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VISUAL LITERACY: LEARNING THROUGH PICTURES AND IMAGES

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Cover image
An illustration of Notre Dame (LP94.12) by Quentin Blake
— from ‘The Hunchback of Notre Dame’ by Victor Hugo,
Image courtesy of and © Quentin Blake.
Introduction
Look closely at picture A. As an historian or history educator:

- What questions does the portrait raise in your mind?
- What messages does the artist intend to convey?
- How does the artist convey those messages to the intended audience?
- What might have been the circumstances under which the painting was created?
- How does the picture relate to the cultural, social, political and religious contexts of Tudor England which influenced its creation?
- What is the value of the picture as a source of historical evidence?
- And, as historical evidence, what clues does it contain to answer the questions that you raised?

Finally, how, using the picture as a starting point, would you pursue the historical enquiry which it has triggered off?

Collingwood argued that questions like these are the driving engine of historical enquiry (Collingwood, 1949). Collingwood was the inspiration behind the Schools Council History Project, 13-16. The project headed the ‘New History’ revolution in History Education in England from the 1970s that transformed history teaching in the United Kingdom. Also, Collingwood wrote a fascinating book on Art (Collingwood, 1958). Nothing can provide as direct and positive an impact upon young minds as the visual image, either alone or when combined with other media in the form of distinct, multi-modal genres (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2001). History academia provides knowledge and understanding of picture’s like A’s artistic, cultural and historical context. Understanding of its potential pedagogic role and significance is the province of education scholarship, research & development (Cooper, 2002, Turner-Bisset, 2004). Effective, expert teaching and learning using a picture like A relies both upon what can be learnt from case-studies of classroom teaching and learning and the wealth of professional experience that the teacher brings to the planning and execution of each lesson (Fines & Nichol, 1997, pp. 132-36).

Academic Scholarship, Research and Applied Knowledge
Each edition of Primary History attempts to bridge academic subject scholarship, educational scholarship, research & development and the classroom. Visual Literacy is a crucial meeting point for these
three elements. The visual dimension is a fundamental aspect of learning whose important is highlighted in the digital, image and iconic driven world of the 21st century. Also, the visual is a mode of representation and human interaction that is as old as Homo Sapiens. The non verbal channel of communication is of paramount importance through facial expression, posture, gesture, movement and artefacts – be they clothes, make-up, jewellery, personal adornment, furniture, furnishings, buildings and other elements that make up the picture's context (Argyle, 1967). We are drenched in a multi-visual multi-modal culture in which the image is paramount. When the latest technology arrives with a set of instructions that consists of no words, only pictures and diagrams, then the extent to which iconography dominates our lives becomes apparent. Or, in the case of a half-assembled shed, non-working computer or unstable greenhouse with a number of left over bits and pieces, it is stark testimony to the importance of visual literacy in the modern world for a grumpy old man remaindered from the previous century.

**Imagery in the 16th, 19th and 21st centuries**

The dominance of imagery in our modern world was brought home to me by a comment in a book on Victorian Britain that the only knowledge that most of our Victorian ancestors had of places they had not visited was through the medium of the picture postcard. Or, the total control over visual images as a weapon of propaganda, political and religious indoctrination that 16th century rulers, including Queen Elizabeth and her ministers exerted, see picture A, made those images an exclusive tool of the state. Cranach's illustrations of the 1522 Lutheran Bible, Holbein's title-page engraving for the 1535 Coverdale Bible and the harrowing illustrations in Foxe's Book of Martyrs are powerful testimony to the power of the visual image. Today we not only have the richness of the printed medium but also the amazing windows into other worlds that the internet provides – type the name of any place in the world into google and you can literally be visually transported there. Indeed, almost every hotel in the world now enables you to tour its rooms, to view its surroundings and even witness through the moving image what living in it is like. History Education develops pupils' Visual Literacy as much as part of their overall education as a tool for historical learning. Visual Literacy has been recognised as a seminal element in History Education since the 1970s: notably in Pat Hoodless excellent and comprehensive volume (1998).

**Visual Literacy: Theory and Practice**

Academic and pedagogic scholarship is the bedrock upon which effective teaching is based: it provides us with the hard core of theory and scholarship in which effective teaching is rooted, i.e. to teach a topic you have to know something [facts – propositional or substantive knowledge] and you have to know how [skills, concepts, protocols and processes – procedural or syntactic knowledge] (Rogers, 1979; Shulman, 1986, 1987). Tacit or explicit theories can take many shapes and forms in their impact upon pedagogic [teaching] knowledge, from general ideas down to the specific hypothesis that can be applied in the classroom. Concerning Visual Literacy three theories of current relevance are Jerome Bruner's theory of iconic, enactive and symbolic knowledge representation, Gombrich's analysis of Form and Function in art and genre theory (Bruner, 1966; Gombrich, 1999; Halliday and Martin, 1993). Their ideas resonate through this volume.

**Jerome Bruner: Iconic, enactive and symbolic representation**

Bruner's theory of cognitive development argues that there are three modes of learning: through activity and actions, enactive learning, visual images and imagery – iconic learning and words and symbols: symbolic learning, figure 1. Bruner's modes of learning are only loosely related to Piagetian phases of cognitive development. In terms of language, cognitive tools and knowledge representation, Bruner argues that there is a human evolutionary developmental sequence that is mirrored in the enactive, iconic and symbolic modes of learning. A central feature of iconic-enactive-symbolic learning is the relationship between the three.

Crucially, knowledge is deepened and enhanced through the cognitive demands of problem-solving and critical thinking required by translation and transformation from one mode to another. Turning pictures [icons] into words [symbols] or drama, role-play or physical representation [enactments], and vice versa has been a central element in engaging pupils with visual images since the 1970s.

Translation and Transformation between modes is a powerful tool/model for enriching teaching and learning. It immediately makes the visual accessible to all children – at its simplest pupils can create a comic strip of scenes in stories such as Theseus and the Minotaur. Or when we have a vivid contemporary written description of Queen Elizabeth pupils can extract from it the elements to

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**Figure 1 – The Links Between Iconic, Symbolic And Enactive Learning**

[Diagram showing the relationships between Iconic, Symbolic, and Enactive Literacy]

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*Primary History / Summer 2008 / The Historical Association*
build up a picture of her: colours, shapes, costume, facial and bodily features: hair/hands/head/body/legs/feet and messages about her personality that the source conveys. Using this information they can produce their own annotated portrait, using if necessary an outline or template. There are thousands of ways in which translation / transformation from the symbolic, enactive and iconic to the other modes can enrich pupil learning.

**Gombrich – Form and Function**

Bruner's theory maps on to Gombrich's pioneering work on the relationship between Form and Function in art, opens up a new world for History educators by him asking psychological questions:

- How does an artist make you think that what appears on a two dimensional medium represents a three dimensional reality from another time and place?
- How does the function [purpose] of a piece of art determine its form?

The form/function dichotomy leads to the active involvement of children in Visual Images as evidence. They have to read the visual source: Visual Literacy requires them to look closely at what were the circumstances in which the picture was created, who created it and with what purpose. Nowhere was this more brilliantly, elegantly and convincingly shown than in Quentin Blake's exhibition *Tell Me a Picture* at the National Gallery in 2000-1. In *The Uses of Images* Gombrich meets the issue head on: the implications of what he writes are profound for History pedagogy when using visual images with children.

...to take an obvious example: a state portrait will differ in medium, format and posture from a portrait caricature and that, in form and spirit according to its social function.

(Gombrich, 1999, p. 8)

The power of Gombrich's thinking is most clearly seen when working with children upon *The Armada Portrait of Queen Elizabeth*, see illustration A. The picture drips with power and purpose, each element is carefully crafted and constructed to convey a particular message.

**Genre Theory**

Bruner’s and Gombrich’s thinking dovetails with a third, powerful way of using pictures to stimulate, enrich, entertain and, supremely, to educate children: genre theory. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy heightened every educationalist's awareness of the role of genre in learning, re-treading the ground Bullock had cleared with such conspicuous success in the 1970s. Through working alongside David Wray who developed Writing Frames I was made aware of the role of genre theory in creating Functional Literacy, originally in Australia. Functional Literacy treats all form of communication as having its own, distinct genre with a specific intent or purpose, i.e. function. A genre consists of four interlocked elements:

1. **The voice [register]**. This voice consists of the relationship between the author and the intended audience. As such, the dominant element is the author, and the influences that shape and form his work in relation to the intended function. Collingwood, the inspiration of the revolution in History teaching in England since 1970, as a child lived in a house full of professional artists. He expresses the vital role of the authorial voice:

   ‘I was constantly watching the work of my father and mother, and the other professional painters who frequented their home, and constantly trying to imitate them; so that I learnt to think of a picture not as a finished product exposed for the admiration of virtuosi, but as the visible record, lying about the house, of an attempt to solve a definite problem in painting, so far as the attempt has gone.’

   (Collingwood, 1958)

2. **The Form [which the genre takes]**

   There are thousands of literary and visual genres, each made up of multiple components. The form consists of conventions which give the form its identifying characteristic, be it Holbein's Tudor state portrait of Henry VIII or Bryan Organ’s portrait of Princess Diana.

3. **The Content**. The content of the genre: again this can involve multiple factors and coded messages

4. **Culture**. The cultural ambience which defines the image within its wider context.

Genre theory is a powerful medium for understanding pupil interpretation of images and their creation of it. Indeed, Visual Literacy is as complex, multiple and varied as the Symbolic Literacy of the National Literacy Strategy.

**Conclusion**

This edition of *Primary History: Visual Literacy* bears eloquent testimony to the power of pictures and images in developing pupils' visual literacy. History Education is a highly effective tool for learning: it provides an exciting, stimulating and rewarding context for developing an awareness of self and identity; the high level thinking skills, protocols, processes and concepts and the values and beliefs needed for active citizenship in a pluralist democracy in the 21st century.

**References**


Gombrich’s *Illusion and Reality* (1960)


Rogers, P.J. (1979) *The New History: Theory into Practice*, Historical Association


When, at your invitation, I bring together the words ‘History’ and ‘Illustration’, two images spring immediately to mind. One is John Leech’s illustrations to *The Comic History of England* (1847-1848); the other is the drawings that Ronald Searle brought back from being a prisoner of war of the Japanese a hundred years later. I am not sure why I think of these, in some apparently random fashion, and, as I know nothing about the teaching of history, I don’t know if any use can be made of them; what they do exemplify, at least, is two different approaches. Leech is re-enactment, an imaginative involvement; in this case made memorable by comedy, though any other mood is possible – elegantly romantic, for instance, as in Boutet de Monvel’s fine illustrations to the story of Joan of Arc. Searle, by contrast, is the artist as witness – in his case, a young artist in the most appalling of circumstances and presented with the most challenging of subjects. War offers droves of examples, from the benevolent Ardizzzone in the Second World War to the acerbic Otto Dix, with his terrifying postcards from the front, in the First. Added to the visual qualities of all these works is their authenticity, their immediacy. The artist was there. (In this context there’s a valuable book by the late Paul Hogarth — *The Artist as Reporter* — and of course the Imperial War Museum has enormous holdings of both printed and original material.)

Illustration has incomparable abilities to show us what former times looked like. If you want to know what a journey from London to Southampton was like in the late 18th century, Rowlandson can do it for you; or to get a sense of dawn in the streets of London in the 19th century, George Cruikshank is your man.

As everybody knows, the pages of ancient volumes of *Punch* are a valuable source for researching appearances and attitudes; though sometimes I find all that cross-hatching a bit lowering to the spirits, and the attitudes, after the first few years, resolutely bourgeois. More mental and visual stimulation is to be found, I think, in those illustrated magazines like *Le Rire* and *L’Assiette au Beurre* which flourished in Paris at the end of the 19th century. There we can find other views of, say, the Boer War or what the English looked like — and portrayals of Queen Victoria unlike any to be seen in London at the time.

It’s to help make everyone aware of this rich — though not always readily available — heritage of illustration, from the illuminations in medieval manuscripts to the cartoons in yesterday’s newspapers, that some of us are at work in the attempt to set up a Museum of Illustration. The museum hopes to find a home in the great King’s Cross redevelopment before too long, but its exhibitions and activities have already begun. One of them perhaps has some relevance to the history situation: a project in collaboration with Land Securities and Prince Charles’s Arts & Kids foundation in which a number of schools drew their town or city — the people, the architecture, the occupations, and, by implication, their own history. It had, I believe, the advantage of being a specific illustration task, with a brief and a deadline and the motivating consciousness that the work was to be looked at outside the classroom. This is the young artist as recorder, as witness; and once you have with concentration drawn that face, that costume, that façade, you really begin to possess it and know something about it.

The other approach, which observation doesn’t preclude, is of imaginative depiction. In the 19th century, visual reporters were called ‘Special Artists.’ Perhaps we can envisage a class of our own special artists bringing back their reports from the past.

Quentin Blake is an artist and distinguished illustrator of children’s books, notably those of Roald Dahl. He was the Children’s Laureate from 2000-01.
in my view

USING PICTURES

— John Fines

Introduction
Children grow up surrounded by pictures – moving pictures on the TV, still advertisements on hoardings, pictures in newspapers and magazines and comic books. ‘The media’ are ever present, and so we assume that our children are visually literate - wise eyed. When we see them flicking through books ‘looking at the pictures’ we assume they are taking the easy option, doing something they all can do. Yet when you question children about what they have seen they often enough are unable either to remember what they have seen or to comment on it. The images have passed by, passed on, have never been held still for long enough to take a concentrated, analytical and critical view.

Teaching visual skills: pictures as sources
We need to teach visual skills to our children, and to do that we must start using pictures in a special way – not as illustrations to our text, but as sources in their own right. We must also give children reasons for looking, and ways of looking, for both of these need learning.

Beginnings – challenge and mystery
As so often in the business of teaching there are no correct obvious answers, and often one must use seemingly perverse techniques. If I want to teach children to want to look (the first step in the process) I do not make it easy for them. Maybe I have the picture covered, or wrapped, or face to the wall and spend a lot of time building up to its revelation, so that after a while the children are almost pleading to see it. Sometimes I will choose a picture that is hard to see – small, dim, dirty, one which you really have to screw up your eyes to see. In such circumstances I might give special permissions: ‘If you think you can see something no one else has yet seen, you can come out to the front to examine the picture closely.’ I might also have a magnifying glass which I am willing to loan to someone who might just find something new – a magnifying glass confers expertise on the user, you become Sherlock Holmes at once.

I have, on occasions been thoroughly mean and only allowed the children a fast glimpse of the picture, to force them to look hard and quickly. I recall the first time I used this technique, with a small leaf from a 15th century Flemish book of hours. I said to the children that as it was a kind
of magic to see what someone saw 500 years ago, we
would look at it in a magic way – just glimpsing it. After
I had flashed the picture, at great speed, they all told me
what they had seen – loads of things – sheep, washing
on a line, birds – children have good eyes. But one small
girl proclaimed she had seen a bicycle. This caused a great
hubbub as most of the children had at least a rough idea
of the impossibility of this (and I was mystified). So I said
that it was just possible that some medieval Fleming had
invented a bicycle and that it hadn’t taken on, and it had
to be reinvented later. So pro tem we would have another
brief glimpse, but this time the task would be harder: you
had to confirm what you had seen, see what someone else
had seen, see something new and look for the bicycle. They
saw lots more, and this time thirteen saw the bicycle. I was
baffled and had to discard the device and say ‘show me’
– there at the top of the picture, in a cartouche no bigger
than a little finger nail, roughly sketched in grey were the
two spoked wheels of the chariot of the sun.

**Entering and exploring: bringing to life**

Once one has got them wanting to look, one must turn
to devices for helping them enter the picture and explore.
Usually the picture will be too intense, too demanding in
its business, too implacably alien for the children to be able
to make their own entry, so the teacher must help. Very
simple things work wonders – ‘How many men and how
many women can you see?’ is a quick way to say, here’s a
way of looking. As we count the different jewels on Queen
Elizabeth’s dress we are scanning the surface of the picture,
we are usefully active, and we are already beginning to
think – if only to say ‘does she wear these every day?’ The
questions that arise from the preliminary scan of the whole
surface of the picture are often the way in to the next layer
of investigation.

There are many such devices. I will ask the children, for
example, to reconstruct the palette of the artist who painted
the picture, and perhaps move into speculating on his
favourite colours. I might ask ‘Was the sitter pleased with his
portrait?’ (Churchill wasn’t and I guess that’s true of many).
Looking at a wild American landscape I would get children
to speculate with me where to build our settler’s hut.
Looking at any scene I might ask what was going on beyond
its edges – to the sides, above, below. I recall with great
pleasure some children in Northern Ireland constructing with
me the whole household that surrounded Hogarth’s ‘The
Graham Children’, from parents to one side whispering
noisily ‘Sit still’ to the butler entering with a tray of sweets
as a reward, and if I remember rightly me with my bucket
trying to clean the windows.

Another approach is to bring a picture alive by asking the
children to supply additional ‘before’ and ‘after’ pictures. I
often use an old engraving of ‘When did you last see your
father?’ for this, and, like so many of the Victorian narrative
pictures it turns into a film quite easily.

One profoundly beautiful entry point to a picture was
given me by God one day when I had been hired to make
a film for ILEA on using difficult manuscripts with clever
sixth formers. I prepared sheaves of documents on the life
of Strafford, and at the last minute thrust in a slide of the
Petworth Van Dyke portrait. On the day all was ready when
the wrong children arrived – a group of illiterate fifth formers
who were not doing examinations and who were very cross
at missing their lunch and sweltered in the Tube en
route to me. They really couldn’t read, I was sweetly assured
by the accompanying teacher, and to this day I am looking
for the person who gave her instructions. So I put the slide
on and asked them ‘Could you trust this man?’ – a question
God popped into my mind at that moment because He was
sorry. (His jokes are ever dreadful, but His compensation is
full to overflowing). The children argued and peered, argued
some more, asked me to tell them about the man (and to a
child when I got to the point of Charles signing the death
warrant, they chorused ‘the BASTARD’) they argued some
more, and looked and looked, and finally begged to take the
documents away, confident they would find people to read
to them.

**Working in depth**

Having got children to walk into the picture, using whatever
key might come to hand, one must now give them the rights
of exploring and surveying what is there. Often again this
can be done on a very simple mechanistic basis – ‘Let’s look
at clothing – you two concentrate on hats, you three on
children’s clothes, you four on ladies dresses...’ and so on. I
get children to take notes by drawing (and often by drawing
in a specifically enlarged format) what they see. Drawing
slows you down, gives you time to look, to notice, and it
helps you decide that you have got something to say and
how to say it. Really there is a good book to be written on
slowing children down to the rate at which they can learn
effectively.

**Key question**

The key question at this stage, after we have reported on
‘what is there?’ is to ask ‘what is the difference between
then and now?’ Now this is not an invitation to scorn the
past and praise the present: the best breakdown for ‘what’s
the difference’ questions is to say ‘what do they have which
we lack, what do we have that they lacked, what do we
share?’ An enormous amount of list-making will now ensue
and the teacher must be patient at this stage, not quite
sharing the total collectomania of the children, but always
ready to help the children categorise the list of what they
have found – lists can only come to life and be of use if they
begin to dance under headings – headings are ideas, and
here we are closer to the heart of understanding, of reading
the picture.

**The artist/photographer’s perspective**

Our final explorations must be of the vision of the artist
or photographer who created the picture. Why was the
subject posed that way, dressed that way, set against such
a background? What is the message of the picture, what is
the artist trying to tell us? Why does he/she see the world
in this way, so different, perhaps from the way we see it?
What does all this tell us about them in their time, and the
ways they thought? Can we step back into their shoes for a
moment and see just the possibility of a different vision?

**John Fines** was president of The Historical Association,
co-director of The Nuffield Primary History Project
and a visiting professor at Exeter University.
I don’t think our problem is using visual sources in history. In fact, we are always using pictures, photographs and the moving image in our teaching. In practically every theme, there is something that can be described as visual but when I add up what we do, there does seem to be an issue of what we use and the way we use them. I am sure there is a greater variety of visual sources than those we use and I am even more convinced that we can do rather more than use the image as stimulus or to aid simple comprehension. What are we doing wrong?

Introduction
You identify two valid concerns that are commonplace in primary history – the range and the use and both have a similar weakness, a degree of sameness of approach. This can lead to an issue of progression if the same types of sources are being used with older children as with the younger ones especially when asked to do similar things with them.

You do recognise that the visual image is important. It can convey impressions in a way that a thousand words cannot. There is also plenty of evidence that pupils are motivated by pictorial images but this has to be accompanied by the question, “but what have they learnt?”

The range of visual sources
A huge range of sources come under the broad heading of visual sources – both 2-D and 3-D and it may be useful to carry out a quick audit on how far some of the following are used, with which pupils and what kind of activities are carried out with them. For example, does the school make use of many of the following?

- paintings of people, places and events,
- drawings and diagrams including annotated drawings, graphs, charts and family trees;
- photographs and film,
- cartoons,
- memorials, gravestones, inscriptions and statues;
- maps and plans;
- engravings and woodcuts,
- advertisements,
- ceramics,
- jewellery,
- stamps and coins,
- textiles,
- costumes,
- architecture,
- sculpture.

And, if they are not used, is this an issue of accessibility? If so, the remedy is at hand through typing the type of image into google images: a plethora of sources that can be downloaded and used immediately becomes available.

Topics and the range of visual images
Some topics lend themselves to particular images. For example, you might find for ancient civilisations, Egyptian paintings, friezes, pyramids, tombs, treasures, Greek sculptures, ceramics and architecture such as the Parthenon and Doric columns, Benin’s terracotta and bronze work, Roman architecture such as the Coliseum, Pompeii, town designs, dwelling houses, temples and mosaics.

Already popular for the Tudor period are the portraits, family scenes, architecture and costumes. This is an ideal theme to investigate symbolism and distortion such as Holbein’s Ann of Cleves or the famous picture of Mary Queen of Scots which turns into a death’s head when viewed from a different angle.

The range widens further in Victorian and more recent times. Apart from Victorian architecture including the Gothic revival, industrial “palaces” and stained glass, there is a huge range of images that can be probed for specific bias including the idealised pictures of the countryside, imperial splendour and the images of industrialisation. The works of William Morris and Pre-Raphaelites are just some that are readily accessible. From this period, one can also delve into photographs, memorials, comics, postcards and advertising posters; supplemented as time progresses by a greater range of emblems and moving images.

Teaching and Learning – tasks and activities
Higher and lower order task and activities
Such a range opens up a huge variety of lower and higher-order tasks. One school has
completed a guidance sheet on some useful activities that help access the key concepts and ideas of history. These include:

- annotating, providing captions and producing “speech bubbles”;
- acting out scenes or assuming an in-role identity; identifying the sounds, smells and tastes in picture; frieze framing and discussing the significance or viewpoints of events depicted in images;
- discussing change, similarity and differences such as “then and now” comparisons of pictorial images;
- describing/drawing “before” and “after” scenes of a specific image ideally based on some investigation;
- highlighting parts of a visual source that helps explain a key concept such as change, continuity, change or where something is designed to represent a particular viewpoint;
- taking a theme such as children, costume or buildings and discussing change, similarity, difference and progress across time with reasons for the changes and the impact of the changes or alternatively comparing images of the same person or place at different times;
- discussing ways in which images can be used to influence others or producing a pictorial image to represent a particular standpoint or view or making deductions about the beliefs and values of the producer of the source;
- sorting images into categories devised by the pupils themselves;
- using visual evidence to compile a narrative or description;
- inferring the possible impact of a scene shown in a visual source;
- comparing the value of different sources including different sources including different visual sources such as discussing whether a photograph is better than a painting or whether a film is more helpful for an investigation than a photograph or whether some sources such as cartoons or biased paintings are helpful to an enquiry. It can also include comparing visual sources with eyewitness accounts and why there might be differences.

**Classroom pedagogy – asking questions**

Another school devised a prompt sheet to help pupils when asking about a visual image such as a painting or a photograph. It contained questions such as:

- What do I see and feel? (As a whole and in detail, eg. foreground and background? What can I see in different parts of the image? What emotional impact does it have? Does it have the same impact after knowing more about the theme?)
- What questions do I wish to ask about this source?
- Why was it produced? (Who was the audience? Where would it be seen and by whom? Was it intended to be decorative? Commemorative? Persuasive? Commercial? Emotive? What do we know about the author/compiler?)
- How has it influenced me? (What has been the role of colour, texture, shape, movement, use of space and patterns? What has been framed? What has been missed out? How has it been posed? Does the location of display make a difference?)
- How useful is this as evidence? (What is it evidence of? How does it compare and contrast with other sources about this issue? How might different people have interpreted this?)
- How does it help me understand the content of the source? (How does it contribute to an understanding of the theme or age? How useful is it for a particular enquiry? What does it tell me about the compiler?).

Many of these questions were initially daunting for the primary age pupils and it may be better to simplify such a list but the school using it found that the pupils developed much better visual literacy through constant reinforcement and embedding.

**Conclusion**

All this is a long way from simple drawing or comprehending visual images. In a world which is increasingly visual, however, it is important to consider history’s role in developing this competence amongst our pupils.

**Tim Lomas** is Principal School Improvement Adviser, Lincolnshire School Improvement Service and Deputy President of the HA
Whenever I look at an old sepia photograph or one of those amazing 19th century genre pictures like William Powell Frith’s *Ramsgate Sands*, it is not the immediate images that grab my attention. Although the detail is often remarkable, in the case of *Ramsgate Sands* the attentive mother gently introducing her over-dressed child to the water or the seaside entertainer with his cluster of performing mice, it is the notion that these pictures can be viewed as frozen moments in time, part of a continuing narrative of life and action. Visual images evoke the past because they have the power to hold time in suspension, an image sustained ad infinitum. After one of my standard teaching sessions on *Using Photographs* a postgraduate teacher trainee brought in to show me a battered black and white photo of, what appeared to be, a family working in a garden. A teenage boy was wielding a fork and smiling into the camera, a woman in a housecoat was on her hands and knees deep in a flower-bed, whilst a toddler sat on the lawn appearing to be eating earth. It was only the fact that there was an Anderson Shelter prominent in the left hand corner that hinted at the fact that this was a picture from the Second World War. However, the photo gathered meaning when the student explained that these people were all members of his family. The teenage boy was his grandfather, the woman on her hands and knees his great-grandmother and the toddler was his great aunt who never reached maturity because she had died when a doodlebug made a direct hit on the house in 1944. The student was able to recount these times from the stories his grandfather had told him and it was the ‘frozen moment’ that provided the evidence.

The idea of the pictorial image being one part of a continuing story is not a new idea. For many years now ‘story boarding’ and ‘event framing’ have been used in schools to help children organise and rationalise their narratives. They provide ‘markers’ which help them order and sequence the passing of time and can give particular insights into chronology and significance. I was in a school recently where Florence Nightingale’s life was being discussed by six year olds in preparation for them making a pictorial event frame showing the five most important moments in her life. The drawing of the pictures not only established the narrative but also helped the children decide what to put in and, perhaps more importantly, what to leave out of Florence’s biography.

Some years ago I carried out a teaching project in conjunction with the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford to create stories from some of their historical genre pictures. My history education students all chose a picture to ‘narrate’. The idea was that they would select one person from the picture and then, costumed as the character, be questioned by children in order to discover how they came to be in the picture at that frozen moment in time. The Ashmolean were most co-operative in the project allowing the students to appear in front of the pictures thus giving the activity an authentic yet somewhat surreal context. I remember one particular student choosing a rather desolate 17th century Dutch landscape by Salomon van Ruysdael showing a girl standing in a pond with a motley collection of pigs. A group of villagers are watching her. The student dressed as the pig-girl wore a long skirt, bob bonnet and genuine clogs! The picture is an enigmatic image and was well-chosen by the student for it provoked many questions from the children: Where are you taking the pigs? Are you lost? Do you know these people? Why are you sad? It was fascinating to see the children constantly scanning and searching the picture to generate questions for the character. The student’s presence seemed to give a veracity to the picture, all the children accepted it was ‘real’ and ‘from a long time ago’ and that she was speaking as someone from those times. In discussing the project with the children afterwards it was clear that they had gained a real flavour of 17th century rural life. Greta (she tending the pigs) had done her homework carefully and constructed a charming story about a market, a wrong track and a pig called Hans. More than that the children began to appreciate something of the nature of the visual image when imagining the past. Two quotes from the children: “when the people were acting they were like they were somebody in the picture, it was like the picture had come alive” and “the picture had stopped the story but the actor made it carry on…”.

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Introduction
Although I have always been fascinated by history and almost took it as my major subject at university, I have to admit that the bulk of my ‘knowledge’ about historical people and events was shaped from an early age by what I gleaned from the cinema. Admittedly, this has led at times to a subsequent need to revise my initial beliefs that Errol Flynn single-handedly drove the Japanese out of Burma after having previously led the Charge of the Light Brigade at Balaklava and defeated Sitting Bull and the might of the Sioux nation at the Battle of the Little Big Horn, but it also led to me wanting to find out more about why and where and how those events took place and even why Hollywood could get it so wrong. Despite such obvious limitations, I have long believed that films (and television) can bring history to life in a unique way that can capture and retain the imagination of even fairly young children, either in illustrating lessons introduced by their teachers or as stimuli for further exploration of particular themes.

Learning History through Film
Although some of my earliest memories of films with an historical theme date back to my primary school years, their images have stayed with me ever since. David Lean’s ‘Oliver Twist’, for example, raised all sorts of questions in my young mind about what it must have been like to be poor in Victorian times, long before I was able to sample Dickens’ original novel. The same director’s ‘Great Expectations’ similarly brought to life the contrast between the lifestyles of rich and poor in those times whilst emphasising the importance of moral values as standards by which to judge one’s life, no matter what the era. I remember also at the age of eight being transfixed by a poster that our teacher had pinned up, depicting two warriors in combat, whom she told us were Achilles and Hector at the battle of Troy. This led to a lifelong fascination with Greek myths which I believe would have been enhanced even more at the time by the opportunity of watching Achilles and Hector battle it out in the cinema version of ‘Troy’. Whilst the computerised graphics of ‘Gladiator’ make that a very enjoyable spectacle for young and not-so-young boys, the similar, but far superior, ‘Spartacus’ raises for the history teacher the perfect opportunity to explore the nature of slavery and the foundations upon which the Roman and Greek ‘civilisations’ were built.

Someone once wrote that if a picture is worth a thousand words, then a motion picture must be worth a million, because it displays words in action. Movies as history can be extremely effective because, whilst words require a level of concentration beyond some young (and not so young) children, it is difficult to miss the messages conveyed by a motion picture as it illustrates an historical period or event – the historical message, the background, the setting, language and incidental details. This is not to suggest that such depictions should be presented as true, despite their often highly persuasive nature. Despite the kind of inaccuracies alluded to above, movies are not necessarily any more prone to untruths or propaganda than many so-called historical ‘records’. The only difference is that movies can be far more seductive in getting their messages across.

Thinking through Film
To my mind this can and should be seen as a productive stimulus by the creative history teacher because it provokes the need for pupils to reflect on what they are watching on the cinema or television screen and not to take anything for granted. Was General Custer an All-American hero and the Indians all ‘baddies’? Find out for homework! Did the siege of Troy really take place and if so, why? Was it really all for the love of a beautiful woman or might there have been other reasons? What happened afterwards and how do we know? Can we rely on poets like Homer to tell us what really happened in ancient times or is ‘The Odyssey’ just a story? Maybe all historical records are just stories. So what can we believe about what is written, as much as what we see on a screen? Does it matter who is telling the story? How can we know if something is true or not? What do we mean by evidence?

By taking such an approach, we can use any cinematic depiction of historical events as a stimulus for cognitive education in critical thinking. Even Tony Curtis learning the art of combat in ‘The Black Shield of Falworth’ can provoke a fascinating discussion about the weight of weapons and armour and the strength and training needed to wield them. There is a sense in which all films can be considered a form of historical representation. As such, our main task as educators is to provide our students with the skills to evaluate the relative worth of their historical messages. In accepting this premise, the difficulty for the Primary School teacher becomes one of how to identify and select films or passages from films that match the level of understanding of the pupils they teach. Whilst there is an enormous body of films that come immediately to mind as applicable to this approach with Secondary school or university students, identifying those suitable for the younger child is a trickier task.

Taking a thematic approach may be the most helpful starting point here. A deep and far-ranging discussion of aspects of war and its consequences, for example, can be examined in various fascinating ways by comparing, say, scenes from Chaplin’s ‘The Great Dictator’ with John Boorman’s autobiographical account of the blitz in ‘Hope and Glory’, Vittorio da Sica’s ‘Bicycle Thieves’ and Rene Clement’s ‘Forbidden Games’. The fact that one of these films is silent and the others were made at different times in different languages adds to the power of their messages rather than detracting from them.

Conclusion
What is being suggested here is not an easy option for the lazy teacher to switch on the DVD and sit back and relax; far from it. A great deal of extra (but enjoyable) work will be needed to seek out appropriate films, identify key scenes and build these into one’s curriculum planning. The results, I suggest, may well provide yet another opportunity for history to function as a transformational activity.

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— Bob Burden
Introduction
The employment of the visual image is a fascinating and exciting way to enable children to gain a glimpse into the past. It is problematic, however, in that such imagery is often an undervalued and under used resource by some primary practitioners. This article aims to provide practitioners with a quick and easy guide to how we can utilise this resource effectively within the primary classroom.

First things first, where can I obtain copies of suitable images?
The visual image is all around us: websites, magazines, movies and books are replete with them. They come in various shapes, sizes and colours and the main difficulty, it would seem, is knowing which ones to use and which ones to avoid. A good starting place to find images is 'Primary History’ itself which has for many years endeavoured to include usable images within its pages. In the modern era, the World Wide Web also provides a virtually unlimited source of images which with careful selection can be employed within your classroom. It is important to remember, though, that the images you employ do not have to be ‘old’. For example, to develop children’s skills of critical interpretation, I recently employed an image of David Beckham from his recent after shave campaign. I asked questions such as what was David trying to show through this image? What was he thinking when this image was taken? The children, to say the least, provided some very interesting answers, many including reference to Victoria Beckham, not all of which were complimentary!

How should I begin to employ the visual image in my classroom?
Employing the visual image can sometimes be difficult as children do need to develop the skills with which to interpret this valuable source of first-hand evidence. A fun way of developing these skills is to use the ‘Where’s Wally’ cartoon books; these actively encourage children to examine images in minute detail. I find that taking these books apart and laminating each page provides a useful and moreover permanent resource. You can start by using the questions provided by the book to encourage children to look more carefully at each image. After this children can be asked to quadrant the picture; that is split it into four segments, either mentally or physically through the use of a cardboard frame. They can then be asked a series of questions relating to each segment in turn. You might also ask your pupils to divide the picture in three sections, top middle and bottom. Children, tend to concentrate on the foreground of an image and often overlook what is happening in the background. By dividing the picture into these three sections you can encourage the children to ‘see’ that the background of an image is often as important, if not more important, than the foreground in terms of deciphering the true meaning of a picture. Another activity you might like to try to encourage close scrutiny of a visual image is ‘Kim’s Game’. To facilitate this activity you need to allow the children a short period of time to view a given image, say a minute, cover the image, and then ask a series of rapid fire questions that relate to the objects found in the picture. What your pupils will come to realise is that they can answer your questions much more quickly if they have a strategy for systematically exploring the images you provide them with. (Further activities may be found in Hughes, P. Cox, K. and Goddard, G. 2000 Primary History Curriculum Guide. London: Fulton).

How do I employ a historical image for the first time in my class?
A good place to start is to begin with a whole class lesson that introduces your pupils to an enlarged image in which there is a lot happening. Ideally, the image should contain people and be from the local area as these types of images provide a rich source of discussion. Images can easily be enlarged by using desktop publishing software and then displayed on your interactive smartboard. A small copy of the chosen image should be given to each child as this encourages them to look carefully at the image. You should commence your first lesson by telling a story about the image – one that encourages close observation and locates the scene in time and place. After the story has been told you should ask your pupils to formulate their own questions about the image encouraging them to move from closed questions through to evaluative ones.

Closed
How many people are in the picture?
How many houses can you see?

Open
Do you think that …?

Interpretive
What lesson do you think is taking place in this Victorian classroom?
From their appearance do you think that these children have been well cared for?

Evaluative
How would you feel if you were a child in this picture?
How reliable do you think this image is? Has it been staged?
Does this picture provide a truthful account?

Asking children to formulate their own questions about an image can provide a powerful means of assessing their understanding of the process of interpretation as well as their knowledge and understanding of the period that image relates to. The questions that children pose can then be answered by other pupils or indeed by future research using information books and the internet.

What do I do next, how can I move this activity forward?
When children are comfortable in using the visual image we need to encourage them to develop the skills of critical interpretation. “History is an evidence-based, problem solving
discipline’ (Nuffield Primary History) and the visual image either in isolation or in conjunction with other sources of evidence is an excellent method of developing children’s understanding of the different ways in which the past has been represented and more importantly interpreted.

We can start to develop critical interpretation by providing the children with questions such as:

- What happened just before this picture was taken?
- What happened just after this picture was taken?
- What could the people in this picture see, hear or smell?
- Why do you think this image was constructed, what was its purpose?
- What did this image hope to show?

Children can draw a prequel and sequel picture to demonstrate what they think was happening around the time the image was created. They can employ speech bubbles to indicate what they think the people in the picture could smell, see and hear. These initial ideas can be utilised to formulate small ‘spotlight’ dramas through which the children can develop their thinking about the context of the image and why it was created. A classroom court can be created to enable children to put forward what they think the purpose of the image was and whether they think it provides a truthful account. They can defend their position by usage of secondary sources such as census records, other images from the time and oral accounts. A jury of children can then vote on which they think is the most plausible explanation offered.

A case study of the employment of the visual image.

A class of Year Six pupils were provided with a Victorian street slum scene from their local area. The children in groups of four where presented with cards that asked the following questions:

When was the photograph taken? Who might have lived in the street? What was the standard of living they might have experienced? Do you think that all people lived like this? Would you have liked to have lived in this street?

The children were then asked to provide an initial account of the street scene from the evidence they had gained from the photograph. Inevitably, the groups provided different accounts of what they thought was happening in the image. At this point the class was split into two teams the prosecution and the defense and each was then provided with further evidence such as local census records, written accounts from the time, CD ROMs, history books and were allowed access to selected internet sites. From this they built a case as to what they thought was occurring in the street scene. At this point a ‘classroom drama’ ensued where the children, dressed up in appropriate gowns and wigs, presented their evidence to the Head teacher, another class and members of the school support team. After the appropriate number of ‘if it may please me Lord’ and ‘as my learned council will know’ the jury pronounced their verdict.

What became clear after the completion of this activity was that the children realised how the past can be interpreted in different ways and that these interpretations are based upon people’s employment of historical evidence. In this particular case, as soon as the verdict was received, the prosecution team immediately launched an appeal. This was because the defense had not released vital evidence to prosecution that one child had found out from his Great Aunty Mabel. She had completed her own research on this particular street when she had been tracing her family tree!

Activities such as this develop not only children’s concepts and understanding of the visual image but also develop chronological understanding, knowledge and understanding of events, people and changes in the past, historical enquiry and organisation and communication of historical knowledge. Moreover, they are a fun activity which the children really enjoy. The case study above outlined an activity that was utilised during an Ofsted inspection and, yes, they like it too!

Where can I find out more about the employment of the visual image?

You might like to do a little reading on this subject. A good place to start is with Hilary Cooper’s (2007) book History 3-11 London: Fulton and the Nuffield Primary History site (www.primaryhistory.org). These sources offer some really useful ideas on how to successfully employ the visual image to stimulate excitement and develop children’s knowledge and understanding of the past.

In the modern age children encounter the visual image on a daily basis, indeed, they are bombarded with it. So why not tap into this and employ the visual image to develop exciting and innovating history lessons that stimulate pupils to really think about what happened in the past?

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Images are available at:

http://classroomclipart.com/cgi-bin/kids/imageFolio.cgi?direct=History/Industrial_Revolution
www.primaryhistory.org
www.bbc.co.uk/ww2peopleswar/
www.rogerco.freeserve.co.uk/
www.chichesterweb.co.uk/06old.htm
www.learningcurve.gov.uk/snapshots/snapshot03/snapshot3.htm

Alan Hodkinson is a Principal Lecturer for Educational Research at Liverpool John Moores University. He is also a Fellow of the Historical Association and a member of the Primary Committee.
Introduction
Images allow us to step back in time and ask important historical questions such as ‘Were the Victorians just like us?’ Growing digitisation and the spread of the internet allow teachers and learners unprecedented access to historic images and provide a plethora of new ways to use them.

The power of images
Images are powerful. Take pupils into the centre of your local town or village to observe and record the scene in the morning and in the afternoon fill your interactive whiteboard with an image of that same scene taken 50, 100, possibly even 150 years ago.

The questions and observations will flow naturally. What has changed? What is the same? What would we have seen, heard and smelled when the photograph was taken? What did we see, hear and smell this morning? When did that building disappear? Why was that building built? What did people do here then and what do we do here today? Why is it different?

This is a motivational way to teach continuity and change, chronology and the historical skills of observation and interpretation. It also offers an opportunity to give pupils an appreciation of the history and value of their local community and to involve parents and local people in research.

Relevance to the Primary curriculum
The Victorians invented photography and theirs is the first age that can be studied from photographs.

Victorian people were mainly photographed at significant moments in their life: marriage, christening or a boy in his first pair of trousers. Children were photographed in posed family portraits holding favourite toys, out playing, at school, at work and even, poignantly, after their death. Holidays and days out were also recorded.

Fortunately for teachers these occasions tie in closely with the primary curriculum themes of childhood, family, toys, seaside and Victorians.

Themes such as seaside can then be followed through to examine what people did at the seaside in the 1930s, the 1950s and compared to what we do today. Images will reveal changes in fashion, modes of transport and entertainment but little change in paddling and building sandcastles.

Photographs can be used in all localities to look at major changes in architecture from impressive Victorian public buildings, through modernist 1930s shop fronts, to the concrete rich shopping centres and new towns of the 1950s and 60s.

They also show major landscape changes such as the huge growth of major roads built in the 1930s to accommodate the increase in motor cars and the consequent spread of housing, garages and roadside public houses still familiar today.

Changes in lifestyle can also be studied on a national and local scale including the move from rural crafts, agriculture and heavy industry to modern service industries; the shift from small rural settlements to modern mass housing and changes in the composition of the population.

Finding images
Finding images to use in the classroom is easier now with the growth of the internet although finding images that are suitable in terms of size and quality, that are also accompanied by reliable information, is more of a challenge.

Image collections in national archives, museums and galleries are being digitised and made available to teachers. Heritage Explorer1 is a new website giving teachers and learners

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Barrack Lane, Cowley, Oxford 1914
Images such as the children in the stream allow pupils to reconstruct the past for themselves and identify with people from the past, particularly when they are close in age or from the same place. It is important that pupils realise these are real people and not reconstructions.

• Ask pupils to consider what they think happened before the photograph was taken and what may have happened next.
• Ask them to look closely at the clothing. Can they pick out rich and poor children? What are the differences between them and who is having more fun?
• What do they think the children were thinking and what can we learn about their lives from the image. Were they just like us?

Ref. CC71/00076 Reproduced by permission of English Heritage.NMR
free online access to over 400,000 images from English Heritage's archives that can be searched by theme or place. Local history libraries and archives also have collections of photographs that may possibly be accessible online or available to order as a scan. Some educational suppliers have picture libraries available on a subscription basis and some software suppliers also provide images as part of their packages.

A ‘google’ search on any place name will bring back many websites featuring old photographs. Local history society and community group websites will prove particularly fruitful for research but you do need to check their terms and conditions before actually downloading any of their images for your own use.

A great place to start are the Images by theme selections on Heritage Explorer which offer captioned images on curriculum related themes in a safe searching environment for pupils.

Using images
Once you have selected suitable online images then you can generally simply save them onto your computer [put your cursor on the image, right click your mouse and select the save option] and they are ready for use.

Filling your whiteboard with a striking image is invaluable in helping to ‘set the scene’ at the beginning of a lesson. However there is a larger range of more interactive uses available that are straightforward to set up using software provided as standard on your computer or IWB.

- Turn an image into a starter activity by annotating it on the whiteboard. Try labelling differences and similarities or attaching speech bubbles to people who then ‘introduce’ themselves. The slides can be printed off and used in displays.

- Copy images onto power point slides and ask pupils to write captions to present information learned about a place or topic.
- Use the tools provided with your whiteboard to make simple interactives including, matching [‘drag and drop’] or ordering activities.
- Use free downloadable software such as Microsoft Photo Story to link a series of images into a story, older pupils can make their own.
- Use Movie Maker to combine still and moving images.
- Use a photo manipulation package such as Photoshop to create ‘spot the difference’ or ‘Where’s Wally’ type activities.

All of these activities can be used to reinforce learning, test knowledge and improve observation, collation, presentation and ICT skills.

Photographs are just one type of visual image available online. It is now possible for teachers to access prints, paintings, film clips, posters and documents from an increasing number of sources and combine them to provide a rich learning experience for their pupils.

References
1. www.heritageexplorer.org.uk
2. find your local archive on this website www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archon
3. for example RM's Living Library www.livinglibrary.co.uk/
4. for example Espresso www.espresso.co.uk
5. www.heritageexplorer.org.uk/nmrlearningzone/basic_search.aspx?tab=2
7. for a helpful guide see www.innovativehistory.net developed by Neal Watkin and Johannes Ahrenfelt.
8. see BFI website www.screenonline.org.uk/education/index.html and TNA website www.learningcurve.gov.uk
9. see Unlocking Archives www.unlockingarchives.nen.gov.uk a new website combining material from English Heritage, TNA and BFI to provide ready to use resources written by Ben Walsh

Mary Mills, is education manager for English Heritage/NMR
Introduction

History and Art have been taught as traditional subjects for many years and as cross curricular subjects they compliment each other beautifully. I do not see how we can realistically completely separate them given that so much of the evidence we use, with younger or SEN children in particular, are visual images of one kind or another. Sight is one of our major senses so we need to develop its use wherever possible. However we must be able to justify this traditional alignment in terms of the historical skills and/or the artistic skills our children are developing – this was the problem during the era of ‘topic’ work during the 1970s and 80s and we need to be careful not to repeat these mistakes. We need to be wary of trying to achieve too much.

“The fewer the curriculum subjects represented within a single theme, the more teachers are able to help raise subject standards and ensure curriculum progression and coverage” (Barnes, p. 71).

Combining two subjects like history and art therefore seems a good place to start.

Art & History combined

It can be extremely useful to integrate subjects both in terms of time and in terms of the way complementary topics or themes can be used to develop ideas and understanding but we must keep the essential integrity of each subject. It is a common problem in cross curricular work that historical skills have often lost out when themes or topics are introduced – teachers make use of the history content but do not always ensure the specific history skills are kept. The latest Annual Report from Ofsted finds,

“In schools where the subjects were flourishing, the youngest pupils researched, made judgements and then wrote, drew and talked about the historical ... topics they had studied. In these schools, Key Stage 2 pupils often demonstrated considerable knowledge and insight. However, achievement in history ... was often constrained because they were taught using disjointed activities which failed to provide pupils with opportunities to build up their subject knowledge, skills and understanding progressively.”

(Ofsted p56)

We need to take note of these types of criticism to ensure that the curriculum we provide enriches and develops the children’s understanding and skills.

Combining art with history should not just be to produce a good looking display for the classroom wall! According to the QCA (p. 116) art “provides visual, tactile and sensory experiences and a unique way of understanding...
and responding to the world.” As history teachers surely this is an aspect we would want to utilise. There are many examples of good practice going on in classrooms up and down the country but this article aims to focus mainly on alternatives to the use of paintings and photographs and more on the other craft work that can be developed by combining the two subjects.

**Art, History and Craft Work**

Art and History sit comfortably together in the following examples with neither subject taking precedence. For example:

- One group of children examined wallpaper designs from the Victorian period (e.g. William Morris) and then designed their own wallpaper. To do this the children needed to research the popular colours, themes, motifs etc. These designs were then compared to the modern day equivalents with similarities and differences being discussed and examined.

- Another group of children made a clay pot, helping to give them a better insight into the skills required by the Ancient Greek potter, and hopefully developing a deeper respect and understanding of his world.

- Producing a collage of a street scene needed careful investigation to see what the people would have been wearing, what colours and shapes would have been found then, types of street furniture and what the buildings would have looked like.

In each case the finished articles depend very much on the age of the children and their skills in manipulating and managing the materials but a great deal can be learnt through this kind of activity.

**History, art and thematic work**

When developing a theme on a particular period in history it can be fascinating to examine an aspect of the art of the period; for example, the architecture of the buildings, popular designs found on the crockery, fashions or garden design.

**Ancient Greece**

For instance, a study of Greek buildings might lead to construction work in which an understanding of the concepts of form and shape, as well as pattern, can be developed. Interestingly, a Nuffield Primary History Project Ancient Greek study involved Year 6 pupils in designing their burger bars along the lines of a Greek temple, using as a model the Macdonalds in Exeter: it was designed and decorated in the style of an Ancient Greek temple. Alternatively making models of Tudor houses helped students understand how the fire spread so quickly in the Great Fire of London. This required investigation of what they looked like, materials they were made from, designs of windows, doors and chimneys and then interpreting these 2D pictures into 3D models.

As part of a recent Ancient Greeks session on ‘Myths and Legends’ I gave my students the task of presenting their chosen myth using either puppets, masks or appropriate pictures for a pot. None of the activities involved much
Drawings by Yr 1 students from University of Cumbria.

Children’s work is from Blennerhasset Primary School, Cumbria.
reading and writing once they had read their chosen Myth or Legend. The students researched on the Internet to find appropriate images to reinterpret for themselves and incorporate in their chosen representational genre. They then had to organise themselves and present this knowledge to their peers. Over the space of this session they had achieved most of the History KSUs and also several art ones too. Approaching all this in one lesson with a class of children might be too much for them; it could certainly be built up to, and a lot depends on how professional you want the finished product to be. Interestingly each group of students chose a different method and so we were able to see the advantages and disadvantages of each activity and how this could be approached with children – as well as having a lot of fun!

Local museums Working with local museums can also be extremely worthwhile. Discussing potential possibilities with an Education Officer can spark ideas and new ways of working – don’t feel you have to stick with what’s on offer – most good museums are happy to develop activities and themes to suit your circumstances and children. One of our schools has their ‘Art Week’ in the local museum each year, focusing on a different period in History and using the wealth of resources available to them. Each year this has involved a different aspect of the collections and has included paintings, sculptures and artefacts so far. So much of any museum’s collections are not on display so talking to Education Officers and curators can help you to access resources you didn’t even know they had!

St Cuthbert’s Primary School in Cumbria has been involved in a project making puppets representing the main leaders from different countries during World War II. The children then used these to write and perform ‘leadership speeches’. This project brought together history, art, literacy and drama to help the children understand and interpret the evidence that people supported differing points of view during the war and to begin to understand why. The Year 4 class contains several SEN children but Sarah Ashcroft, the class teacher, was delighted with the outcomes. All the children had benefited from the cross curricular approach but the SEN children in particular had been involved and excited by the project to an extent which she had not expected.

Puppets are a useful visual, enactive medium that combines Art and History for encouraging and helping children retell a narrative or develop their understanding of a famous person and the main events in their lives. Even younger children or SEN children can access these activities as they can be organised to require little or no reading and writing. This particular project was developed to go beyond the National Curriculum schemes of work and start to introduce and develop new ideas using links the staff felt were worthwhile.

Conclusion

By knowing exactly what you want to achieve through combining Art and History in the theme ensures a clear, sharp focus on the aims. It enables you to keep on track and achieve more than you hoped. Sometimes as a topic develops it can be tempting to go off on a tangent but you need to be very sure that each activity is intrinsically worthwhile and working towards your aims or you can become sidetracked and lose your way. The advantages and potential rewards of cross curricular work are all down to how the subjects are taught:

- having clear expectations of what the children will do
- encouraging them to ask questions, investigate and find out for themselves; ensuring they form their own interpretations
- to organise and present outcomes in different ways/ modes for a variety of audiences.

If we do this we will ensure that the integrity of the history is not lost amongst a swathe of interesting things to do that draws upon a range of ill-digested subjects and interests. The links described here between Art and History have all been successfully tried and tested. But, I would encourage teachers to trust their own judgements and have a go! Don’t be limited by the usual tired and unchallenging schemes of work either. You can be creative in your approaches and ideas so long as you can justify the work that you are doing.

References


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Children’s work is from Blennerhasset Primary School, Cumbria.
Visual images are powerful teaching and learning tools, providing windows into the past. Every picture has information, a story, woven into it. Pictures, like words, can be read as texts in their own right, not as mere illustrations. The best quality to bring to reading pictures is curiosity: by asking questions we can wink out the multiple and often hidden meanings in any image.

We need to teach visual skills to children, and that means treating pictures as sources of information. Although children are surrounded by visual images, particularly on television, they often cannot comment on or remember what they have seen - they have not engaged with the images, have not ‘read’ them. For that they need to look deeply, to enter imaginatively into the picture, to question, to hypothesise.

History and literacy

There exist strong natural links – more, a rich interrelationship and interdependence between history and English. Both are concerned with language and its uses, including the language of pictures. Both explore human feelings, situations, motives, relationships, and both require the use of an informed imagination to reach an understanding of the human condition (Fines and Nichol, 1997; Hoodless, 1998).

The language of historical texts, both visual and written, is challenging. Full understanding of them demands deeper knowledge than contemporary texts require. For example, Jackie, whose Year 4 class had been interrogating a picture depicting an Anglo-Saxon farmstead, noted: The vocabulary seemed to be the greatest obstacle to expressing ideas. Many children had no idea what was meant by a loom, what thatch was, what weaving, spinning and dyeing were. For the children fully to understand the patterns of Anglo-Saxon life depicted in the picture, they had not only to look and to question, but also to learn the language for the activities and objects they were observing. Historical pictures thus present endless opportunities for children to develop their linguistic range.

The nature and analysis of visual texts

In the multi-media world in which children are growing up, it is perverse to restrict the notion of texts to written texts. Images are texts in their own right, with their own modes, functions, affordances and logic (Bearne and Kress, 2001). They, like words or artefacts, are modes of representation requiring careful ‘reading’ to understand their forms, meanings and purposes. Although a reader may need different ways of looking to understand the different text modes – written, visual and visual/tactile – the process will be the same.

When questioning visual images, we ask the same questions as we would of written texts, namely:

- **Content:** What is the image about?
- **Structure:** What form does the image take (e.g. photo, painting, sketch, film)?
- **Message:** What is the artist/film-maker/designer trying to say?
- **Method:** How is the artist choosing to say it?
- **Time:** When was the image produced?
- **Situation:** What was the context, the situation, the location of its production?
- **Reason:** Why was this image produced and for whom? Why was it produced in this particular form?
- **Meaning:** What can it tell me about people, places, events, society?

These, and more, are standard questions to ask when interrogating pictorial (and other) sources of evidence. They mirror and extend questions familiar in literacy teaching – about genre, field, mode, tenor and audience. A sterling example is Julian Barnes’ brilliant literary and historical analysis of Géricault’s painting: *Scene of Shipwreck* (1989).

### The Nuffield Primary History approach

The Nuffield approach is to challenge children to look deeply into visual images and to pose questions that the images can help answer – in short, to give them reasons for looking, and for persisting in looking. Seven principles help shape and form Nuffield History pedagogy. Questioning is the key to unlocking visual sources.

#### Nuffield Principles

1. **Challenge**
   - Challenge the pupils throughout facing them with problems to solve

2. **Questioning**
   - Pupil and teacher questioning drive on genuine historical learning

3. **Study in depth**
   - Study in detail/depth is the only way to achieve genuine understanding

4. **Authenticity**
   - Where possible use real, authentic sources

5. **Economy of resources**
   - Use the minimum amount of resources needed

6. **Accessibility (and respect for children)**
   - The teacher mediates the learning: he or she makes the past accessible to the pupils and provides guidance and support as needed.

7. **Communication**
   - The pupils should communicate what they have learnt to an audience using an appropriate mode and genre.
The Nuffield Primary History website (www.primaryhistory.org) describes the Nuffield approach to teaching using the visual image. It also carries many accounts of actual teaching using pictures. You can find these accounts in both the Lessons and the Exemplars sections of the website. See the end for a full list.

The accounts demonstrate different forms of visual image in use, from film to pictures of objects, from paintings of great events to personal photographs. They illustrate how pictures can be incorporated into the wider context of an historical investigation. A picture is a rich source of information about the past, supplying multiple details about people, clothing, activities, homes. It can form the focus of the lesson, provide the starting stimulus for an investigation, or a portal for entering imaginatively into the past. It can be the basis for reconstruction of the past through drama or role play.

Groups of pictures can be closely observed for insights into the nature of a particular society; they can be used to show different perspectives on the same event; they can provide evidence to confirm (or otherwise) information in a document or account; children can be challenged to organise them in order of relevance, or to form a story or sequence of events (good for kinaesthetic learners).

The lessons give ample evidence of the ability of visual images to foster language development. Observation and questioning of a picture develop speaking and listening, as well as vocabulary. An investigation of a picture can also stimulate children to write extensively (see e.g. Case Study 2 below).

Teaching accounts on www.primaryhistory.org:
In Lessons section:
- Samuel Pepys and the Great Fire of London (KS1)
- The Great Plague of London (KS1)
- The Roman Market (KS1)
- Grace Darling (KS2, but suitable for KS1)
- The Roman Army – Spy! (film)
- The End of Roman Britain
- Saxons: Sutton Hoo
- Saxon Ship Burial
- Viking Travel
- How the Tudors came to Power
- Queen Elizabeth I
- Tudor portraits – Who am I?
- Brunel and the Victorian Suspension Bridge
- Victorian Britain: Down the Mine
- Britain since 1930: The Jarrow March
- Britain since 1930: World War II Air-raid (film)
- Ancient Greece: the Olympic Games
- Ancient Egypt: Tutankhamun’s Tomb

In Exemplars (briefer accounts of lessons, exemplifying specific teaching approaches):
- Toys and games (KS1)
- Scott and Amundsen (KS1)
- Old and new telephones (KS1)
- Local: a Visit to Petworth House Gallery
- Roman Britain
- Saxons: Sutton Hoo objects
- The Battle of Trafalgar (literacy/history)
- World War II: Questioning a photograph
- Ancient Greece: Minoan boxing boys

References
Fines, J and Nichol, J (1997) Teaching Primary History, Heinemann Educational

Jacqui Dean is co-director of the Nuffield Primary History Project and editor of its primary history website.

Case studies 1 and 2 are from in-service courses

For the past 16 years, the Nuffield Primary History Project team have carried out action research in classrooms across England, teaching children in a range of schools. They have also run varied and extensive in-service courses for teachers across England. The courses focused on theoretical and pedagogic aspects of both literacy and history, their separate disciplinary demands and their interdependence. On the Nuffield courses, the tutors used the cognitive apprenticeship model of demonstration, modelling and reflective action research by participants to extend the teachers’ repertoire of pedagogical strategies (Collins, Brown & Newman, 1989; Dean, 2000; Nichol & Turner-Bisset, 2001). In particular, the emphasis was on extended, coherent historical investigations utilising a range of authentic texts and genres, key questions (learning as enquiry), scaffolding structures/frames to support thinking, reading and writing (Lunzer & Gardner, 1984; Wray and Lewis, 1995; 1997; Nichol, 1999), and – crucially – engaging participants actively in their learning through discussion and debate, as a whole class, in groups and in pairs. At a presentation day at the end of each course, the teachers produced case studies reporting on their action research in school and the results achieved.

The two case studies on pages 22 to 23 describe two course teachers’ use of the visual image in their classrooms.
The innovative use of visual images as communication mode and stimulus to writing is provided by Jan, a teacher on one of the Nuffield courses. Children, and adults, have trouble in making effective notes as preparation for extended writing, most frequently because they lack a specific purpose (Neate, 2001). Jan had found her class struggled with written note-taking, despite her explicit teaching. So she introduced an imaginative, pictorial note-making strategy to promote learning in both literacy and history. Jan first modelled the method, by telling the class a personal story about her car blowing up, then drawing pictures to tell the story in visual form. A child retold the story to the class, using the pictures as prompts. Jan then narrated the Battle of Bosworth, first in outline to provide the children with a conceptual framework, then in detail, while the class took pictorial notes, identifying key pieces of the story to draw. She tested the immediate success of the approach by asking six children to read back their pictorial ‘notes’. In the next lesson, the class, working in pairs, wrote accounts of the Battle of Bosworth, working from their visual notes. In her reflections on the pictorial method, Jan noted:

The majority of the class used their picture notes effectively. They referred to them as they wrote up the story and could clearly still remember what the pictures represented. It was interesting to hear several children talking themselves through their notes, stage by stage. Only the two children who had found pictorial note-taking difficult had problems writing their accounts. All the other children were able successfully to punctuate and paragraph their writing by using the pictures to help them identify when they were making a new point. This was particularly interesting because some of the class found it easier than with ‘normal’ writing tasks to identify where a new paragraph should start.

The pictorial approach was a great success. It was a most effective way of recording information, without the difficulties usually experienced by some children in getting their ideas onto paper. It enabled the children to identify key pieces of information more easily than they were able to do during earlier literacy lessons that focused on note-taking. It also enhanced the children’s [history] learning as, even now, most of the class are able to explain in great detail how the Tudor dynasty began.

This use of a different mode, the visual, represented a pedagogical departure for the teacher and enlarged her perception of the importance and applicability of image as a mode of representation (Bearne & Kress, 2001). Use of the visual image in this instance resulted in more effective note-making than previously for the majority of the children. More significant was that the children were able to structure the ensuing writing far more successfully in NLS terms than when using conventional note-taking methods.

See Figures 1 and 2 for examples of the children’s work (Year 4; wide range of abilities in class; 17 of the 24 children are boys).
CASE STUDY 2:
INVESTIGATING A PICTURE IN KS1
— Jacqui Dean

The teacher, Angela, brought from home a large coloured picture: in the middle a photograph of her grandfather in uniform, taken in 1917. The reading of the picture produced a flood of writing from her Year 2 class, ranging from half a page to four pages long.

Key elements of the teaching:

- Angela introduced the investigation with a game of ‘I-spy’ – this challenge stimulated detailed noting of features and language development.
- The children were driven by the desire to be ‘the best detective’. This powerful metaphor involved asking questions, looking for clues, detailed observation.
- As language points arose, they were discussed and explained in context.
- In particular, the children learnt about symbols. (Scott: The bulldog is a sign for England. The white rose tells us it is Yorkshire and The red rose tells us that it is the Penins.)
- The teacher modelled reference skills: with the children she searched in encyclopaedias and topic books for answers to their questions.

- Textual analysis in the visual mode was developed and practiced over a sustained morning’s session.
- Chronological understanding developed (Scott: There is a scroll which says for king and country which tells us the picture was taken a long time ago because we do not have a king now a days).
- The idea of posterity was discussed – men might not return, so their families wanted such pictures to remember them by (Leanne: When some people go into the war they get killed. They never come back. So they do a photo.)

Images are not included in the NLS definition of texts, and yet the literacy (and history) learning resulting from the reading of Angela’s picture arguably surpassed, in its depth and range, that elicited from the textual diet offered in the daily literacy hour.

References
A crucial issue in using history as a vehicle for learning is the professional development of colleagues with whom you are working. This is an activity I did with students on a PGCE Primary Distance Learning Course. As it was distance learning it addresses many of the issues that you may face in your own school. The context was typical of the current situation where the vast majority of teachers who are teaching history based topics have little or no experience of the subject after the age of 14.

What can you do when most students [and teachers] have never done history, even at GCSE, and have six hours to learn what are the processes of historical enquiry and how to teach them, even perhaps become a curriculum leader, in a primary school? Certainly at the end of the session evaluative feedback from the students said that they thought that the activities could be used, or modified, to teach key historical concepts to children at Key Stage 2. My main aim was to demonstrate that pupils could be involved in quite sophisticated historical enquiry without the necessity to read or write, by discussing images. Through this I hoped to introduce the idea that history has two sides: content and most importantly, a problem solving, investigative dimension that develops in children a wide range of thinking skills and equips them with protocols and procedures to investigate topics historically.

The programme’s pattern was to introduce major issues through whole group discussion and then focus on particular elements through working in groups.

History as Enquiry – Introduced through Whole group discussion

Historical thinking centres upon asking questions, making deductions and inferences from historical sources, including text and topic books. First we explored ways in which to:

• raise questions and answer them
• make deductions and inferences from a variety of visual sources, and
• consider the validity of the sources, through whole group discussion.

The sources I chose were readily available: one of the great benefits of the internet is that it has made using a full range of sources a real possibility for all teachers. I had downloaded the sources from the internet and projected them onto an interactive whiteboard, zooming in on details in response to the discussion.

The opening image was to introduce the group to the whole idea of using a single visual source as the basis for introducing a major enquiry, with the students in the role of investigators. The group was able to interpret the symbolism in the famous Ditchley painting of Queen Elizabeth I: the significance of the map of England on which she was standing, the retreating clouds (after the Armada), the importance of the virginal white of her dress (the Virgin Queen used her unmarried status as a bargaining point in offering, then withdrawing from liaisons with foreign

The Ditchley Portrait of Elizabeth I, 1592 Marcus Gheeraerts the National Gallery, London

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**CASE STUDY 3: EVERY PICTURE TELLS A STORY SAGE COMME UNE IMAGE AS WISE AS A PICTURE**

— Hilary Cooper
powers), the importance of the Tudor Rose for a still insecure dynasty. (www.npg.org.uk) The Ditchley portrait, like the other images in this article, is easily downloaded from the internet. Simply type in the name and other relevant details into Google images.

**Introducing Victorian England: The Railway Station, William Powell Frith, 1862**

My intention was to build on the Ditchley discourse and focus upon one of the most important historical areas of study in the primary curriculum: Victorian England, 1837–1901. A sumptuous, seminal and summative image is Frith’s Railway Station.

The whole group now discussed what Frith’s Railway Station could tell us about answering questions about Victorian England: they realised that there was lots of information about a variety of characters and their possible circumstances and feelings, about families, dress, communication and the atmosphere of excitement. One thing perhaps to ask colleagues you are working with whether they can see the history detectives at work!

Talking about the details gave the students the confidence to suggest more wide ranging and abstract ideas which set the painting in the context of the Victorian age: steam power, which made possible extensive iron and coal mining, the steam train, the vast iron and glass structure of the station, a temple to the age of steam, the dominance of clock time, the implications of steam travel for the rail and sea travel, for trade, for the growth of Empire. While these are adult concepts they are readily open to Key Stage 2 children: guided, supported discussion can open up a plethora of areas of interest with the teacher being able to clue and tease such ideas from a class of Key Stage 2 children. (www.rhul.ac.uk/visitors-guide/picture-gallery.html)

Next we looked at a Victorian photograph of a lady cyclist. We had considered symbolism in the Tudor painting and the validity of the of the Frith painting. Now we discussed where and why the photograph may have been taken. (The caption said ‘Barrett, Prospect Place, Southampton). How realistic was it? (Did she always balance on one foot and gaze grimly to her right?) The power of the bicycle to change the lives of Victorian women. (Even I had not been allowed a bicycle because my parents feared the consequences!) (www.cartes.freeuk.com)

**England 18347 – 1901: the bigger picture**

The students now felt confident to work in groups on a more wide-ranging enquiry arising from the Frith picture. What were the key causes the Industrial Revolution: how did they interlink and how did they affect people? Did the Industrial Revolution make people richer or poorer? What was the impact on communication? What were the implications for changes in fashion, in cooking? These are big, fundamental questions but children can tackle them if we represent them as images to be discussed using language they understand.

The images were taken from children’s history books, and from the internet, (www.scinemuseum.org.uk; www.makingthemodernworld.org.uk). Together the enquiries involved making deductions and inferences from sources, understanding key concepts, considering the causes and effects of changes over time, in order to create an account, an interpretation of the period.
Teaching and Learning Activities
The course now split into groups, each of which addressed a key question.

Activity 1
What were the causes of the Industrial Revolution? How were they linked? Make a concept map showing connections between causes of the Industrial Revolution. What abstract language might you introduce in making the concept map?

The students moved them around. They were asked to group them under key concepts: mining, communication, growth of towns, and trade and empire, then to draw lines showing links between the concepts. Since all of these changes continued throughout the 19th century the aim is not to prioritise but to make connections.

Interesting discussions of validity arose when sorting the pictures. Do we learn more about what life in Victorian times may really have been like from the contemporary drawings and paintings or from the reconstructions? How valid are some of the contemporary paintings? Is there a difference between a recent photograph of an old building and a photograph taken in the past?

Activity 2
Did the Industrial Revolution make people richer or poorer? Or ‘Richie Poo bet Wus?’ as the clergyman said when he married Mr. Pooter, in Diary of a Nobody.

Images to sort:
- Coloured photograph of a nursery in a wealthy home, (Wallington), as it may have looked in the 19th century.
- Coloured photograph of a richly furnished room in a smaller house.
- 1865 photograph of a wealthy family on an elaborate picnic.
- Contemporary photograph of a very well-stocked Sainsbury’s grocers shop.
- Contemporary photograph, Frith’s The Seaside.
- Contemporary painting of a family birthday party in a simple cottage with well stocked table.
- Photograph of Charles Sweeting from Essex, born in 1826, who spent all his life as a farm labourer.
- Contemporary painting of harvest time, the family well dressed, and enjoying a picnic lunch amongst the stooks of corn.
- ‘An Anxious Hour, painting of a mother and sick child 1865.
- Photograph of children playing in the street.
- A photograph of children in a Board School

Sorting this group gave rise to some interesting discussions; clearly some were very wealthy, others extremely poor but in what proportions? And what do we mean by ‘poor’? The children playing around a lamp post have starched white clothes and look happy. The family in the harvest painting look very content. The Essex labourer, on the other hand, looks far from happy. The painting of the sick child does not suggest poverty but rather that sick children were common across the social spectrum. Some people were clearly very wealthy, given the size of their houses and their leisure, picnicking in extravagantly expensive clothes. There also seemed to be a new comfortably off middle class, who shopped at Sainsbury’s, had elaborately furnished homes and went on holiday to the seaside. Where do we put the simple, respectable family enjoying a birthday party? The children in the Board School do not look well off but perhaps they can improve their lot; at least they do not work in the mines and factories.

Apart from lots of discussion and exchange of interpretations the main points to emerge were: first, that there was a continuum across the extremes but that there were opportunities for social mobility for some. Second, again, validity. Why was the picture of rural bliss painted, when the Essex labourer looks starving? And was he really starving or posing for one of the early photographers? With a larger set of pictures children could decide on their own concepts to sort to explore different aspects of society: children and adults; town and country; work and leisure, for example.

Activity 3 – Getting Around
These pictures included: a photograph of a man driving pigs to market, the Cutty Sark, a ‘safety bicycle’, a ‘hobby horse’, a carrier’s cart, a model of an early underground railway coach, a horse drawn bus, a horse drawn canal barge, a steam canal barge, a railway train, the Great Eastern’ Steam ship, an electric tram, and a family on their way to a funeral in a horse drawn carriage. Go on. Have a go!

Some sequencing is based on reasoning; the steam barge surely followed the horse drawn barge and clipper was used before the steam ship. But another point that emerges through discussion is that there are overlaps in change. One invention does not immediately mean the end of what is still perfectly functional. Changes of this kind occur slowly. Cattle were still walked to market in the last century. And there are surprises too. You may be surprised by the date when the first underground railway opened. What is important in these activities is that decisions are based on reasoning, but they are not always clear cut. It is the discussion and sharing of ideas and justification for them that develops thinking, both in historical contexts and beyond.
**Activity 4 – Victorian Fashion**

This asked students to put in order pictures of fashionable clothes throughout Victoria’s reign. Their reasoning here required some challenging and some clues as well as involving interesting discussion. It certainly revealed some interesting misconceptions:

‘I think this dress comes at the end of the century, because it looks light and simple and modern’.

This was challenged by a student who thought it looked a bit like the dresses in Jane Austen dramas on television.

‘But they were earlier weren’t they?’

Clue: ‘Yes. It was called the Empire Line. Any idea who had claimed to be the Emperor?’

‘Napoleon!’

Clue: ‘And which Empire did he think he was imitating?’ ‘Think of his crown’.

‘The Greeks’?

‘Oh so it’s like an Ancient Greek style – I never knew that! What’s it made of?’

‘Looks like muslin’.

‘Yes. And what does Muslin sound like?…….

‘Muslin’ (giggle)

Yes. It was imported from Mosel – in present day Iraq’

‘Well that’s extraordinary!’

A shawl from the middle of the century provided the opportunity for another clue.

‘It’s a paisley pattern isn’t it? So did it come from Paisley?’

‘Well yes, you’re right. But what does the pattern remind you of?’

‘A leaf?’

‘Yes it’s the buta traditional leaf motif. The shawls were originally imported from Kashmir but by the 1850s shawls were exported from Paisley based on the buta design. The fez – style hat this man is wearing as a smoking cap is another example of the influence other cultures on English fashion.

The crinoline and, towards the end of the century the bustle, caused a lot of horror and speculation. How could the practical Empire line give rise to much wood and wire and horsehair? Discussion involved indications of status, money, of little need to work, of Victorian ‘family values’.

There was further discussion about Victorian mourning clothes, especially for children, and about reasons for men’s increasingly simple clothes. The photograph of the man wearing a top hat in Regent Street led on to conspicuous wealth and class and comparisons with today. There are numerous fashion websites, for example www.fashionmuseum.co.uk; www.westsussexpast.org.uk

**Activity 5 – How did cooking change, why and what did this mean for people’s daily lives?**

**Cooking from Fresh?**

Pictures included cooking in a pot over the fire, coal fired ranges in modest houses, in great houses, tins of salmon, corned beef and apricots, a ‘higgler’ collecting chicken’s from country houses to sell, Mrs. Beeton’s Book of Household Management (1861), gas ovens, ‘from 10 to 20 inches wide’, a refrigerated ship with a cargo of beef and lamb, an advertisement for the International Electric and Gas Exhibition at Crystal Palace.

Ordering these pictures involved discussion about changes in technology, in rural and urban life, in trade with the Empire, and social changes.

**Conclusion – A history of Victorian England**

Each of the five enquiries had involved discussion, making deductions and inferences about sources, traces of the past which remain. People were able to contribute at their own levels. There were opportunities for some sophisticated ideas. A few drew on previous knowledge – but not much! Everyone had to accept uncertainty and alternative possibilities. The role of the tutor was to listen, to question, to challenge, to offer clues to take thinking forward.

The overarching activity was considering the interconnectedness of aspects of the Industrial Revolution. This was examining the nature of complex change. This underpinned the other enquiries about changes in social structure, in fashion and transport.

Finally the groups shared the findings from their enquiries and were able to discuss how they all interlinked: fashion, and food and social structure and changes in communication all reflected the effects of the Industrial Revolution: trade and politics, changing technologies and social changes. So by the end of the session this group, who said they knew nothing about history had created ‘an account of the reign of Queen Victoria’. It was of course, ‘an interpretation’, but so are all histories.

I have no doubt that your classes can create other versions, from other images, without reading or writing a word!

Hilary Cooper is Professor of History and Pedagogy at the University of Cumbria.
**CASE STUDY 4: DID THEY ALWAYS DRAW THINGS ON THE POTS WHICH THEY MADE?**

**CHILDREN’S QUESTIONS ABOUT HISTORICAL PICTURES**

— Penelope Harnett

**Introduction**

Pictures are an important source of evidence for children to use to find out about the past. They have an immediate impact and children of all ages and abilities find that they have something to say about what they represent. As teachers we often guide the comments which children make about pictures through drawing attention to certain features through our questions. In this respect our questions may restrict some of the observations which children would like to make. This article describes what happens when children are invited to ask the questions. The questions children ask provide some indication of their historical understanding and in this respect may be useful for assessing their learning in history.

Groups of children in Years 3 and 4 were invited to select a picture to work with from a collection of pictures which included paintings, artists’ reconstructions and photographs of archaeological remains. The children were asked to write down the questions which they would like to ask about the pictures. The following is an account of some of the ways in which children addressed this task.

Several children found difficulty in phrasing their questions and needed support in transferring their spoken language into written form. Other children developed a pattern of questions which related to their observations of the picture. So one child who was working with a picture of Tutankhamen’s death mask began to ask:

- Did Tutankhamen die?
- Did Tutankhamen have big blue lips?
- Did Tutankhamen have gold on him?

These questions served to verify the child’s observations.

Another series of questions which had the potential to generate a long list were the ‘do you like’ type of questions. Susan used this format to reinforce the observations which she made about a Victorian doll’s house:

- Do you like the rooms?
- Do you like the ornaments?
- Do you like the house?
- Do you like the pictures?

And so on.

**Ways of observing**

All the children looked carefully at their choice of picture, but attached different significance to the observations which they made which resulted in different questions. For example, looking at the Victorian doll’s house, Helen’s questions derived from very detailed observations which were linked with the identification and function of different household objects:

- What is this gold thing?
- What is the blue thing with leather?
- Why is there a bucket?
- What is this sort of statue?

On the other hand, Tracey looked beyond the immediately observable features in the same picture and used her questions to support investigations about the Victorian family who might have lived in this house. Her questions included:

- Why do they all live in the same house?
- Why do they have so many rooms?
- How come they’ve only got one bedroom?
- What year is it?
- How long did it take to invent it?
- Were all the people family?
- How come they had three floors?
- How many children were there in the house?
- How many servants and maids are there?

In these examples, it could be argued that Helen was field dependent (Fisher 1990:140) – seeing the constituent parts, but not the whole context of the picture. Tracey’s more extended questions suggest that she was able to internalize the different aspects of the picture and to draw a broader interpretation from her observations.

**Pictures as sources of information**

There was a difference between questions arising directly from observable features and the more extended questions from some children who were beginning to use the pictures as sources of information about the past. For example, Philip who was working with a picture of an Ancient Greek pot made several questions based on observable features, relating to its size and what was depicted on the pot. He then began to ask more detailed questions which indicate he was beginning to think about the pot as a source of evidence about the past.

- Did they always draw pictures on the pots which they made?
- Why did they mostly draw on the pots which they made?
- Why did they draw on their pots?
- Did they use pots as a gift or as a form of communication?
- Did everyone make pots?
Such questions reveal a more developed awareness of how the picture could be used as a source of information about the Ancient Greeks.

**Children's series of questions**

Looking at children's lists of questions in their entirety provides a useful indication of their level of historical understanding and the development of their thinking as they work with a picture. The list of questions below were written by Ryan working with a picture of Elizabeth I being carried in a litter surrounded by her courtiers. His initial questions tried to establish what was happening in the picture. He asked whether the picture was of Elizabeth I and whether it was her birthday. He evidently considered that the picture was depicting an important occasion since he later asked if it was her coronation. In question 7 Ryan asked:

**Why did the guards have swords?** Concerns for the queen's security emerged again, when Ryan asked in Question 12 – did they have police?

Using the same picture, we can see how another child's questions developed from each other. Gary's question 2 – How come they fight a lot was extended in question 4 – Why do they need swords when they’re not fighting. Similarly question 3 – How come they are carrying Elizabeth was followed later by question 5 – Why doesn’t Elizabeth walk? We might conjecture that he has internalized the answer to this question by question 9 when he asked, why do they like the queen?

**Conclusions**

The questions above reveal the different ways in which children may view pictures and their developing abilities to raise historical questions. Children's questions might not necessarily correspond with those which the teacher might ask, but they are relevant and important for children as starting points for their investigations. They also provide useful indications of the level of individual children's historical understanding.

As teachers we can also help children to structure their questions and to utilize questions which provide a good basis for developing further investigations. The following suggestions for thinking about pictures as sources of information can support both teachers and children in thinking about the sorts of questions which they might like to ask.

**References**


*Penelope Harnett* is Reader in Education at the University of the West of England, Bristol.

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<td>5. Predicting, hypothesising, imagining, speculating</td>
<td>What do you think? Might be… probably…. Perhaps … could have</td>
<td></td>
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<td>6. Generalising, refining, abstracting, internalising</td>
<td>Is it a useful source of information?</td>
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WHAT ARE THE REASONS FOR LINKING ART AND HISTORY?

— Hilary Cooper

Introduction
Visual images, paintings, sculpture, photographs, cartoons from past times are important historical sources. Accordingly, Simon Schama embeds visual images and imagery in his historical oeuvre, not primarily as illustration but as a crucial part of the warp and weft of evidentially grounded narrative and analysis. Schama has married History and Art in articles, books and supremely through the visual medium of television and DVD. His BBC series, The Power Of Art graphically illustrates the combined educational power of Art and History Arnheim: ‘Every visual pattern, be it a painting, a building, an ornament, a chair …. every work of art is a statement about something which makes a declaration about the nature of human existence’. Illustrations in books can demonstrate how and why interpretations vary. Paintings, drawings, replica artefacts made by children can develop either detailed observation of sources or historical imagination. Can there be more fundamental reasons for combining history and art?

Visual learning is powerful learning
Philosophers from the earliest period have highlighted the centrality of the visual image. The philosophers of Ancient Greece attached great importance to visual perception. Plato noted: ‘The gentle fire that warms the human body flows out through the eyes in a smooth and dense stream of light, a tangible bridge is established between the observer and the observed thing and over the bridge light rays travel through the eyes to the soul’. How do more recent philosophers who have played a key role in education justify visual learning? As such, can they provide History Education with the theoretical underpinnings as applied to practice that give it a central role in a curriculum with the following drivers:

- the overall concerns, entitlements and welfare of each child
- an approach to learning that is both individualised and sees the pupil’s development as the outcome of an enriched, enhanced and supportive socio-cultural environment
- an education that is grounded in these perceptions and not in the imperatives of academic disciplines like Art, Geography, History, Maths and Science that are watered down for the classroom.

Making meaning: The Theory and Practice of Art in History Education
Bruner, Arnheim, Dewey and Collingwood provide a firm foundation for bridging Art and History and seeing the centrality of History in a curriculum that educates the whole child. Bruner and Dewey had a major impact on the development of education in the 20th century: their thinking underpinned a number of curriculum development projects from 1970. Dewey’s role is so central that he has had the privilege of right wing demonisation! Arnheim provides a powerful argument for Art’s historical role, while Collingwood’s thinking in the related area of History has underpinned the transformation of History Education in England.

Bruner (1963) stressed the importance of using imagery (iconic representation) in such a way that the pervading, powerful ideas and attitudes relating to a discipline are given a central role. In 1966 he emphasized the need to learn the questions to ask about an image in order to do this and said that this enabled children to transfer their thinking independently to new, similar material and so avoid over dependence on facts and memory.

Arnheim (1970) explains how paintings and sculptures that portray figures, objects, actions in a more or less realistic style nevertheless make no sense as reports of what life was like in the past until the viewer can read what each symbolises. This requires thought, language and discussion.

Dewey (1932) said that through an expressive object the artist and the active observer encounter each other, their material and mental environments and their culture at large; it demonstrates the connections between art and everyday experience. ‘To emphasise what is aesthetic’, he said is to emphasise ways in which an aesthetic experience is a manifestation, a record, a celebration of a civilization… and an ultimate judgement on the quality of that civilisation’.

Collingwood (1925)(1938) was a philosopher who wrote extensively upon both Art and History. Not only was he a philosopher, but he was also an archaeologist and historian. The connection between Art and History was clear in his mind: Art was a personally constructed interpretation grounded in the visual perception of the artist. As such, art reflected the cultural milieu that underpinned its creation. History was similarly a created interpretation: it was a re-enactment of the past grounded in its surviving evidence. As such Art and History draw upon a shared, underlying feature: the creative imagination:

‘In the field of the philosophy of history, Collingwood famously held the doctrine of ‘Re-enactment’: since the subject is human beings in action, the historian cannot achieve understanding by describing what happened from an external point of view, but must elicit in the reader’s own mind the thoughts that were taking place in the principal actors involved in historical events… his aesthetic theory is in some ways complementary: the aesthetic procedure is one whereby the artist and spectator jointly come to realize, to come to know, certain mental states. Art is fundamentally expression. (www. (2007)Collingwood’s aesthetics)

Collingwood’s ideas are crucial for providing a curricular link between History and Art: Collingwood, in a deep sense, was the father of the revolution in History Education from the
1970s that, through the Schools Council History Project [aka Schools History Project] transformed both the theory and practice of classroom history in the United Kingdom.

From the specific to the general
Interpreting a visual source can help us to move from the concrete to the abstract. Arnheim claims that a picture fuses sensory appearance and reasoning. A portrait may be of a particular individual, portrayed as having particular physical characteristics and personality. But it is also a symbol displaying more abstract qualities. A realistic portrait of Winston Churchill, for example, may portray him as a stout, thoughtful, elderly statesman. But it may also be a symbol of more abstract qualities of the period: of oppression and resistance, determination and inner containment. Frith’s Railway Station describes the departure platform at Paddington Station in great detail, but is also a symbol from which to deduce the causes (steam power, iron and coal mining) and effects (railways, communication, travel, trade) of the Industrial Revolution. Klausmeier (1979) discusses the role of imagery in concept formation. Images, he said, are stored. Shared characteristics can be abstracted, new information added and generalisations made. Arnheim (1970) similarly linked visual perception and thought. He said that by collecting images of kinds of qualities, kinds of objects and kinds of events the mind grasps what they have in common and so organises experience into concepts. For example we may collect and group images of power, defeat, celebrations, noble deeds, poverty, wealth across the centuries, which become categorised as abstract concepts.

The general to the specific
Ausbuch (1968) on the other hand suggested that a subject is best learned through introducing the overarching content of a new topic which is at a ‘higher level of abstraction, generality and inclusiveness’. He called this an ‘Advanced Learning Organiser’. New material is then integrated into this framework through comparisons and cross referencing. He investigated how pupils can learn and remember verbal and textual information in secondary schools. But, the Advance Learning Organisers can also be presented as a framework of visual images.

Ausbuch (1968) investigated how individuals can effectively learn and remember large amounts of textual and verbal
information. He suggested that teachers start by introducing the ‘Big Idea’, which he called an ‘Advanced Learning Organiser’, then explore the detail within the ‘Big Picture’. For example a teacher might introduce a unit on Elizabethan England by explaining that initially the Queen’s position was insecure but that gradually, through voyages of discovery opening up new trade routes and by defeating the Spanish Armada England entered a period of wealth and stability, then use this as a framework for further lessons. In primary schools we try to avoid large amounts of text and teacher talk but we could apply the theory visually.

Art and Historical Imagination
Dewey (1996:236) said that ‘The imagination is the medium of appreciation in every field’. Collingwood (1939, 1942, 1946,) was concerned with the definition of historical imagination. He reasoned that we can only speculate about the feelings of people in the past by speculating about the sources they leave behind. The more we know about a period the more likely are the suppositions we make. A key figure for understanding what artistic representation involves is G.H. Gombrich. His Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation (1977) brilliantly, and in a highly readable form, explains how artists can convey on a two dimensional medium an illusion of the three dimensional that they are presenting. This book is now in its fifth edition and has been continuously in print since its first publication in 1960. Gombrich (1982) discusses ways in which strong feelings can be conveyed in images. For example ‘The Kneeling Captive’, (Bibliothque Nationale, Paris) demonstrates, through posture, the stark contrast in the statues of Imperial Rome between authority and submission. Innumerable images of 13th century saints, donors and worthies in churches, with their folded hands, evoke piety, although there is here a complex relationship between ritual and expression. Greek vases illustrate familiar narratives but 19th century paintings of domestic scenes tell stories about feelings -- jealousy, fear, loss. Images in stained glass windows change metaphor into symbolic images. The centrality of creative imagination in the writing of Collingwood has already been mentioned. Kieran Egan (1992), another major influence upon the curriculum and the role of the Arts and Humanities in the education of the whole child emphasised the importance of forming and articulating vivid images in teaching and learning.

Learning in situ: Art and History in harmony
Gardner (1990: 31) having introduced his theory of multiple intelligences, concluded that the most promising way to integrate the various forms of learning that they involve is through ‘situating’ it:

When students encounter various forms of knowing operating together in a natural situation; when they see accomplished adults move back and forwards between these forms, when they are themselves engaged in a rich and engaging project which calls on various modes of representation, when they have the opportunity to interact and communicate with individuals who evidence complimentary forms of learning, these are the situations that facilitate a proper alignment amongst various forms of knowledge.

Conclusion
This brief outline of some ideas that lie behind the relationship of Art and History and its role in the education of the whole child might be of value in defining the wider role which History Education can play in the 21st century curriculum. The passions, pleasures and fulfilments that both Art and History can bring to the personal and educational development of all children is justification enough for highlighting their curricular role without commenting upon their role in educating flexible minds that are artistically, historically and linguistically literate and skilled.

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ARCHIVE NEWS
The Archive Awareness Campaign is an ongoing celebration of all kinds of archival treasures. Many archives are planning open days, workshops and other activities as part of this initiative. www.archiveawareness.com provides information and resources.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister announced on 25 October 2007 that he has commissioned a review of when historical records are transferred to the National Archives and opened to public access. In most cases this happens after 30 years. There is the possibility therefore of access to documents rather sooner. The review is scheduled to report in spring 2008.

HISTORICAL CONCEPTS
An outline of children’s emotional development has been produced by Linda Hopper, a child counsellor and published in the journal “Counselling Children and Young People”. She suggests children only become capable of empathy at the age of 8. Questions such as “how do you think that this makes me feel” are thus inaccessible. Time is also a difficult concept with terms like “yesterday” and “last week” blending into any past time whilst “tomorrow” is seen as more than 24 hours away. See: www.ccyp.co.uk

One of the most difficult concepts for pupils to grasp is the idea of chronology. One interesting resource that might help the youngest pupils is “Family Memories: When Your Gran was Little” written by Jane Bidder and Shelagh McNicholas and published by Franklin Watts. Several grandmothers from the 1940s and 1950s each describe an incident from their lives as children such as the Coronation.

BLACK HISTORY
Northamptonshire Black History association have new teaching packs focusing on Walter Tull: Sport, War and Challenging Adversity”. There are two packs – one aimed at Key Stage 1 and a cross-curricular Key Stage2/3 pack. Both use the footballer Walter Tull, one of the first professional footballers and the first black British Infantry Officer. They address the history concepts of significance, interpretations and provide schemes of work and worksheets. For further information see: www.northants-black-history.org.uk or phone 01604 590 967. The work stands as a fitting testimony to the extensive contribution to primary history made by the late Hilary Claire.

ENGLISH HERITAGE
“Heritage Explorer” is a new education service. The website provides classroom resources and accessible information aimed as a one-stop-shop for teachers of pupils in Key Stage 1,2 and 3. The information is downloadable and free and contains many image-based resources (over 360,000 pictures) from the National Monuments Record. It also searches images relevant to their own locality. See: www.heritageexplorer.org.uk

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE
Her enduring appeal as a teaching topic especially in Key Stage 1 continues. “Infant History: Florence Nightingale” is a “talking book” with three levels of text and many related activities. Aimed at Key Stage 1, it is produced by Neptune Computer Technology. See: www.neptunect.co.uk

MUSEUM NEWS
“Museums and Archives Alive”, funded through DCMS and DCSF, enables museums, libraries and archives to develop an understanding of what teachers want and how to meet the needs of schools especially in relation to developing resources around Citizenship and Diversity. This year’s funding has enabled exploration of opportunities around extended services.

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LONDON TRANSPORT
The London Transport Museum has reopened after a major refit. There is a free programme of gallery activities, activity days and outreach sessions. The themes include the development of London, London Transport and Enterprise and London and the Blitz. Their poster and photograph collection is now on line. See: www.ftmuseum.co.uk/learning

PRIMARY PROJECT BOX AND PRIMARY SUBJECTS
The Key Stage 1 box is now available and builds on the Early Years Handbook. It covers enjoyable activities related to individual subjects. Written by teachers working with the subject associations. It contains 5 themed teaching units in booklet form, each with its own multimedia CD and web pages on the Subject association website www.subjectassociation.org.uk. Themes include Our classroom and school, inside outside, our wider world, our changing world, our future world. There is also a teachers’ guide, “Teaching out of the box: CPD guidance”. £89.99p or £59.99p if a member of a subject association.

Meanwhile all schools should have received the first edition of “Primary Subjects”, a joint publication from the subject associations. The history section contains information on approaches to particular units, history in Key Stage 1, why history matters for every child, parent, guardian or teacher and some news.

PRIMARY REVIEW
More details are slowly emerging of the curriculum review being carried out by Sir Jim Rose. It is expected to produce interim findings by October 2008 and to make final recommendations by March 2009. The aim is to introduce the new primary curriculum from September 2011. A consultation process is currently taking place focused on 5 aspects – curriculum design and content; reading, writing and numeracy; modern foreign languages; personal development and transition and progression. Amongst the questions being asked and which are relevant to primary history are:

• What is the scope for reducing prescription and content in the programmes of study?
• How might schools be enabled to strengthen their focus on raising attainment in reading, writing and numeracy?
• What can be done to ensure that these vital subjects are taught thoroughly and systematically and fully integrated within all areas of the curriculum?
• What are the personal, social and emotional capabilities that children need to develop through their schooling?
• What is the most appropriate framework for achieving greater integration of these capabilities throughout the curriculum?

The Historical Association will be co-ordinating a response at the end of April.
SLAVERY

Museums and Galleries Month runs from 1-31 May 2008. The theme is “Ideas and Innovation”. For events see www.mgm.org.uk

TEACHING THE TUDORS
Some recent resources:

“The Tudor Trail” contains activities to support the teaching of the Tudors is produced by Neptune Computer Technology. See www.neptunect.co.uk

“Big Picture: Tudors and the Wider World” (1 4086 0045 8) is resource from BBC Active consisting of an A4 photocopiable book plus a CD containing the worksheets, illustrations and teacher notes. It also has a guide linking activities to the literacy requirements.

For those looking at monasteries as part of their Tudor topic, a useful resource could be that for Topholme Abbey. Topholme Abbey lies in the Witham Valley near Bardney Lincolnshire. With Heritage Lottery funding, this site, which has little now remaining, has led to a series of computer-generated images and animation as well as an education pack reconstructing the abbey and how its story has been shaped by history. One can enter the abbey at the end of the 14th century and walk through the different parts of the abbey. The education pack shows how the reconstructions have been made with examples of cross-curricular work across the key stages. Download from: www.linchesterage.org or contact 01529 461499.

Castle Howard House in Yorkshire has an exhibition running until 31 August 2008 entitled, “Surviving Henry: Tudor Howards on the Block”. The exhibition tells their story of this prominent Tudor family. For further information, see: www.castlehoward.co.uk

ICT AND WEBSITES
Historical Podcasts (http://historicalpodcasts.googlepages.com/) is a website that aims to collect all podcasts on well-known historical figures. Of variable quality, it needs using selectively.

Primary pupils always find monetary values difficult to grasp. What might help the situation is a website matching current and old money values. For example, £124.76p in 2002 had the same purchasing power as £10 10s in 1965. www.ex.ac.uk/~rdavies/arian/current/howmuch.html

On This Day – this is a BBC website enabling a search for news on a certain day from 1950-2002. It can be searched by year or theme. http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday Transport Archive – several thousand images from 18th century onwards.

www.transportarchive.org.uk

History Whiteboard Active is a BBC resource allowing pupils to explore evidence, visit sites and read original texts. New titles include “Famous Men, Women and Children with Magic Grandad (comprises Mary Seacole, Louis Braile, Beatrix Potter, Neil Armstrong, Walter Tull and Elizabeth I!) aimed at Key Stage 1; life in Tudor times; Victorian times and Romans in Britain for Key Stage 2.

TUDORS
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The TES Magazine for 14 December 2007 had an article involve a Jerry Springer-type approach to the wives of Henry VIII. Following research, they had to decide on the extent to which they might be regarded as the favourite. Some links were made with circle time by exploring emotions. Following a role play and questions, they made decisions.

ROMAN DISRUPTION
An interesting article appeared recently in BBC History Magazine illustrating the relationship between history and the present. A well-known Roman monument, The Temple of Mithras, is being rebuilt in its original position removing earlier inaccuracies when it was reconstructed some 80 metres from its original location in 1954. The 144-square metre temple will be in a basement underneath an office block. The Temple was built around 240 AD. Mithraism was a popular cult amongst the Roman military and was an early rival to Christianity. The alterations will correct errors such as the thickness of walls, the wrong mortar, tile courses, the level of the nave and the size of the replica alter.

GREAT FIRE OF LONDON
The TES Magazine for 25 January 2008 contained an article by Michelle Dexter from Manor Leas Infants entitled “A Pepys into the Past” involving Key Stage 1 pupils becoming detectives to discover what happened using evidence from paintings, completing mind maps, looking at different evidence such as videos, books and pictorial evidence as well as eyewitness accounts. Linking art, ICT, literacy, drama and geography they reproduce street scenes and produce a newspaper report. They also compare what would happen today.

THE VICTORIANS
Probably more new resources emerge for this period each month than any other. Amongst those worth a look include:

“about a Boy…The Victorian Diaries of Norman Pring” is a recently published resource from Chester Archives and Local Studies and aimed at Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils. John Norman Pring lived from 1884 to 1972 and kept a diary from the age of 10. The resource contains diary extracts, photographs, teaching notes and ideas for cross-curricular links. Available on a CD from Cheshire Record Office for £15. Contact 01244 602574.

“Victorian Voices” is one of two pilot projects from Sheffield Archives and Local Studies Library. Available at www.mylearning.org it is based on child employment in Victorian Sheffield and incorporates archival material, photographs and evidence from the 1862 Commission. Following soon will be a parallel resource entitled “Victorian Values”.