Marc Bloch *The Historian’s Craft*, 1954

“Many people ... entertain an extraordinarily simplified notion of our working procedure.
First, as they are only too eager to tell you, there are the documents. The historian collects them, reads them, attempts to weigh their authenticity and truthfulness. Then, and only then, he makes use of them. There is only one trouble with this idea: no historian has ever worked in such a way, even when, by some caprice, he fancied that he was doing so.”


“... scholars who have little experience with historical methods appear to be passing on mistaken ideas about what historians do. In other cases, the use of primary sources seems to be driven less by a concern with historical authenticity than by demands for standards and accountability.”
Knowledge v Skills: A Shifting Balance

1. Poor History and False Dichotomies

2. Source Work Discussion

© Paul Kiem
HTA NSW
1. Poor History and False Dichotomies
Poor History and False Dichotomies

1. Once upon a time, before 1980, there was a dark age when ...  
   - History was about memorising narrative history & regurgitation.  
   - It was taught by the teacher from dull texts.  
   - Students were bored, especially less academic students.

2. Then came the revolution of the 1980s:  
   - The British SCHP gave us a source based approach.  
   - History education experts developed ‘historical thinking skills’.  
   - Teacher centered approaches were replaced with inquiry learning approaches.

3. Then came the digital revolution:  
   “adolescent now have all the knowledge they need in their back pocket”

4. Students now enjoy inquiry learning and develop transferable skills

5. We will now move to inculcating 21st century thinking skills
Regurgitation in the Progress Narrative

To many students, history was “a list of dates and events to be memorised and regurgitated”.

1982 NSW History Educator

“History as a single discipline in Australian secondary schools in the 1960s relied heavily on teacher-centred transmission and student rote learning. Standard history textbooks supported this pedagogy ... for easier mastery of the memorisation required for the final regurgitation in essays...”

2012 SA History Educator

“Historical thinking” allowed “History educators to reject History education as simply a function of memorization and regurgitation”.

2014 NSW History Educators

Paul Kiem, ‘Have we lost the plot? Narrative, inquiry, good & evil in history pedagogy’, Teaching History (NSW), September 2012
Paul Kiem, ‘The value of direct teaching and historical knowledge’, Historical Thinking for History Teachers, 2019, Allen & Unwin

History Teachers’ Association of NSW   www.htansw.asn.au
Are Knowledge & Memorisation ‘Lower Order’?

Revised Bloom’s Taxonomy

Bloom’s Taxonomy
Neglecting knowledge is ‘anti-history’

Respecting and working with knowledge is a priority skill that needs to be developed
Knowledge is NOT ‘Lower Order’

Knowledge
communicate
(literacy)
elaborate
organise
select
learn
understand
discover

Kiem’s Taxonomy for essay writing in exams.
Passive Teaching Methods

- Lecture: 5%
- Reading: 10%
- Audio-Visual: 20%
- Demonstration: 30%

Participatory Teaching Methods

- Group Discussion: 50%
- Practice: 75%
- Teaching Others: 90%

*Adapted from National Training Laboratories. Bethel, Maine
The inquiry method is ‘shoved down our throat’.

Recent graduate

Students appear to have been given ‘an agreed set of truths and commandments against direct instruction’.

Melbourne University’s Professor John Hattie

‘You said do the survey by direct instruction ... but we’ve been told we can’t do that.’

2017 pre-service teacher

‘I know this is only direct instruction ... but this is what I do...’

Current teacher
Teacher Centred
- Teacher Exposition
- Text use
- Teacher Focus
- Content Emphasis
- Teacher directed activity...

Student Centred
- Inquiry
- Group Work
- Student Discussion
- Skills Emphasis
- Source Based...

Learning Centred
- Teach for learning
- Mix the approaches
- Support inquiry
- Cater for ALL learners
- Be innovative...

Use what works ... for learning
Look critically at the dominant rhetoric...
Rehabilitate Knowledge & Teacher Transmission
We may need to re-think and re-emphasise, not abandon, ‘knowledge’.

*History as teacher transmitted narrative history is not only valid but essential.*

Why?

1. Skills/inquiry based approaches are not automatically successful.

2. Knowledge is not a ‘lower order’ preliminary to ‘higher order’ skills and concepts but:
   - is foundational
   - gives rise to its own multi-faceted and essential skills
   - is integral to the development and use of all other skills

3. Knowledge, especially in narrative form, is critical to engagement.
Memorisation is not bad!
John Cleese was, briefly, a history teacher.

• So that a ‘little white-haired bastard’ could not catch him out in class, he was forced to learn the kings and queens of England.

• Happily, Cleese now began to enjoy history because he had a framework on which he could ‘hang odd bits of information’.

• He wondered ‘why the skill of memorising (“learning by rote” as its detractors always refer to it) has got itself such a bad name’.

Cleese also had sound advice on classroom management: ‘if you catch a whiff of impending insurrection, use sarcasm’

Memory & Knowledge

Knowledge Infrastructure
+
Residual Knowledge
CHRISTINE COUNSELL
Keynote at HTANSW Curriculum Conference
State Library NSW, 9-10 April 2019
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Introduction, Overview, Topic Detail, Discussion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Source Work: Skills Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student Research: Focus + Present to Class</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creative options + Engagement</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students</td>
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History Teachers’ Association of NSW   www.htansw.asn.au
2. Source Work Discussion
7 Myths of Source Work

1. Primary sources are more reliable and significant.
2. Primary sources can be read as arguments about the past.
3. Historians can evaluate bias and reliability of individual sources.
4. Using primary sources is engaging in ‘authentic history’.
5. Learners can understand the past through primary sources.
6. Primary sources are fun.
7. Distinguishing primary from secondary is an important end in itself.

NSW Modern History

Current HSC exam question:

Assess the usefulness of two [truncated and out of context] sources by considering the perspective and reliability of each one.

New course outcome:

Analyze and interpret different types of sources for evidence to support an historical account or argument.
Student Mnemonic

T  Type
O  Origin
M  Motive
A  Audience
C  Content
P  Perspective
R  Reliability
U  Usefulness
A Historian’s View

Marc Bloch *The Historian’s Craft*

“Many people ... entertain an extraordinarily simplified notion of our working procedure. First, as they are only too eager to tell you, there are the documents. The historian collects them, reads them, attempts to weigh their authenticity and truthfulness. Then, and only then, he makes use of them. There is only one trouble with this idea: no historian has ever worked in such a way, even when, by some caprice, he fancied that he was doing so.”
Issues and Questions

• Use of Sources: Assesment  
  Class work & discussion  
  Research & writing  

• Historians use sources in the context of extensive research.  

• Insight is built on historical context + primary sources + secondary sources.  

• Is it better to work with long sources?  

• Is it better to work with a known ‘source collection’ or ‘unseen sources’?  

• Historians respond to sources with questions rather than answers.  

• It is critical to select the right sources and ask the right questions in the right order.  

• In exam style assessment, language matters and marking criteria must be flexible.
Site of a French Village
obliterated by German bombing in the Battle of Verdun, 1916
Simulated Dig

V

Simulated Source Work

Rich Sources – Supportive/Contradictory – Use as Evidence – Desired Outcome
What about the research journey?
During the last two months great improvements have been made by the Chinese who are living in Cavenagh street. Some substantial stores have been erected and are well supplied with goods which are kept in a very creditable manner. The first store which I visited is on the Esplanade, and is a substantial building of wood and iron, with a verandah extending over the entire footpath. This store was very neatly fitted up, and presented a most cleanly appearance. This property belongs to Kwang Yee Lung, and Sam Sing is apparently the manager or working partner...

See Paul Kiem ‘Trove Research: Chinese in Australia, 1880s – 1920s’, Teaching History, September 2014, pp. 61-65
Vengeance! German Nation
Today in the Hall of Mirrors of Versailles the disgraceful treaty is being signed. Do not forget it! ... German honour is being carried into its grave. Do not forget it! The German people will, with unceasing labour, press forward to reconquer the place among the nations to which it is entitled. Then will come vengeance for the shame of 1919.

In my view German foreign policy in the more immediate future has three great tasks:
First, the solution of the reparations question in a way tolerable to Germany and the safeguarding of peace, which is the precondition for the recovery of Germany’s strength.
Second, the protection of the Germans living abroad, those 10 to 12 million of our kindred who now live under alien yoke in foreign countries.
The third great task is the correction of our frontiers in the East, viz., the regaining of Danzig and of the Polish Corridor and the revision of the frontier in Upper Silesia.
Hitler Ruled by Terror and Force

Hitler was Popular

Source B, C, D and E can be used as evidence to argue that ...
**Source B** Extracts are from Albert Speer’s memoir *Inside the Third Reich*, 1970. (Speer, a prominent individual in the Nazi regime, is recalling his reaction to hearing Hitler speak for the first time in 1931.)

... I was carried on the wave of the enthusiasm which, one could almost feel this physically, bore the speaker along from sentence to sentence... Here it seemed to me was hope

**Source C**
Crowds greeting Hitler at Nuremberg, 1938
**Source D**  German law against the new establishment of parties, 14 July, 1933

The Reich government has resolved upon the following law which is herewith promulgated:

Article 1
The National Socialist German Workers’ Party exists as the only political party in Germany.

**Source E**
Jewish Germans being paraded, Baden-Baden, 1938
Hitler Ruled by Terror and Force

Source D  German law against the new establishment of parties, 14 July, 1933

Hitler was Popular

Source B  Extracts are from Albert Speer’s memoir Inside the Third Reich, 1970.
The question

To what extent could 1918 be considered a year of victory for Australia and its people?

Instructions

The Simpson Prize requires you to respond to the question above using both the sources below and your own research.

https://www.awm.gov.au/learn/schools/simpson-prize
## Ways of thinking about Source Questions

<table>
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<td><strong>ASSESS:</strong></td>
<td>How useful is the source as evidence? Uses and <strong>limitations</strong>.</td>
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| **USE SOURCES:** | - **Select** the ones you want to use.  
- Use source and knowledge.  
- Use the sources **critically**.  
- Assess a statement with S + K. |
### Ways of thinking about Source Questions

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What happens to the weakest students?

How will marking criteria work?
Resources


Kiem, P. 2019 (March), ‘The value of direct teaching and historical knowledge’, *Historical Thinking for History Teachers*, Allen & Unwin


—— 2012, ‘Have we lost the plot? Narrative, inquiry, good & evil in history pedagogy’, *Teaching History* (NSW), September 2012


