

HISTORY OF MY SOCIETY

Students will develop an understanding of history as it applies to their community. The initial focus is on the school, the subsequent focus is on a section of a nearby community.

Our School

Key task:

Using physical, pictorial, documentary and social evidence build a timeline of our school's history.

1900-2010 timeline display

In this unit we add to the 1900-2010 Timeline, key features of the century in terms of our school and community.

Broad objectives:

Students will:

- Recognise that progress involves change to physical structure
- Recognise that progress involves change to personnel
- Design research methods that describe change for which there is no existing physical evidence
- Engage the assistance of members of their school community and the wider educational community in research
- Recognise the unique place experienced citizens hold in providing historical perspective
- Recognise evidence that can give clues as to the date of a building or feature
- Work as a large group with a mutual aim
- Work as small groups or pairs with a mutual aim
- Work as individuals to satisfactorily complete a task of choice
- Work in a way which suits their preferred learning style

In completing the task students will:

- Describe the observable changes to their school
- Identify and resolve conflicting information to their satisfaction
- Prepare and communicate appropriate questions for response by personnel requested to assist

- Use observation, book research, photographs, documents and oral histories to fill gaps in their information
- Design questions which elicit responses to solve research problems
- Sequence physical evidence, information from photographs, information from willing volunteers, and information from documents including books and pamphlets to form an accurate timeline of events
- Construct as accurate as possible time lines of their school
- Select and record information for a presentation of their findings in an appropriate format; Powerpoint, video clip, booklet, poster, short talk.

Lesson outlines for whole group approaches:

Take a critical walk looking at the school site. Our aim is to look at the changes in the physical buildings which will help us date them.

Observe and note down:

- Differing building styles, including roof lines
- Range of building materials
- Any dates which are displayed (foundation stones, plaques, portraits) etc.
- Obvious extensions and/or renovations.

This information could be recorded orally via tape, via video recording or on paper.

- By pre-arrangement with the librarian visit the library and investigate what the school possesses in historical documents which help and describe the time line of the school
- Invite the principal to talk through the school's history with the class
- Write to the local Department of Education requesting records/photographs which describe any aspects of the school's history.

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Using the information as you gather it, construct at this stage a simple timeline of the school's history. In addition to building dates, you may gather information around the history of the school personnel. This may affect the way the group chooses to present their final timeline, which is your ultimate aim. By putting your time line together as the information comes to hand you can identify any conflicting information, thereby giving students opportunities to check their facts and reach a satisfactory conclusion. Be prepared to gather information which ultimately may not be used.

Key questions if your school is new

- What is the history of this site?
- What building(s) sat on this site prior to the establishment of your school?
- What physical evidence exists to indicate how long this site has been in functional use?
- Engage key personnel in the school and the local Department of Education; librarian, school historian, principal etc. to help date the site and assist you form a timeline up to and including the construction of your school.

Individual student approaches/paired or small group approaches, running parallel with the gathering of historical information and documents as a class.

- Represent the school/site as a pictorial timeline; visually record the school through photos, sketches, rubbings etc.
- Sketch what you consider to be a historically integral part of the school; e.g. the front entrance way

- Research and present pictorial imagery of the changes in:
 - roof lines of buildings, or
 - window construction and appearance, or
 - style of buildings, or
 - ornamental features such as door handles, window locks, light fittings etc. Comment briefly on why such changes of style have occurred.

Present your individual project as a poster, Powerpoint, video clip, short talk, book, pamphlet, newsletter etc.

Cross curricula activities

- Invite an old scholar from the school to speak and answer questions about their experiences at your school
- Invite a retired principal/teacher to speak to you of their work experience in your school and the changes they can remember in terms of uniform, discipline and punishment, class sizes, curriculum, teaching resources, and other staff duties
(It is a good idea to send any guest speakers a list of your questions prior to their visit)
- Arrange and conduct an 'old school day' from the information you are gathering from all your sources. Consider your clothing, food you will eat during the day, the way you will get to school, the games you will play in the playground, the discipline the teachers would have expected and the punishments they might have administered, the curriculum you would have been taught, and the type of reports which were sent home. You may need small groups of students to research, find and provide the right resources for an authentic experience

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- Create a chronology of your current and/or recent student populations by gathering and displaying relatively current history via class photos of older siblings in the class, and others in your community who attended your school since the inception of class photos. Present in an interesting and informative way to engage the interest of other class groups
- Roman numerals were once in common use in our schools for work in numeracy. Research the system of Roman numerals and present each with its corresponding numeral in use today. Design some simple questions in each algorithm using Roman numerals for others to solve
- Try some Copperplate or Cord Cursive handwriting. Examples of each are available on the Internet: www.iampeth.com, www.thecalligraphypen.com/2008, www.abcteach.com
- "Tell a Story" – student creates a story, that when saved to ancestry.com is systematically converted to copperplate. Photos can also be added and the history can be printed out in various styles
- With a group of friends, research and practise some of the playground games children may have played in your school playground in days gone by. Demonstrate these to the remainder of the class
- From the information you have gathered about school many years ago, draw something from a typical school scene; desks, uniforms, playground design.

Our Community

Key task:

Using physical, pictorial, documentary and social evidence build a timeline of our community's history.

This key task will primarily be accomplished by a whole class excursion to a historically interesting section of the local community.

Broad objectives:

Students will:

- Recognise that progress involves change to physical structure
- Recognise that progress involves change to personnel
- Engage the assistance of members of their family, and the wider community in research
- Recognise evidence that can give clues as to the date of a building or feature
- Recognise the unique place experienced citizens hold in providing historical perspective
- Represent their school in a positive manner
- Listen actively to information being shared with them
- Work as a large group with a mutual aim
- Work as small groups or pairs with a mutual aim
- Work as individuals to satisfactorily complete a task of choice
- Work in a way which suits their preferred learning style.

In completing the task students will:

- Describe the observable features of their community which enable them to date each
- Identify and resolve conflicting information to their satisfaction
- Prepare and communicate appropriate questions for response by personnel requested to assist
- Use observation, book research, photographs, documents, oral histories, survey and questionnaire to further inform existing knowledge
- Design questions/surveys which elicit responses to solve research problems
- Sequence physical evidence, information from photographs, information from willing volunteers, and information from documents

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including books and pamphlets to form an accurate timeline of events

- Construct as accurate as possible time line of their community
- Select and record information for a presentation of their findings in an appropriate format; Powerpoint, video clip, booklet, poster, short talk.

Whole group excursion

Prior to your excursion, talk with your family and neighbours, particularly senior citizens who have and still live in your community, about their childhood, youth and adult lives in the community. Find out what changes they have seen in their lifetime. If your family is new to the community, chat about the community/communities they grew up in and the changes they observed during that time. Take notes or record your conversations for sharing with your class and use in later assignment work.

As a whole class, take an excursion to a historically interesting area of the nearby community (which has been chosen by the teacher). You are looking for physical evidence or clues to the age and uses of this section of your local community by observing:

- Building dates
- Building materials
- Architectural styles
- Foundation stones/plaques
- Style of sign writing
- Empty buildings/factories
- Evidence of different languages (these will show migratory influences).

Take plenty of digital photographs as you will require these during the follow-up phase

By pre-arrangement with the town library visit the local history room, having previously informed the personnel of your key research questions. Such questions might include:

- Which buildings formed the initial establishment of this community?
- Which buildings today retain their original use?

- How has the streetscape changed particularly to accommodate the increasing volume of traffic?
- Have any green belts been lost to progress the community's areas of business and commerce?
- What associations or clubs existed for the children and youth of the town? When? Do they still exist in a similar or changed format?
- What employment opportunities were once available in this community that are no longer available?

Whole group approaches:

Follow-up activities back in the classroom:

- If there is a local historical society invite them in to talk about how the area has changed over the years. Send them a list of your questions prior to their visit so that you get the information you are really seeking
- Design and publish a survey for current shop keepers to ascertain the history of their location as far as they know. Key questions would include:
 - How long have you been operating on this site?
 - Do you know the nature of the business on this site prior to yours?
 - What changes have you made or do you know have been made to the layout of the building?
 - What do you think are the significant changes in the community since you have lived/ worked here?
- Write an article for the local newspaper describing your activities and suggesting interested people send the class any interesting historical information of events, people and places within the community
- Build a timeline of your community's main street/ an area of interest/the area your excursion focused on from all the information you gathered from your excursion (especially the photograph), guest speakers, family and neighbours

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Time capsule; design and create a time capsule for burial in the school grounds. Each student needs to contribute to the time capsule and state why they feel the item they contribute will be significant when the time capsule is exhumed.

Individual student approaches/ paired or small group approaches

Work should be presented in a fashion which reflects the content.

Represent your community's history pictorially, with brief descriptions of the features which date the buildings (such as signs) and how you learned this information

Conduct a Google image search of your community to affect a greater understanding of how the community has looked in the past. Present this to the class as a Powerpoint

Make a list of "What I discovered about my community through our excursion"

Research an aspect of your community's history which particularly interests you; e.g. the development of leisure activities, history of industrial activity, changes in domestic and commercial areas of the community. Present this to you class as a short talk or booklet.

Cross curricula activities

Make a pie graph/chart of the different nationalities represented in your class: parents, grandparents or extended family. You may need to design a short survey to gather the information you need. Think carefully about your questions in order that the responses give you the information you are seeking

Research the Imperial system of measurement and design a display quality conversion chart into the Metric system. Make an A4 copy to distribute to each member of your class

Research the various currencies which have been in use in Australia since the inception of money. Use the internet to gather the appropriate visuals and present your work as a Powerpoint

With a group of friends write and perform a short play describing a typical day of your grandmother or grandfather when they were young children. Describe the home chores they had to do, their journey to and from school, their school day, their leisure activities etc.

Make a map of a section of your community. Using a key, record interesting historical information on the map for your readers

Take rubbings of the various building materials in use in your community. On each rubbing record the dates these building materials were in use, and the name, building date, original use and current use of the building if you can find the information. Remember the wide variety of sources of information that are available to you

Sketch your favourite building, or the building you consider most interesting in your community. Add water colours if appropriate.

Helpful websites:

For both "My School" and "My Community" there are sure to be many helpful websites. Use a search engine of your choice to enter the name of your school and community for a list of websites and useful links. Similarly, use the 'online catalogue' in your state to locate helpful books and journals.

Australian Capital Territory:

www.library.act.gov.au

New South Wales:

www.library.sl.nsw.gov.au

Northern Territory:

www.ntl.nt.gov.au

Queensland:

www.slq.qld.gov.au

South Australia:

www.catalog.slsa.sa.gov.au

Tasmania:

www.catalogue.statelibrary.tas.gov.au

Victoria:

www.slv.vic.gov.au

Western Australia:

www.slwa.wa.gov.au