

## Preparation Pack for PGCE History Trainees

Welcome to the Cambridge History PGCE course. This pack shows you how to prepare for September. The pack is designed to get you excited about all aspects of teaching history, to build your knowledge of history and of history teachers' development of it as a school subject, and to set you thinking, so that you make a flying start in September. The pack has four sections. *Please make an early start on each section.* Little will be achieved if you attempt it in a rush at the end of August. Tackle the sections concurrently, so that you get a long way with each one. Don't try to complete one section before moving on to the next.

Follow the enclosed guidance carefully. Use it to plan a programme that suits *you*, one that will excite, stretch and challenge you. To help you do this, you will find an action plan on **the final page** of this pack. When you first meet as a group in September, you will compare your preparation results, preparation methods, action plans and reviews. Everyone should have made a good stab at each of the four sections. You may not finish all of them completely, but the more you achieve the better you will cope with the early weeks of the course.

Subject knowledge is extremely important, and quite a challenge for all new history teachers, so this pack is designed to help you to find a manageable, efficient and enjoyable way of making headway with it. It will remind you that everyone is in the same boat (so no need for panic!) and it will mean that you put down some anchors in unfamiliar areas, nice and early.

Best wishes

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## SECTION 1: Read some novels

Very good history teachers are extremely well-read in literature of quality. They are familiar with great, classic texts emerging from periods in the past in which the novel was gradually formed. They often use less well-known texts from past periods as they endeavor to find rich and demanding ways to give pupils a new sense of period of (say) nineteenth-century France or eighteenth-century England. They also read other novels with historical themes. Great history teachers carry on reading, challenging their own perspectives with fresh texts and new perspectives throughout their careers. They draw constantly on new material that might make their own students think or that help them to imagine the past for the first time. A vast range of fiction, whether written *during* the period (Tolstoy, Dickens, Eliot, Gaskell...) or much later as 'historical fiction' (Pamuk, Mantel, Chevalier...) will people your own minds with period stories and dramas as well as chronological frameworks and new starting points for your own knowledge-building and curiosity.

Good novels provide a unique access to past worlds and to debates about ways of selecting from and representing that past. Throughout your career you will often find yourself drawing upon novels both as sources from the past and as modern interpretations of it. We begin your preparation with novels, however, because you are now going to have to deepen and broaden your historical knowledge rapidly, and a novel can be an efficient and enjoyable way of gaining a first window on a new period.

Children's classics and the ever-changing world of historical fiction for children play their part in this too. For 'low-attaining' 11-year-olds, a couple of chapters of Kevin Crossley-Holland's *The Seeing Stone* or Cynthia Harnett's *The Wool Pack* might be a brilliant introduction to 'medieval life'. Such books are rooted carefully in scholarship of the period. Michael Morpurgo's *Private Peaceful* might become a turning point in creating a wholly new kind of curiosity in 13-year-olds' thinking about the First World War.

Therefore, some very important preparation that you are going to do is *to read as many as possible of the novels on the list below*. Those you have not read by mid-September you can steadily read across the year. But please read *at least 10*, and more if you can, before 15 September.

Because you want to enjoy your preparation for September (and, in some cases, to make it double-up as relaxation after some gruelling finals), novels have been chosen which are likely to grip you and which are hard to put down. This part of your preparation should be pure pleasure and you will have fun when you arrive and share your impressions of these texts with the other trainees. Most of the novels you will speed through in a few evenings but some, such as Dickens and Mantel might require something more like a week on a beach. Because you might be short of stretches on beaches, try to link some novel choices with your subject knowledge topic choice. For example, if, when you study Section 4, you realise you are going to have to prioritise the French Revolution, then Mantel's *A Place of Greater Safety* and/or Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities* would be well worth investing in as your longer novels. Greater knowledge of the French Revolution will make these two texts more accessible, and the novels in turn, especially the Mantel, will make you feel much more secure in your knowledge of the French Revolution. They will also bring great pleasure and fire your curiosity.

Quite a few novels have been selected because you are likely to have read them already, either because they are classics or because they are recent, popular big sellers. We are sure that all of you will certainly have already read Orwell's *1984* (and if any of you haven't, then you had better start right there). It is likely that about half of you have already read *A Tale of Two Cities*. By having a

list that we all now work towards, we have some common reference points for some of our discussions and for your practical classroom activities during the year.

It also means that those of you who are not 'well-read' can do something about it, fast.

**Here is the list of novels from which we would like you to select your minimum of 10.**

Chinua Achebe**	<i>Things Fall Apart</i>
Jane Austin	<i>Pride and Prejudice OR Mansfield Park</i>
John Banville	<i>Doctor Copernicus</i>
Pat Barker	<i>Regeneration</i>
Charlotte Bronte	<i>Jane Eyre</i>
Tracey Chevalier	<i>Girl with a Pearl Earring</i>
<u>Kevin Crossley-Holland</u>	<u><i>The Seeing Stone</i></u>
Charles Dickens	<i>A Tale of Two Cities</i>
George Eliot	<i>Adam Bede OR Middlemarch</i>
E.M. Forster	<i>A Passage to India</i>
Amitav Ghosh	<i>The Glass Palace</i>
Thomas Hardy	<i>Jude the Obscure OR Tess of the D'Urbervilles</i>
<u>Cynthia Harnett</u>	<u><i>The Wool Pack</i></u>
Ernest Hemingway	<i>A Farewell to Arms</i>
Khaled Hosseini	<i>The Kite Runner</i>
Aldous Huxley	<i>Brave New World</i>
P.D. James	<i>Children of Men</i>
<u>Judith Kerr</u>	<u><i>When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit</i></u>
Barbara Kingsolver	<i>The Poisonwood Bible</i>
Kazuo Ishiguro	<i>An Artist of the Floating World OR Remains of the Day</i>
D.H. Lawrence	<i>The Rainbow OR Sons and Lovers</i>
Penelope Lively	<i>Moon Tiger</i>
Andreï Makine	<i>The Life of an Unknown Man</i>
Hilary Mantel	<i>A Place of Greater Safety OR Wolf Hall</i>
<u>Michael Morpurgo</u>	<u><i>Private Peaceful</i></u>
V.S. Naipaul	<i>A Bend in the River</i>
Irene Nemirovsky	<i>Suite Française</i>
George Orwell	<i>1984</i>
Orhan Pamuk	<i>My Name is Red</i>
Boris Pasternak	<i>Doctor Zhivago</i>
<u>John Pilkington</u>	<u><i>Thief! (Elizabethan Mysteries)</i></u>
Joseph Roth	<i>The Radetzky March</i>
Arundhati Roy	<i>The God of Small Things</i>
F. Scott Fitzgerald	<i>The Great Gatsby</i>
Paul Scott	<i>The Jewel in the Crown</i>
Ahdaf Soueif	<i>The Map of Love</i>
John Steinbeck	<i>The Grapes of Wrath</i>
Rebecca Stott	<i>Ghostwalk</i>
<u>Rosemary Sutcliffe</u>	<u><i>The Armourer's House OR The Eagle of the Ninth</i></u>
Graham Swift	<i>Waterland</i>
Leo Tolstoy	<i>Anna Karenina OR Resurrection</i>
Alison Weir	<i>Innocent Traitor</i>
<u>Laura Ingalls Wilder</u>	<u><i>The Long Winter</i></u>
Jeannette Winterson	<i>The Passion</i>
Emile Zola	<i>L'Assommoir</i>
Markus Zusak	<i>The Book Thief</i>

The underlined items are children's novels. Please ensure that your selection of ten includes one or two novels written for children.

\*\* Try to find the expanded edition of Achebe's novel- e.g. that published by Heinemann - with notes. You will enjoy reading the introduction on the African background after you have finished the novel.

A range of factors has governed the selection overall. Each novel has a clear purpose in your preparation for the year ahead:

- It might offer fresh or controversial perspectives on past events.
- It might directly address questions about the purposes and value of teaching history.
- It might examine problems relating to memory, collective memory and its representation.
- It might provide intriguing access to a period or part of the world with which you are not yet familiar.
- It might be a text that children or teenagers could be inspired to read or from which you might select extended extracts for use in the history classroom.
- It might explore issues arising from colonialism, empire and post-colonialism.
- It might be a vehicle for raising moral questions about the past and reflecting on the place of moral questions in the study of the past.
- It might develop or broaden your own literary style, your ear for language, your reflections on how texts construct meaning and how readers make meaning out of texts.
- It might relate to the part of the world or to the cultural settings in which you will find yourself teaching whilst on your PGCE.

We'll leave you to decide for yourselves which novels have been selected for which purpose. Each novel will also assist you substantially in your wider work of building broader historical knowledge, both before and during the course. In every case the novel has been chosen because it will keep you imagining the past, examining issues that arise from others' representations of the past and pondering how and why humans choose to reconstruct it in this thing called 'history'.

***In your action plan, please ensure that you read a minimum of ten.*** That should be easily achievable by mid-September, and you will probably find that you can tackle a few more. All are available in paperback and most in Kindle. Most will be available in (or obtainable by) local libraries. The course places strong emphasis on using historical novels, both for our own professional learning and directly as resources with pupils, *so wide reading from this list is essential*. This is also an opportunity to make sure that you catch up with reading the classics. **An outstanding history teacher should know the literature from the period.**

**In choosing your ten, make sure that you read the kind of material that you have not read before.** If you have never read any pre-WWI novels, then clearly you urgently need to become familiar with Austin, Bronte, Dickens, Hardy, Eliot, Lawrence, Tolstoy and Zola and thus start to get the great literary landscape of the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries at your fingertips. Such familiarity with the literary landscape of a century is *essential* for a history teacher, and there is no better way to secure 'period feel', than to grasp social nuance and political assumption from the description of a Dickens, the narrative of a Bronte or the dialogue of a Tolstoy.

At the same time, try to range widely across time, place and style. If you haven't read Asian or African literature, then you should read (for example) Pamuk, Achebe, Ghosh, Hosseini, Ishiguru, Soueif, Naipaul or Roy. If you've never read any of the classic dystopian novels, then read Orwell and Huxley, and compare their dystopias with that of the more recent P.D.James. (Think about why a history teacher could gain benefit from reading dystopian novels, and why you would want teenagers to read them.). If your grasp of the early modern period is hopeless, get your curiosity cultivated and some key personalities established by reading the fast-paced drama of Weir, Chevalier or Sansom (but remember that that while the background structure is factual, the detail is fiction!). And so on.

Another approach is to follow a theme. For example, if your knowledge of art is limited, and you wouldn't know where to start in exploring history through art, then you should read Pamuk, Ishiguru

(*Artist of the Floating World*) and Chevalier. You would thus gain three fascinating - and widely contrasting - perspectives on changing style and changing ways of *reading* style in different settings and periods. You may be surprised at just how much extensive historical knowledge you can build in this way, transforming your knowledge of completely unfamiliar periods and topics.

## SECTION 2: Reflect on the nature of history as a discipline

Here we are providing you with a differentiated package according to your past experience, your diverse educational backgrounds and your current learning needs.

CORE REQUIREMENT FOR ALL	<p><b>As an absolute minimum...</b> Please would everyone read Richard Evans, <i>In Defence of History</i>.</p>
ABSOLUTE BEGINNERS	<p><b>As extra access to Richard Evans' book...</b> ...and for those of you who have never read it, please be sure to read E.H.Carr's <i>What is History?</i> Familiarity with this classic is essential, especially when we come to look at questions of causation and how the National Curriculum for History has been influenced by Carr on causation. Also, you might find Richard Evans' book prohibitively challenging if you have not read Carr. So please would those of you have not done so, kindly work through E.H.Carr <i>a.s.a.p.</i> You could keep a notebook on all the reasons why you agree/disagree with him.</p>
EXPERIENCED READERS ON THE PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICES OF HISTORY WHO WOULD LIKE TO DIG MORE DEEPLY...	<p><b>As extra challenge...</b> For those of you thoroughly familiar with Carr and Evans, we suggest you tackle work by one of the following that you have not yet encountered: Allan Megill, Jörn Rüsen, Quentin Skinner, Philip Gardner, R.G. Collingwood, John Tosh, Geoffrey Cubitt or James V. Wertsch. Past trainees have particularly enjoyed Wertsch's <i>Voices of Collective Remembering</i>, Rüsen's <i>Western Historical Thinking: An Intercultural Debate</i> (especially the debate between Burke and White in the first section) and Skinner's <i>Visions of Politics</i>, especially Chapter 3. Try to read something that is a complete contrast with Evans and Carr. Work out who has challenged each, and why.</p>

### Why does this matter?

It is important to tackle history teaching from many angles. Understanding various theoretical perspectives will help you to make sense of diverse underlying assumptions and practices among both historians and history teachers. As the course progresses, we will expect you to think clearly and conceptually about what it is you are asking pupils to do (as well as addressing deeper questions of why it matters).

In particular, certain assessment traditions in school history in England actually derive from some of these texts. The influence of E.H. Carr on causation assessment, for example, is huge. Later in the course, working with your mentor, you will be thinking critically about where assessment in history in schools has gone wrong, about why we can do better than Level Descriptions, and so on. Our course has always encouraged trainees to go back to their discipline and ask 'is this good history?' rather than slavishly to implement the latest assessment regime of the day. Often that assessment regime is distortive of rigorous history and can lower standards. You need to become the kind of professional who has the disciplinary moorings and intellectual confidence to continue constructive professional debates about how we can *improve* assessment in history. In order to do this, you must understand how the various models of assessment that have been in operation since the 1980s have their origins in certain kinds of historical theory, both implicit and explicit.

Your critique and your ability to design your own better assessment models will depend on your ability to go to your discipline, to go to the work of scholars and to discern which trends or strands historical theory have and haven't influenced school history, and whether this has been for good or ill. **You must always remain a scholar (of history), as well as a teacher**, so connection with definitions and models of scholarship is vital, precisely so that you can join vital, continuing debates about what it means to study history, rather than just what it means to study history in schools.

This is why it is important that you familiarise yourself with some basic reference points.

## SECTION 3: History education in practice: read, reflect, enquire

### Your new community

You are about to join a subject community of practising professionals who are constantly building knowledge about how to teach history, both on their own and collectively. Increasingly, history teachers write about their practice for others. They might do this in order to build the collective, shared knowledge of the profession, in order to join a debate, in order to submit their own practice and ideas to the critical scrutiny of others or simply in order to share and spread intellectual excitement about what can be achieved in the history classroom.

At its best, it is an extremely vibrant group of professionals. The Cambridge course is designed to make you feel part of that community, right from the start. There is now a richly exciting seam of literature for you to mine, full of debates about curricular and pedagogic issues, about *what* we should teach, about how to interpret and critique curricula and examination specifications.

You could be a contributing member of that community more quickly than you think. Those of you who started subscribing to *Teaching History* some years' ago, or who have searched the *Teaching History* archive on the Historical Association site, will have read the September 2010 edition (*TH 140*) and seen a wonderful article by former Cambridge trainee, Ellen Buxton, who devised a powerfully effective way of getting Year 8 pupils to compare France and England in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. She did this after being inspired by the scholarship of historian Robert Tombs. She was concerned at how little knowledge pupils have of 18<sup>th</sup> century Britain, and how decontextualized much schoolwork on the French Revolution is. Working with the full ability range, she built a much more ambitious vision for their knowledge and resultant historical thinking. Many of you will have read the June edition from last year (*TH 151*) and you will therefore be inspired by Rachel Foster's original work analysing what is 'going on' when students argue about historical change and using the scholarship of academic historians to help her do so. Rachel Foster - one of our trainees from seven years ago, and now a mentor - is now internationally famous and her work is used and discussed by history teachers from Lebanon and the Netherlands, to Singapore and New Zealand.

These pieces show how soon you, too, will be part of the collective knowledge construction process that goes on in a professional community that takes responsibility for its own definition of high standards.

The tasks below (A to D) will enable you to taste some of the issues, debates and practical ideas. If you achieve all of the following you have useful terms of reference when you arrive. You will also arrive brimming with practical ideas and inspired to create your own.

### From PGCE to Masters: why research matters

The following tasks have also been carefully designed to prepare you for a key aspect of the Cambridge PGCE course - an understanding of education research. The word 'research' in education sometimes has an unnecessary mystique about it but all it really means is the construction of new knowledge and in ways that can be made public and collective rather than just left as private knowledge building. When you hear educational 'research', simply think 'enquiry' or 'investigation'. During your PGCE year we introduce you to a variety of methods for enquiring into your own practice. We will also help you to discern and appraise the enquiry methods *used by others* in the literature that you will read.

When understood in this broad way, research becomes a natural extension of being a good teacher. All good teachers evaluate their lessons. This, in itself, is an important form of knowledge construction. By evaluating, teachers are carefully examining what pupils say, do and write. This is one form of research. Moreover, this careful reflection on pupils' responses can be linked to reflection on the discipline of history. You will be not only asking the question, 'What approach seems to help this pupil to think about historical causes?' you will also be asking the question, 'What is thinking about historical causes *all about*?' 'What *kind* of historical reasoning is this?' 'How does it - or should it - relate to secure historical knowledge?' The intellectually curious teacher takes nothing for granted. The intellectually curious teacher, evaluating his or her practice, enquires in this way, all the time.

Such enquiry and evaluation are infinitely challenging. But armed with some intellectual tools and techniques of enquiry you can get better at it. We will therefore spend much time teaching you to evaluate. In addition, our course will gradually train you to augment that evaluation with further tools of enquiry. In other words, we will introduce you to a range of ways of researching your own and others' practice. We will also expect you to become increasingly skilled at communicating the results of that research, to peers, to colleagues, to the wider subject community and beyond.

A good starting point for this is to get a sense of what professional enquiry means for other history teachers. What kinds of things do history teachers need to find out? What tools of enquiry are available to them? What research techniques do others use? How do history teachers communicate their findings to other history teachers? How does professional debate happen? What academic standards increasingly inform that debate?

You are not going into a profession to be just a skilled automaton, implementing professional standards and practice received from on high as though they were automatically 'right' or merely copying experienced teachers. Instead, quite early, you will find vast areas of debate within history education. Quite early, you will become part of the knowledge construction process. Even a humble evaluation of a lesson could be the start of a new insight into (say) how pupils knowledge of one period or type of concept seems to make them assimilate another more rapidly, one which will not only improve your own practice but which may influence your peers, your department and perhaps hundreds of history teachers who eventually read your work.

For those of you excited by this ever-expanding circle of enquiry and new knowledge, there is the option in your NQT year and/or the two years' following, to continue and complete your Masters, part-time, during your first job.

Meanwhile, in order to begin the habit of enquiry required in your PGCE year, and in order to gain some good knowledge reference points in existing debates, please tackle the following four areas of activity.

## **A) Read each of the four enclosed photocopied articles**

You will find with this mailing short articles by Sean Lang, Tony McAleavy, Jamie Byrom and Kate Hammond. Each of these was written some years ago and is a classic in the history education community. Countless later pieces make reference to these four items. Each, in its own way, was a profound marker or turning point in certain debates. For each article, don't take detailed notes. Instead, when you have finished, put the article down and see if you can summarise it on less than half a side of A4.

Then ask yourself: Where do these articles interconnect? See if you can make a diagram to show any relationships or contrasts. Each of these articles is emblematic of a key trend or issue in history education that took place fifteen to twenty years ago. Elements would seem dated to the well-informed history teacher today, but you will need to understand these four pieces if you are to understand the huge influence that each of these four teachers exerted through their writing and/or through workshops and lectures.

You will be using each of these four articles in the early weeks of the course. The articles give you background on the subject teaching community, and some of its debates and journeys. They will also offer you frameworks to help you interpret (i) what you see in the history classroom and (ii) your early thinking about how children develop as learners in history.

Take care to think about what each of these authors is reacting *against*. What problems did Lang and McAleavy discern in common practices using sources (such as spotting ‘bias’, such as tackling sources in de-contextualised ways)? Many practitioners, less well-trained than you will be, are not taught to know how these things have been challenged, tackled and reformed, and therefore they end up re-inventing wheels both round and square, sadly unaware that the same debates were run twenty years ago. Often they read articles from the 2000s without realising how those teachers are, in turn, building on Lang’s or McAleavy’s insights. Similarly, Hammond’s writings form a stream of argument for knowledge in history. Her most recent work amounts to an analysis of the properties that shape that knowledge and how we might discern it in students’ work. Hammond is a mentor on our course who has made a major contribution to the post-SHP developments in history education. Starting with this very early piece by Hammond will give you a flavor of how her contribution to that debate evolved.

## **B) Read nine further history education articles of your choice, three from each of the three enclosed journals.**

In your mailing you will find the following three editions of *Teaching History*

*Curriculum Architecture Edition, Teaching History, 147*

*Enduring Principles Edition, Teaching History, 150*

*First World War Edition, Teaching History, 155*

Choose three articles from each of these three editions of *Teaching History*. Overall, make sure that your nine chosen articles have been selected because they grab your personal interest or enthusiasm, or because they tackle issues or areas new to you, and which seem to intrigue you. Then read each piece slowly, carefully and reflectively, making a note of things that puzzle or interest you, as you go along.

As you read, look out for **similarities** of intention or claim, perhaps expressed in contrasting ways. Look out for fundamental **differences** and **disagreements** between pieces. Look for **contrasting ways of constructing professional knowledge about the same learning/historical issue**. These differences may not be made explicit, so test your powers of analysis by working out how (for example) Blow/Lee/Shemilt’s concerns differ from those of Foster, Baker/Mastin or Fordham and where they overlap but in less than obvious ways. And what do van Boxtel and van Drie have in common with Fordham but why does their article feel very different from his? And what do the practising teachers, Fordham, Foster, Brown/Massey, McDougall, Baker/Mastin and Whitburn/Yemoh offer which Lee/ Shemilt, the researchers, perhaps ignore (or vice versa)? In the journals, much attention is given to teaching aspects of British history: how do Fordham, Whitburn/Yemoh, Foster and Grant/Townshend differ in their rationales for teaching British history? Are these rationales

explicit or implicit in how they go about their practice? How are their rationales (whether implicit or explicit) different from or similar to those (i.e. politicians and press) currently arguing for more British history in public spaces of debate? These are just some of the interesting issues you could choose to think about as you start to enjoy these diverse works.

We chose these three editions as your ‘freebie’ *Teaching History* editions because they capture so much of the intellectual energy, vibrancy and dynamism of the scholarly history classroom at its best. This is the community that you are joining - many of its most impressive members share their practice willingly and enthusiastically.

Enjoy these editions and, soon, you will be writing similar articles yourselves, arguing robustly and constructively with others about how to improve pupils’ historical learning.

Your mentor (who - warning! - will be extremely well read!) will expect you to be familiar with this material when you arrive. Subject Studies happens in school, even more than it happens in university. So this is all preparation for conversations with your mentor.

### **C) Start thinking about processes of *investigation* into history education**

Here, we want you to read or *re-read* some of the pieces, but with a different lens. We want you to think about each piece as a report on a *process of enquiry or investigation*. This activity will give you a sense of the range of types of investigation you will learn to deploy, and a sense of how these relate very naturally to the evaluation and reflection in which good teachers constantly engage.

Therefore, please look at (or look again at) these seven articles:

- Kate Hammond (*TH 109 Examining History Edition - on photocopied sheets*)
- Robin Whitburn and Sharon Yemoh (*TH 147 Curriculum Architecture Edition*)
- Michael Fordham (*TH 147 Curriculum Architecture Edition*)
- Hannah MacDougall (*TH 150 Enduring Principles Edition*)
- Mary Brown (*TH 150 Enduring Principles Edition*)
- Rachel Foster (*TH 155 First World War Edition*).
- Mary Brown and Carolyn Massey (*TH 155 First World War Edition*)

Each of these seven articles is a report on a form of *professional* investigation or enquiry. Each is also a form of *academic* investigation or enquiry.

By ‘academic’ we mean that it is situated within earlier work: it isn’t just idiosyncratic, freestanding, practical ideas. It is part of a scholarly conversation. It attends to the practical knowledge *already developed* by history teachers, by historians and by history education researchers. It then moves forwards from that base and builds new knowledge. Some of the articles are remarkably practical - they are forms of ‘action research’. But each is very different from the rest, distinctive both in its approach and its object.

Re-read each of the seven pieces and for each one, develop a considered response to each of these questions. There is a huge amount to think about. Early in the PGCE, you will be invited to share your conclusions to these questions with one another:

- i) **What triggered this teacher’s investigation? What motivated them to investigate in this way?**

- ii) **What was this teacher trying to find out?**  
*Think broadly about this one - it is rarely as narrow as - 'how to get pupils better at....'; it may start there, but it will usually involve something more 'what kind of historical knowledge or historical thinking is this?' 'what language might I use to redefine this historical problem for pupils?' 'How does this aspect of historical thinking/knowledge link up with something else?' 'what exactly is the educational value of teaching this?' 'what concepts are involved here and what is the best way to talk about them?' OR 'what properties does this concept have which my pupils seem to be missing in my current practice?' etc. In other words, the object of an enquiry will often be, in the first instance, a new clarity about an intellectual outcome of learning. Sometimes the teacher is trying to find out about him or herself (as a history teacher). It is almost as though it is a form of auto-enquiry, examining their own professional journey. What value does this have and why might a teacher want to share it with others?*
- iii) **What did the teacher end up finding out?**  
*Can you summarise their conclusions? What new professional knowledge did each construct? Take great care with this. It will lead to fascinating debate in the autumn.*
- iv) **What sources of knowledge did the teacher draw on during their investigation?**  
*This could be anything from other academic and professional literature, to empirical evidence from pupils' responses (what they wrote, said or did in class) to special data created from particular research instruments. Think hard about hidden or tacit sources of knowledge the teacher may be working with, as well as their direct references to others' work and their use of empirical data of their own.*

## D) Read this (non-history) work of cognitive science about memory and learning:

Daniel Willingham: *Why don't students like school?*

Don't be put off by the label 'cognitive science', the book is highly readable and much discussed by teachers at the moment.

You should be able to order this easily from a local library. Most trainees do end up choosing to buy it as paperback or on Kindle because they find it useful and it's a hot topic for current debate in the blogosphere, but you could just borrow it for now.

Having read Willingham, think about his conclusions in the context of the history classroom practice that you have observed and especially the struggling, low-attaining or disaffected student. Where might students have been failing and turned off for want of having sufficient, firm knowledge reference points to be able to join in the interesting thinking and debate required by the lesson? No need to take copious notes on this book. Just record a few reflections on particular insights you would like to keep in mind as you begin teaching.

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Subscribing to *Teaching History*

We know that most of you have already joined the Historical Association and are therefore already subscribing to *Teaching History*. You will therefore already be feeling up-to-date.

If you haven't yet subscribed, we advise you to do so without delay. Your student status will secure the concessionary rate for two years. Once a member of the Historical Association you will be given an individual password that will allow you to access all the HA resources (including past editions of *Teaching History*).

You will need this password every week during next year as you work through the compulsory weekly readings of the course. Membership gives you access to all the back copies of *Teaching History* online. You will use these articles extensively in discussion with your mentor and when researching for assignments. Membership will also give you access to many other riches on the HA website - podcasts by professional historians and so on, helping you find efficient ways to update your subject knowledge and become stimulated by the latest historical debates.

Being an active member of your subject association is a key part of being an effective professional. Subscribing to *Teaching History* simply comes as a benefit of that membership.

Members' access to all the back copies of *Teaching History* will also allow you to use each edition's 'Polychronicon' right away. These Polychronicons will help you with rapid knowledge-building.

The chief reason why you need ready access to the journal is that you are about to do a course in which we think you should reading literature chiefly **by history teachers**. It is practicing history teachers who shape and own the most vibrant discourse in history education. It is important that new generations of history teachers continue to shape that discourse rather than being passive receivers of materials from governments or academics. Your mentor in school will know the debates in that journal very well and will expect you to become familiar with them quickly so that you are situating your practice in much bigger pictures than your own department.

## SECTION 4: Build some completely new historical knowledge

This is the most important section of all. This will require careful planning ahead over the next two months. To keep this manageable and to ensure BOTH that you address your own individual weaknesses AND that the group of 20 history trainees have a few secure topics in common, we are going to ask you to focus on **four areas only**:

- *up to three* from three topics on which we would like all trainees to arrive with some knowledge: the Wars of the Roses, the ‘Glorious Revolution’ and the French Revolution (if you are ignorant of all three, then you should include all three);
- *at least one* historical topic(s) of your choice that will help you to make good another more serious knowledge gap(s).

In sum, we would like you all to expand your current knowledge with **four new topics** and to do this as enjoyably and efficiently as possible over the summer. For some (those of you for whom the Wars of the Roses, the GR and the FR are totally unfamiliar and a complete fog) you will do those three topics and choose just one more. For those of you who do have some knowledge of these three, only choose the one or two in which you are *weakest* and then make up your four with other topics where you know you are woefully ignorant. There is guidance below on how to make your choices, and how to work on each topic.

We want to stress, first, however, that you should not fret and worry if you still don’t feel an ‘expert’ in these four areas by mid-September! You are not aiming for exhaustive knowledge. What matters is that you have read a few things, engaged with some new territory, feel more secure in some core, starting narratives (e.g. you at least know the *dramatis personae*, have a sense of the central stories) and that you now know enough not to get lost when reading serious historical scholarship. Just to manage that will give you a great sense of achievement, as well as ensuring that we all have some common reference points in our work together in Subject Studies.

Another purpose of this exercise is also to get you thinking about HOW you can build new knowledge, efficiently, creatively and enjoyably. During the year, you will have to do this a great deal, while being very busy in schools all day. So please heed the advice below about using initiative and planning ahead to create the learning journey that suits you, your history needs and your personal, preferred approach to learning new material.

### Making your choice

#### A) Gaining knowledge of three major topics: the Wars of the Roses, the ‘Glorious Revolution’ and the French Revolution

Trainees’ knowledge profiles will be very diverse across the history group. This is a good thing: once the year begins, you can learn from each other on lots of topics. At the same time, it is also useful to have just a few areas where we are all reasonably knowledgeable and that we can all use as a common setting for devising and reflecting on interesting learning activities and for discussing historical learning in more detail.

So that we make this double-up with the challenge of gradually getting you more knowledgeable in some more areas, we have chosen three topics on which history trainees commonly feel *extremely*

*insecure*. So if those three topics set off a slight panic, fear not; you are not alone: the majority of the other 19 trainees will have had the same reaction!

For some of you, one of these three might have been a specialist topic in your degree, or you vaguely remember it from A Level, and if so, spend no further time on it. Don't include it as one of your four. That would be a waste of time at this stage. Remember that your goals are to *broaden* your knowledge and to practice *ways* of broadening your knowledge, *rapidly*.

Only include those three topics in your four if you really are clueless on them.

What is 'clueless'? Well, if you saw the words: Elizabeth Woodville, Henry VI, Edward IV, Richard III, the Paston letters, the Battle of Towton, the Princes in the Tower, Margaret Beaufort, the Houses of York and Lancaster and you didn't even recognize one or two or couldn't weave a handful of facts about each into a simple narrative, and if you honestly don't have any idea how Henry Tudor came to the throne (other than some chap yelling for a horse who is now buried under a car park), and if you couldn't really do much with any dates in the period 1455 to 1485, then we think you qualify as 'clueless'.

No shame in that. But you therefore need to work on this topic at some point and we are asking you to prioritise this particular one, right now.

But if you do have those outline narratives, then please consider yourself adequately knowledgeable for now and take the opportunity to make good your gaps in some other areas.

## **B) Choosing your other topic(s) to make up your four.**

For those other areas, really the whole of human history is a possibility because although the 2014 National Curriculum is mostly British it does also require study of European and world history and besides, the future History GCSE and A Level will range all over the place and constantly change. But a good place to make a start is with the 2014 NC. So go to it, skim through, and just highlight those bullet points where you know you are all at sea.

When you get to the section on 'world' history, you will find some examples of possible topics, but in fact anything is admissible, so just jot down a couple of further world areas or major themes where you feel woefully ignorant (e.g. are you clueless about the Ottoman Empire? Do you know about the early expansion of Islam? Could you find your way about 20<sup>th</sup> century China?). World history matters hugely, even though its place appears small on the NC.

Remember to look at Key Stage 2 NC as well as Key Stage 3. It is important to know about content that is on the primary NC so that you can make connections with it, so if you fancy choosing something from the ancient world, that is fine, and useful.

When you've done that, it's time to make choices. If you know you have to do the Wars of the Roses, the GR and the FR, then just choose the ONE topic which you feel would stretch you the most, pull you out of your comfort zone the most or just make you feel a bit more confident by throwing down a few anchors in a rather scary sea. Narrow it down to a manageable focus - a person, perhaps, or a story, or a place, so that you give yourself a specific target and a defined set of content.

Whether you are choosing ONE additional topic, or two, three or four (for those of you who do already know about the Wars of the Rs, the GR and the FR), try to choose something that is distant from your own, more secure knowledge, both in terms of *period* and in terms of *type* of history:

- e.g. if you are keen on military history, choose something social, cultural or political;
- e.g. if you enjoy cultural history, choose something political and constitutional;
- e.g. if all your knowledge is tied to nations or regions, try something on a bigger spatial scale;
- e.g. if your religious history is a big muddle, plump for something that will sort you out!

But choose something new/distant in substantive knowledge terms, too. If you know nothing about Islamic history, or Scottish/Welsh/Irish history, or Russian history, or if your knowledge of 17<sup>th</sup> century English history is hopeless and you know nothing about the English Civil War... then choose to tackle it.

Each of you will thus put together a personal package. Here are some samples of the diverse packages that some of you might build:

<p><b>Trainee A</b></p> <p>Trainee A is very knowledgeable about the French Rev but weak on late medieval and totally ignorant of the GR. She also knows that her nineteenth-century British political history is terrible and feels daunted at the challenge of that bit of the NC for history that reads: ‘party politics, the extension of the franchise and social reform’ so she decides to get started on that by getting to know a single 19<sup>th</sup> century statesman in order to get ‘into’ a political biography and put down some chronological markers in the events and issues of the period. She decides it’s a toss-up between Gladstone and Disraeli and she chooses Gladstone because a recently published biography looks juicy and an enjoyable summer read. It will also allow her to find out more about Ireland and Home Rule (yet another weakness).</p> <p>This trainee also knows that she is insecure on all Russian history and it’s the gap she feels most worried about. So she plumps for the Russian Revolution as the fourth, deciding just to get her head round its causes, course and main personalities. She chooses Pasternak’s <i>Dr Zhivago</i> as one of her novels.</p>	<p><b>Trainee B</b></p> <p>Trainee B specialized in 15<sup>th</sup> century European history and although the Wars of the Roses were by no means a specialist topic, with a little revision, Trainee B could navigate an outline narrative of the Wars of the Roses. So that one is out. Both Glorious Revolution and French Revolution terrify him, however.</p> <p>Trainee B has numerous other gaps and hardly knows where to start, but after doing a highlighting exercise on the NC, notices a pattern. Both ancient and early medieval periods really are a mystery and he feels that much of the Key Stage 2 and early Key Stage 3 content, the primary-secondary crossover areas, are weak. He therefore goes for something that straddles KS2 and KS3, giving him good knowledge of Anglo-Saxon society, culture and politics and of the Norman Conquest. He gets this idea from a recommendation from a university friend who suggests he reads Marc Morris (2012) <i>The Battle of Hastings and the fall of Anglo-Saxon England</i>.</p> <p>Trainee B also decides to put anchors down in one of the world topics that means little to him: Mughal India. He decides to get into this by borrowing a book from a library on Mughal art, and then gradually learns some key stories from the period, enough to help him find his way around.</p>
<p>Final choice:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Wars of the Roses</li> <li>2) Glorious Revolution</li> <li>3) Benjamin Disraeli</li> <li>4) The Russian Revolution</li> </ol>	<p>Final choice:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Glorious Revolution</li> <li>2) French Revolution</li> <li>3) 11<sup>th</sup> century England (pre- and post conquest)</li> <li>4) Mughal India</li> </ol>

## How to go about building knowledge in your four areas

**Tips: Make it enjoyable. Make it efficient. It's all in the hors d'oeuvres.**

You don't want this to be a trudge, so find the right place to start. Find a book you can't put down, a film that fires you with questions, a novel that swims along and leaves you with secure outline narratives. Do something that means that the textbook or work of historical scholarship you *then* go for is much more digestible. Tackle something short first, and use that starter to help you choose and digest something long. For example, see the enclosed an edition of *The Historian*. It has an article by P.J. Marshall on Britain in the eighteenth century and its empire. It is highly readable. If you had plumped for the early British Empire as your topic, then, having soaked that article up, you'll have a sense of where to go next and you'll feel ready for it. That is the kind of starting point we mean.

You don't have much time, and you need to love every moment of it. So good starting choices are vital. Realistic goals are vital.

Here are some ideas for the *very first thing* you might do:

- Why not start with a current play or controversial film, just to feed your appetite and give you questions?
- Find a gripping novel. Make this section double-up with your novel reading section so that each enriches the other.
- Why not look at some websites and find out the controversies - both popular and academic?
- Use a couple of articles in something easy like *History Today* or *The Historian* or *BBC History Magazine* just to get you going and then branch out into a more scholarly, meaty work. We enclose a copy of the *The Historian* for you, as an illustration of what it offers.
- Grab a textbook - Key Stage 3, GCSE or A Level, to get the outline, then test yourself on what you can remember. Then move into some historical scholarship. Amuse yourself by then considering what the weaknesses of the textbook were.
- Once you have joined the Historical Association, go to the feature called "Polychronicon" that you will find in every edition of *Teaching History*. That is a really brief guide to the latest historiography and debates on a wide range of topics. It is a good starting point for navigating the territory.

The key thing to remember is this. Don't go straight in to complicated scholarly works and end up floundering. *Work your way towards those sorts of works*. A pacey biography might be a better place to start - something you won't be able to put down. Equally, don't grind through textbooks in isolation. Be creative. Make it personally compelling. Start with something that makes you hungry for the more demanding scholarship.

Here are some approaches to going about studying the French Revolution for the very first time. You don't have to do all of them; if you were to choose just two or three of the bullets below, you would be much more secure. These approaches have proved useful in giving some former trainees an enjoyable and productive summer on this topic, sufficient to make them feel more than confident the first time we do an activity on the French Revolution in Subject Studies or when your mentor asks you to prepare a lesson on it in school.

### **The French Revolution: suggested approaches for rapid knowledge building**

- Find two good *A Level* textbooks on the French Revolution. Those published in the last fifteen years will include diagrams and ideas for your own learning e.g. Dylan Rees and Duncan

Townson's book published by Hodder and Stoughton or Sally Waller's book published by Heinemann. These two are available as paperbacks if you felt like spending money, but anything you can borrow from the local school history department or library will do. Read the two books in tandem - moving from one to the other and making charts and activities. Invent ways of using the two books together - e.g. read one chapter and then read the equivalent chapter in the other book, mentally noting all the places where there are resonances with the other book. Think about your own learning as you go: e.g. what kinds of things do you retain easily and what do you seem to lose? When does your reading seem naturally to encourage you to ask questions, rather than simply to absorb stuff uncritically? Why and where does this happen? How can you find more efficient approaches?

- After studying an easy (Key Stage 3) textbook or any other short, easy guide on the Internet, read Hilary Mantel's novel, *A Greater Place of Safety*. Once you read that, you will have the personalities firmly in your head for ever, and also the outline chronology.
- Read Simon Schama's *Citizens - A Chronicle of the French Revolution*. Compare it with George Rudé, *The Crowd in the French Revolution* or anything by Tim Blanning. How do they differ in their focus and concerns?
- If Robespierre fascinates you (and he will, especially if you read Hilary Mantel), read Ruth Scurr, *Fatal Purity*. Having got to know Robespierre well with Ruth Scurr's expert help, then find the collection entitled, *Robespierre*, edited by Colin Haydon and William Doyle. Note different lines of argument, different types of evidence used, different foci, assumptions or concerns. **HOT TIP: Ruth Scurr's book was very popular with last year's trainees - several became fascinated by Robespierre after enjoying her book as a summer read.**
- Blend two or three of the above methods and reflect the way in which your knowledge is growing and what kinds of things seem to be getting *easier* for you as you press on to new material.

Finally, here are some examples of how trainees went about finding out about the Wars of the Roses, the Glorious Revolution and a couple of other topics of their own choice.

## **Sally on the Wars of the Roses**

I felt very daunted about this because I am a strong early modern and modern historian and although I have ancient and some early medieval history, I really had no secure, political late medieval history, only social and cultural. I think I must have assumed that Henry VII popped out of nowhere and I didn't know my late medieval kings and queens at all. Worried that I would get lost very quickly, I decided to cheat and read Phillippa Gregory's novel, *The White Queen* as a warm-up. I absolutely loved it! It wasn't at all hard to tell the difference between fact and fiction and I came out with a strong sense of the bigger narratives and a colourful sense of the major personalities. I was fascinated by Margaret Beaufort and felt much more sympathy towards her when I realized what a pawn she had been for most of her early life. It also gave me a sense of the opportunities and dangers of pupils reading such a novel. Having read it, I realized I needed to get into some proper scholarship, fast!! (but would pupils realize that?). So I devoured Christine Carpenter's *The Wars of the Roses: Politics and the Constitution of England*,

c.1437-1509. I really, really enjoyed that book. I went to it with so many questions arising from my first encounter with the personalities via the novel and I found this prior interest just propelled me through the book.

## **Sandra on the Glorious Revolution**

Although I had covered this in an outline course in my first year at university, I had to admit that at the end of the course, I barely even knew the dates of William and Mary or what the Bill of Rights was and I'd forgotten all about how it happened, so this topic was a must for me. I read two completely different books, and the first was a terrific place to start. I read John van der Kiste's *Heroes of the Glorious Revolution: William and Mary*. This is a gripping narrative of William and Mary's lives. I found I started to care about what happened to them and see the stories from their perspectives. It was easy to read and although I didn't retain all the detail, it left me with a good residue of the big picture. It was then much easier to take in a fascinating study of how the Glorious Revolution has been viewed throughout history. I read Edward Vallance (2006) *The Glorious Revolution: 1688 and Britain's Fight for Liberty*. I only read three chapters of Vallance, but it was crucial to helping me understand how the GR has been re-interpreted over and over again. I got the idea of reading his book from two features in *Teaching History, Edition 151*. The Polychronicon in that edition is by Edward Vallance and that gave me the way in. It's followed up by a "Cunning Plan" on how to teach interpretations of The Glorious Revolution, by Arthur Chapman, and that really helped me to pull everything together and see all this being used in the classroom.

## **Simon on the early Islamic history**

I was curious to know about the relationship between Islam and Christendom during the Middle Ages, and also about Muslim influences on the Renaissance, I but really didn't know where to start and I was worried that my knowledge of Islam's origins was too shaky to make much sense of it, so I decided to focus on this as a world history topic. I stumbled by accident on Barnaby Rogerson: *The Prophet Muhammad: A Biography* and was completely drawn into its narrative. I then followed this up with the first half of Reza Aslan: *No God but God: The Origins, Evolution and Future of Islam*. I then decided to explore medieval Spain as an example of a blended Muslim-Christian society developing from the early 8<sup>th</sup> century and was particularly drawn in by the example of Cordoba and its extraordinary cathedral in the middle of a mosque! I therefore read just one chapter of Iftikar Malik: *Islam and Modernity: Muslims in Europe and the United States*, the chapter on Muslims in Spain. This then got me really curious about Cordoba and I now plan to go there for my next holiday. Later, during the PGCE year, when we had to choose historical scholarship for our mentors to read with us in school, I chose David Abulafia's *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. I don't think I could have done that without those earlier knowledge moorings in Islam.

## Sam on Edward I

The bit in the NC that says, 'the English campaigns to conquer Wales and Scotland up to 1314' gave me the heebie jeebies, so I decided to put down one anchor in that area and I made my fourth topic Edward I. I just set myself the target of becoming really knowledgeable about the reign of this one very famous king. I read the whole of one book, really slowly. I read Marc Morris, *Edward I, a Great and Terrible King*. It was brilliant. I read it on and off all summer. I then contacted a university friend who had specialized in that period and spent an evening with him, picking his brains. That opportunity to process and extend my new knowledge with a knowledgeable other was invaluable. With Edward I in my head, I found that during the PGCE year, it was much easier to make sense of the reigns of Edward II and Edward III (about whom I was also clueless) because I now had so many earlier reference points in politics, culture and society. My mentor asked me to tackle a lesson sequence on the significance of Bannockburn, quite early in the course (October) and I was very glad that I'd studied Edward I because I don't think I would have been able to situate the battle, and Edward II's reign, in a wider narrative without it. The bigger picture actually made me question the significance of Bannockburn so the significance focus in school was much less superficial than it would otherwise have been.

### FINAL TIP on general knowledge-building: Don't panic, just MAKE USE of the novels in Section 2.

- Is your African history lamentable? Read Chinua Achebe *Things Fall Apart*.
- Are you hopeless on South and East Asia and don't have any reference points? Read Amitav Ghosh *The Glass Palace*.
- Is your feeling for medieval experience hopeless? Read Cynthia Harnett's *The Wool Pack*.
- Is your nineteenth-century 'sense of period' fairly lamentable? Then read some Dickens, some Gaskell, some Trollope, some Eliot or some Hardy. Get started because you will need that sense of period on Day 1 of the course in Subject Studies when we look at nineteenth-century social and political change!
- Would you struggle to distinguish between eighteenth century British society and later social history? That must mean you have never read any Jane Austen! That is an embarrassing place to be for a history teacher. Read *Pride and Prejudice*, fast. Soak up its language, find some critical social, literary/historical commentaries on it on the Internet.
- Does Islamic art mean nothing to you? Get lost in Orhan Pamuk's murder mystery.
- Is your awareness of the Hapsburg empire non-existent? Make a start with Joseph Roth's tragic and evocative *The Radetzky March*.
- Are the Tudors a mystery? Get absorbed by the characters in an Alison Weir or a C.J. Sansom novel. Then you'll be inspired to *want* to find out more.
- Does East Anglia and its people mean very little to you? Read the classic history teacher novel of the fens: Graham Swift's *Waterland*.
- Do you lack any sense of visceral connection with or awareness of Japanese history beyond high politics and international history? Read Ishiguro, *Artist of the Floating World*.

- Is your knowledge of 19<sup>th</sup> century Russia terrible? Read some Tolstoy to start clambering out of your ignorance, to gain a 'sense of place' and 'sense of period', and, above all, to remedy your ignorance of Tolstoy - the great master of the novel.

**By reading broadly across a good range of novels you will be throwing out other, smaller anchors into many other periods, places and themes, well beyond your four topics. Enjoy.**

## Making a summer action plan

When you have had a chance to read the whole preparation pack, and to reflect on what you can achieve in the time available, make an action plan. This will be good practice for time management of the complicated mix of inter-related activities happening simultaneously during the PGCE year.

You can review your plan from week to week, monitoring how well you are learning and where you need to make changes in your methods.

Your action plan might look like this:

<b>SECTION</b>	<b>Key goals</b> specific goals that are both a) <b>necessary</b> for my individual learning needs; b) <b>realistic</b> , given my available time and circumstances	<b>Methods I plan to use</b> people, places, sources and resources, and the order in which I'll initially aim to do things  Create a rough time-frame, so that you know which part you'll be working on in July, August and early September.	<b>Reflect and review</b>  success? why? how? How much? What do you need to do next?
Section 1 <b>novels</b>			
Section 2 <b>nature of history</b>			
Section 3 <b>history education</b>			
Section 4 <b>historical knowledge: my four new topics</b>			