



Historical Association Primary Survey 2019 – Summary of Key Findings

Please find below a full summary of key findings from the 2019 survey:

- Subject management is moving towards more of a leadership role from a more traditional co-ordination role. However, the main role continues to involve curriculum planning, organising resources, monitoring and supporting other teachers.
- The time allocated to history is largely unchanged from the last survey, but for those who indicated a change in time allocation, more had increased it than decreased it.
- The organisation of history in school is shifting. The most popular organisation is through topic or project work, with termly blocks next. The previous survey revealed that topic work was less prominent and termly blocks more prominent. History is taught as a discrete subject in full or in part.
- While most (the vast majority of) schools are following the National Curriculum in full or in part, there is evidence that some are not.

- Ancient Egypt remains the most popular ancient civilisation choice and the Maya the most popular non-European study area.
- A few schools have developed interesting thematic studies and a small number teach more than one post-1066 topic.
- As in previous surveys, Mary Seacole and Florence Nightingale were popular among Key Stage 1 teachers. Many schools teach about more than one individual. There has been a large increase in those schools covering individuals not referred to in the National Curriculum.
- The Great Fire of London remains easily the most popular Key Stage 1 theme beyond living memory, although a sizeable number focused on events commemorated through festivals or anniversaries. Easily the most common topic within living memory was toys.
- Local topics included individuals, specific events and local places of significance. Some Key Stage 2 schools linked local issues to their national topics.
- Teachers particularly wanted support and guidance on resourcing newer topics, local history, assessment, depth and overview, and making links.
- The assessment of progress has become more prominent among teachers but is rarely identified as a priority.
- Assessment is carried out in a number of ways, but the main one is the scrutiny of pupil work. Some use is made of targeted assessments, skills or progression checklists, learning walks, and direct observation and interaction with pupils. Responses continue to demonstrate a lack of confidence and of informed, coherent approaches to assessment.

- A sizeable number of schools were reviewing their curriculum at the time of the survey. The new Ofsted framework may have influenced this decision.
- Overall, teachers seem less concerned about resources, although a number reported difficulties including the non-European topics. The best-resourced areas seem to be the topics that have also been part of the pre-2014 primary National Curriculum. Local history resourcing appears more problematic.
- A sizeable number of schools wished for changes to their curriculum, either different options within the National Curriculum areas or new topics or periods, to make it more relevant to their pupils.
- According to the 2017 survey, teachers appear to have a broad understanding of diversity. However, the 2019 survey indicates that it is not being translated into planning and teaching.
- As in previous surveys, respondents stated that history had the closest curricular links with English, geography and art.
- Although many of the findings support those of the 2017 survey, teachers felt that 2019 represented a period of change. Ofsted's proposed changes to the inspection framework could have prompted many of these changes. There are possible indicators that these are increasing the status of history in primary schools. This may help to explain why fewer respondents were concerned about the time allocation for the subject.
- Although training remains a significant concern, it seems that the level of concern has fallen among teachers. However, budgets for primary history are still a major concern.

- The amount of training to teach history during initial teacher education remains very small.
- Two-thirds of respondents state that they have undertaken little or no training since qualification as a teacher. Where it takes place, the main provider is the school's history subject leader, who has not received much training themselves, although half have used an outside agency. The most popular forms of CPD were face-to-face and twilight courses, although a growing number sought online and webinar options, possibly linked to concerns over teacher workload, convenience and budget.