

History – Core Concepts

Change and Continuity

Historians recognise that over time some things stay the same, while others change. This concept is referred to as continuity and change. Examples of continuity and change can be seen across every civilisation and any given period of time. Many aspects of history influence how we act and live today. Change can occur within a certain civilisation or specific time period, but also across different civilisations and time periods. 'Change' refers to something that is obviously different from what occurred previously.

Cause and Consequence

Cause and consequence can be defined as the process historians use to identify a chain of events. Its objective is to identify, examine and analyse the reasons why events have happened and then the consequences of the event. It is useful to think of the concept in terms of 'why' and 'what'. Sometimes the link is clear but not always. Usually there are many reasons that lead to an episode or act. There can also be many outcomes. Often the outcomes are easily identifiable but sometimes they are difficult to predict and on some occasion may not be detected until long after the event.

Significance and Diversity

Diversity is based on an understanding of the past of the many individual experiences and localities in order to establish a broadly based understanding of the past. In the same way that the big picture relates to local, national and world dimension. Diversity needs to include an appreciation of experiences from rich and poor, men, women and children and different ethnic groups and different period of the past. Significance can be defined as anything that has a bearing on a situation. This could be a person who shaped what came after them, an event that had an effect on things that followed or place. The importance or significance of a person, place or event defines and influences the way that the past is remembered.

Chronological Understanding

The chronology of a series of past events is the times at which they happened in the order in which they happened. Learning about the complex concept of chronology is often considered very challenging for EYFS Year 1 Year 2 young children, yet this understanding underpins children's developing sense of period, as well as key concepts such as change and causation. It is a challenging concept to teach because of its abstract nature and children's many misconceptions illustrate the difficulties they experience in understanding and using it. Chronology, however, contributes to children's sense of identity and helps them create a context for understanding the present. In order to grasp and consider the 'big questions' of history, children need to establish in their own minds a chronology of events to enable them to make connections between them and see the wider implications of their studies in history.

Interpretations of History

Historical interpretation is the way people in later times explain people, places and events in history. It has been said that the concept interpretation is the national curriculum's 'jewel in the crown'. When pupils use the concept of 'interpretation' they are thinking and evaluating the historical information they have been presented with. What parts are factual, which are points of view or imagined.