum. It is a relatively new school: when I joined, we only had Years 7, 8 and 9. It was set up by parents in our local community and representing the local community is a big part of the school's ethos. From the third-floor corridor, I can see the estate I live on; yet I live further away than most of our students, who generally live within a kilometre of the school. Southwark is a fairly diverse borough and has one of the largest Black populations in the UK. In our school around 45% of our students are from white British backgrounds. The desire to include the Black presence meaningfully in our curriculum is partly a desire to be true to our community and to enable our students to know that people who looked like them existed in the past. Catherine Priggs's recent article, goes further. Priggs suggests that students from a range of ethnic backgrounds need to see the richness of diverse pasts, beyond their own ethnic heritages, represented in their school history curriculum.[9]

The Black presence is challenged

The inclusion of the Black presence in British history is still challenged. In 2017 there was a media storm over a BBC Teach video about Roman Britain aimed at primary school pupils.[10] The video follows a fictional Roman family featuring a Black father, white mother and mixed-race children. Several people on social media took exception to the video and accused the BBC of 'rewriting history'. When renowned classicist, Mary Beard, defended the inclusion of an ethnically diverse family on the basis of evidence from Roman Britain, she faced a torrent of abuse.[11]

As this story demonstrates, the inclusion of Black figures in British history pre-1945 arouses anger in many. This is partly, I think, because some believe such inclusion to be factually inaccurate; they suppose that it has been concocted by people trying to push some sort of agenda. For this reason, I feel strongly that we, as history teachers, have a vitally important role to play in exposing our students to the diversity that existed in the past. The recent backlash in some sections of the media against the Colonial Countryside project, which supported primary school pupils to engage with the links between National Trust properties and the British Empire, makes me even more determined to weave in the Black presence across the curriculum, rather than limiting it to standalone lessons or enquiries.[12]

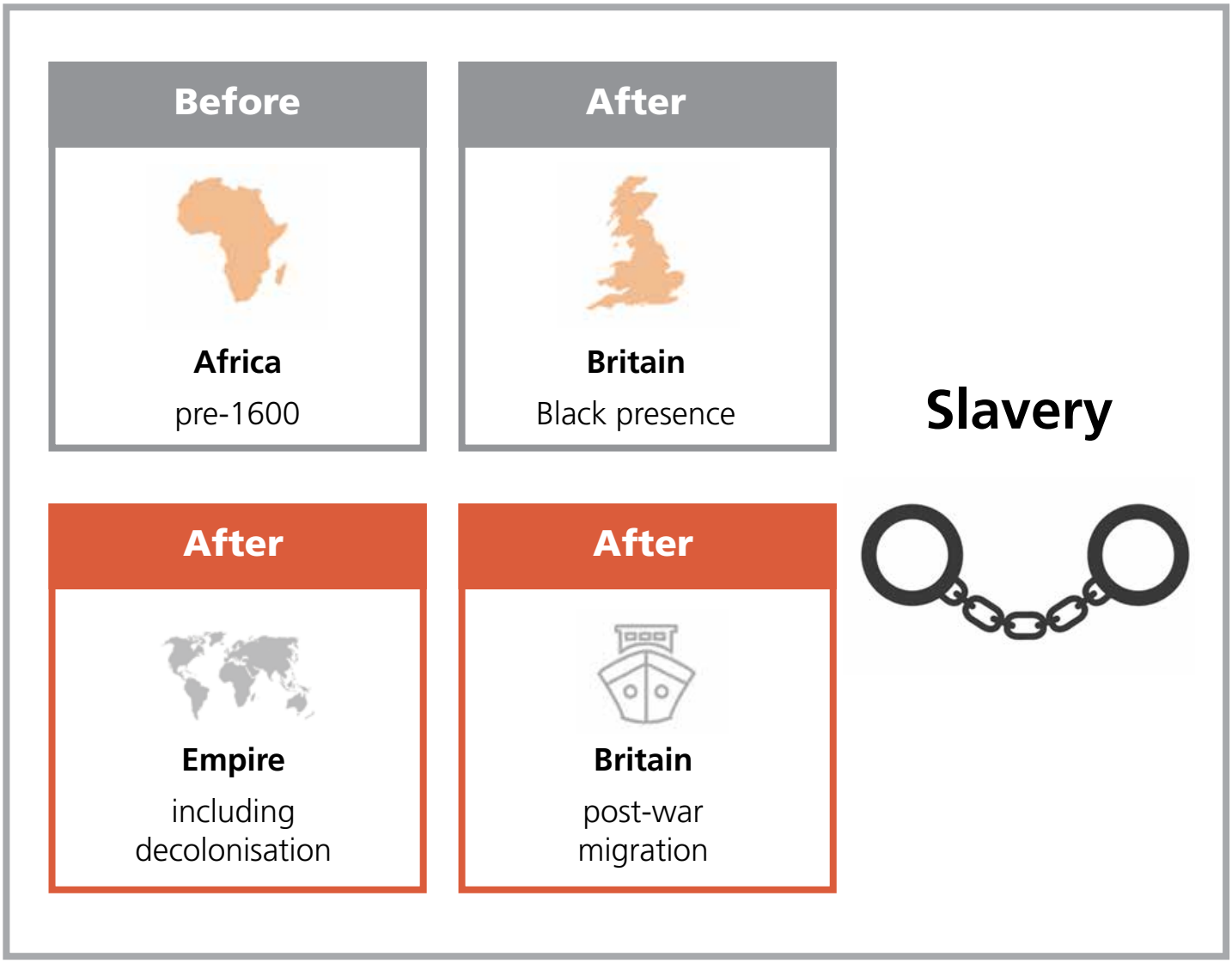
These three reasons explain why I think including Black history is so important. But what has shaped our choices of Black history content, and our decisions about how to teach it?[13]

Curriculum influences

A few months after the migration teacher training day, I received a message from Dr Malachi McIntosh, whom I met at that event. He pointed me to a teacher fellowship run by the TIDE (Travel, Transculturality and Identity in England, 1550–1700) project, which is led by Professor Nandini Das.[14] Becoming a TIDE Beacon Fellow revolutionised my view both of the Black presence in Britain, and of Britain's interaction with, and sense of status in, the world. Exposure to academic research and primary source material made me realise the power of teaching early empire and first encounters. By taking the timeline back to the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, my very one-dimensional view about empire was interrupted.

Previously, my understanding of the British empire had been strongly influenced by the dynamics of the nineteenth-century empire: Britain as an omnipotent imperial power and the colonised as victims. At one of the TIDE training

Figure 5: Where slavery fits into our curriculum



days, we explored the experience of Thomas Roe, English royal envoy to the court of Mughal Emperor Jahangir. Roe sought a trade agreement to help England access the wealth of India and to build links with the Islamic world following the break with Rome. Roe's records of his time in India reveal how the Mughal Emperor clearly had the upper hand and how Roe struggled to achieve his objectives, as suggested by Figure 4. It has become increasingly clear to me that, if we are fully to understand empire and race, we need to begin our study in the early modern era. History teacher and early modern expert, Kerry Apps, has written a number of blogs exploring the power of teaching early empire and showing how to weave it into the curriculum.[15]

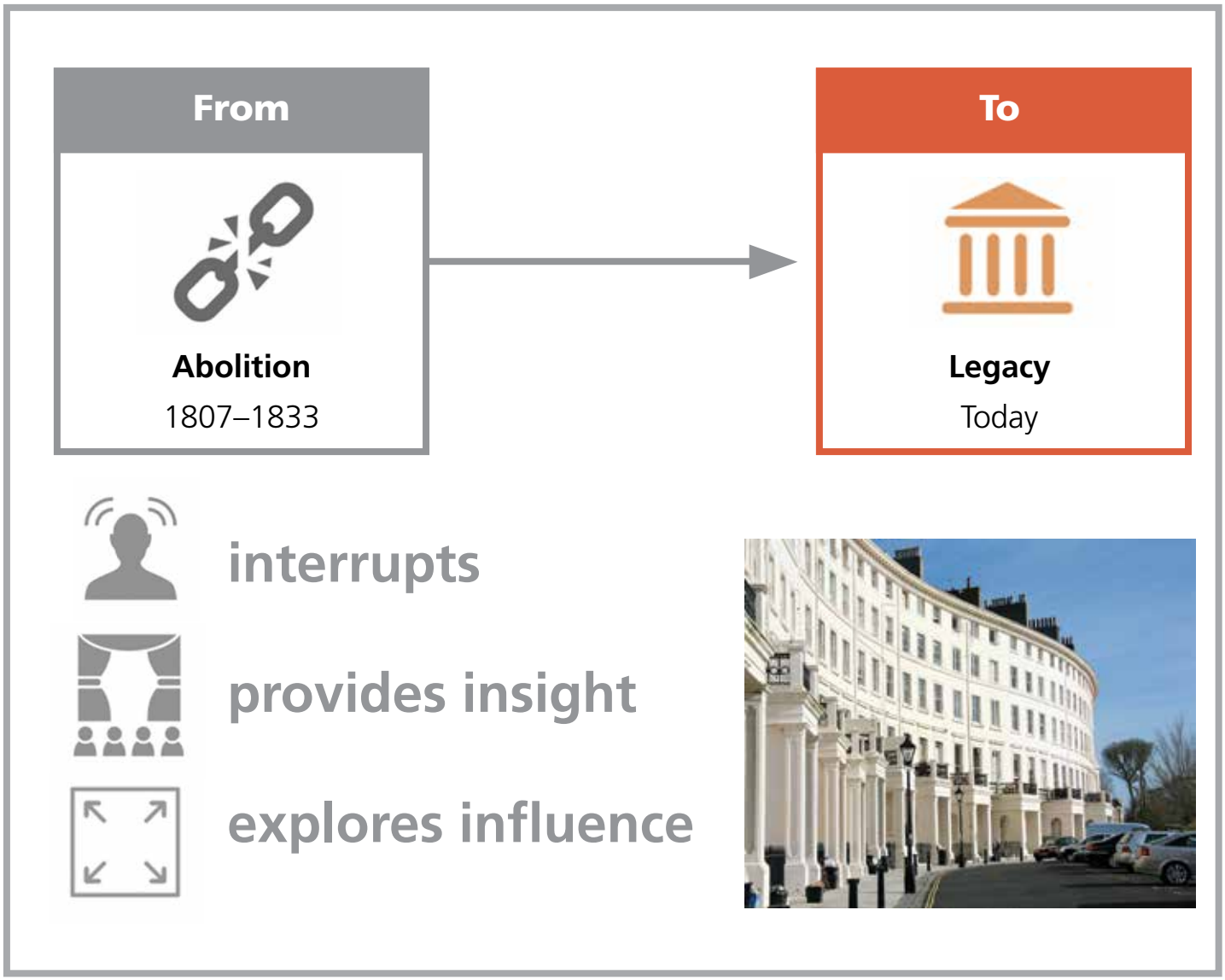
The more I read, the more I realise how much the popular interpretation of history often hides, obscures or misrepresents, especially when it comes to Black history. As a result, when choosing topics and designing enquiries, I keep in mind the three 'I's as outlined by Mohamud and Whitburn:

> *influence: how someone, or something, produced consequences in their own time, or, how, long after their work was complete, someone continued to affect the way people functioned. The second is insight: how a person, place or event can show us what the key features of life were at a particular time and place in the past. Finally… interruption of the psyche: how someone or something challenges the conventional thinking about a situation in the past and dismantles assumptions about history.*[16]

The final 'I', interrupting, has particularly influenced the development of our curriculum, as we have sought to challenge conventional thinking and assumptions such as the Windrush narrative. Moreover, I would argue that dismantling changes us in the present. Knowing about Sarah Forbes Bonetta changed me and how I felt about where I grew up. How might that knowledge have changed me, had I known about her presence in Brighton when I was 13 rather than 30? What does knowing about the rich history of Africa do to our ideas about Africa today? How might it change how our students see themselves or their classmates?

While we can aim to achieve a whole range of things, I keep coming back to the question of what students are left with, what they take away from the lesson and how this fits into their idea of the past. As Jason Todd said in a tweet in 2020, exploring the teaching of empire, we have to be very thoughtful, since what is taught is not always what is learnt.[17] Well-meaning enquiry questions can distort. When teachers ask students to debate how much was good or bad in the empire, or to read interpretations that bring out the good, what do students actually take away from that enquiry? When teachers ask pupils to debate whether Britain should apologise for the empire, what are the students left with?

Figure 6: Switching the focus from teaching of abolition to a focus on the legacy of transatlantic slavery



Inspirational actor and artist Heather Agyepong has also strongly influenced my thinking. I had the honour of speaking alongside Heather at a National Portrait Gallery event during Black History Month. In her talk, Heather spoke about what she was left with from her history education. She spoke about how at school she learned about the transatlantic slave trade and the US civil rights movement, but this curriculum left her cold. It left her with this impression that Black people were either victims of unimaginable violence, or heroes, with nothing in between. It left her with little understanding of Black British history, and little sense of what life was like for ordinary Black people in the past. They were saviours or slaves. We have to avoid that, I concluded.

Each of these influences led me to think that we needed to spread a number of enquiries across our curriculum, reflecting the scope and balance shown in Figure 5. To avoid leaving children with the impression that Black people were slaves and that was it, we needed to go back to a time before the transatlantic slave trade, and to study African kingdoms without any reference to plantations or the Middle Passage. We needed to teach the Black presence in Britain, because it was there, because it interrupts established narratives. Nor could we leave the story at slavery, as if to say 'Oh our ancestors were there, now we're here...', without anything in between. We needed to continue the story with the study of empire after slavery, and with decolonisation and the increase in migration from 1948 onwards.

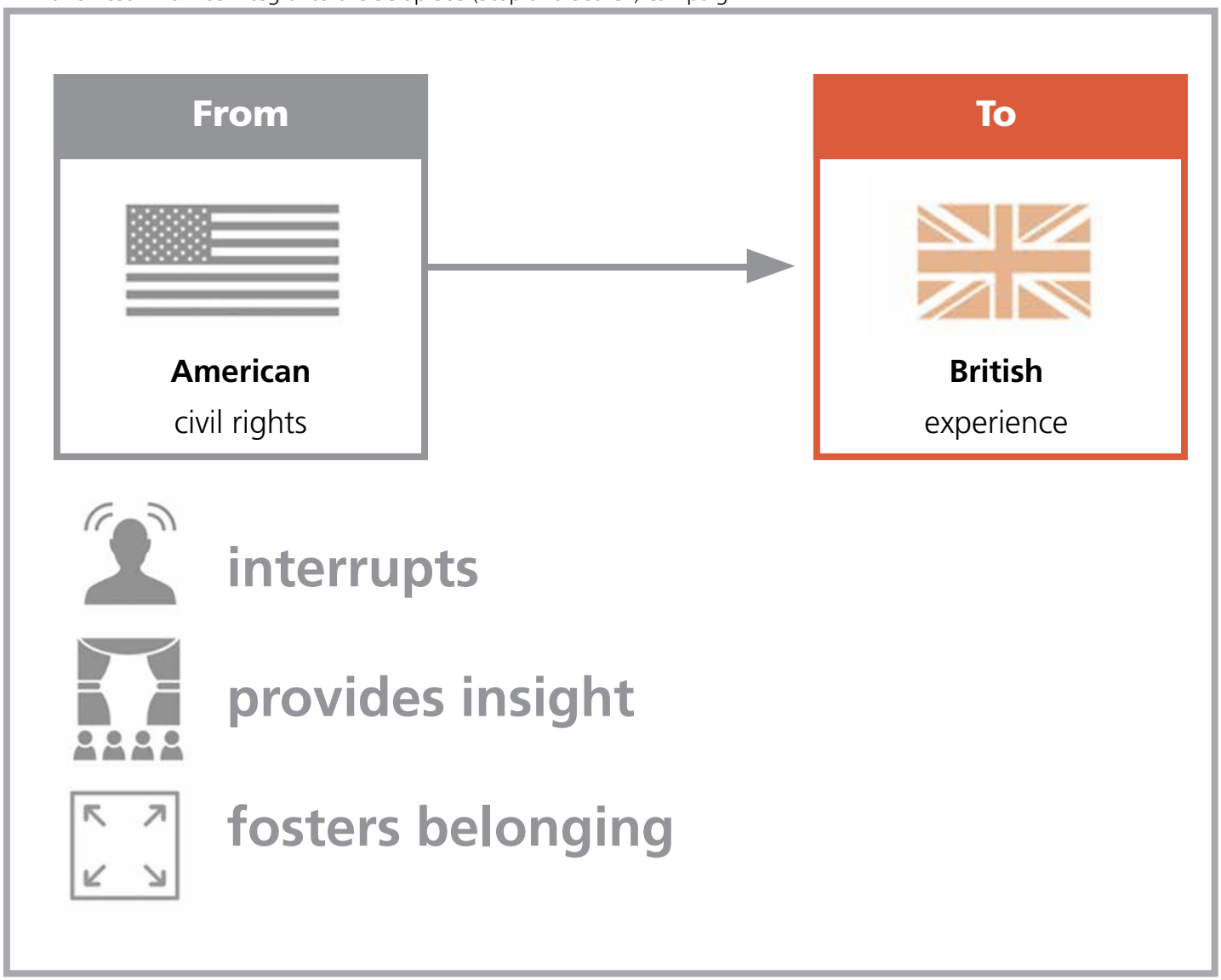
Taking the curriculum into the classroom

Stereotypes

In his song 'Black', Dave speaks about blackness, race and racism. He also devotes a significant portion of the song to history, which I had always found fascinating. I later realised that I trained with teachers who taught at the school Dave attended, at roughly the same time. Perhaps they taught him. That really hit me. From the song, it sounds like we needed to have taught him something more. I was particularly struck by these lines:

Black is so much deeper than just African-American
Our heritage been severed, you never got to experiment
With family trees, 'cause they teach you 'bout famine and greed
And show you pictures of our fam on their knees
Tell us we used to be barbaric, we had actual queens
Black is watchin' child soldiers gettin' killed by other children
Feelin' sick like, 'Oh shit, this could have happened to me'[18]

Figure 7: Switching the focus from US civil rights to Black British experiences, such as that of activist Mavis Best who was integral to the Scrap Sus (Stop and Search) campaign



When I put together our curriculum and our lessons, I thought hard about how to avoid reinforcing stereotypes. I am not sure how explicitly I had thought about this back in 2012. And I am sure that I still make mistakes today. But I hope that by bearing these things in mind, I can give my students something different.

We do not teach an enquiry about abolition (Figure 6). At first, this wasn't intentional; perhaps it was more subconscious. I think an enquiry on abolition can play too strongly into the narrative that Britain's abolition of slavery means what happened before no longer matters: that abolition 'removed from England the guilt of the African slave trade', as it says on Wilberforce's monument. I acknowledge what Mohamud and Whitburn say concerning how teaching of the transatlantic slave trade in Britain focuses very heavily on the economic dimension.[19] But only as an adult am I beginning to appreciate how much of Britain is built on the wealth of the trade, and how its economic legacy still touches us today. Growing up in Brighton I idolised those white Georgian houses. The same ones you see in Bristol. I knew so little about where the money came from to build them. I think the extent of the wealth generated by the slave trade and enslaved labour is still not well known. This means that still, today, when it comes to empire, 'some islands in the Caribbean' may very often be mentioned in passing, without reference to the extent of the wealth generated there which came back to Britain.[20]

Similarly, instead of teaching about civil rights in the United States, we teach about the experiences of those who came to be known as the Windrush Generation, and their children: my parents'. For us, it is local history. An aunt of one of my students was invited to, but did not attend, Yvonne Ruddock's birthday party in New Cross, where fire claimed the lives of 13 young people. If you catch the bus outside our school gate, a few stops later you are in Brixton. I hope that our students take away both that 'my people struggled too' (as Yemoh and Whitburn's student realised) but also that Britain was shaped by that struggle: the struggle of ordinary people to be accepted as the citizens that they were and are. (See Figure 7.)[21]

Language

I admit that I did not think enough about language before I started teaching Black history. You do not get very far into teaching Black history before you run up against the N-word. I always knew of the slogan from the Smethwick by-election that followed the 1964 general election, with the original N-word replaced by 'coloured': 'If you want a coloured for a neighbour, vote Labour'. A key part of the Stephen Lawrence case was that his killers used the word before they attacked him.

Before I started teaching, my view was pretty clear. If a child used it in the playground, that was a serious sanction. If it was used in a classroom as a result of its presence in a source, that was different. It is history. But some of my students seriously objected. And I completely understand their objections. They did not want this word to gain any legitimacy by being used in a classroom. That does not affect me in the same way it affects them. I do not have to worry about a fellow student using it to refer to me in the corridor. Because I am Black, the students that objected to the word's use were not concerned about *my* saying it; but that doesn't work for many other history teachers in the UK. Earlier this academic year, in response to student voice and changing approaches in mainstream media, my school took the position that we wouldn't read the word out loud and would instead either leave a pause or use the expression 'N-word' as a substitute.

Another stumbling block is the word 'negro'. Again it comes up a great deal. It appears in passages of *Black and British*. It appears in primary sources. I see students' eyes widen when they see the word. We talk about it: about its etymology, its history, how it was used as part of, and to perpetuate, a racist system, about how it is offensive to use it today, and about why they must not use it outside the classroom for this reason. I am not sure if that is the right approach, but we definitely cannot just put this word on a slide, or include it in a source, and leave it there without comment or discussion. I strongly advocate discussing, as a department, how to approach language when teaching Black history. History teachers need to become aware of how some students may react to particular words being used in the history classroom.

Colourism

My final consideration is colourism. Referring to discrimination against dark-skinned people in favour of those with lighter skin from the same race, colourism is often described as 'racism's little sister'. This is something I have only recently started to think about in the context of our curriculum. Colourism is often discussed on Black Twitter, prompted by TV adverts, perhaps, or celebrities dating. I know that my experience of the world, as a mixed-race or light-skinned black woman, is different from the experience I would have if I were dark-skinned. I would be seen differently. I would be treated differently. What does that mean for my classroom? It means I feel the need to be aware of it when highlighting Black figures from the past. I need to make sure that, in addition to including mixed-race or light-skinned individuals, such as Walter Tull, Mary Seacole, or Dido Belle, I also show dark-skinned figures. And I need to make sure that I not do so exclusively when teaching about slavery. Making reference to the position of people of colour or mixed-race people when teaching about slavery in the Caribbean offers a way in to exploring colourism and the ideas that sit behind it.

To end, I want to highlight some of the scholarship which has informed our curriculum. The first place to go, if you have not already, is Olusoga's *Black and British*.[22] I know many history teachers have already read Kaufmann's *Black Tudors*.[23] I would also really recommend Stuart's *Sugar in the Blood*.[24] It completely changed my understanding of slavery by both broadening and deepening my knowledge of the Caribbean. It is so engaging and thoughtfully written. Finally, I want to acknowledge how much progress I have seen being made since first writing these words back in May 2020. Long may it continue.

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8 One Big History Department is a regular blog hosted by the Historical Association. Sian Ayling's blog is about fostering students' understanding of connections between the industrial revolution, British Empire and the transatlantic slave trade. It can be found at: https://onebighistorydepartment.com/2021/03/18/how-can-we-foster-students-understanding-of-the-industrial-revolution-the-british-empire-and-the-transatlantic-slave-trade-as-interconnected/

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What have historians been arguing about...

...the impact of the British Empire on Britain?

Liam Liburd

The murder of George Floyd during the summer of 2020 and the ongoing 'culture war' in Britain over the legacy of the British Empire have reignited interest in imperial history. This focuses, in particular, on the question of the empire's impact on Britain itself: on how the act of conquering and maintaining an empire shaped British politics, culture and society. More broadly, the teaching of Britain's imperial history has become a contentious issue in public debate. One side complains that the history of the British Empire is barely taught, while the other side attacks attempts to teach about colonial legacies in Britain as 'biased' exercises in national 'self-flagellation'.[1] For teachers, bringing this hotly-contested history in the classroom may at first seem daunting, but the topic offers opportunities to open pupils' eyes to the history all around them, enabling them to look anew at the everyday and the taken-for-granted.

The present public debate over the legacy of Empire mirrors older and ongoing debates in the historiography about the influence of the empire on Britain. This turn towards examining the domestic impact of empire was first popularised by the historian John MacKenzie. In his *Propaganda and Empire: the manipulation of British public opinion, 1880–1960* (Manchester University Press, 1984) and the subsequent 'Studies in Imperialism' series he founded, MacKenzie argued that the empire shaped the way that Britons saw the world and themselves. Specifically, he argued that an 'ideological cluster… made up of a renewed militarism, a devotion to royalty, together with a contemporary cult of personality, and racial ideas associated with Social Darwinism' constituted a 'core ideology' in Britain from the 1880s to the 1950s.[2] MacKenzie's analysis was informed by a range of evidence as he looked for the empire's imprint on cinema, radio, literature, school textbooks, theatre and a range of other forms of popular culture.

In order to understand the significance of MacKenzie's intervention, we need to look back at the kinds of scholarly perspectives and studies that had dominated the field prior to this point. The conventional wisdom had been that Britain had acquired and maintained its empire in – to quote the Victorian historian, J.R. Seeley – 'a fit of absence of mind'. According to this school of thought, the creation, existence and loss of empire was of marginal significance to Britain and exerted little influence on British society.

A recipe for 'Empire Christmas Pudding' produced by the Empire Marketing Board, London c.1926–34



As a result of this assumption, Britain's imperial history had largely been written as if it were a story separate from Britain's national history. The most influential historians working on imperial history from the 1960s focused on the development and workings of Britain's imperial system. The concern of historians such as John Gallagher, Ronald Robinson and their acolytes was with 'high politics' and with the 'official

Map of the world showing the extent of the British Empire in 1886, made for the Imperial Federation by Walter Crane, whose artistic representation of empire and colonies represents a subtle critique of the impact of empire



mind': that is, essentially, with the interests and strategic concerns of those governing the empire. Before MacKenzie, British imperial history was almost a sub-field of diplomatic or economic history, rather than an integrated part of British history. Its source base was as narrow as its analytical perspective, focusing on the official – and as we now know, deliberately incomplete – colonial and government archives.[3]

Alongside MacKenzie, historians inspired by the work of literary and cultural theorists also encouraged a new focus on the impact of empire and imperial ideology *within* Britain. This 'imperial turn' or, as it also became known, the 'new imperial history', paid particular attention to the empire's influence on British ideas of race and gender. Historians such as Catherine Hall, Antoinette Burton and others investigated the empire's role in the formation of 'Britishness' and British ideas about whiteness, as well as ideas about the people of colour over whom they ruled. Like MacKenzie, these historians drew on a broad range of sources, looking at everything from religion to travel writing.

The work of these historians has enriched and expanded understanding of Britain's history, as well as inspiring further historical study. But it also met with resistance. The historian Bernard Porter defended and restated the old conventional wisdom about absent-minded imperialism, arguing that Britain's empire had a relatively minimal impact on Britain itself.[4]

In the aftermath of these clashes between Porter and those who reject his critiques – including MacKenzie and Burton – historians have continued to examine the empire's extensive, complex, and sometimes subtle impact on Britain. While some, such as David Edgerton, insist that this impact has been overstated, others, in the context of Brexit and Black Lives Matter, have returned to the question of the Empire's influence on the politics of race and immigration in Britain.[5] Including the British Isles and the British Empire in the same analytical frame has also illuminated the long history of black Britain, which predates the 1948 landing of the SS *Empire Windrush* by centuries. It has led historians to emphasise the connection between the end of empire and Commonwealth immigration after 1945.[6] Others have examined anti-immigrant racism, such as that of Enoch Powell, in light of the history and legacy of British colonialism.[7]

For these historians, the empire was not simply a political, economic and diplomatic system distant and remote from the British Isles. Instead, it was an entity which shaped and, through its legacy, continues to shape everyday life in Britain. In terms of how we ought to study Britain's imperial history, this does not mean that we should turn back to an insular focus on the British nation; rather, it is a call to think about the way that Britain was constituted by its global connections. The nuances of this approach to Britain's history perhaps partly explain why it has proved so controversial in the public arena. The work of historians who have adopted this approach challenges and complicates our understanding of British history. But, from this sometimes uncomfortable process of working through the past, we stand to gain a much richer understanding of Britain's history and one which reveals the extent to which ours is not simply an island story.

Liam Liburd is a Lecturer in Colonial/Postcolonial British History at King's College London. His most recent publication, in the journal *Twentieth Century British History,* examines the imperial character of early British fascism.

Designing enquiries to help students think about interpretations of the impact of the British Empire on Britain

Heated debates in the media about the impact of empire can be used to prompt pupils to consider why debates about empire still matter urgently to people today. We might frame an enquiry question such as: *Why does the history of the British Empire in Britain upset people today?* Students could analyse, for example, articles relating to the National Trust's Colonial Countryside project, drawing out diverse interpretations, responses and justifications.

Within various histories of Britain's empire, students might also look for connections between the type of source consulted and the interpretations constructed, together with any silences that result. Local examples of the impact of empire, from architecture and street names, monuments and memorials, to family photographs and stories linked to empire and migration, can change the way that students view their own immediate surroundings. An enquiry question encapsulating such a study might be: *How can historians write the history of the impact of the British Empire on our local area?*

One consequence of empire has been the development of ideas about race since the sixteenth century. We might ask: *What sources have historians used to write the history of race in Britain?* or, exploring silences in history: *How have historians' questions about (or enquiries into) racialisations changed over time?*

The Editors

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Further reading

Sources/source databases:

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The underdevelopment of Africa:

broadening and deepening narratives of Benin for Year 8

Josh Garry describes his effort to refresh his approach to teaching the British transatlantic slave trade. Drawing on reading, lectures and discussions during an Historical Association Teacher Fellowship programme, Garry built a sequence of lessons designed to contextualise the trade while showing African agency and complexity. The result was a sequence that encompassed a very long time span, It focused chiefly on Benin and introduced the concept of 'underdevelopment' as advanced by Walter Rodney. Garry unpacks the curricular reasoning process that took him on the path towards new vibrancy, dialogue and engagement for staff and pupils alike.

Josh Garry
Josh Garry is deputy head of history at Platanos College (11–16 comprehensive), south-west London.

Introduction

I recall a metaphor used by Jamie Byrom at the Schools History Project annual conference in 2018. He spoke of a curriculum being like a sword that is constantly hammered and refashioned in the fire to make sharp. I look at the development of a history teacher in the same way. It is a vocation where one is constantly learning and developing a craft. Although I have seven years' experience, I consider myself still near the start of my journey, trying constantly to refine rigorous sequences of lessons that allow my students to fall in love with the subject that I fell in love with.

When I completed my training in 2016, I came across a video of a conference held by History Matters.[1] History Matters is a group of concerned Black historians and teachers led by Professor Hakim Adi. The conference aimed to address the reasons for the under-representation of ethnic minorities studying history beyond GCSE and, in particular, the low numbers from African and Caribbean heritage studying history at university and choosing to teach history in schools.

When watching the video, I was taken aback by three conclusions of the History Matters conference. In England:

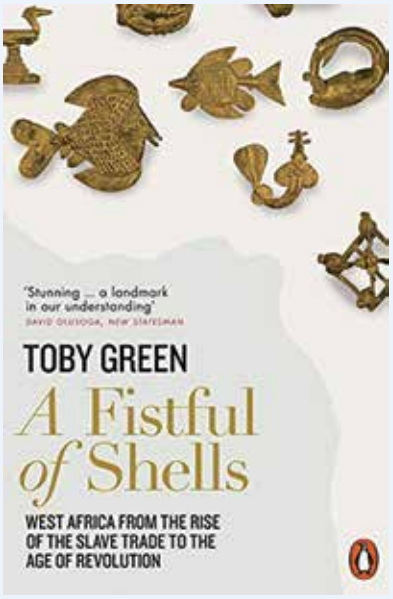
- Only three Black students were admitted to train as history teachers in 2016.
- History is the third most unpopular subject among Black undergraduates.
- In 2013, just 1,340 Black undergraduates were studying history – less than two per cent of the total.

I could not believe it. History had been my favourite subject at school, so this was a difficult pill to swallow. How could others not find it as fascinating as I had?

Looking at various types of research in order to establish how other Black students were experiencing school history, it seemed that a possible reason for the low take-up of history among Black students could be the content of typical history curricula. In 2007, Traille's research drew attention to the serious consequences of Black students' first or only encounter with Black history being the slave trade. Traille's research showed that the experience was traumatic for Black students, even fostering a sense of inferiority and shame.[2] Twelve years' later, Priggs, a history teacher who had overhauled her history department's curriculum to introduce African history from long before the transatlantic slave trade, was citing Traille's work as she reflected on the varied experiences of her students of diverse ethnicity.[3]

Of course, the reasons for the relative unpopularity of history within certain demographics are likely to be complex. But research that we do have, such as Traille's, would suggest that pupils seeing themselves in the past, and seeing their rich heritages (as opposed to disproportionate emphasis on the single and traumatic lens of slavery), is likely to be one of them. There are now

Figure 1: An extract from Toby Green's *A Fistful of Shells* in which the author explains his approach of focusing on west African history in its own right



> When mainstream Western media turns to Africa, it far too often fixates on war and conflict, on famine or Africa's 'amazing wildlife', instead of its creative, resourceful and brilliant people. Through this approach, the inequities produced by the slave trade are addressed, but there is also a move beyond a reductive focus on slavery alone. African history must not be reduced to that of slavery; and yet slavery must not be avoided or ignored. Indeed, slavery, of course, affected cultural change, in Europe every bit as much as in Africa.
>
> Green, T. (2019) *A Fistful of Shells: West Africa from the rise of the Slave Trade to the age of revolution*, London: Penguin, Page 11

many more Black history teachers in England than there were in 2016, but, as a disciple of the profession, I want to work with other teachers and historians to keep bringing about change. I want to increase the number of students of African-Caribbean and Asian backgrounds who want to study history beyond A-level and the number of history teachers emerging from these backgrounds.

In this article, I will tell the story of how I went on to try to play my part in addressing some of these issues. I chose to design an enquiry that *both* opened up wider swathes of African history than are normally taught *and* placed the transatlantic slave trade in historiographical contexts that have largely been neglected in schools. First, I will give some context about my school setting. Then, I will describe the crucial CPD experience with the Historical Association that gave me the knowledge and inspiration to plan this new enquiry for my Year 8 class. I will describe the kinds of scholarship, discussions and other influences that led to a new sequence of lessons built around a single overarching question on the kingdom of Benin and the British transatlantic slave trade. Finally, I will offer tentative comments on our successes and then indicate what my history department now feels that it could have improved.

My school context

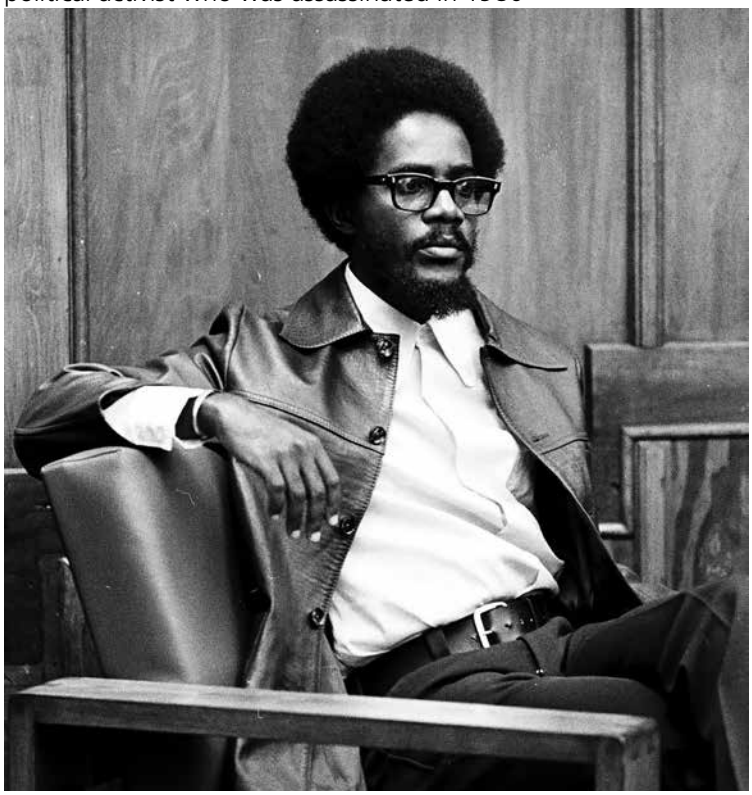
The school within which I planned and taught the enquiry is a comprehensive, mixed-gender secondary in south-west London. The largest demographic within this school is Afro-Caribbean. 60% of students, twice the national average, have special educational needs. These two factors are always at the forefront of our history department's minds when we plan our lesson sequences. We expect our students to cover topics suggested in the National Curriculum but within that curriculum our scheme of work must speak to our cohort. Priggs recently offered two reasons why the inclusion of Black history in a school curriculum is important: first, because the past itself is diverse (it includes billions of Black people) and so to narrow history in a way that excludes them is simply to teach poor history, whoever is being taught.[4] She stresses, moreover, that if Black history were only important for Black students, then white students would not get taught it! This would mean white students would only study history in which they saw their own ethnicities. That would be just as disastrous: all pupils need to study diverse pasts, including the pasts of those with whom they may *not* feel any connection related to ethnicity. Second, all pupils, whatever their ethnic heritages, need to see *themselves* in the past. It is for both these reasons that we take care to integrate Black history, along with wider diverse experiences, into our curricula.

Connections start to form: the HA fellowship programme

In 2019, I secured a place as Teacher Fellow on an Historical Association Teacher Fellowship Programme designed to help history teachers improve the teaching of slavery and its legacies in the UK.[5] The programme was partly designed by Justice2History – an educational consultancy supporting history teaching that promotes social justice and equality.[6] The other major contribution was that of two historians, Katie Donington and Nick Draper, from the Centre for the Study of the Legacies of British Slave Ownership based at University College London.

The programme began with a residential in which history teachers met with historians. The programme lasted for eight weeks and during this time, fellow history teachers met and were immersed in scholarship on far-reaching issues about the British transatlantic slave trade (hereafter, BTAST). A three-day face-to-face residential was followed by support supplied through an online platform. This gave us space and opportunity to engage with and debate the readings and to design new enquiries.[7]

Figure 2: Walter Rodney, the prominent Guyanese historian and political activist who was assassinated in 1980



As a result of the Fellowship experience, I set about planning a new enquiry for a Year 8 class. I chose Year 8 because it dovetailed neatly with two other topics that we taught in the same year, the industrial revolution and the British Empire. Britain's empire was built on sugar, tobacco and coffee plantations worked on by enslaved African labourers and their descendants. As Scanlon has argued, this legacy helped to develop modern capitalism.[8] Thus the BTAST, the industrial revolution and the British Empire were all connected. It allowed me to show Year 8 that history is not a series of individual events, but a messy web of developments, with each topic flowing into the others. The narratives ebb and flow in the way we tell them, but always, in the background, they are flowing into each other.

Of all the influences on my planning, the HA Fellowship experience was biggest. I found the whole process extremely helpful. Other remarkable practitioners brought inspiring ideas to our weekly discussions about the readings. The readings and discussions provided me with substantive knowledge which allowed me to rethink my approach to the BTAST. This allowed me to reflect on my approach to serving the students. It also helped me become more comfortable in using sources and creating enquiries that are not necessarily found in textbooks. Before this experience, I struggled to plan enquiries that were not in textbooks. Through reading scholarship, studying sources and discussing with historians and history teachers, I was eventually able to develop my own enquiry.

Figure 1 is a quotation from Green's *A Fistful of Shells*.[9] It captures a key influence on the direction that I began to adopt for my enquiry. Other history teachers have used Green's work and it was Paula Worth, in particular, that helped me find a way to use Green's work. In her fascinating blog on the teaching of Mali, Worth argued for tackling historical myopia by shining light on cultures and empires way beyond the Williams, Edwards and Richards of England. She also picks up on the themes I mentioned above, concerning the dangers of limiting African history to slavery:

> *Historians need to move beyond externally generated and Eurocentric perspectives that treat sub-Saharan Africans in terms of their skin colour, their prominence in modern slavery, and the legacy of guilt that slavery and discrimination have left in the modern world.*[10]

As I shaped my enquiry, I trod a similar path of reasoning. I did not want to teach our students the BTAST without giving them an insight into earlier, remarkable aspects of African history. But for me, this was of personal significance, too. As a person of African heritage, my experience matched that of the students interviewed by Traille: I remember how traumatic it had been to learn about the BTAST. It was not that my teachers were wrong to teach about the BTAST; it was rather that I had not been introduced to other figures in history that I could identify with. Failing to teach any African history other than colonised Africa and the BTAST, can also perpetuate the myth that Africa is a continent that has always been riddled with poverty, famine and war. It becomes a continent that is instantly contrasted with 'development'.

Indeed, my own educational experience had left me with the impression that Africa was always underdeveloped. Commercials from the early 1990s presented an impoverished view of African children that left me without anything I wanted to claim from African history. I wanted to address that. I wanted my students to explore the complexities within history but also have something that they could be proud of. I also wanted to challenge all my students' misconceptions of African history and Africans. But how could I include the BTAST in that process?

During the HA Fellowship residential, Toby Green gave a talk on the history of Africa. He made the point that he had just one hour to teach us the history of Africa, whereas we, his audience, had probably had between two and four decades of teaching on the history of western Europe. As I began to think about how to frame my enquiry, I felt that I, too, had been burdened with Toby's yoke. Not only would my students need to catch up on a vast amount of substantive knowledge about Africa, they also needed to see how slavery changed Europe, particularly Britain, just as much as it changed Africa. And then there was the connection between slavery and later colonialism. Some historians have viewed these as two distinct episodes but they were very much connected. Colonialism was the younger sibling of enslavement.

I wanted my students to see how this all played out. It was a huge challenge. An enquiry question was beginning to take shape in my mind, but I still was not clear about how to frame it, nor which second-order concept I would use to drive it.

Closing in on the enquiry question: Walter Rodney lights the way

It was time to give my ideas some curricular shape. As Toby Green had inspired me so much during the HA Fellowship residential, I started with his book.[11] Green's book is like a

Figure 3: An extract from Walter Rodney's book summarising his view on 'underdevelopment'

> All of the countries named as 'underdeveloped' in the world are exploited by others; and the underdevelopment with which the world is now preoccupied is a product of capitalist, imperialist, and colonialist exploitation. African and Asian societies were developing independently until they were taken over directly or indirectly by the capitalist powers.
>
> Rodney, W. (1972) *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, London: Verso, Page 12.

map of my journey to creating the enquiry. I loved his book. It provided me with the clearest lens that I wanted to use in my approach. I now knew that I wanted to start with African civilisations. I did not know, however, how to progress my idea beyond this point. Green examines several west African civilisations. There is merit to this approach, but I really wanted to home in on the relationship between Africa and Europe. I needed direction. I wanted to teach substantive knowledge concerning the BTAST *and* I wanted to examine African civilisations before the BTAST, but the problem I needed to figure out was how? What was the right angle?

A fellow teacher on the fellowship, and a friend of mine, Thabo Stuck, suggested I base my enquiry on Walter Rodney's seminal book, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. Thabo was using Rodney's work with his post-16 students and this meant that we could collaborate. This was brilliant! Thabo was the brains behind this idea and I must give much credit to him. As I began to engage with Rodney's work, I realised that through examining the concept of 'underdevelopment', I could allow my students to see pre-colonial African development *and* explore the European impact. Rodney was a prominent Guyanese historian and political activist (see Figure 2). His 1972 work, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa,* presented a controversial argument where a portion of the underdevelopment of Africa is attributed to the European superpowers (see Figure 3).[12]

It was an interesting argument. As I read, I gathered that Rodney saw the BTAST as child of capitalism. Colonialism was the BTAST's younger sibling. For Rodney, the BTAST was also the basic factor in the underdevelopment of Africa. Here was a possible 'turning point' that my Year 8's could think about through a problem of change and continuity. I could begin to picture Rodney's argument resonating in my classroom. It was controversial. Its radical angle would feel enlightening and alternative. This would lead to debate. Rodney's argument offered nuance, too. Rodney argued that colonialism brought development to Africa through the introduction of infrastructure. Here was a problem for my students to wrestle with. Rodney's work also appealed because it provided me with a logical structure with which to sequence my lessons.

Moreover, if I were to use the book title itself in my enquiry question, it would have a triple benefit. First, it allowed me to make direct use of historical scholarship in the classroom. Second, it allowed me to emphasise the diversity of historians and in this case a Black historian which would challenge stereotypical assumptions of historians, just as Nzeribe Nascimento has argued in this journal.[13] Third, it sharpened a conceptual focus on change and continuity. The process of actually wording the enquiry question took longer (see below), but I was at least clear now that I could paint a picture of the remarkable achievements of a pre-colonial African kingdom while introducing my students to an argument for the BTAST being a turning point in a process of change.

Before I went through the process of refining the enquiry question, I had one further foundational matter to work on: some fundamental principles for working on the BTAST as set out by the leaders on the HA Teacher Fellowship. My choices here were similar to those of Davies, a fellow participant on the same programme.[14]

Working principles for teaching the BTAST

The HA Teacher Fellowship programme provided participants with fourteen core curricular principles for teaching the BTAST. From these I selected four. I decided that I wanted to focus on:

- Africa and Africans
- race
- legacies
- historiography

My rationale for the choice of these four was as follows.

Africa and Africans

Chinua Achebe, probably Africa's best-known novelist and a founding father of African fiction, wrote, 'Until the lions have their own historians, the history of the hunt will always glorify the hunter.' Much of what we currently know about African history has come from the voices of Europeans, such as the written sources of Portuguese and Dutch explorers, rather than Africans themselves. The European sources give us helpful insights into the Kingdom of Benin, such as the observations of the Dutch explorer Dierick Ruyters, who travelled to Benin in 1673 and remarked, 'the houses in this town stand in good order'.[15] But, for me, it was equally important to give agency to the people of Benin by letting them tell their own story. I did this by also using sources such as the Benin bronzes (see Figure 4), oral history accounts and written sources from Olaudah Equiano who claimed to have been originally from the Kingdom of Benin (see Figure 5). There is some debate around Equiano's testimony, but his

Figure 4: One of the Benin bronzes



Legacies

I wanted to help my students better understand the contribution of the enslaved Africans and the BTAST to the development of modern Britain. I accept that the scale of the contribution is open to debate, and a valued critique of this would be that neither Spain, Portugal or France went through an industrial revolution at the same time as Britain, but all had slave economies. However, as Joseph E. Inikori argues, the Atlantic slave trade contributed to many industries such as the shipping industry, the insurance industry and the railway industry. The slave trade helped to propel hitherto insignificant industrial players, such as George Hibbert and the Hibbert family, into positions of immense wealth and power.[16]

Historioraphy

Walter Rodney's book provided an historical interpretation from an African historian. I wanted to ensure that my own work built on work carried out by African and Caribbean historians.

The kingdom of Benin

A further decision that I made before refining my enquiry question was to focus on the kingdom of Benin. Benin was located in west Africa in what is today Nigeria. The first dynasty to rule Benin was the Ogiso which ruled from c.900 to c.1170. The Ogiso dynasty was replaced by the dynasty of obas who ruled from 1200 to 1897. In 1897, Benin officially became a part of the British Empire and was later amalgamated into what is today Nigeria, on 1 January 1914.

work is revealing and corroborates the written European sources on Benin. By looking at the Kingdom of Benin through several such sources I could allow the lion to tell his story of the hunt.

Race

In my short teaching career, I have found that students often believe that racism as we know it today has always been present in history and, in particular, has always characterised relations between Europe and Africa. The transatlantic slave trade provides students with the lens to recognise the birth of racism and to discern it as a functional tool that supported the trade. Through studying the BTAST, students can see how arguments to justify slavery emerged which became crystallised into what we know as racism. When I taught the BTAST in the past I would often begin with the triangular trade, then teach the plantations in the Americas and then abolition. Yet this small part of the story prevented them from understanding slavery's links to colonialism, to the industrial revolution and to modern Britain.

Knowledge about the kingdom of Benin furnishes pupils with a rich and complex perspective on the BTAST. The first recorded contact with Europeans emerged in 1486 with the Portuguese. On 12 August 1553, they first came into contact with the English. Major areas of achievement within Benin included the bronze and brass casting which began in the late thirteenth century, the expansion of the empire and the creation of the inner walls of Benin in 1440. The inner walls of Benin extended for 9,900 miles around the Kingdom of Benin. They appear in the 1974 *Guinness Book of Records* as the world's second largest man-made structure after the Great Wall of China. The Benin bronzes in Figure 5 show the sophistication of this bronze casting.

At the same time, one could argue that Benin was underdeveloped in three ways: a practice of human sacrifices, a dependence on European firearm technology, and the absence of navigational technology for exploring the globe. These points allowed me to present nuance to my students. The complexity of Benin can be found, further, in the fact

Figure 5: An oral recollection of the arrival of the Portuguese in Benin, taken down in the 1890s, showing the developing relationship between Benin and the white traders

> This is how the white men came to [E]do. King Esige ... sent messengers with some tusks as presents to the country by the big water [the Benin River] where the white men used to come to trade, and they told the messengers to go and salute any white man they found there and beg them to come; which they did, and ever since then white men have come to Benin. The white men stayed long, many many years they came to trade, and if a man comes to trade he must sit down and sell his things softly softly; they used to buy ivory, redwood, oil, gum, and slaves; then there was a different white man who used to come, but he only bought slaves. ...These white men ... built houses, big houses with big doors in which they kept their goods and slaves.
>
> quoted in: Green, T. (2019) *A Fistful of Shells: West Africa from the rise of the Slave Trade to the age of revolution*, London: Penguin, Page 160

that the obas originally barred the BTAST in the 1500s and refused to engage in the process, yet later re-entered the slave trade with the Dutch in the 1700s. A question arising from this is: why did this happen? This question was later to grip my students. Here, the role of the BTAST was key. Benin was eventually forced to re-engage because the demand for their textiles fell while the market for enslaved Africans grew. It was therefore almost impossible for the kingdom to resist because several other kingdoms surrounding Benin were involved in the BTAST. I knew that this would also allow my students to probe the relationship between the obas and the Europeans. Who had the power? Why did this change? I wanted my students to understand that Africans had agency during this period and that in order to survive they had to re-engage in the trade so that the economy could grow. This all happened in the context of political instability within the kingdom which coincided with the political and economic changes that occurred in Europe. These changes are reflected in the trade relations that Benin managed. The kingdom of Benin traded with the Portuguese, English, French, Dutch and then the English again as the English came back into ascendancy.[17]

I did consider including a focus on other kingdoms within Africa such as the kingdoms of Kongo and Ghana and my first effort at an enquiry did attempt to do so. These kingdoms would have added dimensions to the story of the BTAST that are absent in Benin. The kingdom of Benin, however, provides a unique insight into the BTAST that would allow me to challenge student misconceptions, such as the pervasive assumption that Africans sold Africans. The Obas (kings) of Benin barred the sale of male slaves into the Atlantic trade, focusing primarily on textiles in 1517. It was external factors such as the growth of the trade in other regions of west Africa that later forced Benin to engage in the Atlantic trade again. This would later directly link to the sacking of the palace of Benin and the looting of the bronze plaques in 1897. Through re-engaging in the slave trade, the Benin military had gradually weakened, making it easier for Britain to conquer. Also, once the slave trade was abolished in 1833, Britain needed to replace the profit gained from the enslavement of Africans with another source. The mineral resources of Benin such as palm oil, as well as her labour, were used to replace the profits from slavery. All this would have been unimaginable in the fifteenth century, when the military of the Kingdom of Benin was formidable in battle and competent in defending its territory.

A focus on Benin also allowed me to show and celebrate the remarkable achievements of the kingdom by introducing my students to religion and art. In focusing on the Kingdom of Benin instead of several other African kingdoms, I hoped to remove the notion of a strange, remote and unfamiliar place and to replace it with one that would transform my pupils' ideas of the past from something patchy and inert into something coherent and richly textured.

After reading Green and Rodney, I needed works that gave me a deeper focus.[18] I then came across two works that did exactly that, and now gave my enquiry legs. Phillips's *Loot* focuses on the history of Britain and the Benin bronzes. Siollun's *What Britain Did to Nigeria* developed the argument that 'Benin's decline corresponded with its contact with Europeans and primarily with its centuries-long engagement in the slave trade'.[19] This was my 'Eureka' moment. Through Siollun's work, I was able to establish that the Kingdom of Benin had the longest contact with Europeans in the west African region.[20] Siollun also discussed the vast Benin wall. These texts would all play a critical role in enabling me to build my enquiry's core puzzle around change and continuity. Such works later enabled me to create resources such as a timeline for Lesson 2 (see Figure 8) and also to bring life, through rich sources, to the obas of Benin.

In summary, after toying with the idea of working on several African kingdoms, I concluded that an exclusive focus on

Figure 6: Student work 1

> The BTAST underdeveloped the Kingdom of Benin in many ways one of which is the fact that many young men and women capable of working and further improving their countries were taken to work as slaves in the Caribbean. This made it incredibly hard for Benin to develop as they did not have any new capable workers for a long time. Furthermore, Benin started to engage in warfare; therefore leading to an underdevelopment yet again as they did not have many young men and women at their home countries and they were instead fighting in the wars.

the Kingdom of Benin offered four important things. First, a narrative that challenges the misconception that all African kingdoms engaged in the slave trade, all the time. Second, it yielded plenty of historiographical material and debate. Third, it would present my students with a rich, powerful and resourceful kingdom which undoubtedly felt the impact of the BTAST change its destiny. This helped keep a strong focus on legacies, a key principle that I took away from the HA Fellowship programme. Finally, it allowed me to give my students the benefit of a rich depth study, rather than just a superficial or scattergun approach. As Hill has demonstrated, taking time to do world-building allows students to grasp the past more fully and to find its textures and complexity.[21]

Getting the enquiry question right

I now needed to craft all this into an enquiry question which would really knit together my lesson sequence and give pupils a clear analytic focus for their final piece of work. Like Davies, I had several attempts:[22]

Attempt 1: Did the transatlantic slave trade underdevelop west Africa?

This was my first attempt at an enquiry question. But I soon began to question it. Having decided that I wanted pupils to examine the process and extent of change and continuity, I began to realise that this question would not give adequate prominence to that pattern of change. This question narrowed it down to a simple consequences question. Of course, my focus inevitably overlapped with a focus on consequences, but I wanted pupils to be examining the process of change itself, not just characterising consequences.[23] A second problem with this question was that it could have led the students to a weak answer of 'yes' or 'no'. This would have prevented students from fully engaging with the question properly. Finally, west Africa as a region had many different kingdoms. By framing the enquiry question in this way, I also ran the risk of perpetuating the idea to my students that Africa is a country. It was back to the drawing board.

Attempt 2: How far did the transatlantic slave trade underdevelop the kingdom of Benin 1750–1897?

This new wording gave more precision to my question by focusing on Benin. The 'how far' would also prompt pupils to examine states of affairs and effects of the BTAST at different stages, thus bringing out the change/continuity dimension. It would also enable my students to encounter a developed kingdom in Benin. Such a question would mean providing students with knowledge for assessing areas such as trade, art, military, religion, administration and power. This new question would allow my students to examine the nature of change, while also presenting them with a genuine debate as to whether there was 'development' in some ways through the creation of hospitals, railways and schools. This would force my students to think hard before they readily dismissed the notion of development, but also consider *who* would have benefited from these changes. This question began in 1750, however, and I needed to push the timeline a little bit further. It was time for Attempt 3.

Attempt 3: How far did the transatlantic slave trade underdevelop the kingdom of Benin 1500–1897?

During the 1750s, the Kingdom of Benin had re-engaged with the BTAST but this did not fully capture the decline of the kingdom for me. I needed to start in 1500 because it would allow me to draw my students into what many historians consider to be the golden age of Benin under Oba Esigie. During this period, historian Barnaby Phillips has argued that the Kingdom of Benin was at its peak in terms of military power and culture.[24]

In addition, the earlier period is important in allowing the students to see where the power relations lay between the obas and European powers. During this time the obas repeatedly stopped trading with the European superpowers when that trade did not favour the kingdom. The European superpowers were forced to accept this.[25] Also, in 1553, Benin first came into contact with the English and I decided that I wanted this to be central to the enquiry.

Ending the period in 1897 was also crucial. This was the date when the Benin kingdom no longer had the power to resist the power of the British. In 1897 Admiral Harry Rawson took the city of Benin, forced the Oba to flee and looted the palace. This could not have occurred in the sixteenth century. The question for my students is how important the BTAST was *in allowing this to happen*. So I settled on the period of 1500–1897. It allowed students to follow the rise and fall of the kingdom *and* to ask how far the BTAST allowed this to happen.

Figure 7: Student work 2

I believe that the British transatlantic slave trade underdeveloped the Kingdom of Benin to a large extent. This is because Europeans made the West African economy plummet while their own economy skyrocketed. This is shown in the quote 'Europeans continued to steal African minerals such as gold, diamonds and rubber from Africa. These were used to improve European society. The interest of Africans was never a concern of the Europeans.' This shows that the British transatlantic slave trade did underdevelop West Africa as it resulted in West Africans to live poverty while the Europeans prospered. Therefore, it is shown that the British transatlantic slave trade underdeveloped West Africa to a large extent.

Another reason why the British transatlantic slave trade underdeveloped West Africa to a large extent is that Africans were brutally laboured even to death. This resulted in a lower life expectancy for Africans which ruined their descendants in the future. Even though they had hospitals, Africans in poverty, due to the slave trade, could not afford to be treated in those hospitals. This is shown in the quote 'Most Africans could not afford to use the hospitals and so often had to attend hospitals with poor equipment and hygiene.' Therefore, it is shown that the British transatlantic slave trade underdeveloped West Africa to a large extent.

On the other hand, it could be argued that the British transatlantic slave trade did not underdevelop West Africa. This is because the Europeans introduced laws. This is shown in the quote 'Europeans introduced the rule of law and democracy.' Even though Europeans did introduce the rule of law, this did come at the expense of Africans at times. For example, in South Africa it became illegal for Africans to go to certain areas. This shows that the British transatlantic slave trade did underdevelop West Africa because the laws did not benefit as much as cause problems for the Africans. Therefore, it is shown that the British transatlantic slave trade underdeveloped West Africa to a large extent.

In conclusion, I believe that the British transatlantic slave trade did underdevelop West Africa. Based on all the evidence I believe this because there were more detriments than benefits which West Africa underdeveloped. Furthermore, due to this, it may have contributed to the development of racist ideology as due to the fact that Africans were living in poverty it made Europeans think that Africans were inferior to them.

Figure 8: Some cards which students placed in chronological order to create an overview of the whole period studied



1200
The Kingdom of Benin begins with the first Oba (king) Eweka I



1280
Benin begins to develop its bronzes. These were as important as portraits of monarchs in Europe.



1440
Ewuare the Great expands Benin's empire and builds inner city walls and a moat.



1504
Oba Esigie ascends to the throne. This is known as the golden age of culture and military power in Benin.



1516
Oba Esigie engages in the slave trade with the Portuguese.



1530
The Oba of Benin bans the slave trade in the kingdom.



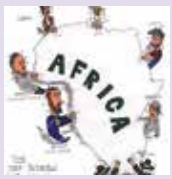
1553
An English fleet of ships under Thomas Wyndham sails from Portsmouth (England) to Benin.



1730
Benin returns to the slave trade with the Dutch.



1897
Kingdom of Benin is sacked (attacked and looted). The kingdom collapses. The Oba is forced to leave the kingdom.



1897
The British seize Benin during the 'scramble for Africa'. Benin eventually becomes part of Nigeria in 1914.

This was the wording of the enquiry that I settled on. The full plan of the lesson sequence is set out in Figure 9.

Evaluating the enquiry

Successes

The focus on Benin added vibrancy to our curriculum. It was no longer 'pale and stale' as Worth puts it.[26] Both the students and my colleagues very much enjoyed the content. The lessons fostered much dialogue between the pupils and our staff. The Benin enquiry has left our department critically thinking about how we can foster such levels of engagement throughout our curriculum.

The second lesson, which focused on the chronological development of Benin (see Figure 8), worked particularly well because our students could focus on specific events and could tackle specific questions such as *why* Benin re-engaged with the slave trade in the 1700s, *who* had the power in the relationship between the Benin and British in the sixteenth century, and *how* Britain and the European superpowers benefited from the BTAST.

The structure of the enquiry and the wording of the enquiry question also had the unexpected benefit of enabling students to examine a further dimension of change in addition to its process. They were able to comment on the *speed* of change. In 1840 the interior of Africa was still very much unexplored by the Europeans, but by 1884 most of the continent had been divided up by the European superpowers at the Berlin Conference in 1884.

What helped the successes?

Having completed the mental wrestling with the substance and focus of the enquiry that I have described above, I needed to ensure that my department was equipped to teach the enquiry and to grasp the significance of the smaller questions within it. I directed them towards Toby Green's podcast for support.[27] I shared my idea with them during department meetings and took feedback, especially around how we might bring some of the academic ideas into the classroom. I worked with my head of department to refine my ideas to ensure that they were pitched appropriately. I regularly discussed the lessons with the different members within my department and tried to make the objective for each lesson clear. Within the resources, I included as much information as possible to fill gaps in knowledge. I also sought to help colleagues understand and explore Rodney's idea of underdevelopment so that they could address students' misconceptions and answer questions. Finally, I provided colleagues with as many images and sources as possible.

Two areas of prior learning also helped to strengthen students' readiness to tackle the enquiry. First, we had studied the British Empire before the BTAST; most of my students therefore understood the concept of colonialism. Nonetheless, I had to be careful to avoid the danger that my students would end up confusing colonialism and slavery. They needed to understand that the slave trade allowed colonialism to occur in west Africa partly due to the loss of male soldiers who had hitherto provided protection. Developments in vaccinations, mosquito nets, maps and the Maxim gun were also important in the underdevelopment of Africa because these allowed the British superpowers to penetrate the interior of west Africa in a way that they could not have done in the sixteenth century.

Second, our students had recently completed an enquiry on the British Empire that focused on similarity and difference within peoples. This meant that students were ready to focus on both similarities and differences in the experiences that the people of Benin faced in relation to the BTAST.

Areas for development

There are some ways in which I now think I could have improved the enquiry. I should have completed the chronological overview lesson before examining the concepts of development and underdevelopment. Exposing students to

Figure 9: The enquiry plan

The enquiry plan:
How far did the transatlantic slave trade underdevelop the kingdom of Benin 1500-1897?

Lesson 1
The difference between development and underdevelopment

Summary

The lesson introduces the terms '**development**' and '**underdevelopment**'. For Walter Rodney, 'development' revolves around an individual's or a country's ability to live a more satisfactory life (in the sense of freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material well-being) through the exploitation of the natural resources. Rodney's key argument is that African and Asian societies were developing independently until they were taken over directly or indirectly by capitalist powers in colonial exploitation. 'Underdevelopment' was used to define the relationship of a 'developed' country to an exploited country.

Students are provided with a range of sources from Benin and (from the later period) Nigeria. Through these sources the students identify features of development and underdevelopment as defined by Rodney.

Lesson objective

To explain the concepts of development and underdevelopment, as defined by Rodney, using specific examples from Benin and Nigeria.

Main lesson activities

Teacher explains terms 'development' and 'underdevelopment'.
Students study a range of sources taken from Africa at different times from the medieval kingdoms until now. Students decide whether these sources are examples of 'development' or 'underdevelopment' and state why.

At the end of the lesson, the students identify differences between two sources, infer what happened to the power of Benin and make an initial judgment on the reasons for this happening.

Students elaborate their own definitions of development and underdevelopment.

Examples of resources

- brass cast of the Oba of Benin with adjutants, sixteenth century.
- brass manillas for trade
- extract capturing the military power of the Benin kingdom
- manilla currency
- cowrie shells
- story of Dom Jorge, Bini ambassador to Portugal.
- various songs

All of these sources can be found in Toby Green's *A Fistful of Shells.*

Lesson 2
The development of the Benin kingdom before the Europeans

Summary

The sources provide an excellent opportunity to analyse African history without the bias of a European gaze. The Kingdom of Benin presents a good example as the rise and fall of the Kingdom of Benin are well documented.

Lesson objective

To characterise the development of Benin in the period 1500–1897.

Main lesson activities

Students describe key differences between a map of precolonial and modern west Africa.

Students watch video from Gus Casely Hayford who describes the west African kingdom of Benin: www.youtube.com/watch?v=QW_kaUuUg8Y

Students put the important events in chronological order on a timeline.

Students examine various sources from Benin, guided by questions such as: What does this reveal to us about the power of the military in the Benin kingdom? What does this source tell us about the nature of the obas?

Students use the sources to create evidence of the Kingdom of Benin's development.

Examples of resources

- brass head with a beaded crown and plume, Ife, Nigeria
- brass cast of the Oba of Benin with adjutants
- Pieter De Maree's 1600 description of Oba's court
- portrait of a Portuguese trader
- manilla currency, Bende, Niger Delta region
- ifa divination tray, early seventeenth century, Aja-Fon region
- Oyo proverb to show military strength

Figure 9: The enquiry plan (continued)

Lesson 3
How Africa contributed to Europe's development through trade

Summary
Students now have the opportunity to look at several other areas of west African history prior to the slave trade. Students will use sources to find evidence for west African religion, art, economy and relationships with the West. These sources allow students to think about how the transatlantic slave trade affected west Africa.

This lesson establishes how the relationship between Africa and Europe began to alter in the favour of Europeans. It focuses on areas of trade between Portugal, Britain and the Kingdom of Benin. It depicts an initial relationship of equal trading partners, then begins to show inequalities that started to surface within the relationship, especially in relation to gold, for example, or the monopoly on enslaved peoples. African exports included horses, wax, gold and slaves. Imports included textiles and dyes. The different currencies used for trade were cowrie shells, copper arm rings and manilla iron.

This lesson dovetails with the following lesson to illustrate how the slave trade disrupted African history, destroying structures and kingdoms. It established new patterns that were not favourable to the Africans. Students see how trade between Africa and Europe changed. The key question surfacing is: why?

Lesson objective
To explain how and why the trade relationship changed between the Kingdom of Benin and Europe.

Main lesson activities
Information cards enable students to take part in a role play through which they learn about the above developments. Students go to a marketplace in Benin city in role as *Duarte Pacheco Pereira,* an actual Portuguese trader in 1500. Students 'buy' several items for trade using local currencies. Students then 'visit' this location two hundred years later, around 1700, as one of Duarte Pacheco Pereira's great-grandsons. Now students can only buy slaves and gold. The exchange items will be guns, cheap alcohol, and textiles that no longer have value in Europe.

Lesson 4
The European slave trade and the underdevelopment of the kingdom of Benin

Summary
This lesson illustrates the British transatlantic slave trade as the key turning point in the 'development' of African kingdoms. This lesson provides students with an overview of the causes of the slave trade and its consequences for Africa's underdevelopment.

Lesson objective
To explain the consequences of the transatlantic slave trade on the Kingdom of Benin.

Main lesson activities
Students first watch a TED talk video on the slave trade: www.youtube.com/watch?v=3NXC4Q_4JVg

The content of the video can be traumatic for students. It is therefore important to follow this video with a 'think, pair, share' discussion so as to encourage the students to digest and discuss the impact of the slave trade. Do not feel afraid to allow the students to discuss their feelings around this subject in class. If necessary, it is fine to allow this lesson to focus only on the video.

Students then read an extract from Toby Green's *A Fistful of Shells* in order to link back to Benin. Students think about how the transatlantic slave trade would have affected the Kingdom of Benin.

Students then categorise the consequences using terms such as 'race' and 'ideology'. They consider such issues as: loss of manpower, weakening of African military strength in comparison to Europe's industrial revolution, control of the seas. One consequence of the transatlantic slave trade was the birth of racism as we know it.

Lesson 5
How far did Africa benefit from colonial rule?

Summary
During the study of the slave trade and colonialism there has often been an argument put forward that **'developing'** countries benefited from colonial rule through the creation of infrastructure such as roads, hospitals and education. Walter Rodney argues that this is far from the case and that colonialism simply further increased Africa's dependence on Europe and stunted its own development. This lesson examines the creation of such infrastructures and requires students to analyse them with nuance. For example, in Ibadan Nigeria, the European expats had approximately 11 hospital beds for a population of 50 people. In comparison, the indigenous Nigerians had 34 beds for half a million people.

Lesson objective
To make a judgement on the extent to which Nigeria benefited from colonialism.

Main lesson activities
Students hold a class debate by the end of the lesson. To structure the debate, the A-agree, B-build and C-challenge structure can be used. Students are provided with language needed to debate in a meaningful way. This lesson works well when students consider characteristics of a 'developed' nation such as education, transport, religion, politics, healthcare, economy, art and culture.

Figure 9: The enquiry plan (continued)

Lesson 6:
The sacking of the Benin kingdom

Summary
The students read the story of the sacking of the Kingdom of Benin

Lesson objective
To make a judgment on how far the transatlantic slave trade underdeveloped the Kingdom of Benin.

Main lesson activities
Students infer what happened from a photograph of the sacking of Benin in 1897. The story of the sacking of the kingdom is then revealed to the class through reading.

Students then examine a bronze plaque of the Oba of Benin holding the mudfish and the leopard. Students discuss the question: How do these two images capture the underdevelopment of the kingdom of Benin?

Students use the rest of the lesson to plan their extended writing in response to the enquiry question.

Lesson 7:
How far did the translatlantic slave trade underdevelop the kingdom of Benin between 1500 and 1897?

Summary
In this lesson students complete their answers to the enquiry question.

Main lesson activities
Students make a washing line with all their knowledge about the Kingdom of Benin and the evidence that they would like to deploy in their responses to the enquiry question.

Students organise their material and begin their extended answers to the enquiry question.

concrete examples within Benin's history would have made the concepts of development and underdevelopment gain meaning more quickly. The overview lesson would also have allowed an earlier focus on the enquiry question.

Another way in which my department could have enabled students to grasp 'underdevelopment' better would have been consistent reference to examples of it throughout each lesson. Each lesson revisited the enquiry question, but I think this could have been improved by getting the students to fill in a table weighing up the ideas of development and underdevelopment at the end of each lesson. Thus they might slowly have seen the process of change unfolding. Another issue was that some students did not understand what development would have looked like in the fifteenth century. For example, Benin had a system of government, a trading currency and artistic masterpieces. Some students did not quite understand that these were examples of *development.* For example, the Benin bronzes acted in a similar way to portraits in Europe. The idea of the 'Divine Right of Kings' was very similar to the Oba's belief that he was a god.

We will keep developing the enquiry in the light of experience and our discussion of new scholarship. Meanwhile, I hope that our first efforts give some inspiration to others seeking to teach more Black history, and also to inspire more Black students to study the subject after GCSE and to consider teaching it in schools.

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What's the wisdom on…



extended reading?

The purpose of this guide

This short guide provides new history teachers with an overview of the 'story so far' of many years of practice-based professional thinking about a particular aspect of history teaching. It draws on tried and tested approaches arising from teachers with many years of experimenting, researching, practising, writing and debating their classroom experience. It therefore synthesises core messages from key *Teaching History* articles, blogs and other publications. The guide includes a range of practical planning suggestions suitable for any key stage and signposts the basic reading essentials for new professionals.

The power of prose

Why, in a history lesson (or *out* of a history lesson; let's say, for a homework perhaps) might we want pupils to read more than a paragraph, to stay with the text, to actually *read*? We don't mean plucking facts from information boxes, nor ploughing through four comprehension questions. We mean letting prose do its joined-up work (two, three, four, paragraphs…. maybe more?) just to carry pupils along.

Proper reading, reading where the prose propels you along, does a special job in *affecting* us. It builds material in memory and works on our imagination so that we actually want to read on. It is the coherence of prose, its profound internal connections, that affords such rich material to think with. In other words, proper reading works its magic through pleasure. Here's an editorial on this from 2004:

> *At the start of her novel about the French Revolution,* A Place of Greater Safety, *Hilary Mantel tells us that she writes a book for us to 'live inside'. Reading a whole book, we inhabit its world, we feel compelled to stay there, we grieve when it ends. Without visual imagination we could not read most books. What a remarkable conjunction of imaginations every act of reading is – the imaginative effort of the author hits the imaginative construction of the reader, as we conjure a hundred mind-pictures to illustrate the author's text in our own way. Is it this that gives them power over us? … Under their spell, we let books question our values and challenge our intellects in ways we would not suffer from any other source… Why do books make us so submissive to such pounding? Novels, biographies and great works of history all do this. They make us stand in a different place. But we endure it because it is pure pleasure. It is pleasure that is a book's power.*

Proper reading adds value to mere information. It isn't a collection of facts. It is facts glued with artistry. We rarely read just for 'information'. We read for narrative, or for argument, or sometimes for mood, tone or texture.

Proper reading does special jobs in the history curriculum and history classroom. These are jobs peculiar to the practice of history. If we survey the wide-ranging work of history teachers who have enabled pupils to read at length, these teachers are not doing it chiefly in virtuous service of 'whole-school literacy'. They are not doing it because the deputy head has announced a policy on academic reading or 'disciplinary literacy across the curriculum'. It isn't an add-on to serve an extrinsic end. It doesn't need a box on the scheme of work called 'literacy'.

No. Immersion in a text has distinctive curricular roles to play in history education. It is just a normal part of good history teaching. This is partly because *the accounts themselves*, and their status as *accounts*, are often the object of study, and partly because doing history involves creating new accounts. Prose isn't everything in history education; non-literary sources abound and matter. Other ways of communicating matter. But prose won't go away and the riches it affords are special.

So what special jobs does extended reading do in history education? These jobs are shaped by type of text and by the status of that text within whatever is being studied. Let's run through some categories of text that history teachers use.

Extended reading of secondary accounts

Histories written for pupils

Perhaps the most basic and obvious example is that of modern narratives and descriptions written especially for pupils about the past. These might be

textbooks (but ones with the occasional page of continuous narrative, not 'busy' with isolated facts or scattered source boxes), they might be booklets or handouts crafted by teachers or they might be history magazines written for school students, either hard copy or web-based. Some historians have written short books especially for children, such as David Olusoga's *Black and British*.[1] E.H. Gombrich's *A Little History of the World*, while now dated, is remarkable for the way it nails a conversational but unpatronising voice that carries pupils along, even across panoramic world dramas. Numerous short history books have been written for children or 'young adults' such as the 1960s *Then and There* series which once filled department cupboards, or more recent short history booklets on many parts of the globe.[2]

Historical scholarship

More and more history teachers have experimented with what was once rare and often judged impossible – using extended extracts of real historical scholarship in the classroom. Naturally these extracts have to be carefully chosen, and sometimes adapted slightly, but a surprising amount of real historical scholarship exists which, with careful scaffolding, pupils can be helped to read. Foster (***TH 142***) produced a taxonomy of curricular reasons why history teachers choose to give pupils direct access to sections of historical scholarship, ranging from studying it as an interpretation, through to specific disciplinary purposes such as illustrating a type of argument at work or just just using it for superb story-telling or evocative description.

Children's historical fiction

Many adults will tell you their first love of history was kindled through reading historical fiction. The range within this genre is vast. We can find gripping, well-written fiction on just about any period or setting in the past and there is nothing like it for cultivating sense of period. Jill Paton Walsh captured the value of historical fiction like this:

> *Whereas a history textbook deals, usually, in what happened to groups of people in the past – what happened to the English peasantry after the Black Death, …. The novelist gets personal. He or she is more likely to tell you what happened to one particular peasant as he suddenly found himself free to sell his labour to the lord of the manor, … The writer may invent characters, conservations, circumstances, but if the book is a good one, the invention will all be with the grain of the known historical evidence, and will illuminate.*[3]

If ever a text can be 'lived' inside, it's in a work of fiction that evokes a time and a place in rich detail. Using historical fiction in history is now so popular that the Historical Association has put together an historical fiction list. In it, you will find something for all ages on any period.[4] There is also a long tradition of history teachers writing about how they use children's historical fiction in lessons. For example, see Brooke and Martin in ***TH 111*** or resources in *Primary History*.[5]

Other text-based interpretations of the past

All the above count as 'interpretations' in England's National Curriculum sense of the term, meaning a *subsequent* account that attempts to reconstruct the past. (See 'What's the Wisdom On interpretations of the past' in ***TH 177***). Many other categories of interpretation exist, and certainly not all are text-based (think films, museums, murals) but those that are text-based can be very stimulating reads, introducing pupils to all manner of arguments, hidden and overt, and provoking critical reflection on how accounts get constructed.

Michael Riley once had pupils reading the advertising material on sugar, by the company Tate and Lyle. Lively and readable, as advertising blurb often is, pupils were soon sucked in, and their reactions were palpable as they began to notice that the entire account of the history of sugar had been produced without a mention of slavery.

We might go to speeches by politicians who plunder the past to make their point, to textbooks in certain jurisdictions designed to foster a state narrative, to folk histories and community stories which have changed as a community's natural conversations sift and winnow what matters to them about their pasts. Find them in libraries, on walls, in websites, in the long lyrics of folksongs and ballads. These can all be read as fascinating examples of how voices and stories gradually surface or are surreptitiously silenced.

Extended reading of primary sources

Fiction from the period under study

This needs to be distinguished from historical fiction, above. Novels written during the period under study are primary sources for the period itself. The archaic language of eighteenth- or nineteenth-century authors can present many more challenges than twentieth-century fiction, but even there, history teachers have made great strides.

Woolley in ***TH 111*** explained her rationale for using longer texts, including nineteenth-century fiction, with a low-attaining Year 8 class:

> *The simple textbook – especially the textbook especially designed to be 'easy' – often makes the mistake of only including the essential, when in fact it is the added extra, the unnecessary detail, that makes reading and researching so pleasurable and memorable, and that makes the task of reading one of engagement, questioning and exploration. Since then, I have been on the lookout for longer texts that provide their own narrative hooks on which to build historical learning.*

In that quest for a longer text, Woolley alighted on a short story by Thomas Hardy, *The Withered Arm*.[6] The length of the story allowed her to read the entire story in history lessons and pupils were thus immersed in the customs, beliefs and assumptions of nineteenth-century rural England, and all through a gripping story which they found 'really weird and freaky'.

Monaghan (***TH 138***) collaborated with the English department to gave time for extended and supported reading of Dickens's *Great Expectations*. In history, Monaghan's Year 8s interrogated the novel as a primary source. Hillyard (***TH 140***) drew on pupils' reading of such fiction to stimulate pupils' own writing of fiction set in the past.

Other text-based primary sources

The problem of sources being reduced to gobbets and tiny reductive tasks based on them – the infamous 'death by Sources A to F' – has been discussed for almost half a century. Yet it persists. Well-trained history teachers are alert to its dangers, and carefully ensure that at Key Stages 2 and 3 at least, pupils build their evidential thinking by hearing or reading much longer extracts.

Consider the power of Pliny's letters recounting the eruption of Vesuvius. Read them aloud. The gentle, well-paced rhythms of Pliny's pompous, proud prose ('My Uncle was at Misenum in personal command of the fleet') holds Year 7 entranced. Pupils get to visualise the mounting horror ('… darkness fell, not the dark of a moonless or cloudy night, but as if the lamps were put out in a closed room'). The complex yet strangely fragile assumptions of the age are laced through ('Some prayed to the gods, but more said that the gods did not exist and that this was the end of the world').

There is no point in just reading five lines of these letters. And if you are serious about building evidential thinking, you would not want to fool pupils into imagining that they can make inferences from five lines or, worse, judge their utility or reliability. One can only begin to constitute evidence from it by feeling the text work as a whole. The narrative needs to unfold at its own pace. Pliny's perspectives and assumptions start to come through with subtle but unmistakeable force.

A summary of the wisdom

What practical approaches, both for curriculum shaping and for classroom enactment, seem to make a difference? Here is a selection of approaches and tips:

1) Read aloud yourself

Is this a lost art? Perhaps, but it is reviving! Choose a passage, whether textbook, children's history book, short passage or gripping or intriguing scholarship or a children's historical fiction, and just read. Stay slow. Use pauses. Look up to convey moments of suspense or puzzle with your eyes. Take care not to 'swallow' words and let the well-crafted sentence do its work on pupils' ears. Do this for half the lesson and, if the text is good, they will not tire. What it will achieve in memory, motivation and meaning will be immeasurable.

2) Cultivate desire to read on independently

Do the above and then stop in a crafty place. Stop at a cliffhanger. Or if you can't find a cliffhanger, just make it feel like a cliffhanger with an intriguing voice.

Now, what you say next is critical. How about: 'Read the rest of page 57 and find out what happened next.' It's not rocket science. If the text is good and you read the first bit well, they will read on.

3) Pre-teach vocabulary

This is an easy trick but often missed. Let's say you want them to read a page of Peter Frankopan's version of *The Silk Roads* written for children but you have noticed that the words 'commodity', 'cocoon', 'nomad' and 'reputation' could trip up some of your Year 8s and overload them, collapsing their working memory and making reading much too frustrating.[7] You know you can't afford for certain pupils to give up in that way. So don't let it happen. Select those words and systematically 'pre-teach' them with lots of fun choral repetition and speedy question-and-answer in which pupils must use the words in different ways, at speed. It is highly inclusive. It's fun. It can be hilarious. Pack in a teaching point about a period feature as you do it. *Then* set them reading, confident that neither decoding nor inaccessible meaning will trip them up.

4) Write your own stories

Sometimes the existing texts, even those for children, just don't do the particular job you want at the right moment. Or they exist, but would cost a bomb. So write yourself. Use the rationale of 'world-building' elaborated by Hill (***TH 180***) to think through the details about material culture, the diverse experiences and the individual stories that you want to bring to the surface in your own account of a period.

Semi-fictionalising a real character, as long as it 'goes with the grain of the evidence', is a speedy and satisfying way to draw pupils into a period. Look up ***TH 175*** to see how Boyd did this with Saxon women (see Figure 1). See also Snelson's *Cunning Plan* in this edition for an example of this approach.

5) Choose texts with pulling power

Fed up with his GCSE students' bewildered expressions when studying tiny source extracts, McDonnell adopted a new approach to source analysis (***TH 175***). McDonnell used an anthology of substantial sources when studying nineteenth-century Whitechapel in London. Not only were students sucked in by the long, vivid and disturbing accounts by Jack London, Morris Winchevsky and Charles Booth, but to his delight, McDonnell found his students revising and improving their original judgements as their knowledge of the sources and of the historical context grew. Reading much longer sources than the exam requires will tackle much deeper problems that get in the way of exam success.

Likewise, when Counsell was experimenting with having pupils read longish extracts from Eileen Power on medieval women, she chose the extracts with patterns of repetition or passages where Power's personality (she often sounds exasperated) sings through.[8]

6) Do annotation or highlighting tasks that *help* with meaning-making

As any good English teacher will tell you, it's easy to kill a text by endlessly analysing as you go. But there are ways of asking pupils to listen out for things or to spot things and so to channel pupils' concentration as they read or listen to a text.

See Foster in ***TH 142*** for ways of getting pupils to draw what they're hearing or reading in a text.

7) Clarify your curricular purpose

Are you using the text as an interpretation, with a plan to enable pupils to understand how, when, where and why it was constructed? If so, shape your activities and your positioning of it in your enquiry accordingly. See 'What's the Wisdom On historical interpretations' in ***TH 177***. Are you planning on using it as a source, to foster evidential thinking? Then see 'What's the Wisdom on evidence and sources' in ***TH 176***. Or

Figure 1: One of Susanna Boyd's stories that she wrote for her Year 7s to read (*TH 175*).

Ælfgifu – Saxon Lady



I was born into a noble Anglo-Saxon family. My father was Harold Godwinson's brother, Leofwine. We, the women of Godwinson's family, led a petition to King William to allow them to be buried, but he refused – saying that the crows would bury them as traitors deserved. This is despite Harold's mother, Gytha, offering him Harold's weight in gold.

Not to be defeated, however, Gytha secretly paid for the bodies to be collected and taken to Waltham Abbey where the monks daily say prayers for their souls.

I had only just finished mourning when I received a messenger from Geoffrey de la Guerche, one of William's knights. I had no desire to marry him, but as the daughter of a man who had fought against William, what choice did I have? I was not in the privileged position of Gytha or Godwinson's widow Ealdgyth to whom the King and Queen granted they could keep their lands.

We are now expecting our first child: with God's help it will be a girl. I know Geoffrey hopes for a boy he can mould in his own image, but a girl would be more closely mine. She can stay with me, I can teach her my mother's language, English, so she will grow up speaking not only French but the language of her ancestors. She could embroider pictures of our saints and hear stories of our heroes like Beowulf. She may even be able to enter a nunnery rather than marry another Norman boy – my father's lands could provide enough for a dowry and Queen Matilda seems keen to ensure there are many such nunneries built across the land.

I must keep these thoughts to myself. If my husband knew, his anger would be terrible, and I know that many other Saxon ladies have not been as lucky as I to marry into wealth. I will stay quiet for the sake of my child and other future children.

are you just wanting to set a scene, to accelerate knowledge, to provoke new questioning? Decide on your specific historical purpose within your wider lesson sequence and your enquiry question.

8) Tell the story *first* in a more accessible way

This might sound the opposite of the point about cliffhangers, above, but sometimes, it is best if pupils know the story, direction or interesting features, first, so that they move into it grasping where it's all going and why. This is often the case with otherwise complex primary sources. When having her pupils climb into a Horace satire, Counsell was worried that they wouldn't find it in the least bit funny because they lacked knowledge of material culture (to visualise it) and attitudes (to grasp what amused the Romans). So she wrote a short play to capture the satire, which pupils acted out first.[9]

Pitfalls

1) Don't use tasks which mask reading avoidance

Beware 'Read this and pick out the places where…'. In a desire for an easy life, pupils will sometimes take the shortest possible route to the most pointless task. You may think you've set a thought-provoking task where they look for some feature or instance of something or other, but actually what the pupils are doing is low-level word-matching. They are not reading; they are just looking for instances of a particular word.

2) Avoid exam-driven instrumentalism

Practising what the exam requires is rarely the best or the only way to secure really substantial shifts in what pupils can recognise, do, understand or write. The final performance is not the same as the means of its nurture. Remember McDonald ***(TH 175***). He made strides in enabling pupils to think harder and say sensible things about those tiny exam-style source gobbets, *not* by trying to build evidential thinking using those gobbets, but by immersing his pupils in much longer sources.

Take the long-term view, especially at Key Stage 3. Consider what will really change the pupil – rich knowledge yielding a vast vocabulary, a burning curiosity to know more and a sensitivity to period and to its multiple voices. Texts are your friends. Take time to ensure pupils enjoy them.

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2 See for example: James Oliver, P. (2013) *Mansa Musa and Empire of Mali: a true story of gold and greatness from Africa*, CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform. Geared for children, the narrative is well-paced and draws the reader in with its story flow and intriguing details, rather than bombarding them with information in a 'flat' style.

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Jim Carroll on the benefits of subject development for middle managers



'I was confident the HASLDP would be of a high quality.'

The Subject Leader Development Programme

I was looking for CPD which would be directly relevant in helping me become a subject leader as well as in my further career. When surveying the training options available, I was particularly drawn to the Historical Association's Subject Leader Development Programme (HASLDP) for a number of reasons. First, I wanted a middle-leadership course which considered the subject-specific demands, challenges, and opportunities of running a history department. Additionally, having taken advantage of the HA's training opportunities in the past, I was confident the HASLDP would be of a high quality. The course more than met all of my hopes and expectations in these regards.

Expert tutors

During the HASLDP, I especially valued having the opportunity to learn from the experienced, expert subject leaders Sharon Aninakwa, Elizabeth Carr, David Hibbert, Ruth Lingard, Catherine Priggs, and Hugh Richards. It was invaluable to hear from such presenters who were equally comfortable discussing the theoretical bases to approaches to management and curriculum design as they were in rooting their ideas in real-life concrete scenarios and experiences. The course would therefore be equally useful for both aspiring and as current subject leaders.

Topics relevant to in-school subject leadership

The course provided training on topics highly relevant to subject leadership. These included short-, medium-, and long-term strategic planning; curricular design in terms of ensuring a clear vision that is implemented successfully, incorporating scope, coherence and rigour; choosing and changing examination specifications; team development including hiring, CPD, developing departmental subject knowledge, and drawing on the latest trends in history education; performance management including how to meaningfully respond to data and setting developmental targets; working with senior leadership; and raising one's department's profile in the wider school. We also had the opportunity to listen to a talk by Tim Jenner, the HMI Subject Lead for History. Tim's talk was incredibly informative (and reassuring!) about the implications for the new OFSTED framework focused on curriculum for subject leaders.



Ongoing professional conversations

The modular course was largely based on pre-recorded talks. This structure meant I could schedule my training at times that were convenient for me. There were also occasional online webinars where we could meet as a cohort. In these sessions, we had the opportunity to share our reflections on what we had learnt and how it applied to our particular contexts. These sessions were also very valuable in allowing us as a cohort to build a mutually supportive network. As a result, we have been able to have ongoing professional conversations about the opportunities and challenges of subject leadership during the course itself and beyond.

The impact on practice

The HASLDP has already had a profound impact on my practice. First, it has highlighted how it's vital for a subject leader to produce a self-improving departmental culture. For such a situation to happen, team members must feel safe to openly reflect and constructively criticise, and the course provided guidance on how to achieve this. Second, it has provided me with concrete guidance on how to avoid 'knowledge-doing gaps' in a department, ensuring that attempts at change become embedded in a team's practice. Third, it has given me specific guidance on how to build co-productive relationships with SLT, meaning my department can be alert to and adhere to wider-school policies while still maintaining the integrity of history as a specific discipline. Fourth, the course has given me concrete techniques for ring-fencing precious departmental time so that these can be focused on improving teaching. Fifth, it's helped me realise that self-regulation and self-care are critical for an effective subject leader to operate successfully. The course has also furnished ideas on how to achieve this, such as by identifying sources of support within my own context and in the wider history-teaching community.

'I can't think of better CPD for an aspiring or current history subject leader who wants to develop in terms of history-specific, subject-leadership training.'

Invaluable for future career

To sum up, my experience of the HASLDP has been overwhelmingly positive. The course will, I believe, be invaluable for my future career in both the medium and long term. It has provided guidance to me on how to identify subject-leadership jobs that are congruent with my teaching values, how to apply successfully, as well as how to be effective when in post. For anyone considering joining the HASLDP, I can't think of better CPD for an aspiring or current history subject leader who wants to develop in terms of history-specific, subject-leadership training.

About Jim Carroll
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The HA Subject Leader Development Programme is open to aspiring, new and experienced subject leaders new to a school or looking for a fresh direction. The course offers practical professional subject-specific development wherever you are on the path of subject leadership. To find out more, email **events@history.org.uk**
www.history.org.uk/go/sldp

Decolonise, don't diversify:

enabling a paradigm shift in the Key Stage 3 history curriculum

In this article, Dan Lyndon-Cohen makes the case that history departments should move from diversifying the curriculum to decolonising it. After reflecting on some examples of how he made the content of his lessons more representative, he explores how the influence of writers such as Michel-Rolph Trouillot and Emma Dabiri inspired him to find practical ways to bring marginalised voices into the classroom.

Dan Lyndon-Cohen
Dan Lyndon-Cohen is the Lead Practitioner for Humanities at Park View School (11–16 comprehensive) in Tottenham, London.

It's like a piece of the jigsaw is missing, but no one knows where to look to find the answer.
Year 7 student at Park View School.

What students need is to find ways to navigate dominant narratives, find themselves within them, and challenge how they come to be positioned within these narratives. This knowledge can then guide students to making transformative change for themselves, their communities, and the world.[1]
Samantha Cutrara

In 2006, in my article in *Teaching History 122*, I made the case for a series of short bursts of relevant black history dripped into the curriculum at the appropriate moment.[2] Recent developments, however, would suggest that now is the right time for further reflection. These developments include the re-emergence of the Black Lives Matter movement, the toppling of the Colston statue and many student calls for wider representation in their curricula.[3] This article will explore how the history department at Park View School, where I currently teach, has started to address both aspects of the pertinent question, raised above, by one of our Year 7 students. I will demonstrate a range of ways in which at least some of the missing pieces of the jigsaw have been discovered. I will also share some of the strategies that we have started to embed in our practice, and which empower our students to make, as Samantha Cutrara has it, transformative change for themselves. Finally, I will argue that in order to make substantive change, history departments should decolonise their curriculum rather than diversify it.

Paul Miller defines diversity in the following ways:

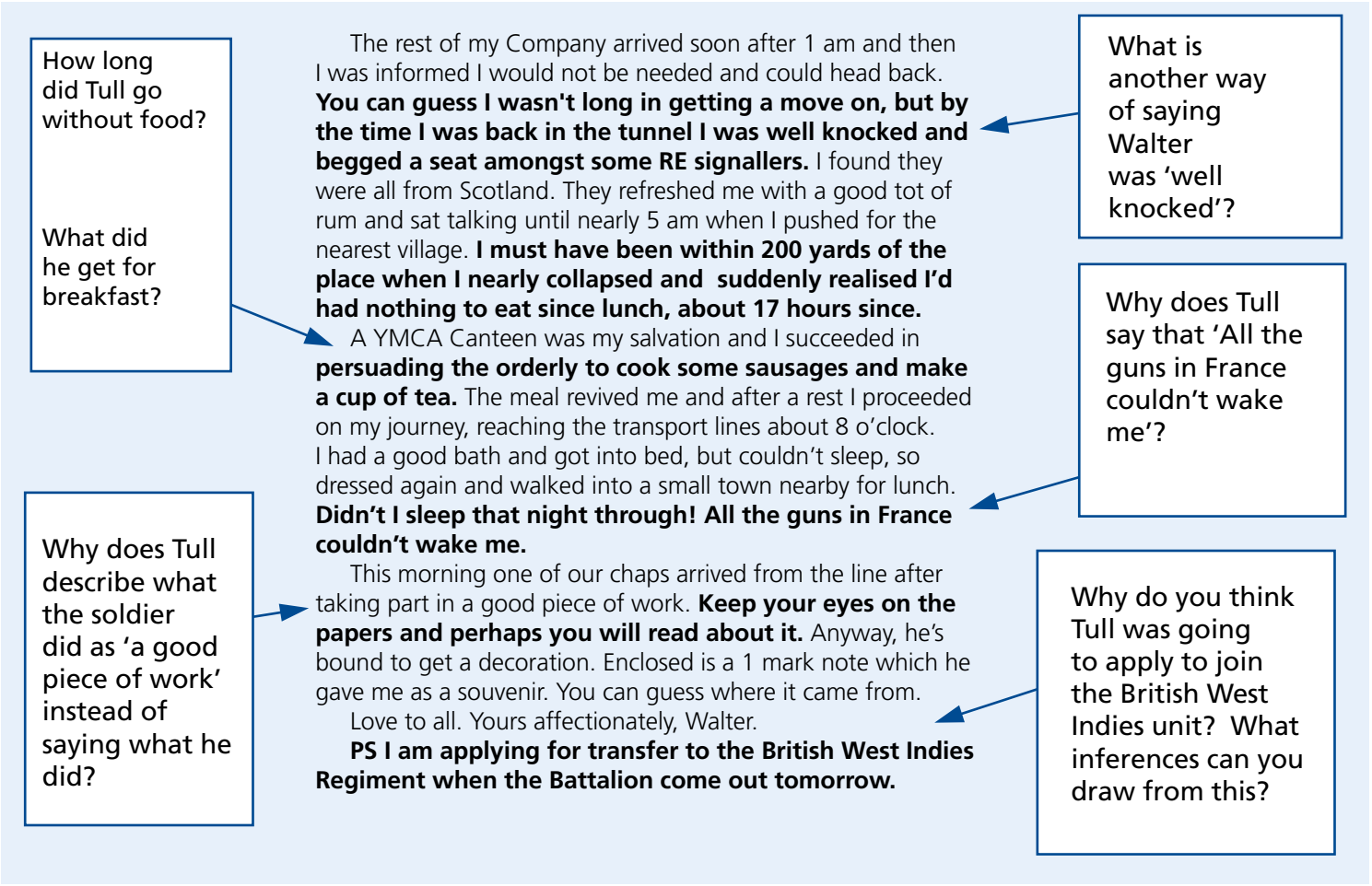
> *(It) involves bringing global perspectives into the curriculum, recognising diversity of students, academics and professionals within a discipline, and promoting opportunities for learning in a global, multicultural context.*

He explains how decolonisation is a profoundly reflective process, and cites the *Manifesto for Decolonising the Curriculum* from Keele University, which states:

> *Decolonisation involves identifying colonial systems, structures and relationships, and working to challenge those systems … It involves a paradigm shift from a culture of exclusion and denial to the making of space for other political philosophies and knowledge systems. It is a culture shift to think more widely about why common knowledge is what it is, and in doing so adjusting cultural perceptions and power relations in real and significant ways.*[4]

Such a shift resonates with my own experience in moving the curriculum from diversity to decolonisation. In a curriculum webinar for the Historical Association, Abdul Mohamud and Robin Whitburn warn against what they term the 'Diversity and the Bantustan Curriculum'. Here, they use the analogy of the false impression of independence created by the existence of 'homelands' in South Africa under apartheid. Mohamud and Whitburn identify three main

Figure 1: Walter Tull letter with marginal questions



areas which can undermine the impact of a more diverse curriculum. First, if the content is rationed, it risks appearing peripheral. It may fail to shape the enquiry ethic or be limited to the lower secondary school curriculum. Second, if the content only reflects the school's demographic, it may become too narrow and restrictive. Finally, if the content is 'unduly upbeat', it does not do justice to the struggle and gives a free pass to the oppressors.[5] I hope that the following examples reflect our genuine desire to create a curriculum that avoids these dangers and does justice to history.

The lived experience of Walter Tull

In my 2006 article, I proposed a range of ways in which diverse stories could be made mainstream. These included a study of key historical events, such as the two world wars, and an examination of key individuals. The story of Walter Tull fits neatly into these approaches. Tull was one of the first Black professional footballers at the start of the twentieth century. He played for Tottenham, where he was subject to racist abuse from the terraces. At the outbreak of WWI he signed up for the Footballers' Battalion of the Middlesex Regiment, rising through the ranks to become the first Black infantry officer in the British Army. In so doing he broke the colour-bar that had prevented non-European soldiers from taking positions of command. Over the past few years, the way in which I have taught the story of Walter Tull has been refined, so that it now reflects both of these approaches. Until fairly recently, I taught the bulk of the First World War unit through looking at Tull's experiences. Students were introduced to a range of sources illustrating Tull's childhood experiences growing up in a mixed-race family, suffering the loss of both parents before he was ten years old, and moving to an orphanage in East London with his brother. These experiences gave a powerful insight into Edwardian Britain. A series of lessons followed, based on Tull's amateur and professional football career. These culminated in an investigation into the racist abuse that he suffered from the terraces – the first recorded incidents of racism at an English football match. All this set the context for an exploration of Tull's experience in the Footballers' Battalion. His actions in the first battle of the Somme provided an excellent vehicle for teaching about trench warfare. Students examined newspaper reports about Tull's leadership following his successful commissioning as the first Black officer in the British Army to give commands to white soldiers. They also studied the recommendations for Tull to be awarded the Military Cross, and wrote passionate proposals arguing for this to be realised, before reflecting on his death at Favreuil in March 1918.

With a new head of department at Park View, we started to think again about how we could integrate Tull's story into our teaching of the First World War. This time, we wanted to bring all of this rich material into the students' assessed work. We therefore turned to an old favourite, and adapted it for our purpose. We used a *Teaching History* article about a single soldier, Reg Wilkes, in which history teachers enabled their students to engage with a series of letters that Wilkes sent to his family, including his participation in the battle of the Somme.[6] In our own version of the Reg Wilkes story, we drew on Phil Vasili's book *Walter Tull: officer, footballer*. We discovered that there were only two surviving letters from those Tull wrote to his brother Edward during the war. One

letter (Figure 1), written in August 1917, gave us the chance to examine Tull's direct experience of life as a commissioned officer, when he led his men on a night mission to inspect the conditions of the trench a few miles further up the line. The letter is a treasure-trove of information: Tull sardonically commented on being trapped in a flooded tunnel, 'we got soaked up to our hips, but H^2O is less dangerous than shrapnel or HE [high explosive]', and reflected on his exhaustion at the end of a seven-hour mission, 'Didn't I sleep that night though! All the guns in France couldn't wake me'.[7] But it is the final sentence in a postscript that takes the narrative to a different level, and one that would not be apparent but for the presence of race. Tull writes, 'I am applying for a transfer to the BWI (British West Indies Regiment) when the Battalion come out tomorrow.' With the knowledge that students gained from studying Tull's experience as a footballer, they were able to explore whether Tull's lived experience of racism had left a trauma that continued to play out in his career as a soldier. This deepened their ability to address the usefulness of the letter as a source for their assessment task, which was investigating soldiers' experiences of the war. It widened their understanding of what constituted a typical experience by bringing in the extra dimension of race and the additional challenges it brought. One student wrote, 'Tull's letter is useful because it comes from the perspective of a Black soldier, and it suggests that he might have been treated differently from other soldiers. He may have been hinting at racism when he writes that he is applying for a transfer to the BWIR, but because the information in the letter was being monitored he could not say that he was being mistreated because of his race.' The understanding demonstrated by this response, of the intersection of race with self-censorship, may have been unintentional but still shows how the analysis was enhanced by the addition of a racial dimension.

Migration histories

One of England's most significant recent developments in increasing diversity within schools' history curricula was the decision by OCR and AQA exam boards to include migration histories as part of the new 2016 GCSE specifications. (Edexcel will be offering their migration units from September 2021). Although the uptake for these courses has been limited – analysis by the *Guardian* newspaper suggests that fewer than 4% of students taking GCSE History study the AQA units and fewer than 1% study the OCR units – there does seem to have been a trickle-down effect, with an increase in the number of schools that have opted to include or are considering including more migration histories in their Key Stage 3 curriculum.[8] A recent Twitter poll of 75 history teachers (a small sample set) revealed that whilst only 4% taught GCSE migration courses (in line with the national data), 46% now teach migration at Key Stage 3 and a further 32% are planning to.[9] Kate Smee, who wrote about developing an anti-racist curriculum for the Historical Association's One Big History Department Blog, also commented, 'The existence of the GCSE books makes it much easier to plan such a unit for Key Stage 3.[10] I certainly relied heavily on such textbooks in planning a Year 7 unit. Without them it would have taken years, or would never have happened'.

Resources such as the Runnymede Trust's *Our Migration Story,* and those produced by the Migration Museum,have also been of immense benefit to history teachers.[11 12] Similarly the TIDE [Travel, Transculturality and Identity in England] Project, in conjunction with the Runnymede Trust, ran a very successful Beacon Teacher Fellowship which produced some outstanding resources for schools.[13] Teachers such as Kerry Apps and Chris Lewis have also demonstrated in *Teaching History* how they have used Miranda Kaufmann's book *Black Tudors* in their classrooms.[14 15 16]

At Park View, one of our history curriculum units concerns Jewish migrants to Britain. Shortly after our Year 7 students learn about the Norman invasion, they follow a sequence of lessons examining the changing experience of Jews in England between 1066 and their expulsion in 1290. The opening lessons ensure that the students understand that the initial experience of the Jewish community was positive: Jews established communities across the country, were employed in a diverse range of occupations and, depending on the whim of the monarch, enjoyed a large degree of protection. However, the Crusades acted as a key turning-point in this relationship. Students are asked to look at the blood libels in Norwich and Lincoln, and the mass suicide of the Jews of York in 1190, and explore how the experience of the Jewish community began to change. The unit examines the gradual removal of rights for the Jews of England, which culminated in their expulsion by Edward II in 1290. The use of Ian Dawson's work, which focused on the emotional experience of people in the Middle Ages, deepens the empathetic understanding of the period.[17] Students plot an emotions chart (see Figure 2) which records how Jews would have felt at different moments in Edward's reign, as their rights and freedoms became more restricted. The final outcome of this unit sees students writing an historical narrative. Through their narratives they highlight the changing nature of Jewish community experience and identify major turning points which altered that experience.

Don't touch my hair

My deepening knowledge of texts which challenged the hegemony of the traditional Western approach to constructing history, came at the same time as the Black Lives Matter movement reignited following the death of George Floyd in May 2020. This was no coincidence. Reflecting on my experience as a history teacher who has been an active participant in the diversification of the curriculum for over two decades, I felt a gnawing sense of frustration at the painfully slow process of change. The fall of the Edward Colston statue in Bristol a month later, and the surrounding media and social media commentary, confirmed for me the need to acknowledge the limitations of the concept of diversity and commit myself to the process of decolonisation.

Emma Dabiri's book *Don't Touch My Hair* was the lodestar for my personal journey. It opened my eyes to the ways in which the traditional Western construction of history had, explicitly and implicitly, marginalised indigenous approaches to the way in which history has been recorded and constructed.[18] Similarly, it revealed stories of which I was completely unaware, despite over three decades of studying and teaching the histories of the African diaspora in schools (for my undergraduate degree I read history at Sussex University's School of African and Asian Studies). The

Figure 2: Activity using an emotions chart

TASK: Place a cross on the graph below to show how each event would make the Jews feel. If they would feel safe then put your cross on the left, if they would feel danger then put your cross on the right.

Safe and secure ◄——————————————————► **In serious danger**

Jews had to live in specific areas of the King's towns.

Jews had to wear a badge so that everyone knew who they were.

All Jews aged over 12 had to pay a tax of 3d each Easter.

Jews could only sell property with the King's permission.

Most people who owed money to Jews would not have to pay.

Jews were now allowed to buy land and become farmers.

All Jews were forced to attend weekly sermons by monks who tried to convert them to become Christians.

680 Jews were arrested for 'coin-clipping' and 293 were hanged.

All the Jews in England were expelled and their homes were taken by the King.

1) Choose four events from the chart.
2) For each event, write down what happened to the Jews and explain what the result of that event would be.
3) Explain which is the worst change for the Jews and why you made that choice.

Extension: If you were from a Jewish family in England at this time, explain what you could do to try and limit the problems that you faced.

reason for my lack of consciousness was neatly summarised by this passage from Dabiri's book:

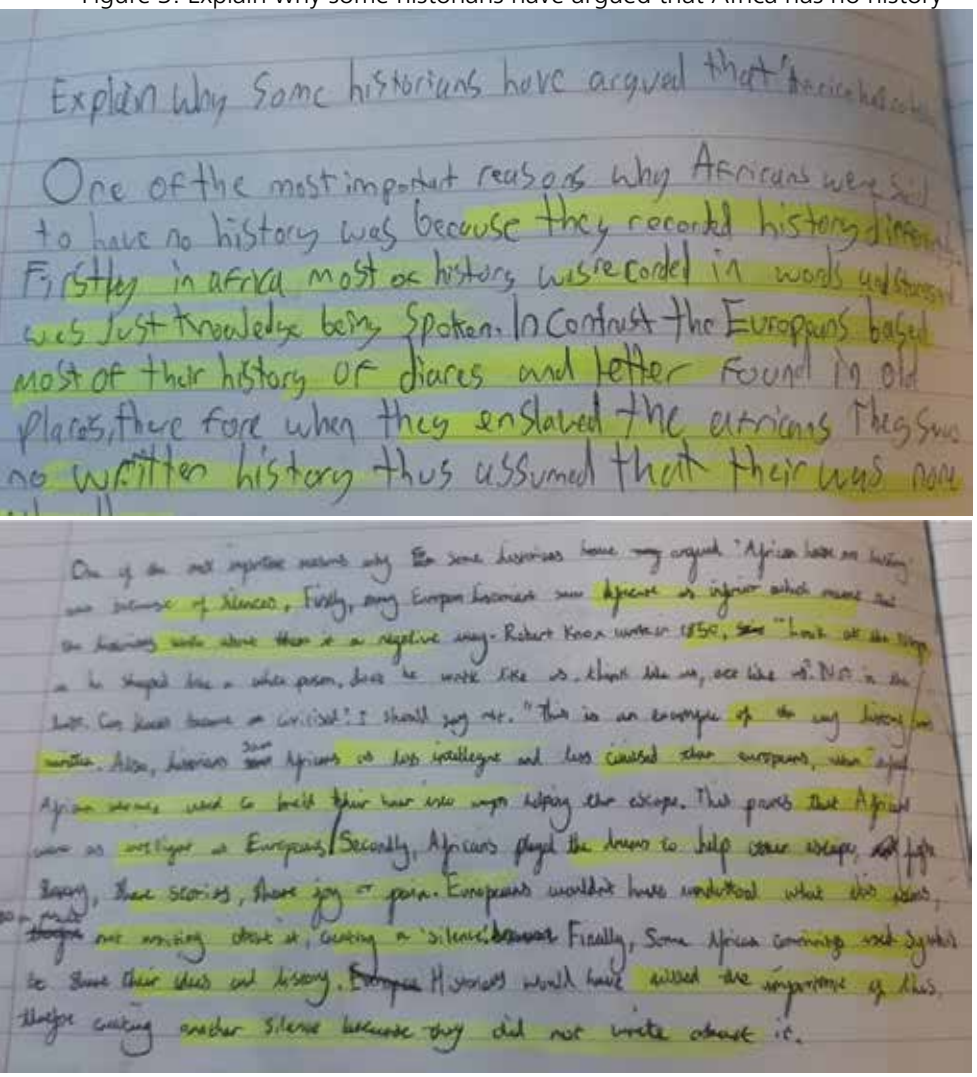
> *Unless something had a direct parallel in European society, usually it went unseen. As a result, many rich, complex cultural phenomena were merely discarded and dismissed as primitive, and certainly never made it into the annals of history. European culture placed value only on the written word, on art and monuments that stood the test of time … the emissaries of European culture remained illiterate in much that existed of value in oral societies, including the intricate language of hairstyling, unable to understand the ephemeral temporality of this art form.*[19]

One particular story caught my attention, and I knew that I had to find a way of bringing it into the classroom. Dabiri writes about a Maroon community of former enslaved Africans in Colombia, in a town they established called San Basilio de Palenque. As part of their ongoing resistance against enslavement, the women of the town would braid maps into their hair showing the path to freedom. 'Hair was utilized as a form of mapping that would be unintelligible to the Spanish', and was also used as a signal to suggest when the best time to escape would be.[20] Women would also weave seeds and bits of precious metals into their hair to be used later by the community. This story was revelatory to me in a number of ways. First, why had I never heard about Palenque before? Second, the world-view that excluded the possibility of hair being used in this way really struck a chord with another text I had been reading, by the Maori academic, Linda Tuhiwai Smith. In her groundbreaking book *Decolonising Methodologies,* she argues that history is:

> *The story of the powerful and how they became powerful, and then how they use their power to keep them in positions in which they can continue to dominate others. It is because of this relationship with power that we (indigenous communities) have been excluded, marginalized and 'Othered'.*[21]

Finally, Dabiri's book resonated with my reading of Michel-Rolph Trouillot's *Silencing the Past: power and the production of history.*[22] Trouillot's important work, which Nathanael Davies cites in his article 'Staying with the Shot', talks about four ways in which silences are created in the process of historical production.[23] There is the moment of fact creation (the making of sources); the moment of fact assembly (the

Figure 3: Explain why some historians have argued that Africa has no history



making of archives); the moment of fact retrieval (the making of narratives); and the moment of retrospective significance (the making of history in the final instance).

I decided to use the opening lessons of our Year 7 and 8 curriculum to bring Trouillot's ideas directly into the classroom. I wanted to find ways of making these complex elements accessible to the youngest cohorts of my students. To explain the idea of fact-creation I shared some photo-books that I have created for my own children, and letters that I wrote to them the night before their birthdays. I drew on another activity that I had written about, the history of the local area around the school, to explain the ways in which archives have created silences. A few years earlier, I had been given a suitcase belonging to a woman who lived in one of the streets that bordered the school. I had spent many hours poring over the documents inside the suitcase before selecting which to retain and which to throw away, and created a sequence of lessons based on some wonderful nuggets. These included an advertisement for a missing soldier from the First World War – the brother of the woman who owned the suitcase – and an invitation to the opening of the Cenotaph. Why she had been invited will always remain a most unsatisfactory mystery. I now asked students to recall an earlier activity in which they had examined the contents of the suitcase that I had selected for them. But this time, as they revisited that exercise, they were examining it as an archival process. Consequently they were able to identify silences that I had created in my selection of materials. The additional knowledge provided by Trouillot's research illustrated to the students, in a clear and meaningful way, the power of the archivist.

San Basilio de Palenque

This groundwork was fundamental for the next activity that I developed for Year 8: to answer the enquiry question: *Why have some historians said that 'Africa has no history'?* Before embarking on the answer, students were immersed in pre-colonial Africa with lessons about Mansa Musa and also the kingdom of Benin. This gave them the critical contextual understanding to be able to challenge the infamous remark from Hugh Trevor-Roper made in 1962:

> *Perhaps, in the future, there will be some African history to teach. But at present there is none, or very little: there is only the history of the Europeans in Africa. The rest is largely darkness, like the history of pre-European, pre-Columbus America. And darkness is not a subject for history.*

A sequence of activities then helped the students to understand both the development of racist attitudes used to justify European colonialism and enslavement, and the ways in which the discipline of history had been used to marginalise indigenous voices. Students were told about the story of San Basilio de Palenque through song and documentary footage, and they explored how the marginalisation of this history represented one of the silences that Trouillot identified.[24] [25] Likewise they studied examples of Adinkra semiotic symbols and the significant role that drums played in resistance, examples that were dismissed or ignored by European historians. Having absorbed all of this contextual knowledge, students were then ready to challenge Trevor-Roper's claim. Their response was exemplified by the examples shown in Figure 3.

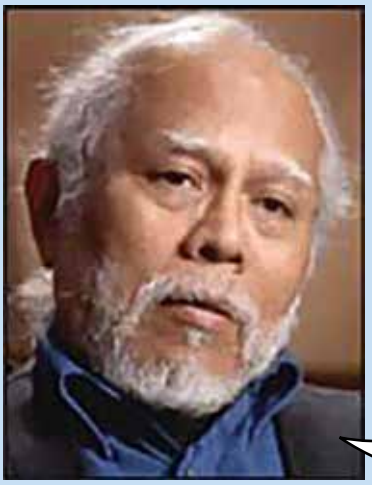
The tyranny of the written text

Toby Green has argued passionately for curricular thinking which transcends a reliance on the written text. In a recent *Teaching History* article, he writes, 'Showing how far history can range beyond the tyranny of written texts can also catalyse a new interest in history for all students.'[26] I was determined to widen the range of source material to which my students would be exposed, across the whole of Key Stage 3, and to bring marginalised voices into the classroom. Another Year 8 unit that we teach at Park View examines the impact of settler colonialism on the Native American peoples of what is today the United States. Inspired by the work of Samantha Cutrara, a Canadian history teacher and academic, I wanted to avoid the pitfalls that she describes in her article on the Canadian history curriculum:

> *However, with historical thinking, Indigenous epistemologies can only be present within a colonial grammar of understanding. They can only be present*

Figure 4: Teaching resources created for the lessons on the impact of the Gold Rush on the indigenous communities of California

How is this 'major gap in how we look at the land' going to be a problem for the Native Americans living in California?



When two different people look at something so fundamental as the land, what we find out is, there is a very major gap in how we look at the land. To the indigenous people, the land is sacred. It provides a livelihood. It gives you an understanding of the place that you belong. It has allowed you over all these generations to know how to live with the land, how to gather things, how to use it so it is not depleted. And you have a sacred bond with the land. Essentially, the European idea of land is that you have to use the land, you have to make the most out of it, and you better use it in the best way.

Frank LaPena, Professor, Native American Studies

Listen to the story

This story was told by April Moore, a teacher from the Nisenan Maidu tribe from the area that is now called California. Their community was very badly affected by the Gold Rush.
THINK, PAIR, SHARE: How does this story show the resistance of the Nisenan Maidu tribe against their attackers?

One of my grandmother's stories that really stuck with me, it was so emotional, the way she portrayed it. It was an event that happened to her aunt and her two great-aunts. It was some time during the early part of the morning. These aunts, two aunts and this baby and other family members were living out in this small village site, and they'd heard this noise, and it had woken them up. They weren't quite sure what it was …



Figure 5: Some of the enquiry questions for the Tape Letters British-Pakistani oral history scheme of work.

Enquiry questions for the Tape Letters British-Pakistani oral history scheme of work

- 'Would everyone agree with Mehmood Basharat that 'The British presence in India was a blessing'?
- 'Why did Mahmood Arshad say that British Pakistanis will 'never feel that they are British'?
- What made Parveen Farkhanda say that without cassettes 'we'd be broken into pieces'?

when the stories told by elders are considered with an equal 'critical stance' to that taken by formally trained historians. In this way, stories that feature Indigenous narratives and perspectives become open to assessment and evaluation in ways that suit the demands of the colonizer more than the truths of the storyteller.[27]

This meant that substantial material used in previous years to teach the unit needed amendment. One of the most effective redrafts came in the lesson on the impact of the Californian Gold Rush on the Nisenan Maidu. This tribe had lived in the area for thousands of years before European settlers arrived. Earlier lessons had focused almost entirely on the discovery of gold: the rush to the West coast, and the settler communities that were established. Not only did this exclude the experience of the indigenous communities but it also minimised the genocidal policies that were enacted by the American state. Those policies facilitated the expulsion of the indigenous population from the area that became known as California. In order to address these silences, I wanted to bring in different voices, to counteract the traditional narrative and to share the emotional impact of these policies. The students had already had a lesson looking at examples of Native American beliefs about the land and their relationship with nature. Now they were able to bring in this knowledge to address the question of how gold-mining would directly challenge these beliefs. The students read a quotation from Frank La Pena (Figure 4), Professor of Native American Studies at California State University, which illustrated the differences in approaches to the land between Europeans and Native Americans.[28] They also listened to an oral history extract from April Nisenan (Figure 4) describing the impact of settler colonialism on her tribal ancestors.[29] This was an important extract in a number of ways; it acknowledged the genocidal impact of the gold rush and it presented the Nisenan as actively resisting these policies. Student responses to the inclusion of indigenous voices showed the insights they had gained. One commented:

The Europeans can alter the way that the stories were told because they want people to perceive them as heroes. The way that they tell the story creates silences because they want people to think that they were the first to inhabit America and the Native Americans get silenced.

Another wrote,

The Europeans manipulated the situation to show that they were more powerful over the Native Americans, because their stories were hidden away.

Future plans

The next stage of the Park View journey is to look at ways in which we can bring decolonisation into our assessment practice. As part of our commitment to widening the use of oral history, we have embarked on an ambitious project with an organisation called Tape Letters.[30] The project is centred on the British-Pakistani community and draws upon an astonishing archive of cassettes that were sent back and forth between the two countries from the 1960s to the 1990s: 'They contain deeply human stories … and can be considered significant artefacts both as objects and as aural moments in a crucial time for the migrant Potwari-speaking community.'[31] Since most of the families that were sending the cassettes were from the northern parts of Pakistani Punjab, they spoke Potwari or Pahari, languages which have no written format. Working with the director of the Tape Letters project, Wajid Yaseen, I have been given exclusive access to the archive, and have started working on a sequence of lessons focusing on three key themes: empire, partition and migration. For each theme, I have tried to find a quotation from the archive (see Figure 5).

Each lesson will contain audio files which include the relevant content both in Potwari and in English in order to bring these voices directly into the classroom. The assessment of the unit will be an oral history migration project interviewing family members, or members of the local community, about their experiences. Using similar approaches to those described by Toettcher and West, we will provide Park View students with training in questioning and listening skills in order to enhance their ability to conduct effective interviews.[32]

Decolonise, don't diversify

Todd reminds us of the relationship between curriculum choice and power:

The choices or emphases we make, in relation to the curriculum, are related to the exercise of power – perhaps

unconsciously – in replicating our own histories, but with possible detrimental impacts for both the subject and those pupils who may see themselves excluded from this national story.[33]

I hope that this article illustrates a range of approaches that history departments can take in order to address some of the concerns Todd and many others have raised. While finding ways to make the history curriculum more representative is clearly welcome, I would urge more departments to enable their students to study one of the GCSE migration courses. If substantive and structural change is to be made in the ways in which school history is taught, there needs to be just the paradigm shift that Paul Miller has called for.

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Cunning Plan

… to teach a broader Britain, 1625–1714

'Gruesome!' was how we decided to describe our teaching of seventeenth-century British history, although 'inadequate' was probably more accurate. Oh, how much was wrong! We had…

- **Incoherence.** The Civil War and Protectorate years plonked in between the Elizabethan Age and the origins of the industrial revolution.
  We had lost years!
- **A narrow slice of society.** A story mostly focused on high politics: a king executed, a killjoy Protector, and then a king back. Chiefly told through powerful, white, mostly southern, English men.
  We had lost most of the people!
- **An oversimplified narrative.** A story that concealed diverse and complex agency and experience. Worse, we had fostered the ahistorical idea that there are two clear sides.
  We had lost reality!

With lessons that were certainly in Ruth's 'greying pants' category, we needed help. We went back to older textbooks, read some newer scholarship, listened (again) to Curricularium, attended SHP Understanding.[1] We also read *Teaching History* articles such as those by Mike Hill on world-building and Natalie Kesterton on the relationship between small narratives and big pictures.[2]

We then did some deep thinking and lots of talking about what was important to teach from the British seventeenth-century story. We asked ourselves:

- What builds on and develops past knowledge?
- What lays the groundwork for future knowledge?
- What mattered to diverse people within the seventeenth century?
- Who had agency within the seventeenth century, and within what spheres?
- How does what mattered to seventeenth-century people help us to think about why the seventeenth century matters ***today****?*

Despite there being little curriculum time to study the seventeenth century, we became ambitious for Year 8 students. We were inspired by what we knew Natalie Kesterton had achieved with her 'plug the gap' narratives and how Mike Hill had built an imagined past with his students.[3] We created sixteen core first-person narratives telling the stories of the lives of a variety of people from the period 1625–1714. Within these lives were woven the stories of *other* people, places and events, including some of the better known political stories. These sixteen core first-person narratives are freely available for you to use.[4]

The enquiry 'What mattered to people in Britain in the period 1625-1714?'

Lesson 1: Introduction of first-person narratives

These can be introduced in a variety of ways and they can be adapted. Try giving pairs of students a narrative to read and giving them plenty of time. To focus their reading, supply a prompt sheet in which they capture key dates in their character's life and they write a few notes about their character's life experiences, about what was happening and about what it was like to live then.

Tackling the narratives needs the majority of the lesson. Any pairs working more quickly can do the same for a second or third character. Towards the end of the lesson, each pupil pair compares its character's experiences with another pair's character.

Lesson 2: Linking narratives to national events, people and developments

Recap on learning so far from the narratives, taking care to remind pupils of our enquiry question's direction. We are trying to work out what ***mattered*** to these people.

Put up a generic timeline of key dates in political, social and cultural history of the period 1625 to 1714. Pupils will have already encountered some of this through the first-person narratives, and now is the moment for you to fill in some gaps so that they can orientate themselves in time. Use whole-class questioning to enable pupils to combine and make links between these dates and the narratives that they have begun to study.

Figure 1: An extract of a life story annotated to show the wider knowledge it reveals



I was born some time in the 1630s, into the East End of London. I don't know how old I am. I was the daughter of a shipwright (a skilled worker involved in building ships). There was a large shipyard in Poplar in London, where my father worked. London was growing rapidly. My father died when I was young and my mother brought me up. We attended church regularly both for Sunday services and to study the Bible. Where we lived there were many visiting preachers. They would speak for hours, stirring our spirits, and challenging what some bishops were saying. As a young woman, I would run from sermon to sermon, listening to the preachers. I then became very low and sad in my spirits. I do not know what afflicted me. I considered taking my own life, especially when a civil war began between supporters of the King and the supporters of Parliament in 1642. The times were now so uncertain. But then, one day, I heard the Puritan preacher John Simpson! He preached the teachings of the Swiss reformer, Calvin. My spirits were lifted! Calvinists (as followers of Calvin are known) are strict Protestants who believe that God has already decided who is going to heaven and that they can be identified by the good, faithful lives that they lead. I began to seek out the company of other Christians of like mind and was lifted in my spirits.

No record of births.

London rapidly growing. Thriving ship industry. London clearly connected with wider worlds.

Lived in a world of Protestant preachers. Fired up by them as a young woman.

Long sermons, which were clearly popular. Preachers must have travelled around.

Possibly a struggle with mental health? But no language for describing it. Worsened by the Civil War.

Civil War between king and Parliament in 1642.

A new preacher converts Anna to even more radical Protestant beliefs. Influenced by religious ideas from Switzerland.

By the end of the lesson, students can say what mattered to the character that they had worked with. Elicit some initial responses from this, and discuss them, so that the whole class is intrigued by a widening spectrum of characters and begins to join up the wider developments that their lives reflect …. or complicate.

The civil wars are being put into real personal contexts. Their diverse impact is becoming clear, yet newly interesting and contested.

Lesson 3: Using the content of the narratives as evidence of wider developments

Begin with a large map. Pairs write the name of their character on a post-it and stick it to the correct place on the map. The range of these characters' stories from across the British Isles and beyond is immediately clear. Through teacher questioning, draw out the wider themes and narratives. The students act as the 'experts' on particular characters and use aspects of their characters' lives as evidence to answer teacher questions. For example:

- What can we learn about Parliament and about monarchy?
- How were the Americas important?
- Who had power and what made them powerful?

Through focusing on what mattered to the people of the period, pupils also begin to grasp some of the 'matters' that stand out from the seventeenth

century, giving a fresh perspective on why this period is interesting and important for all of us to study today.

Lesson 4: Answering the enquiry question

Give pupils an obviously over simplified narrative of the period. Give them time to read it. Check they understand it.

Now, as their culminating task, through which they answer the enquiry question, have students work in pairs or threes to correct and expand that over simplified summary of the period. In their improved, expanded summaries, they can add more detail, alter the generalisations or even reorganise some of the material.

Finally, share and compare some of their efforts. Conclude with a discussion about how we can link what mattered to seventeenth-century people to why the seventeenth-century matters today.

Adapting the narratives

There are many ways that the use of these first-person narratives can be adapted to suit a specific curriculum and practical constraints. They can stand alone to bridge the gap between depth studies in other centuries, or they can build a particular world ready for a specific seventeenth-century depth study.

Using small narratives to reveal wide diversity

Well-written first-person narratives can convey much complexity in an accessible way. From such narratives, students can learn about the continued centrality of religion to people's lives, the way religion was causing conflict and shaping different people in different ways. Also, the depth, scale and variety of the impact of conflict is revealed. At the same time, a wider range of events, places and changes are introduced and seventeenth-century British people are revealed as diverse in the widest sense of the term.

In addition, students' attention can be drawn to the silences and the gaps in narratives caused by less wealthy and powerful people leaving fewer traces in the historical record.

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3 *ibid.*

4 The personal stories and accompanying worksheets are freely available via www.yorkclio.com.

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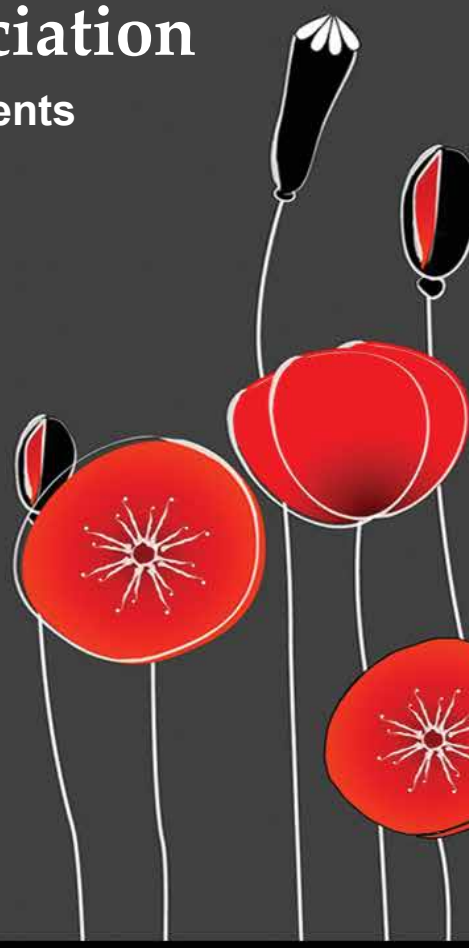
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Diversifying the curriculum:

one department's holistic approach

In this article, Theo Woods shares the experience of one history department as they embarked on a substantial process of curriculum review and development. The department sought to address concerns that the range of history taught in their school, across the full seven years of students' secondary experience, was too 'traditional, White and Eurocentric'. Woods outlines the range of arguments that prompted her team to take action and the principles that they developed to underpin the construction of a geographically broad, culturally diverse and academically challenging curriculum. She also explains how they tackled the various challenges that they encountered, not least the development of their own subject knowledge. While the article includes an outline of their current curriculum structure, its essential value lies in the insights that it offers into collaborative processes of curriculum renewal and the range of resources that can support such an approach.

Theo Woods
Theo Woods works in initial teacher training, as a Development Lead for Teach First. She was previously Head of History at Dormers Wells High School (11–18 comprehensive), West London.

The context that shaped our department's curriculum thinking

In June 2020, in the wake of George Floyd's murder, the subsequent momentum of the Black Lives Matter movement, and the growing debate around Whiteness in the National Curriculum, I was contacted by a number of concerned staff and parents, asking about what exactly was taught in the history classrooms at our school.[1] While an outline of this information was available on our website (as is the case for most schools), those who contacted me clearly wanted both to know more and to start a dialogue – one in which I was more than happy to participate. In fact, I was thrilled that colleagues and parents were paying closer attention to a curriculum that my team and I had worked hard to shape over the previous few years, and of which we were very proud. Not because the curriculum we taught was perfect, or utterly different to what was taught elsewhere, or in fact 'finished'; but because it was an outline of learning that was being consciously crafted on the basis of explicit principles, with careful consideration of the holistic learning experience of our diverse community of students.

That summer, it was impossible to ignore the explosion of public discourse concerning such issues as the experience of Black people in Britain, the decolonising of the curriculum, and how Britain physically chooses to remember its history – issues which, for me, were encapsulated in an image of Colston's empty plinth, standing in central Bristol (Figure 1). Yet, while these issues may have seemed new to some, to those inside the teaching profession – or more specifically to those working in history classrooms – they were the subject of long-standing debates that drew on a rich tradition of scholarship. It was with this scholarship that my team and I had explicitly chosen to engage, and which had contributed to the work we carried out prior to the events of 2020 (and which continues to inform the department's ongoing curriculum development).

Our drive to start this work had been multifaceted. We were a close-knit team of five teachers, who had worked together for many years in a collaborative and reflective way. We shared a genuine love for our subject, continued to read whenever we could, and enjoyed departmental 'wrestling' over issues of practice and pedagogy.[2] Yet, we were increasingly aware that many of the topics we taught, those about which we were most knowledgeable, and within which we felt most comfortable going 'off-piste' with Year 8 on a Friday afternoon, were largely traditional, White and Eurocentric. We were also aware of our own ethnicity, as a department staffed by White British teachers, in contrast to the West London community that our school serves, which is incredibly diverse in regard to the ethnicity, culture and religion of our students.

As a department we therefore decided to commit time and effort to interrogating and starting to re-shape the history curriculum that we taught. This commitment resulted in the methodical construction of a holistic, seven-year curriculum that is geographically broad, culturally diverse and academically challenging. It is a curriculum in which we have chosen to explore different parts of the world, alongside a specific focus on the West, within which Britain is located. This works to bring global perspectives into the history classroom in a meaningful and integrated way. Of course (as with every

Figure 1: Photograph showing where a statue of the slave-trader Edward Colston had stood, taken the day after protesters had felled the statue and rolled it into Bristol harbour (7 June 2020)



good curriculum), it is still a work in progress, and I am not suggesting that what we have done so far is a recipe to be copied. Simply that the thinking we did, the questions we asked, and the lessons we learnt might be a useful starting point for other departments wanting to evaluate their own curriculum critically and honestly, at a time when such consideration has become increasingly important.

Why diversify the curriculum?

Perhaps a useful starting point for anyone wanting to grapple with this type of work is the question '*Why* diversify the curriculum?' As a department we looked carefully at the different kinds of argument that teachers and campaigners had advanced in answer to this question, and from such research drew out four compelling strands, which we felt, when woven together, formed a strongly reasoned basis for curricular change.

The argument which we found most persuasive is that the past is itself diverse! If the discipline of history is one that at its crux seeks to uncover and explain the past, surely the scope of that past should be probed to its fullest extent. This point is one that is carefully considered in a recent article by Priggs, who states that 'respecting the diversity of the past, and constantly questing to uncover voices hidden in that diversity, is just good history.'[3] It therefore follows that diversity under this guise is about breadth. Not breadth in the sense with which history teachers are perhaps most familiar – chronological breadth – but breadth in the sense

Figure 2: Byrom and Riley's suggested criteria for content selection[4]

Possible criteria for selecting content in a study of the British Empire

chronology Does our selected content give a fair sense of the rise, peak and fall of the empire?	**complexity** does our selected content help them to see that history is a 'messy' business?	**diversity** Does our selected content reflect the experiences of rulers and ruled, men, women and children?
geography Does our selected content give a fair sense of the spread of the empire?	**impact** Does our selected content help to explain later events and developments in history?	**morality** Does our selected content allow pupils to reflect appropriately on moral, social and cultural issues in their historical context?
coherence Does our selected content help us to give pupils a framework or a story where all the parts hold together?	**'icons'** Does our selected content help them to know about commonly accepted landmarks in history?	**utility** Does our selected content help pupils to understand their world and their place in the world?
depth Have we given sufficient opportunities for pupils to develop a strong sense of historical situations and processes?	**interpretations** Does our selected content allow them to understand how and why the empire (including its 'icons') is interpreted differently by different historians?	**motivation** Does our selected content help us to make the learners WANT to learn?
reality Have we chosen studies that have a strong sense of real people making real decisions in real places with real consequences?	**variety** Does our selected content allow us to study different 'types' of history e.g. political, social, cultural, aesthetic, economic …?	**progression** Does our selected content help us to move forward pupils' historical knowledge, skills and understanding, building on earlier experiences and preparing for later ones?

of broadening horizons, be they in relation to geography, culture, race, class, sex, experience or religion. The expanding of historical horizons in this way is brilliantly encapsulated in Frankopan's book *Silk Roads: a new history of the world,* which presents an ambitious global history of the past few millennia, in which Europe features only on the periphery of the world stage.[5] Frankopan's rationale for writing such a narrative was two-fold. First, that he had been genuinely interested, since boyhood, in the parts of the world that featured in the news but never in his classroom; and second, because cultures which are so often 'other-ed' actually have a huge amount to teach the West and might be better valued if more care were taken to teach them 'in the round'.[6] Thus, if our students are provided with such breadth through their curriculum, they will be introduced to peoples and places different from their own and encouraged to consider unfamiliar perspectives; they will become more comfortable with cultures that they do not initially recognise, and they will learn to value the achievements of societies that do not mirror their own.

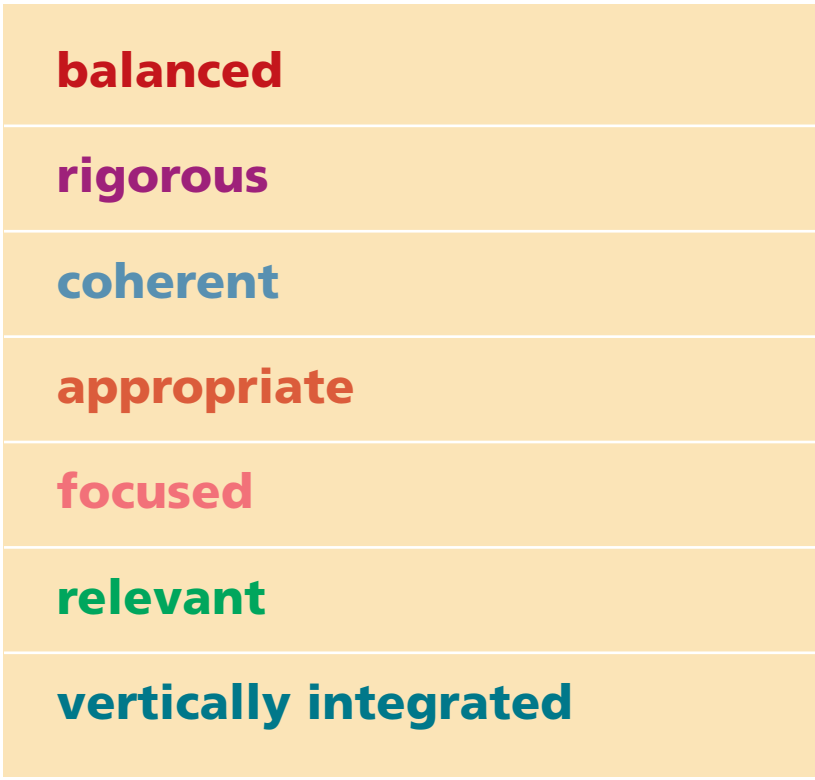
A second argument we came across is that the history curriculum taught in Britain should itself reflect modern Britain and its current place in the world. Statistics presented by the DfE show that students from minority ethnic backgrounds make up 32.3% of all pupils in Britain's state secondary schools.[7] Of course, across the country the make-up of the student population looks different in each and every school. Yet, as the 2019 TIDE-Runnymede report argues, 'a curriculum that takes little account of the long-standing presence of minorities in Britain and why they moved here, and fails to offer a comprehensive evaluation of their treatment, will do little to end the stereotyping and racist attitudes that continue to hinder the life chances of

BME adults.'[8] Yes, Black History Month has been a feature of school life since the 1980s, and the Transatlantic Slave Trade was a compulsory topic on the 2008 National Curriculum, but if their inclusion is limited to these curriculum cameos, the reality is that Black people are presented only 'through the lens of oppression and victimhood rather than Black agency…[which in turn leaves] young people with a largely distorted sense of Black history.'[9] The cry to go beyond this tokenism has been heard from the history-teaching community for many years – in fact Culpin was arguing over a decade ago that in modern Britain 'a curriculum based on *Our Island Story* just will not do' – yet it is louder now than ever before, as public debate rages over what type of society modern Britain is, what impact this country has really had on the wider world, and how this should be reflected in our cultural memory and in our classrooms.[10]

A third compelling argument for diversifying the curriculum, closely linked to the previous one, is to allow all students to see themselves in the history that they encounter. This argument draws on scholarship exploring the relationship between history and identity.[11] In a survey of students from minority ethnic backgrounds, concerning the history curriculum and its personal connection to them, Harris and Reynolds concluded that such students, on the whole, felt a lack of connection to the largely White British history that they learnt, they felt marginalised by what they perceived as the narrowness of their curriculum and they did not share the sense of pride in Britain's achievements expressed by some of their White peers.[12] Some even articulated their concern that the minimal attention given to the study of Black people in the past – primarily in the context of the transatlantic slave trade – might lead to their White classmates holding negative views of Black people in their own society. If the purpose of history is, among other things, to give those that study it a sense of where they come from and an understanding of their place in the world, such findings suggest that for many students this sense of self is, at best, absent from and, at worst, negatively stereotyped in the history that they learn. The consequences are highlighted by the Royal Historical Society in their *Race, Ethnicity and Equality in UK History* report. The report contends that a lack of diversity in school and university curricula is partly responsible for the worryingly low number of BME students that take history at GCSE, A-level and degree level. The report goes on to argue that this 'poses a genuine threat to our ability to maintain strong university History departments'.[13] The report further argues that diversification of the curriculum must include revision both of the content *and* of the scholarship used to inform that content. This parallel approach – addressing both the knowledge taught and its relationship to the discipline – is vital if all students are to see themselves valued in the history classroom.

A final argument for diversity that resonated with us, also advanced by the Royal Historical Society, is a moral one: 'It is simply the right thing to do.'[14] This dimension of the diversity debate takes seriously Counsell's assertion that 'curriculum is all about power. Decisions about what knowledge to teach are an exercise of power and therefore a weighty ethical responsibility.'[15] This sense of responsibility is a golden thread running through the writings of Whitburn, in reports over many years of the innovative work he has undertaken, in partnership with different colleagues.[16] In one article, reflecting on a scheme of work focused on the UK Somali community, Whitburn and Mohamud note the importance of history teachers being responsive to the communities that they serve, as this enables them to challenge the injustices that such communities may face, by undermining prejudices with valid historical accounts.[18] They regard 'social justice' as central to the history classroom, establishing *Justice2History* specifically to promote history that 'can make a difference to the diverse multicultural societies we live in.'[19] An analysis of similar moral arguments is presented by Barton and Levstik, in *Teaching History for the Common Good,* which considers the interplay between students' historical understanding and their engagement in society.[20] While moral claims about the purpose of history education and their implications for the curriculum can be divisive, and are often oversimplified and overemphasised (particularly by politicians), Counsell's point that 'curriculum is power' is ultimately a hard one to ignore. The ethical implications of curricula choices are always present, whether acknowledged or not.

Figure 3: Wiliam's seven principles of curriculum design[17]



What does a diversified curriculum look like?

As a department, we felt that the combined weight of these arguments made it hard not to engage seriously with the view that the history curriculum taught in British schools should be a diverse one. Yet, even if one accepts this position, deciding what such a curriculum actually looks like is still challenging. Luckily however, we found many examples of educators working to build diversity into their teaching in myriad ways, and generously sharing their experiences of doing so, thus helping us to consider the various approaches that we might take.

Of these, first and foremost, there is no doubt that any history curriculum must strive to be rigorous. Since history is an academic discipline, a strong history curriculum is one

that is built on the careful dual consideration of conceptual thinking and subject knowledge. Whatever topic is being taught, it should be treated with the same concern for disciplinary thinking as any other. This has always been a central pillar to any scheme of work constructed by Whitburn and Mohamud, not in order to 'placate the sceptics' or to be 'politically correct', but because such a principle is integral to the value of any topic being investigated in the history classroom.[21]

In respect of content, one approach we came across is to teach British history in a more diverse way with an emphasis on broadening narratives and making space for more varied experiences. Such an approach challenges assumptions and reveals hidden voices within the well-trodden curriculum routes that most of us would recognise from our own school days. This work, increasingly taking place in history departments, is often based on the scholarship of historians such as Kaufmann and Olusoga, and is most commonly focused on the racial diversification of well-known periods of Britain's history.[22] One example of this is Lewis's significance-focused enquiry, which uses Black Tudors as a window into Tudor England.[23] However, there is no reason why such an approach could not aim to diversify the curriculum in a broader sense still, striving to include women or Muslims more meaningfully within these prevailing narratives, as advocated by Boyd or Spafford, and in so doing adding a richness and complexity to already well established curricula.[24]

An alternative, yet complementary approach, is to teach the history of diverse peoples and places from well beyond Britain's shores. Such an approach is exemplified in the work of Kinloch, who introduced his Year 8 students to the indigenous people of modern Mexico through the study of Aztec poetry. He chose the Mexica (as they are more accurately known) on the grounds that – for his students – 'no ancient civilisation is more alien' and through them he hoped to 'challenge stereotypical images of Mexican society and enable a vanished people to speak for themselves'.[25] Or else, this could take the form of a more familiar topic considered through a different lens, such as an enquiry into the abolition of the slave trade through the Haitian Revolution; the winning of women's suffrage through the experiences of women in different parts of the world; or the impact of the British Empire through its treatment of the Indigenous peoples of Canada. Other practical examples of this approach have been offered by teachers such as Kennett and Bailey-Watson, Hibbert and Patel, and Oladehin, all of whom have taken the time to write about their recent exciting ventures into the less familiar.[26]As a result, there is now an increasing amount of guidance and many resources available for other teachers wanting to follow in their footsteps.

Yet is diversifying the content of the history curriculum taught in Britain enough? In a recent webinar for the Chartered College of Teachers, Miller argued that while 'diversifying content is a way of bringing global perspectives into the curriculum' these initial activities should be a process rather than an end in themselves, paving the way for a deeper reworking of the curriculum, known as decolonising.[27] In the recent emergence of a more mainstream debate on this subject, the terms 'diversification' and 'decolonisation' have at times become interchangeable. However, the teacher and author Lyndon-Cohen notes that he has only recently started to understand fully the difference between these two concepts, and thus evaluate his teaching accordingly. While reflecting on this shift in his thinking for a recent *Be Bold History* webinar, Lyndon-Cohen referred to Dabiri's summary of what decolonising the curriculum is fundamentally about:

> *Unless something had a direct parallel in European society, usually it went unseen. As a result, many rich, complex cultural phenomena were merely discarded and dismissed as primitive, and certainly never made it into the annals of history. European culture placed value only on the written word, on art and on monuments that stood the test of time…. [thus] the emissaries of European culture remain illiterate in much that existed of value in oral societies.*[28]

Such thinking prompts us to ask the question, 'Whose culture has capital?' and to acknowledge that even a thoughtfully diversified curriculum is likely to be based on western approaches and assumptions. While the implications of this are complex (and for some perhaps even demoralising, in the context of the many other pressures and considerations that need to be juggled by any history department), Whitburn, Hussain and Mohamud demonstrate a proactive response to this realisation. Their pre-colonial African Societies scheme of work focused on the story of Queen Nzinga of Angola, whom their students learnt about through the study of oral history, not in the western historical sense of eyewitness accounts but as a 'formalised approach to the creation and transmission of historical interpretations in societies'.[29] This is just one example of how the challenge of working to decolonise the curriculum might be undertaken, and although such an approach might feel unfamiliar, choosing to engage with curriculum reform in this way clearly holds merit. As Miller argues, a truly inclusive curriculum ultimately requires a shift in the minds, beliefs and values of those who are involved in its construction and everyday implementation.[30]

Beginning to build a diversified curriculum

With these different considerations drawn from the research to balance, deciding what form our diversified curriculum might take was going to be an intellectual challenge (albeit an enjoyable one). Yet, these scholarly whys and wherefores were not the only concerns with which we needed to contend. Just like any history department deciding to embark on curriculum reform, we faced a multitude of issues that had to be taken into account, both general and particular; ranging from the National Curriculum, exams and Ofsted, to whole-school priorities, our department budget and workload capacity.

So, where to start? We knew that there would always be tension between the vast array of considerations we had to juggle – from the academic to the practical – and that we could never address each one perfectly. Yet we also realised that constantly worrying about those tensions would leave us in a place of inaction. We therefore took note of Counsell's point, that curriculum 'is at once a thing of beauty and of utility', and made some decisions.[31]

Figure 4: The summary cards we made, based on Wiliam's principles of curriculum design, to be used in our department meeting

BALANCED

Students should have access to a broad and balanced curriculum, so as to best 'future-proof' them for the fast-changing world in which they will work.

RIGOROUS

The subject must be taught in a way that is faithful to the discipline from which it is drawn, giving students the capability to further develop their understanding of this discipline in the future.

COHERENT

Meaningful learning comes when all classroom experiences explicitly connect together, so that students are able to see how what they are learning links to a wider development of understanding.

APPROPRIATE

What students learn must be suited to their ability, so as to enable them to properly access the learning and make progress.

VERTICALLY INTEGRATED

Material taught at one point in time must build on that previously taught, and clearly feed into what is to be taught later. This sequence must be logical, in regard not only to knowledge but also to skill and challenge. Thus all contributing to a model of progression for students.

FOCUSED

While all material is important, to make a curriculum manageable some must be left out. Therefore, a clear understanding of the 'big ideas' within a subject, and a strong rationale for selecting some parts from within these to teach in depth, must be forged.

RELEVANT

The curriculum must be as relevant as possible to the students being taught, both in what specifically is included, and in the way that teachers clearly demonstrate the purpose of what is being taught. In this way the curriculum will be engaging and motivating to students.

The first was to avoid being constrained by the National Curriculum and exam boards, as far as was possible in light of our contextual considerations. While it is easy to focus on its limitations, Kennett and Bailey-Watson choose to view the current National Curriculum for history through a more optimistic lens, pointing out its hidden flexibility. The fact that 'the specific substantive content is not prescribed … allows for all sorts of interesting areas of study and lines of enquiry to be explored'.[32] Similarly, while departments can certainly choose to play safe and select GCSE and A-level topics that emphasise a traditional narrative of British monarchy and power, there are more diverse topics hidden among the traditional options. At GCSE, these include: Migrants in Britain; Conflict in the Middle East; Mao's China; the Aztecs and Spanish Conquest; the Crusades; and the Mughal Empire.[33] Of course, we did not assume that embracing the partial freedoms of the Key Stage 3 National Curriculum and some of the more unfamiliar examination topics, would magically result in 'some optimal blend of diversity, some nirvana of neutrality, [or] the holy grail of content selection', but we would be choosing to offer our students, at all stages, more diverse encounters in the history classroom, thereby communicating the value of such histories.[34]

We also agreed that it was important for our curriculum to be holistic, which meant carefully considering the seven-year journey that students would experience if they chose to study history right through school. Of course, we could not ignore significant milestones (for us these were the end of Years 8, 9 and 11) when students might opt out of history, and thus depart with the picture of the past established up to that point. However, more and more of our students were

Figure 5: The department statement underpinning our curriculum rationale

> Our history curriculum is built on the principles of a balanced, relevant and vertically integrated experience of learning. It aspires to instil a genuine interest in history and foster a broad worldview in the students we teach. Focused enquiries are carefully structured around big historical ideas, developing over a seven-year period, so as to shape citizens who can inquisitively and confidently play an active role in the changing world they belong to.

choosing to study history at both GCSE and A-level, a trend we hoped would continue. We therefore made their learning experience our priority, considering it as a whole rather than as separate sections. Considering the 11–19 experience as a whole also meant avoiding the danger of treating Key Stage 3 as the time to squeeze in anything 'exciting' and the danger of allowing A-level to be overly dependent on inherited resources or individual whim. We found good examples of teachers thinking carefully about restructuring one particular section of their curriculum, but few of them had holistic approaches on which to draw.[35] Nevertheless, we were encouraged to adopt such an approach because of the arguments that had most resonated with us as a team, and on which we had chosen to focus first – the arguments that good history should reveal the diversity of the past; that we should go beyond diversity as tokenism or political correctness; and that we should be responsive to the heritages, identities and experiences of our school community. At their core, these ideas seemed to us to be about shifts in values and overall approach; thus, we saw it as essential to consider our curriculum in its entirety, weaving these notions in throughout its design.

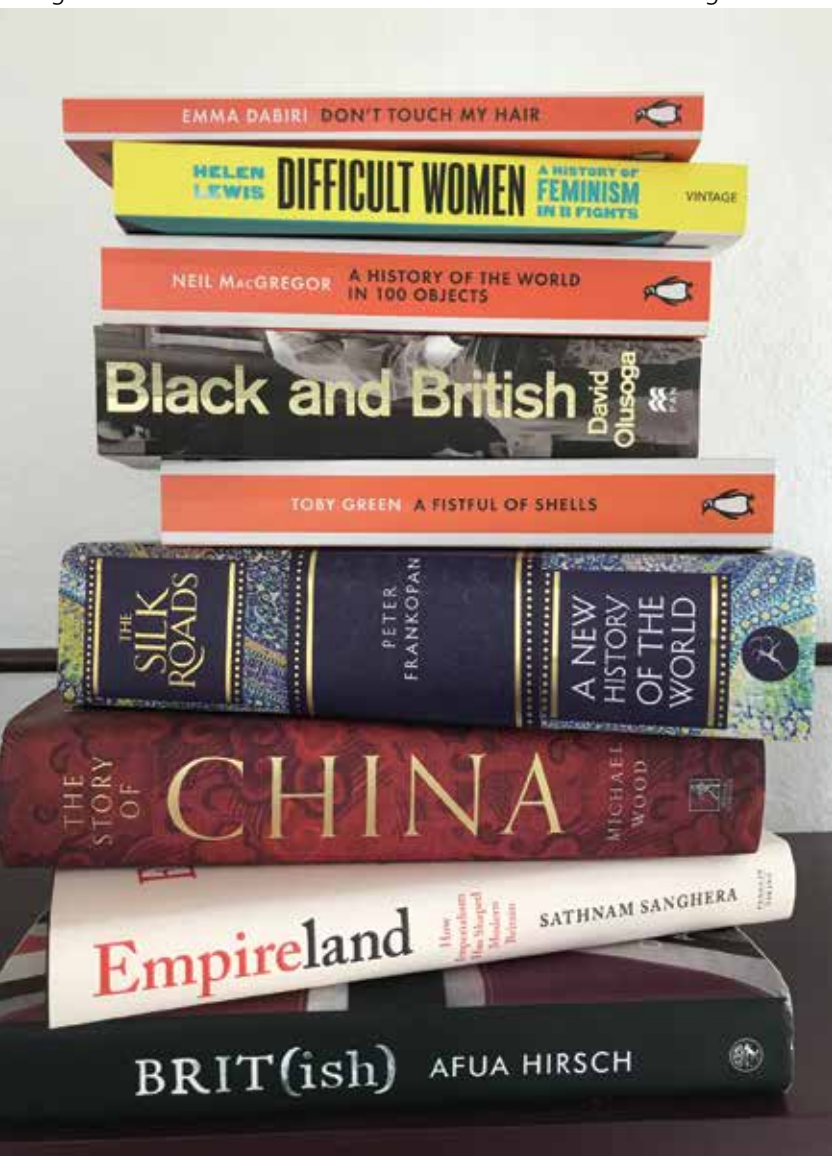
We knew that determining what to omit as well as what to include was going to be a challenging but necessary process.[36] We therefore decided to develop a more focused rationale on which to base our selections, making the process easier to navigate. In their account of 'professional wrestling' – as pertinent now as when it was first published – Byrom and Riley present the criteria that they used in selecting content for an enquiry into the British Empire (Figure 2).[37] Of similar value is Wiliam's SSAT publication *Principled Curriculum Design*, which we used as the jumping-off point for our deliberations, finding his seven curriculum-design principles both easily accessible and necessarily complex (Figure 3).[38] Wiliam asserts that curriculum design is an ever-evolving, inherently creative process that cannot be effectively imposed on teachers since it requires their input. He recognises, however, that scope is rarely provided for such input, or that it is sought only on an *ad hoc* basis, with insufficient time for collaboration and little consideration of processes. Wiliam warns against any prescriptive model or simple recipe, advocating instead that teachers are given regular time and space to focus on curriculum development and to make their curriculum choices explicit. It is in this context that he suggests his design principles might be useful, and this is how we, as a department, tried to engage with them, both initially and as ongoing points of reference. We did this first by making time to all read his research in full, then by summarising his detailed principles onto cards that we could move around the table at the centre of one of our department development meetings (Figure 4). These cards worked well, facilitating a lively debate and helping us to discuss our wider reading about diversity in a meaningful and structured way. As a team, this gave us a better understanding of our shared curriculum priorities, greater clarity about our decision-making processes, and a common vocabulary for ongoing work. We also found that capturing our thoughts at this point, in a short statement of our departmental rationale for curriculum design (Figure 5), was extremely useful.

Hence, when it came to finally making decisions about diversifying our curriculum content, we were better prepared and informed than we had previously been. The changes we agreed to make still felt daunting and, to an extent, uncomfortable, but we were clear about why we were making them and how they fitted into a bigger picture of what we wanted to achieve. We were also better able to evaluate those parts of our existing curriculum that we kept and could more explicitly articulate how they contributed to the whole. We had, for instance, followed a thematic approach at Key Stage 3 (based originally on exemplar plans shared by the *Historical Association* in response to the 2008 National Curriculum changes) and felt that the bones of this were still strong. We had also taught a number of British and European topics carefully linked to one another across different key stages (while avoiding straightforward repetition), as a way of developing a sense of period and contextual knowledge. This reasoning still fitted well with our newly articulated principle of a vertically integrated curriculum. Once further on in our work, we agreed that we wanted to revisit some of these topics (particularly the Tudors and the Second World War), using a more diverse lens, so as to ensure that we considered a wider range of experiences. We were also keen to weave elements of diversity more effectively into other topics, as advocated by Dennis, so that, for instance, the contribution of women might be analysed within the history of medicine.[39] We chose, however, to focus our initial content development on incorporating greater geographical and cultural breadth, establishing it as a recognisable feature of our students' curriculum experience. As a result, those young people who decide to study history throughout their school career now learn about medieval Africa, Ming China, and Islamic Spain in Key Stage 3; about the Middle East at GCSE; and about apartheid South Africa at A-level, among many other diverse topics (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Our history curriculum in the summer of 2020

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Year 7 Living and believing	What mattered to ordinary people in medieval Britain?	How progressive were the kingdoms of medieval Africa?	How did the Mughal Emperors shape life in Hindustan?	How much did Britain change: 1750–1900?	What can the history of the Olympic Games reveal about the 20th century?	The local history of Southall: How has immigration affected where we live?
Year 8 Power and protest	How did the Normans gain control of England?	What type of a journey did the Tudors take England on?	Did the Ming Dynasty bring a golden age to China?	Why did Britain have an empire on which the sun never set?	Why did so many women gain the vote in the 20th century?	How should we remember the Holocaust?
Year 9 Conflict and co-operation	What made medieval Cordoba so special?	Why can't historians agree about the Crusades?	How did the experiences of Black people in America change between the 17th & 20th centuries?	What made the Great War so terrible?	The road to war: what caused the outbreak of WWII?	Why was Europe so divided between 1945 and 1991?
Year 10 GCSE	British thematic study: Medicine through time (1250–present)		Environment study: The British sector of the Western Front (1914–1918)	Modern depth study: Weimar and Nazi Germany (1919–1939)		
Year 11 GCSE	Period study: The Middle East Conflict (1945–1995)		British depth study: The Early Reign of Elizabeth I (1558–1588)		Revision and exams	
Year 12 A-level	In Search of the American Dream: the USA 1917–96 (PAPER 1)		In Search of the American Dream: the USA 1917–96 (PAPER 1)		In Search of the American Dream: the USA 1917–96 (PAPER 1)	
	South Africa 1948–94: from apartheid state to 'Rainbow Nation' (PAPER 2)		South Africa 1948–94: from apartheid state to 'Rainbow Nation' (PAPER 2)		South Africa 1948–94: from apartheid state to 'Rainbow Nation' (PAPER 2)	
Year 13 A-level	Britain: losing and gaining an empire, 1763–1914 (PAPER 3)		Britain: losing and gaining an empire, 1763–1914 (PAPER 3)		Britain: losing and gaining an empire, 1763–1914 (PAPER 3)	
	Coursework		Coursework		Revision and exams	

Figure 7: A selection of texts that we found most interesting



One of the biggest challenges we faced when it came to planning new topics was subject knowledge. This had two aspects: the limitations of our existing knowledge and the availability of resources to support our development. Embarking on this work quickly demonstrated that, even as a department of subject specialists, our expertise was confined to specific areas. Changing this would require sustained investment of time and effort alongside the everyday demands of school life. There is no denying that we had to be highly resourceful. There are benefits, however, in becoming learners again: digging into books, following our curiosity, and sharpening our historical research skills. (Some of the books into which we delved are shown in Figure 7 – although we also found valuable online resources and journal articles.) The process was undoubtedly easier in some areas than in others, where accessible pools of resources had already formed as a result of the growing interest of the teaching community. There is now, for instance, a wealth of teaching resources available for pre-colonial Africa.[40] CPD resources have also become far more diverse in recent years, with the Historical Association, the Be Bold History Network, and even the BBC making it far easier for busy teachers to step into less familiar territories.[41] Furthermore, if you look hard enough there is also work being done in areas where few foundations yet exist, with some brave teachers delving into topics such as imperial China and the early Russian tsars.[42]

Engaging with this wide array of resources, so as to diversify our subject knowledge, might have been challenging but it was also satisfying, and it made for some truly fascinating discussions in the humanities office. There is no disputing Wilson's point, that the best teachers feel confident in what they are teaching and are able to make lessons memorable with 'weird little anecdotes' gleaned from years of studying a topic.[43] We knew, however, that unless we were prepared to feel less comfortable for a little while, we would never build up expertise in new areas. Of course, teachers cannot all be experts in everything – and no-one is contending that students should never learn about the Norman Conquest or the Reformation – but, as Frankopan argues, it is time that we all also 'pick from some other shelf!'[44]

Managing such a shift in curriculum content was quite an undertaking. We agreed, therefore, to make it a practical as well as a theoretical priority. There was obviously much work that teachers needed to do individually for such curriculum reform to be effective, but it was important that the value of their work was reflected in the way that department time, budgets and line management structures were used. Department meetings were, for instance, often dedicated to debating enquiry questions or sharing subject knowledge, and the team was encouraged to ask for any new resources they needed. After teaching each new scheme of work, the whole department would also always come together (sometimes with pizza after school) to give constructive feedback to the topic lead. These ongoing touchpoints were crucial for ensuring that our evolving curriculum was academically rigorous, that we shared responsibility for its ongoing development and that we quickly improved our subject knowledge. Consequently, when outside interest was piqued about our history curriculum – prompting questions in the summer of 2020 from other colleagues in school and from parents – we knew we still had work to do, but were also happy to discuss our curriculum in its current form, confident that we could, with integrity, explain its content and justify its construction.

What next?

The department has come a long way since we began interrogating the diversity of our curriculum. Judging the success of such work will always be difficult, and there is of course no finishing line. Nevertheless, there are some signals which have reassured us about the impact of our work on students' learning. The proportion of students at our school choosing to take history at exam level has continued to increase, putting it well above the national average.[45] Since the vast majority of our students are from minority ethnic backgrounds, this pattern contradicts the tendency towards lower take-up among such students reported by the RHS.[46] Yet students' own views are needed in order to take us beyond the data. Surveys of those within Key Stage 3 reveal that many students particularly like the variety of the different peoples they learn about in history and are proud that some topics link to their own heritage. Older students similarly report positively on having learned about the history of many different places. At A-level the British Empire (approached through case studies of America, Australia, Canada, India and Egypt) is by far the most popular topic. And anecdotally, a Black British A-level student, when discussing the debate

concerning the Whiteness of the National Curriculum, commented that this had not been her experience of studying history at school, which she had personally always found as inclusive as it was varied. Clearly more work can be done to dig down into this feedback, but these comments are certainly encouraging.

The richness of the scholarship available means there is no end of ways to add further layers of diversification to our curriculum – as we always fully intended to do. The question is simply what the department has the capacity and inclination to work on next. In terms of geographical breadth, we are aware that students never encounter South America within the curriculum. Back at home we would like to do more work on the 'British civil rights movement' and LGBT experience – which our students currently only study at A-level within the context of the USA. Several of our Key Stage 3 enquiries could also be re-worked, with an eye to reflecting a more global perspective (as our reading emphasised), while the fact that our exam board has finally caught up with its competitors and released a GCSE 'Migration in Britain' thematic study will give the department lots to think about.[47] There is also a great deal of exciting work being done in the history classroom regarding the place of women, which could be brought into any number of our existing topics.[48] Ultimately, we have only scratched the surface when it comes to constructing a truly diversified curriculum; but we have begun that process in a considered and principled way, taking the time to identify what we regard as most important and deciding how best to encapsulate this within the learning experience offered to our students.

This work was a shared endeavour and would not have happened without the commitment and contributions of the whole department, which at the time included Phoebe Symonds (KS3 Co-ordinator), Liam Cudmore, Alice Dunn, Alex Pritchard, and me.

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In pursuit of shared histories:

uncovering Islamic history in the secondary classroom

In 2005, in a *Teaching History* article entitled, 'A need to know', Nicolas Kinloch built an argument for teaching the history of Islamic civilisations to all pupils.[1] Afia Chaudhry returns to this theme, reflecting deeply on the needs of her own students – Muslim and non-Muslim alike – within a diverse south London community. As she clearly demonstrates, the need to know – and to build shared knowledge and understandings – remains as pressing as ever. Her article first explains the deep-rooted concerns that prompted her to create a new scheme of work on Islamic civilisations, before outlining the sources from which she took inspiration and presenting a short, informal evaluation of the scheme's impact.

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Introduction

Although many history teachers have been adapting their curricula in response to the ever-increasing diversity of modern Britain and in response to the ever-expanding historical scholarship that serves to contextualise that diversity, British pupils still face risks. Some young people may still be found regurgitating damaging stereotypes and myths about Britain's past. Others (including many Muslim pupils) find themselves unable to reconcile such myths – apparently settled histories that may have been endorsed by school history lessons – with their own lived experiences or with family and community histories. My moment of epiphany concerning this problem arrived when a Muslim pupil in a top-attaining Year 8 set asked me, 'So when people say Malcom X had violent resistance strategies, was that because he was a Muslim?' To which another pupil replied, 'Yeah, ISIS!' It was then that I knew I had much work to do.

My first response was to interrogate this mindset further. As I delved more deeply, I realised that that I was facing two long-standing issues: first, the lack of rootedness within history that pupils from ethnic or religious minorities can feel; second, the ignorance of other pupils who have not received the kinds of curricular content which might have helped them to challenge damaging popular discourses or harmful misconceptions – discourses and misconceptions to which government policies designed to combat radicalisation (specifically the Prevent agenda) have, unfortunately, contributed.[2] In other words, many young Muslims are not being taught the kinds of history that connect them with their traditions, while many non-Muslim pupils learn too little beyond White western-centric narratives. The pressing nature of the first issue was particularly apparent in my own school community. It includes a large majority of pupils from minority ethnic groups, and a larger than average number of pupils with English as an additional language. But the second issue applies in every context, including those in which there are few, if any, pupils from minority backgrounds.

The article reports my experiences as I began to explore ways of mitigating these two problems. The first problem is that of disassociation from history and the potential identity crises to which this can give rise. The second problem is the stereotypical outlooks that can be formed from popular media discourse and wider political realities. In what follows, I first outline my explorations of perspectives drawn from literature on the nature of history, historical study and classroom history. Then, I consider aspects of Islamic history which are still not generally taught to all pupils. I then explain how I drew on all these considerations to conduct a short investigation of my Year 7 pupils' attitudes. Finally, I outline a lesson sequence designed with the purpose of remedying the problems that the investigation revealed.

Figure 1: Outline of the scheme of work

Big enquiry question:

'How similar were Islamic civilisations to European civilisations during the period A.D. 500–1500?'

Lesson 1: What was Arabia like before Muhammad?

To describe what Arabia was like before Muhamad.

To describe what England was like at the same time.

To identify similarities and differences between England and Arabia in A.D. 500.

Lesson 2: Life of Muhammad

To describe the life of Muhammad.

To explain why Islam was rejected by Arabs.

To explain key events in the life of Muhammad and early Muslims.

Lesson 3: The death of Muhammad and spread of Islam

To explain how Islam spread following the death of Muhammad.

To categorise the four different periods of expansion.

To analyse why expansion was so successful.

Lesson 3: Influence of the Islamic Golden Age

To discuss the key inventions of Islamic empires.
To compare these advancements with Western civilisations.
To analyse how Islamic culture affected Europe.

Lesson 5 The Crusades

To explain what a crusade is and why it took place.

To understand different motivations for participating in the Crusades.

To know who Saladin the Merciful and Richard the Lionheart were.

To identify some of the ways in which the Crusades had an impact on Europe.

The legacy of the Ottomans

To explain how the Ottoman Empire spread.

To understand who Suleiman the Magnificent was.

To describe the lasting political impact of the empire.

***Note on the Crusades**: An important outcome of introducing this new scheme of work is that pupils' first encounter with the Crusades follows a focus on the development of Islam and some of the achievements of the 'Islamic Golden Age', rather than approaching the topic from a purely European perspective. Within this lesson, pupils will learn who the Seljuk Turks were and how both Muslims and non-Muslims opposed their rule, as well as about who the two great rulers were, one from the East and one from the West, and about their immense respect for each other. Pupils will also be better placed to understand the significance of the Holy Land.*

In pursuit of a shared human historical experience

My starting point, as noted above, was the vital role that an awareness of the past plays in shaping every individual's sense of identity. As the historian, John Tosh, has argued,

> *Because our species depends more on experience than on instinct, life cannot be lived without the consciousness of a personal past; and someone who has lost it through illness or ageing is generally regarded as disqualified from normal life. As individuals we draw on our experience in all sorts of different ways – as a means of affirming our identity, as a clue to our potential, as the basis for our impression of others, and some indication of the possibilities that lie ahead.*[3]

Accepting this proposition, Corfield argues that being able to draw a link between past and present is vital in understanding the condition of being human.[4] Like Tosh, Corfield points out that those unable to connect to their own past are essentially disabled. Knowledge of the past is what enables us all to 'root' ourselves in time, to frame our purpose, to understand our human condition and natures, and so to build and grow:

> *Indeed, at the most extreme end of the out-of-history spectrum, those individuals with the distressing experience of complete memory loss cannot manage on their own at all. In fact, all people have a full historical context. But some, generally for reasons that are no fault of their own, grow up with a weak or troubled sense of their own placing, whether within their families or within the wider world. They lack a sense of roots.*[5]

As this quotation illustrates, a sense of 'rootedness', as Corfield understands it, requires more than personal memories; it involves locating ourselves 'within the long unfolding human story within which all participate'.[6] Knowledge of the past beyond the span of our own memory depends on the work of those who reconstruct and interpret it for us, most obviously and immediately our families and the communities of which we are part, but beyond them, and contributing to them, historians and the history teachers who mediate their work for young people.

The purpose of school history

Once we acknowledge, however, that the human story is one 'in which all participate', the function of school history is also to take us *beyond* those communities with which we feel most closely affiliated and so to connect us with others. As Slater has argued, school history has to introduce pupils to *other* stories and conceptions of the past, ones that sit outside their own experience and that can challenge the assumptions and views pupils bring with them. These new stories and conceptions might be unsettling or uncomfortable, requiring great sensitivity in the teacher.[7] But if, as Riley has argued, the subject's value lies in its capacity to 'humanise', then we need to think at the level of the human species.[8] If we are all living histories, do we not all have a right to participate and feel included in historical study?

The idea of being 'rooted' in history also implies growth – a forward momentum nourished by those roots. This forward dimension is captured in the idea of 'historical consciousness' as developed by Seixas, the Canadian history educator and philosopher of history.[9] History teachers have long acknowledged that learning history is about much more than acquiring substantive knowledge. It is common in many history teaching communities to teach pupils how to handle competing interpretations of the past.[10] But a further challenge is enabling all young people to see themselves in relation to that past. Our understanding of the past and how it has shaped the present serves to inform our decisions and actions in the present. It is therefore important that young people learn not only how and why diverse interpretations have arisen, but also to reflect on the implications of taking any interpretation as the basis for belief and action in the present.

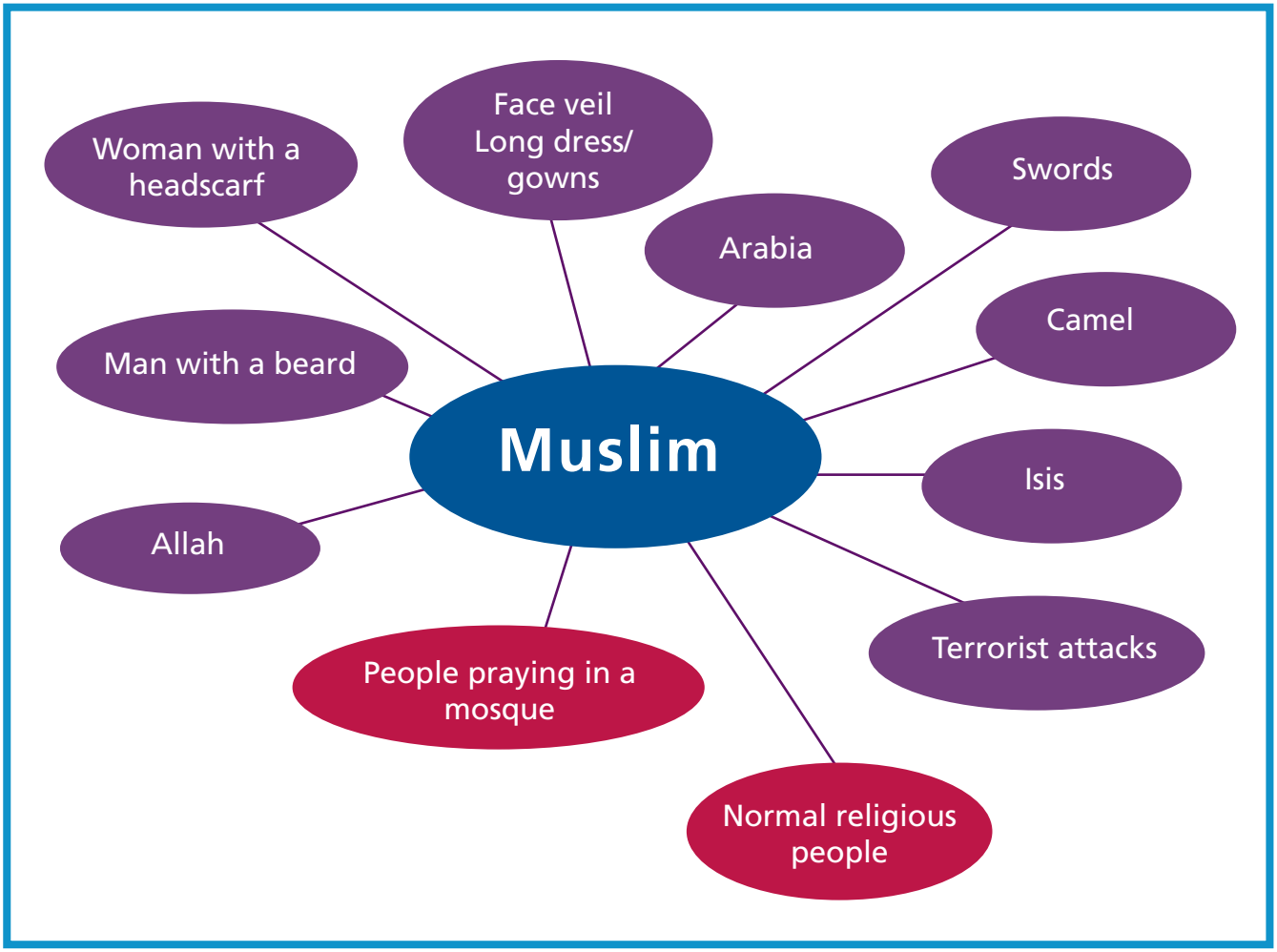
Numerous history teachers have shown, through curricular work on 'interpretations of the past', that pupils can understand how and why new accounts of the past come to be constructed. We can therefore build on this. If pupils expect narratives to keep changing, then pupils can better understand the need to keep pursuing fuller or more representative stories. Engaging pupils in an understanding of the processes of historical construction and reconstruction is one way of addressing the challenges faced by pupils currently unable to identify with history. Instead of being faced with fixed accounts or narratives of a dominant people's past, pupils can be encouraged to 'examine critically the invention, development, progress, and manipulation of national history, to assess various historical evidence and conflicting historical accounts, or to develop empathic understanding of people from different times and cultures'.[11] My aim as a history teacher is to reimagine the teaching of history as a living, dynamic process that necessarily requires all young people to hear a diverse multitude of voices engaged in the construction and reconstruction of a collective, shared human history.

Inclusivity in history education and potential pitfalls

Whether as a means to ensure that pupils see themselves in the history they study and feel included, or whether as a means for pupils to become interested in and challenged by stories that are *outside* their own experience, the issue of fair representation of the diverse past is vital.[12] Drawing on a growing range of theoretical and practical work by history teachers and historians, the Historical Association has offered a set of principles to ensure that history teaching is genuinely inclusive:[13]

1. History content should be chosen to positively reflect diversity wherever possible.
2. Historical stereotyping of individuals, peoples or societies should be avoided.
3. The choice of sources and materials should reflect diversity and challenge stereotypes whenever possible.
4. Sources should be chosen in diverse media and be as accessible as possible to all learners.
5. The vocabulary and types of language used should be carefully considered by teachers.

Figure 2: The words generated by the class as they constructed a mind map. Only the two phrases in red were suggested by Muslim pupils.



6. Assumptions about the backgrounds and views of learners should be avoided. Teachers should never assume that learners share a common background, culture or moral code, and should never teach history by referring to groups of peoples as 'us' or 'them'.

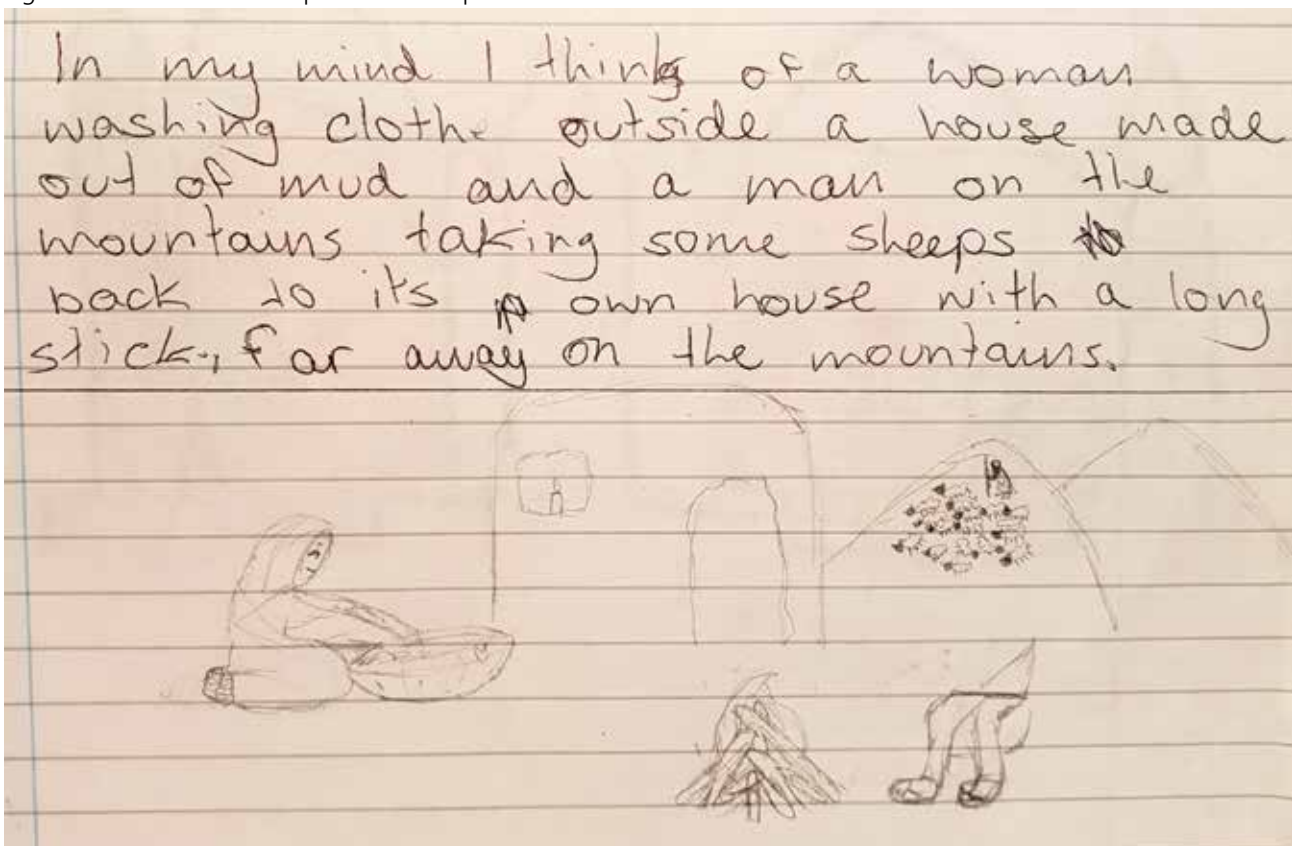
Moreover, England's National Curriculum for history does attempt to mitigate any homogenisation and whitewashing of history and to encourage the study of marginalised groups by stating not only that the diversity of the past should be studied but that pupils should be helped to understand their own identities. Accordingly, a number of attempts have been made by practitioners to ensure that all pupils can connect with history, and so gain a richer understanding both of who they are and of who they have potential to become. Identity formation, as Byrom and Riley have argued, has a pivotal role to play in teachers' curriculum planning.[14]

In my own efforts to address issues of inclusion or representation, I have, however, noticed how easily a deficit view can be created, even when trying to address an imbalance. In attempting to mitigate historical exclusion and disenfranchisement, by including people with whom their pupils identify, teachers may inadvertently end up creating a victim narrative. Reporting on her research into Black pupils' experience of school history, Traille uncovered the upsetting and traumatic experience that such pupils faced when the transatlantic slave trade was the first instance of any Black history they encountered.[15] Not only does this contribute to an unhealthy psychological outlook, it contributes to a problematical power dynamic between young people of different ethnicities and it may perpetuate a victim/saviour complex. This has arguably led to feelings of continued ostracism. Clearly, the phenomenon that Traille identified was part of a wider pattern: in 2004, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority noted that Black history was almost always approached from the angle of slavery or confined to Black History Month, which had the effect of disregarding the contributions of Black people to wider society.[16] This narrow perspective had persisted despite the existence of a wealth of Black history beyond the transatlantic slave trade.

Traille's concerns had been prefigured some 15 years earlier by the Nigerian essayist, Chinweizu, who commented on the call for reparations and for comprehensive repairs extending well beyond economic restitution. Chinweizu explained how the Black community 'was made to feel inferior by slavery and then was steeped in colonial attitudes and values' and outlined the impact of this on Black pupils' psyche, keeping them shackled mentally, and to some degree crippling their self-worth. Hoping to change this, Chinweizu argued, as early as 1993, for 'a different view of global history, one that does not centre 'West Eurasia' and 'White Invaders' and that looks at history before the fall of places such as Black Egypt.[17] Given that such accounts of global history are now accessible at the tap of a button, the question arises, why have so few history teachers been teaching them?

Many history teachers in England have now picked up this call, arguing, in particular, that the need for pupils to see themselves in the past is enough justification for broadening the curriculum. Some history teachers have explored ways

Figure 3: One student's response to the question 'What comes to mind when the word "Muslim" is said?'



of tackling the issue through redesigning their curricula. Lyndon, for example, wanted to move away from teaching Black history as a 'bolt on', and instead to integrate it within his schemes of work.[18] He chose to address Elizabeth I's attempts to deport the Blackamoores (Africans living in England in the sixteenth century), to focus on key players in the abolition movement and to examine the contributions of Black peoples within both world wars. More recently, over the past decade, Mohamud and Whitburn have supplied many examples of how to broaden the curriculum through innovative historical enquiries, such as the migration and multicultural development of the British Somali community.[19] Mohamud and Whitburn both aptly note how, in order to understand one's own community, its diversity must first be appreciated. They point to the value not only of certain pupils (in their case, those of Somali heritage) being able to place *themselves* in history, but of pupils being able to locate one another in the past – thus addressing issues of disassociation while also promoting mutual respect by combating negative stereotypes.

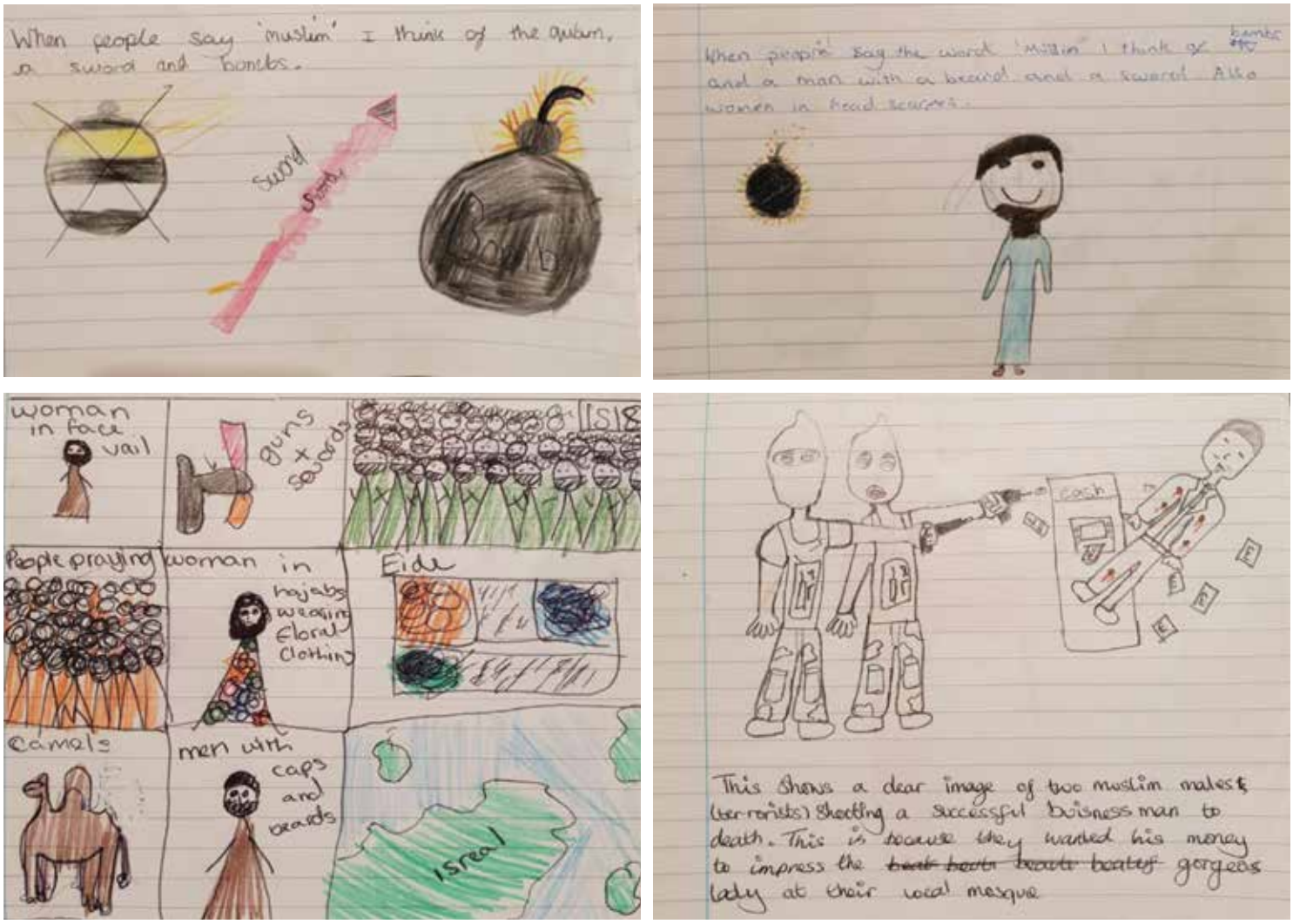
Damaging discourse and its impact on pupils

The two problems that I have discussed so far – evident in my own context in terms of the identity crises of Muslim pupils, and potential prejudice against them from among non-Muslim pupils – could, when combined, contribute to a further problem: ill-informed popular discourse. As mentioned above, once this popular discourse began to pick up speed, it was exacerbated by aspects of government response – a pattern evident both within and beyond educational institutions.

In 2018, Ofsted proposed banning the headscarf in schools across the UK out of concern that pupils could become 'isolated' and susceptible to extremist practice through brainwashing.[20] Ofsted made this proposal at a time when the Muslim Council of Great Britain had identified more than 30 different newspaper headlines misreporting incidents involving Muslims, including non-existent terror plots, the linking of the veil to heinous terror attacks, and false information on grooming gangs.[21] Media scaremongering led to a harrowing increase (by more than 600%) in Islamophobic attacks, with Muslim women facing the brunt of the often gendered abuse.[22] Arguably, the hypervisibility of Muslims, as they were catapulted by the media into the public eye, has led to a fervent contestation of their place in contemporary British society. In addition, as Ahmed, has argued, the 'visible Muslim' – the one indicating 'the most visible marker of the differentness' – has become 'an open target of colonial attack and the spearhead of the assault on Muslim societies'.[23] In light of such negative portrayals, the job of an educator as a vehicle of emancipation becomes ever more pivotal.[24] In the context of my own teaching, there have been numerous instances where non-Muslim pupils have mirrored popular discourse in their use of racially and religiously charged comments, and some where Muslim pupils have relayed their feelings both of fear – in response to such comments – and of feeling 'securitised', as a result of the Prevent agenda.[25]

A few years ago, an original research study was conducted which illuminated the effects of ill-informed popular discourse through the perspective of a large sample of Muslim boys.[26] Wilkinson, a research fellow in Islam in Education and Law at the School of Oriental and African Studies, conducted a survey of 295 secondary school boys to ascertain the kind of understandings that they were gleaning from their school history lessons. He also explored what the boys would ideally like to learn more about, and why. Wilkinson's primary focus was to interrogate the idea that Muslim boys are resistant to formal education, underachieve

Figure 4: A collection of pupil images that included a focus on bombs or terrorist activity



significantly, and are vulnerable to extremist thought and practice. He drew a link between Muslim pupils not learning enough Islamic history – and thereby feeling disenfranchised – and a vulnerability to extremism.

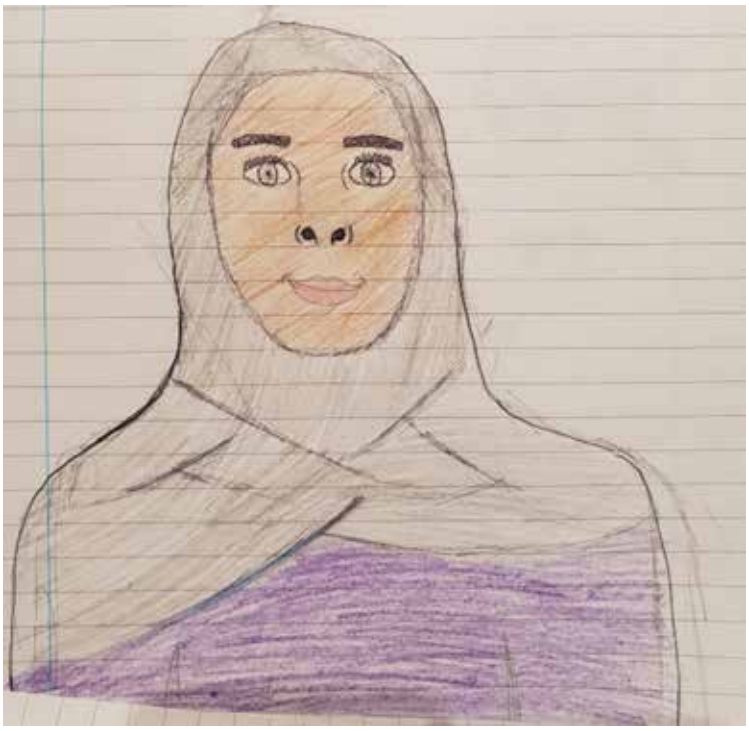
This study showed how, when harnessed correctly, school history provides a 'vital meaning-making tool' encouraging integration, external social engagement, and the success of Muslim pupils in different dimensions. Drawing on these findings, Wilkinson argued that in order to prevent Muslim pupils from feeling defenceless against popular discourse and from suffering a consequent identity crisis, it is vital to engage them in school history. Without such engagement, young people seeking to 'root' themselves in history would be open, potentially, to much more dangerous ideas, making them more vulnerable to extremism.[27] Wilkinson also noted how anti-Muslim and fascist organisations 'continue to stir up anti-Muslim hatred based, in part, on false historical representations of the role of Islam and historical fantasies of an all-white, all-Protestant Britain'.[28]

Wilkinson's findings clearly illustrate school history's potential for emancipatory education. The problem? A false impression of both Islam and Muslims on the one hand, and a lack of awareness of Islam's historical contributions to Europe on the other. The solution? A curriculum that helps to shape a more accurate view of Islam both internationally, and within Britain. Yet, few history teachers that I encounter are aware of Wilkinson's important work on the experience of Muslim boys in history education and the solutions he presents. Given the paramount importance of positive relationships between peoples of all cultures and backgrounds in Britain today, Wilkinson developed a framework for an educational approach intended to address the tensions between British Muslims and Britons of other faiths. The principles that underpin his proposed Curriculum for Cohesion are that it should be:

1) representative of a shared public culture and narrative in which the culturally diverse school population of England can actually share;
2) developmentally appropriate to children's ages;
3) capable of being taught in a way that inspires pupils to learn about Britain's history;
4) in keeping with the findings of modern historical scholarship about the interconnectedness of civilisations and nations.[29]

In my own classroom, the general performance of Muslim pupils regularly demonstrates pupils' readiness to learn about cultures and experiences with which they do not necessarily identify. If this is the case for Muslim pupils learning a predominantly Eurocentric, Protestant history, then non-Muslim pupils can be expected to perform at a similar standard when learning about Islamic civilisations. There is no reason to lower expectations of either group.[30]

Figure 5: further examples of pupils' association of Muslims with the headscarf or veil





A potential solution in the form of historical enquiry

Given the nature of my school's community and the negative stereotypes that Muslim pupils regularly encounter, I felt that it was my responsibility as an educator and agent of social change to mitigate the risks of identity crisis and to challenge the potential budding of toxic ideas among young people. I therefore sought to design an historical enquiry for Key Stage 3 pupils that would dispel certain myths that have embedded themselves in both current societal discourse and government policy.

The changing balance of the population in Britain – and of its religious affiliation – also played an important part in determining the focus of my enquiry. According to data reported by the Office for National Statistics in 2013, Christianity was the largest religious group within Britain, accounting for 59% of the population, followed by Islam at 5%.[31] As patterns of religious affiliation change, with the proportion of the population identifying as Christian continuing to decrease and the proportion identifying as Muslim increasing, all young people need greater cultural awareness and an understanding of their peers and their communities.

Inspired by Wilkinson's recommendation that the history curriculum should properly locate national events in 'their true international context', I hoped that British Muslim pupils would be able to root themselves in Britain's historical legacy, while their non-Muslim counterparts would be able to recognise and better engage with the multicultural dimensions of Britain's economic, social and political systems.[32] Wilkinson's research had concluded that all pupils should be exposed to the contributions that Islamic civilisations made to the European Renaissance; that they should know about key figures, such as Ibn Al-Haytham the father of optics, and about relationships between Britain and the Muslim world, exploring trade links, Muslim Spain, and the Golden Age of Islam. Integration of such knowledge within the curriculum would, Wilkinson argued, 'begin to provide to *all* children in English schools a history education that enables them to engage knowledgably with themselves, their classmates, their country, and the rest of the world'.[33]

Into the planning process

I set about planning my sequence of lessons with the above considerations in mind. My priorities were to create a rigorous and engaging historical enquiry that would develop pupils' understandings of a diverse historical reality existing outside of oppressive narratives, colonial victories, and stereotypical assumptions.

The class on which I chose to focus was a top-attaining Year 7 set of 26 pupils. Of the 26, seven identified as Muslim, one identified as an atheist, and 18 identified as either Baptist/Protestant/Catholic Christian, giving a ratio of Muslims to non-Muslim pupils (27% to 73%) that was higher than in other classes. Breaking down class performance in history according to religious background revealed that the median level for both Muslim and non-Muslim pupils was very similar.

I initially decided, in consultation with a colleague, that an enquiry question shaped by the second-order concept of similarity and difference would be ideal for overcoming the 'clash of civilisations' rhetoric rampant in present societal discourse. 'Similarity and difference' has a long tradition in England's history education practice.[34] It is a second-order concept ideally suited to helping pupils to move beyond stereotypical assumptions about people in the past, to recognise and analyse the diversity of past experience.

We eventually worded the question as follows: 'How similar were Islamic civilisations to European civilisations during the period A.D. 500–1500?' On reflection, it might have been more appropriate to have asked the question 'What was the significance of the Islamic empires?' or 'What was the significance of the Ottoman (or another specific Islamic) Empire?' Such enquiry questions would have made the focus less about trying to compare the value of communities in terms of their economic contributions, and more about the historical significance of the peoples within the Islamic

empires. Nonetheless, the enquiry, as we originally planned it, is set out in Figure 1, with the organisation of content following a chronological sequence. I sought not only to bring to light the contributions of Islamic empires to European civilisations, but also to help pupils draw parallels and understand the co-existence of different societies within this period (taking them beyond medieval England), each with their own issues and realities. By studying the Islamic empires in their own right and through their interactions with Europe (including England), I hoped to enable pupils to locate themselves in history and to build their awareness of the eclectic nature of British society.

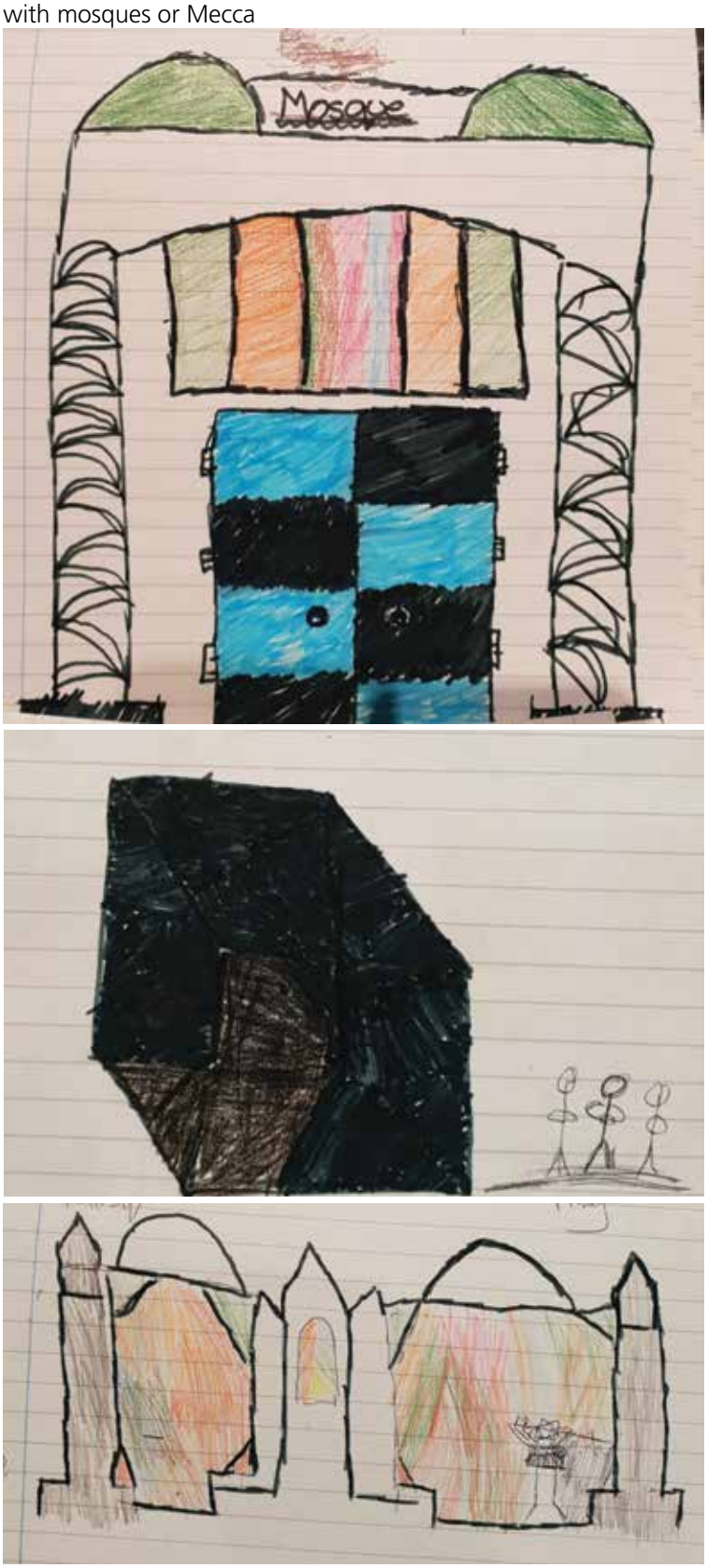
Addressing the prejudice

Before finalising detailed content choices, I chose to strengthen my planning by building a better understanding of my pupils' existing perceptions of and attitudes towards Muslims. First, in order to procure a general overview of the pupils' preconceptions, I invited them to work together to build a whole-class mind-map in response to the question: 'What comes to mind when the word "Muslim" is said?' I asked them to copy the mind-map that was generated in this way (shown in Figure 2) into their books to provide a focal point for reflection at the end of the enquiry. It is important to note that the two points presented in red were added by Muslim pupils and all of the others were suggested by non-Muslim pupils.

I then used a technique, developed by Barton, for exploring sensitive topics with young people. I encouraged each of them to *draw* what came to mind in response to the mind-map question. They had the option to elaborate on their image with writing if they wished to do so.[35] In retrospect, I realised that the class mind-map should have been created after the individual drawing because pupils ended up treating the mind-map as inspiration for their drawings, as opposed to starting with their own ideas. Nonetheless, the images did help to provide a richer insight into the pupils' thinking.

The answers from the class revealed a triad of focal points: clothing, terrorism and location/architecture. Figure 3, for example, seems to reflect a location-specific and traditional, gendered outlook on the role of Muslim men and women. Some of the more brazen examples (grouped together in Figure 4), made explicit reference to bombs and swords, sometimes alongside women in headscarves, and the Qur'an. Altogether, nine pupils drew men in beards holding bombs or some kind of weapon, eight pupils drew women in headscarves (Figure 5), and five pupils drew mosques, Mecca or Arabia more generally (Figure 6). This pattern of responses also indicates a gendered view of the religion, with pupils making the assumption that Muslim men all have beards and are associated with terrorism, and that all Muslim women dress in similar ways to one another. These stereotypes are deeply problematical, as they fail to reflect the diversity within Muslim populations (within and beyond Britain) and they reinforce media propaganda against Muslims, creating powerful associations through the use of particular symbols – leading to the association of Muslims with both with terrorism and with the headscarf or veil. Additionally, some images suggested an assumption that all Muslims are innately susceptible to extreme practices in order to achieve their goals. This is illustrated in the fourth image in Figure 4, a pupil's drawing of two Muslim men killing a 'successful businessman' to impress the women in their local mosque. In summary, many pupils believed Muslims to be highly susceptible to a resort to violence or other extreme measures, and none of the images seemed to suggest that Muslims might be associated with positive achievements.

Figure 6: Further examples of pupils' association of Muslims with mosques or Mecca



Through the new enquiry, I therefore needed to position Muslims and Islam outside of a narrative of oppression or terrorism. In seeking to challenge pupils' existing

stereotypes, I also wanted to show the existence of Muslim men and women as pioneers in various fields of progress, as opposed to women confined to local mosques and men acting as terrorists or shepherds. The aim of the enquiry was, therefore, to build pupils' knowledge of Islamic empires, of their relationship with the West and of their contributions to Western civilisation, thereby equipping pupils to make sense of Britain's development in relation to – and in dependence on – wider international influences. However, what I did not want to happen was for a new bias to be created; namely that Islamic empires were invincible and could do no wrong. It was important that pupils should be encouraged to examine and evaluate the actions and achievements of different Islamic civilisations, with respect for the principles of historical objectivity.

Given that my objectives in broadening pupils' knowledge extended beyond raising attainment to challenging their preconceptions, including the ways in which some of them viewed their peers and communities, it was important that my lessons included scope for carefully structured discussion. Inspired by Lyndon's approach in asking pupils about what they found surprising in what they were learning, we approached the planning process looking for opportunities to ask open-ended questions to tease out pupils' new and developing ideas.[36]

The lesson sequence

The first lesson explored life in Arabia before the birth of Muhammad and drew on comparisons with England. In teaching pupils about life in Arabia at the time, we wanted to alert them to the existence of a governing system in the form of nomadic tribal rule, as well as to other social and economic realities, such as the facts that most people lived in the countryside, with many people making a living through livestock; or that people worshipped several different gods; or that the region was divided into different tribes and kingdoms. These different aspects could be analysed in relation to aspects of life in England at the same time, looking for similarities and differences. In so doing, pupils were encouraged to draw parallels and to recognise how different societies flourished in their own way. They were also alerted to a diversity of experience across the world within the same time period.

Lesson 2 looked at the life of Prophet Muhammad in the early seventh century and what he introduced to Arabian society; his progressive message on women and slavery, his social policies, and his religious message. A particular focus was on the latter as a message of peace, noting the ways in which Muhammad was opposed to violence. We also looked at how many Arabs, most notably those of the ruling classes, rejected Islam for fear of losing their power and traditional tribal status. My aim was to help pupils to appreciate governance and the role of religion in other societies. Pupils also explored how England was being introduced to Christianity at a similar time, with the baptism of the first Christian king in Kent in 601 A.D. The aim here was to show the spread of religion in different contexts. By introducing pupils to how Muhammad encouraged the freeing of slaves, to his positive treatment of women, and his arguments against harming the environment, I was seeking to show Islam and Muslims in a different light from the assumptions about Muslims that many had earlier expressed.

Lesson 3 focused on the spread of Islam following Muhammad's death (see Figure 7). At this point, comparisons between England and Arabia started to assume less prominence, with the focus directed primarily onto various Islamic empires. The country-to-country comparison was difficult to sustain once Islam began to move out of Arabia and the national emphasis now was on the comparison of one empire with another. Pupils were taught about military conquests, trade, the Islamic ruling system, and the ideological bond between Muslim soldiers and the state, and how these all paved the way for rapid expansion in the period of the Prophet's four successors.

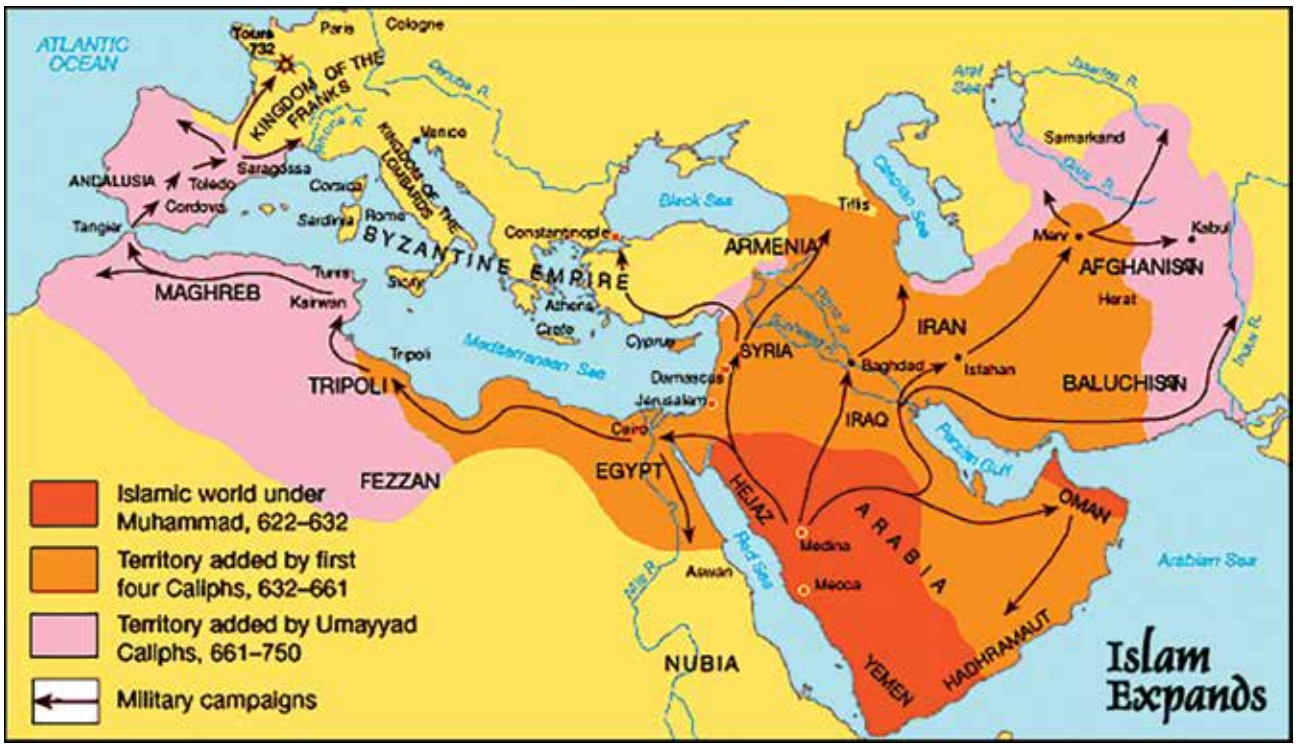
Lessons 4 and 6 on the influence of the Islamic Golden Age (illustrated in Figure 8) and the Ottoman Empire were of particular importance when addressing stereotypes of Muslims and Islam. Pupils learned about different areas of scientific discovery – within medicine, mathematics and optics, including notable figures such as Ibn Al-Haytham, the 'father of optics' and inventor of the first ever pinhole camera. I thought it would be beneficial to include key figures who were women, such as Fatima Al-Fihri, the founder of the world's first university. This lesson included time for discussions about the role of women in Islam, and the fact that Muslim women were now acknowledged for what was *in* their head, not what was *on* it. In addition, we began comparison on a larger scale, noting that the Islamic Golden Age (eighth to fifteenth centuries) coincided with Europe's 'Dark Ages', and how the former came to influence the latter, playing a role in the development of ideas that would flourish in the Renaissance period (fourteenth to seventeenth centuries).

The final lesson focused on the Ottoman Empire and was intended to draw attention to its legacy. I chose to spend time on the religious and cultural tolerance of the Ottoman Empire through its millet system. The millet system was a system of independent, regulated courts of law that Abrahamic communities within the empire could use to settle personal matters. I did this in order to challenge the view that Muslims are inherently intolerant towards other faiths or peoples, as some of the pupils' drawings had suggested. Another focus was on the architecture of the Muslim world which pupils could link to their own drawings and interpretations. The last focus was on the military, its organisation and technology, so as to cement in pupils' minds the idea of an empire flourishing alongside others.

Evaluation of impact and consequences for practice

In looking back to consider the impact of the enquiry, I concede that the evidence base on which I have to draw is very limited, but I am confident, nonetheless, that the enquiry played an important role, both in challenging negative misconceptions around Islam and Muslims and in providing a focus for study within the school history curriculum that contributed positively to Muslim pupils' developing sense of identity. This conclusion is based on my interactions with the pupils and on discussions in class that arose at the end of

Figure 7: A map showing the expansion of Islam after Muhammad's death



the enquiry when pupils were each asked to share with the class one thing that had impressed them about the Islamic empires. Many of the girls cited Fatima al-Fihri and her contributions to education. Rather than focusing on how Muslims dressed, discussion focussed on their engagement in games such as chess and polo, their introduction of three course meals, the development of pharmacies and their pioneering work in the fields of medicine, astronomy, and optics. While I am not entirely comfortable with the way in which the enquiry's emphasis on Islamic contributions to the wider world seemed to imply that the value of particular peoples might depend on their socioeconomic or political contributions, it achieved its primary purpose of showcasing alternative histories and helping to foster a positive sense of belonging and peer recognition. Another example of this positive recognition occurred in the first lesson when we were interrogating the standards of living and culture of the Arabs and of the English. During the lesson, many pupils commented on the living arrangements of Arabs: on learning about aspects of nomadic life, many argued that society was not as progressive or advanced as elsewhere. However, it was here that the pupils' attention was brought to the weather in Arabia, how the nomads had adapted to it, and how tents and camels were ideal at the time – to which I heard many pupils responding with 'Oohs' or 'Aahs' and 'True-dats'. Further, when this lifestyle was compared with that of the vast majority in England, with people living on farmland and making their living through livestock, a sense of balance was attained.

One of the most rewarding outcomes of the enquiry was the engagement of the class with the history of a community to which they were normally exposed through the lens of negative media tropes. This engagement afforded pupils who identify with that particular community a sense of its place within the course of history. The class enjoyed actively debating the different areas of discovery and the development of new ideas, while their continual surprise at the level of Islamic influence reinforced the need for such an enquiry. Above all, seeing non-Muslim pupils engage with their Muslim peers, asking them questions about the religion and culture of Islam, and the obvious enjoyment of the Muslim pupils in response to this representation of their religious and cultural history and the opportunities to discuss it, shows how the enquiry had benefited all pupils within my classroom, addressing both the problems that I had sought to tackle. It revealed afresh the truth of Tosh's observation about the importance of being able to draw on the past for one's sense of identity:

> *All societies have a collective memory, a storehouse of experience that is drawn on for a sense of identity and a sense of direction … some knowledge of the past is almost universal; without it one is effectively excluded from social and political debate, just as loss of memory disqualifies one from much everyday human interaction … to understand our social arrangements, we need to have some notion of where they have come from.*[37]

Preferring an emphasis on discussion, I did not conclude the enquiry with an extended written task answering the enquiry question. As a result, I could not look for specific kinds of improvement in the quality of pupils' written work or in grades. But the open, discussion-based approach created a continuous flow of nuanced feedback to guide planning for the next step. The lack of a final written task also reflects, in part, my inexperience as a trainee history teacher when I first taught the enquiry. Instead of focusing on the outcome, I had become absorbed in creating an environment in which pupils could continue their discussions of what they were learning. While I would certainly want to address this balance on future occasions, I have no doubt, as a Muslim woman who has been on the receiving end of gendered Islamophobia, of the importance of teaching this kind of enquiry, and of prioritising a sensitive approach that gives space and time to discussion. I recognised that there was more work to do in refining the enquiry question itself and in ensuring that pupils do eventually go on to answer in a final outcome task,

Figure 8: The round city of Baghdad in the tenth century



and perhaps in acknowledging biases in my own accounts of the past; but for me, designing and teaching this enquiry represented an essential and important start.

As I have already noted, one of the main changes I have since made was to the enquiry question itself. In my school now, instead of drawing a comparison between different cultures, we ask, 'What was the significance of the Islamic empires?' This question helps to shift the centre of gravity and gives historical importance to a period of history independently of its link to Western communities. Importance is thereby attributed to Islamic history and pupils are given a space to learn and respect an history in its own terms, rather than simply considering what it contributed to others. For Muslim pupils who identify with it, the enquiry helps them to understand themselves; for the non-Muslims who do not, it contributes to an understanding of their peers. Leading learning in communities is about creating this sense of community among all pupils and facilitating the satisfaction of their innate human desire to be accepted: to belong, to identify, to root oneself, and to understand each other's place in wider society.

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Secondary CPD coming up this year

Historical Association
The voice for history

July 2021

Date/time	Title	Focus	Release type
Monday 5 July	**Introduction to Sporting Heritage in the curriculum***	Subject knowledge	LIVE
Thursday 8 July	**India and the Second World War: recovering experiences and emotions***	Subject knowledge	LIVE
Tuesday 13 July	**What makes a great university historian?***	Student-facing: transition	LIVE
Throughout the month	**Mapping women's suffrage**	Subject knowledge	On demand

July spotlight

Introduction to Sporting Heritage in the curriculum

Monday 5 July
Live webinar

Thinking of working on a new project over the summer? Excited about the opportunity to creatively incorporate sporting history as a new part of your curriculum offer or a thematic enrichment extension to it? Interested in hearing more about how this approach could inspire your students' potential approach to EPQ? Join us for this webinar led by Sporting Heritage's new Education Lead, Derek Peaple. Sporting Heritage is a not-for-profit community interest company working specifically to support and promote a love of sporting history in community and education settings. The new education strategy is being specifically designed to add value to learning and provide adaptable resources for teachers from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 5.

September spotlight

GCSE diversity network: Medicine

Friday 24 September
Live meeting

The third of our network sessions examining diversity within popular GCSE topics. Join us for an academic discussion of recent research and debates, followed by short presentations from teachers exploring the ways in which they have attempted to diversify their teaching of medicine through time. Breakout discussions with examination board representatives give you the chance to further explore opportunities for development.

Autumn spotlight

Diverse histories in the secondary curriculum in the 2020s

September to December

We are pleased to offer another chance to benefit from this popular webinar series in partnership with Justice to History, including an updated session on Islamic history highlighting a new lesson sequence on the Iranian Revolution of 1979.

Coming up in 2021–22

The CPD calendar for autumn will be published on our website in mid-July and you can look forward to our usual range of history-specific support.

This includes a new online course designed to complement our online resources for beginning teachers (see page 4), which will focus on supporting mentors of early career teachers.

We will be releasing more on-demand webinars and will resume our monthly subject knowledge webinars with historians, free for HA members, including sessions on refugee history with Jessica Reinisch and on Partition with Sarah Ansari.



* Webinars marked with an asterisk are **free** to HA members, but must be booked in advance.

LIVE These events are live webinars. All live webinars are 4–5pm unless otherwise stated and include a recording sent to delegates after the webinar.

On demand – these webinars are available to view throughout the month, at a time and place that is convenient to you.

For more information and booking details, you can view the secondary CPD calendar at:

www.history.org.uk/go/CPD-secondary

Move me On

The problem page for history mentors

This feature of *Teaching History* is designed to build critical, informed debate about the character of teacher training, teacher education and professional development. It is also designed to offer practical help to all involved in training new history teachers. Each issue presents a situation in initial teacher education/training with an emphasis upon a particular history-specific issue.

Mentors or others involved in the training of student history teachers are invited to be the agony aunts.

This issue's problem:

John Davinier does not see any reason to include Black or Asian British history in his lessons.

John Davinier took the decision to move into history teaching after ten years working as a university administrator. He is now half way through his one-year teacher training programme. Since his degree was in Ancient History, he has been very conscious of the need to develop his subject knowledge, particularly in relation to the medieval and early modern periods. Working within his current school's existing schemes of work has helped to boost his confidence and he is generally doing very well in terms of the clarity of his explanations and instructions and the creation of a positive and productive classroom environment.

As part of his subject-specific training, John has recently been asked to plan, teach and evaluate a new sequence of lessons. Several of the other history trainees within his training programme have expressed a strong interest in developing a more diverse approach to teaching the early modern period, but John has told them that he can't see any reason to divert from his school's current schemes of work for this period. In part, his reluctance to engage with new scholarship about the connections between England and the wider world under the Tudors and Stuarts seems to reflect a lack of confidence in going beyond the 'standard' topics of the Reformation and the Civil Wars. He has found these topics quite hard to get to grips with as they are – requiring much more knowledge of religious history and of the relationships between England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland than he had expected – and he feels that they present challenges enough for Year 8 students, without further complicating their views of the population or expecting them to keep track of expanding foreign connections. But the main argument that he has put forward in conversations with other trainees and in discussion with his mentor, is that he cannot see the point of focusing on Black British history given the catchment area of his school. In the south west of England, as he regularly points out, less than 1% of the population identify as Black and only 2% as Asian. While he concedes that there may be valid reasons why students in London needed to learn more about the Black and Asian presence in Britain over time, he can not see why it would be necessary for the children that he teaches.

An extract from John's enquiry plan proposal form

Focus of the scheme of work

I have discussed several ideas with my mentor so far:

- an introduction to Tudor England, possibly with a focus on similarity and difference.
- An overview unit looking at how England was connected to Europe and the wider world in the early modern period – a possible focus on how this changed from 1500 to 1750
- A study of the impact of the Second World War on Britain (and its empire?) – I think the focus here would be on consequences, although it obviously overlaps with issues of change and continuity.
- What was the legacy of Britain's empire?

I am finding this quite difficult to pin down at the moment. I think I would prefer to tackle the more modern units, but they all seem like huge topics. I'm struggling to find something that feels manageable – but I'm also not sure how to make it relevant to the students that I will be teaching.

Email from John to Liz, another of the history trainees on his training programme

Hi Liz,

Thanks for inviting me to work with you and Lindsay on a more diverse unit for the Tudors or Stuarts. It would've been great to collaborate with you, but I honestly can't see the point of me trying to create a new scheme for either of those periods, given how complicated they are anyway! My school has got a well-established scheme of work on the Reformation and then an enquiry on the Spanish Armada and I would feel much safer sticking to what they do well. I haven't looked much further ahead, but I'm already worried about making sense of the Civil War(s). My mentor completely freaked me out when she referred to the 'War of the 3 Kingdoms'! I'm already way out of my depth without trying to think about connections to the wider world. And, to be honest, I think there are much more important issues for the kids where I teach, than looking at the very small numbers of Black people in Tudor England or trying to make sense of wider connections. Looking beyond Devon is a big deal for many of them. They already think history involves having to learn lots of facts and dates that don't make much sense to them anyway and I think this would be even more alienating. Good luck with what you're doing – I can see that it might be valuable for you in Bristol – but it's not going to work where I am.

John

Email from John's mentor, Lindsay, to the PGCE subject lead for history

Hi Dido,

I just wanted to check on the requirements for the scheme of work planning that you expect the trainees to do. Is a focus on more diverse histories a specific requirement of the task – or is that something that is just emerging from the trainees' conversations with one another? I would be very keen to help John in developing a new unit that properly recognised the diversity of the past – and/or that gave our students a much fuller picture of trade and empire, but I know John is quite anxious about this. In part, I think, because of worries about his subject knowledge. He's mentioned that some of the other trainees have been sharing their ideas and I had hoped that he might connect up with a group to tackle a similar topic, but he seems to have decided against working on the early modern period. I've told him that there is plenty of scope to think about a 20th-century unit too – looking at the impact of the Second World War or the end of empire, for example, or something on migration and social change. But he's still pretty reluctant. I suspect that he doesn't see the need to teach such topics in our rural backwater – but I also wonder if he is worried about how the students might react. What specific guidance/input have the trainees had centrally on dealing with sensitive issues or with racist comments in the classroom?

I'll be honest that we need to think much more systematically about this as a department. I guess I was hoping that having a trainee thinking about this would help me to encourage everyone to do so – but it's going to be much harder to do if John himself is unconvinced about the value of taking a more diverse approach.

I'd value a bit more detail about what the planning task formally requires – and then any other advice or support you could give. Thanks!

Lindsay

Clara Mason is an assistant headteacher and Head of Humanities at Backwell School (11–18 comprehensive) near Bristol and is a mentor with the University of Bristol PGCE partnership.

Lindsay will need a clear understanding of John's reluctance to teach black British and Asian history. How much is it a confidence issue around subject knowledge or is it that John does not fully understand the importance of teaching a diverse curriculum? Lindsay will need to explore with John his understanding of why the history community is engaging as never before in a diverse and decolonised curriculum and why this is now increasingly recognised as our responsibility as teachers of history. She will also have to move John's thinking on, helping him to understand that a diverse curriculum also leads to 'better' history. It widens the narrative, gives valuable opportunities to develop understanding of second-order concepts and also develops students' thinking around the nature of history as a construct and the work of historians as interpreters of the past.

IF I WERE JOHN'S MENTOR I WOULD DO THE FOLLOWING:

1. **Encourage John to read the HA Update 'Thinking beyond boundaries' in *Teaching History 176* by Jason Todd**, which highlights the need for a diverse curriculum at all levels of history teaching and gives a clear rationale as to why this is so important for all history teachers. Also encourage John to read 'How can I include more BME history in the curriculum?', the New, Novice or Nervous feature in *TH 173*, which lists many excellent case studies of history teachers having diversified what they teach in order to enhance students' understanding of the past. Ask John to come to his next mentor meeting prepared to discuss Todd's article and one of the case studies. This should give him a better understanding of why all teachers of history have a responsibility to develop students' understanding of the diversity of the past and how a diverse curriculum does more justice to the discipline of history.

2. **Directly address John's concern about how students may respond to the subject matter** in the light of his reading around why a diverse curriculum is important, and specifically consider how he can plan to mitigate any adverse reactions if they arise.

3. **Build on John's wish to focus on 20th-century topics by discussing possible areas of focus about which he feels more confident in his planning**. Discuss examples that narrow the broader topics he has identified to possible lines of enquiry, to help him see the task as manageable. For example, the impact of the Second World War has lots of potential, perhaps with a specific focus on post-war social change. This could incorporate other aspects of social change as well as the black British experience, such as women and the development of the welfare state. This may help John to understand that by including the black British experience, students will get a deeper understanding of the period in question.

4. **Increase John's confidence in his subject knowledge by encouraging him to read David Olusoga *Black and British: a forgotten history*** (chapters 13–14) about the impact of the Second World War and post-war developments on experiences of black British people. Also recommend *Homecoming: voices of the Windrush generation* by Colin Grant.

5. **Encourage John to read 'What's the wisdom on continuity and change'** in *TH 179* to help him frame an enquiry question around this second-order concept. Discuss at a mentor meeting what aspect of continuity and change would work best for an enquiry into post-war social change. The extent of change could work well here.

6. **Review the students' experiences.** After John has taught the enquiry, encourage him to reflect on how the addition of the experiences of black British history students, has given students a deeper understanding of post-war Britain and the extent of change in society. Looking at students' work would be important to this discussion.

Lynne Adams is Head of History at Dene Magna School (11–18 comprehensive) in the Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire. She regularly mentors trainees from the University of the West of England (Bristol) and the University of Gloucestershire.

There are two main issues that Lindsay is going to have to address with John. The first is that John cannot see the point of teaching Black British history, given the catchment of his school in Devon. She will therefore need to help him recognise the importance of teaching diverse histories. The second is John's lack of confidence in his subject knowledge. Here she needs to reassure him and help him to see that by creating new schemes of work rather than relying exclusively on enquiries previously developed by the department, his subject knowledge will improve rapidly.

IF I WERE JOHN'S MENTOR, I WOULD DO THE FOLLOWING:

1. **Address John's reluctance to teach diverse history in a rural location.** The lack of diversity in the *local* community makes it even more important for history teachers to make clear the different kinds of connections that there have been over time between Britain and the wider world and the ways in which those connections have been reflected in the diverse range of people living in Britain over time. This will allow his students to make sense of Britain's current diversity, preparing them for interactions with the wider range of people they may meet in future. Ask John to read Catherine Priggs's article 'No more "doing" diversity: how one department used Year 8 input to reform curricular thinking about content choice' in *Teaching History 179*. Discuss the different arguments outlined for teaching more diverse histories: how do Priggs's arguments go beyond the idea of students needing to 'see themselves' in the curriculum?

2. **Find the local links.** Ask John to create one overview lesson on migration in Devon using the timeline found at: www.tellingourstoriesdevon.org.uk/latest/devon-timeline
While he might feel safer just dealing with the Tudor and Stuart periods, give him the option, at least, of using the entire timeline to present a broader view of migration to and from Devon. This would encourage both John and his students to see wider connections over time to their particular region. They may recognise nearby place names, or names of individuals such as Pocahontas which would draw them in to the topic.

3. **Give John a narrower focus on the Early Modern period.** Since he is worried about being out of his depth, give him the chance to tackle a specific issue – such as Elizabethan exploration, with a particular focus on John Hawkins who came from Plymouth. This would provide a point of connection to the previous overview, as Hawkins obviously features in the Devon timeline. Encourage John to use Hawkins's travels to explore Elizabethan connections with the wider world, perhaps by getting students to draw his voyages onto a map, demonstrating how Devon connects with other parts of England and with Europe, as well as with the wider world. Discuss how this focus could be connected to the school's existing scheme of work on the Spanish Armada and to later work on the transatlantic slave trade, thus fulfilling the requirement to look at change over time.

4. **Recommend that John read Robert Winder's book *Bloody Foreigners*.** Set a longer-term project for John to read this wide-ranging account of the diversity to be found within Britain at many points in time – ask him to identify two or three other points where different stories could be woven into the existing curriculum to give students a richer sense of their 'island story'.

Next issue's problem:

Jaya Desai is struggling to see beyond the tightly regimented teaching strategies that have recently been adopted in her current school. For details of his mentor's problem, email: martin.hoare@history.org.uk
Responses are invited from mentors and trainers of trainee history teachers.
Responses for the September edition must be received by 30 July 2021.
John and Jaya are both fictional characters. Thanks to Katharine Burn, Department of Education, University of Oxford, for devising the Move Me On problem.



Mummy, mummy why is everyone in the south waving?

Not now dear, Mummy is horizontal in a darkened room, recovering from something called TAGs, a seemingly innocuous little mouse of a word for such a huge, great mammoth exercise that has never…

Oh Mummy for goodness sake stop moaning and tell me the answer. I need to know about the people in the south who are waving from a 14-foot carriage with silver wheels and seven tiers studded with twenty thousand precious stones. Apparently two white elephants pulled it and it was in an aviary and…

Ah, I think you are talking about the kingdom of Ava, dear. The carriage that was stolen during the first Anglo-Burmese war and taken to London in 1826. It is described in a book by Sujit Sivasundarum called *Waves Across the South: a new history of revolution and empire*.

So who was doing the waving?

No one. 'Waves' in the title means two things. First, it means waves of revolution or general tumult. Many of us use the phrase 'the age of revolutions' to refer to the period Sivasundarum covers (1790s to 1850s) and we have in mind such things as republicanism, nationalism, political upheavals and so forth, all in the northern hemisphere. But Sivasundaram is writing about upheavals and movements for change along the coasts and islands of the Indian and Pacific oceans. So 'waves' also means the waves of the southern oceans. Sivasundarum tells the story through the perspectives of Burmese, Malays, Mauritians and Aboriginal Australians and of the seafaring peoples of the Persian Gulf, the Bay of Bengal, southern India, Singapore, Indonesia, Tonga and New Zealand.

That's a lot of people for one book! Does it have good stories?

Yes. It has small stories (like the one about the carriage with twenty thousand jewels which British forces, marching up the Dawei River, seized from Ava) woven into big stories. And it is action-packed. Sivasundarum tells stories of numerous groups who were responding to developments both at home and globally. Some of the 'waves' of revolution were furthered by men, women and ideas being shipped in from Europe, some were home-grown and some were reactions to British, French or Dutch colonists. Sivasundarum tells stories of peoples of colour asserting their place and driving reform but then thwarted by European imperialism. 'This in the end,' Sivasundaram argues, 'was the tragedy of the mid-19th century.'

But weren't some waves in the north like these waves in the south? What about the Haitian success against the French?

Ah, now there you have an example of fascinating connections. The Kingitanga (king movement) appointed the first Māori king in the late 1850s, opposed the British takeover of their ancestral lands and declared its own boundaries in 1858. Sivasundarum tells how the Haitian revolution became a point of reference for the Kingitanga movement. The Haitian Revolution was interpreted from a Māori worldview: Haitians had built a *pa* (fortification) on a hill, from where they had flown their *kara* (flag), calling the French to attack them. They described how the *runanga* (councils) of Haiti worked for the good of the island. So, you see, Sivasundarum surfaces the Māori and Pacifica political vocabularies that were used to interpret events on the other side of the world. This is what I mean by seeing it through their perspectives. And there now you've got me going and it's time for bed. Run along now…

Mummy, is it true that the pursuit of theory in education is the pursuit of a chimera?

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Teacher Fellowship Programme
The People of 1381



We are pleased to re-open applications for a fully-funded programme focused on developing the teaching of medieval history and the history of revolt, popular protest, power and the people, in partnership with The People of 1381 (www.1381.online/) project team. With an emphasis on sustained professional development, the HA Teacher Fellowship Programme aims to bring teachers up to date with the latest historical research and how to apply this in their teaching.

The project is focused on revealing new insights into the diverse range of people who played a part in the Peasants' Revolt of 1381, and will give us more detail on the lives of 'ordinary' people in the later Middle Ages. This programme will allow access to the new database being created, and to see at first hand how a major, multi-institution project is configured. It will also help participants to work with medieval primary sources (in translation) and draw on their professional expertise in creating teaching resources that will be of use in the classroom. Find out more about the project and its activities at www.1381.online/media/

The course will be led by Helen Snelson and participants will work closely with the 1381 project team: Professor Adrian Bell (Reading), Professor Anne Curry (Southampton), Professor Andrew Prescott (Glasgow), Dr Helen Lacey (Oxford), Dr Helen Killick (Oxford) and Dr Herbert Eiden (Reading).

The programme will provide the opportunity for teachers to carry out their own research into an aspect of the history of the 1381 uprising and create original learning resources to be published on the HA website, which will support the teaching of medieval history and the history of revolts.

What's involved?

The course structure is split into four stages:

1. Three-day residential **6–8 January 2022 at Mansfield College, University of Oxford.**
2. An online course from **February to end March 2022.**
3. A one-day workshop to explore and agree course outcomes in **April 2022.**
4. Development of a classroom resource on teaching 1381 and popular protest.

Participants will be assessed and awarded a Historical Association Teacher Fellowship on the successful creation of a resource for the benefit of other teachers, by autumn 2022.

Am I eligible to apply?

The programme is open to all UK history teachers with a minimum of three years' experience of teaching history. Applications are open to all who fit the above criteria, but please note that greater weight will be given to those from state-funded schools.

You must be able to attend the residential on 6–8 January 2022. Accommodation and travel will be funded.

How to apply

Application forms, guidance and further information are available to download on the HA website:

www.history.org.uk/go/HATF-people-1381



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