

## What is 'enquiry planning'?

A very effective way of organising content in history and linking it to the areas of knowledge, skills and understanding is to focus individual units/topics/enquiries around an overarching enquiry question. This key question provides a route through the topic and can be used to maintain the pupil's interest and deepen their understanding of the subject being studied. For example:

### **How can we find out about the Indus Valley civilisation?**

This question not only requires the children to look at aspects of life in the Indus Valley but also to use their enquiry skills in doing so.

### **Why have people invaded and settled in Britain in the past? A Viking case study**

This question requires the children to identify and describe reasons for the Viking invasions of Britain and some of the results.

When devising a unit/topic/enquiry, choose an area of content and then devise a key question which focuses on an area of historical knowledge, skills and understanding.

The list below contains common stems that can be used to devise key questions that focus on specific areas of historical knowledge, skills and understanding:

Question stem	Link to key concepts and key skills
'What was it like in/for ...?'	Features of societies
'Why was ... So important to the ... people?'	Features of societies
'What were the differences ...?'	Change
'How did life change...?'	Change
'Was life in ... always ...?'	Change
'Why did ...?'	Causation
'What were the effects ...?'	Causation
'Why do we remember ...?'	Causation
'Does ...tell us the truth about ...?'	Interpretations
'Why do people disagree about ...?'	Interpretations
'Was ... a hero/ villain as portrayed?'	Interpretations
'What can we find out about ...?'	Enquiry
'What was it like ...?'	Enquiry
'How do we know ...?'	Evidence
'What do the songs, paintings, letters, etc, tell	Evidence

## What questions should we ask when planning historical enquiries?

When planning an historical enquiry you may wish to use the following questions as a guide:

Questions we should consider when planning historical enquiries.

1. Is the chosen area of **content** interesting and relevant?
2. What aspect of historical knowledge, skills and understanding will be the particular **focus** of the enquiry?
3. What would be a rigorous and motivating **enquiry question**?
4. How will we **'hook'** the children at the start of the enquiry?
5. How will we **sequence** the learning for maximum motivation?
6. How can we create varied learning activities, which appeal to children with **different learning styles**?
7. How can we use **learning objectives and outcomes** effectively?
8. Are we using **rich resources**?
9. How can we help children to **choose and use** information?
10. How will children communicate their understanding through an engaging **end product**?
11. How can we set **challenging expectations** for children of varying abilities?
12. Does this enquiry **fit** within the long-term plan in relation to revisiting and reinforcing ideas as well as the five aspects of historical knowledge, skills and understanding?
13. What mutually reinforcing **links** can be made with other parts of the curriculum?

### Activity 4

#### Planning a local history enquiry for one locality captured in the following images

- a. In your groups of 4, choose some of the images on the next few pages for use with KS1 and/or KS2 children.
- b. Devise an overarching enquiry question to drive your planning for an historical investigation that focuses on developing an understanding of the history of this locality. Look back at the question stems and think of which historical concepts and skills you will develop through this enquiry.
- c. Choose one of the images and think how you might use it as a captivating starter (hook) for your enquiry.
- d. How will the children communicate their historical understanding through an engaging end product for your enquiry?

## Engaging the children: different ways to start your enquiries

- **Start with a question to provide a sense of mystery or intrigue about an aspect of the past:**
  - How did the Ancient Egyptians build the pyramids?
  - Why is Sutton Hoo so important?
  - What was it really like to be an evacuee in the Second World War?
- **Other questions might be used to appeal to the pupils' sense of fair play, for example:**
  - Was anything done to improve the lives of Victorian children?
  - Did Mary Queen of Scots deserve to die?
- **Use some of history's wealth of resources:**
  - Personal accounts, stories, pictures, film or artefacts.

## Engaging the children: different ways to end your enquiries

- In groups, children become the expert archaeologists and present their findings at an archaeological conference on Roman Britain.
- An art exhibition on the theme of Victorian country children. Children become experts on particular pictures, giving talks to visitors and writing guides to individual paintings.
- Children use their knowledge to plan a local history display for their local library.
- Children write to the Hollywood producer, explaining why he should make a more balanced film about the Vikings.
- The children produce a *Today at the ancient Olympics* TV news report.

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