

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.”

Keith Barton, ‘Primary sources in history: Breaking through the myths’, *The Phi Delta Kappan*, vol. 86, no. 10, pp. 745–53, 2005

“... 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

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

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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

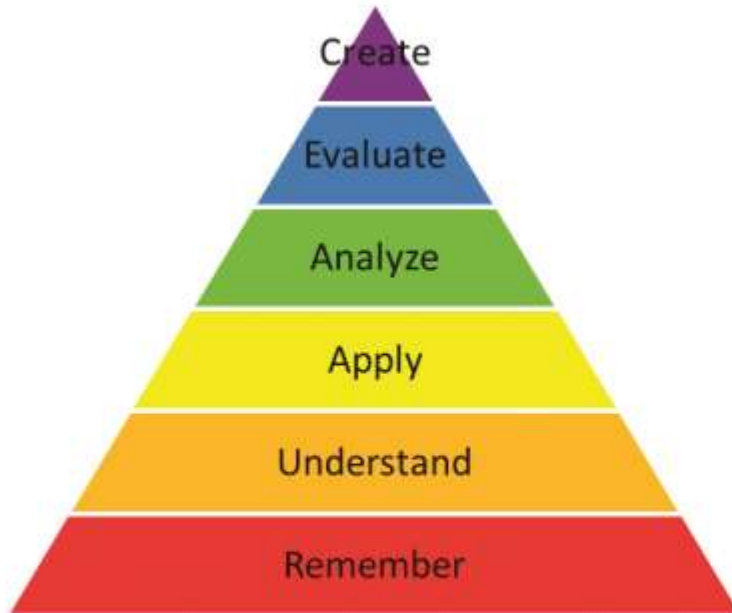
“Historical thinking” allowed “History educators to reject History education as simply a function of memorization and **regurgitation**”.

2014 NSW History Educators

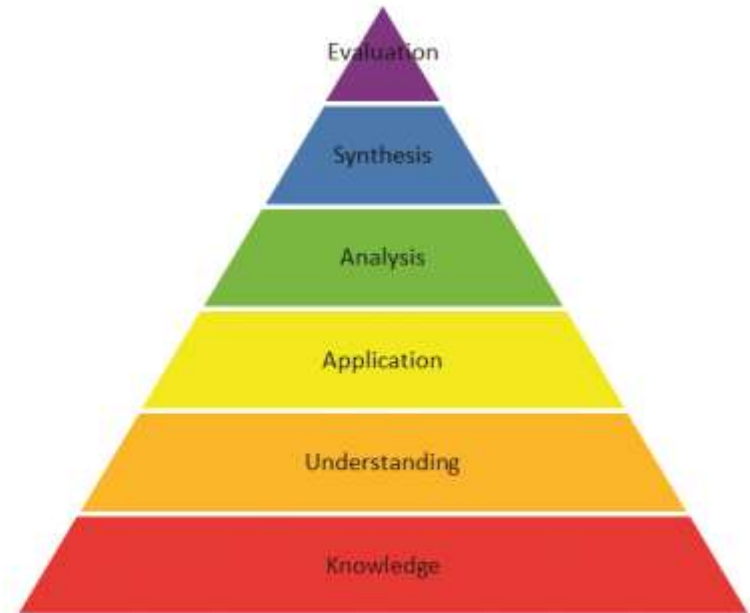
Paul Kiem, ‘Have we lost the plot? Narrative, inquiry, good & evil in history pedagogy’,
Teaching History (NSW), September 2012

Paul Kiem, ‘The value of direct teaching and historical knowledge’,
Historical Thinking for History Teachers, 2019, Allen & Unwin

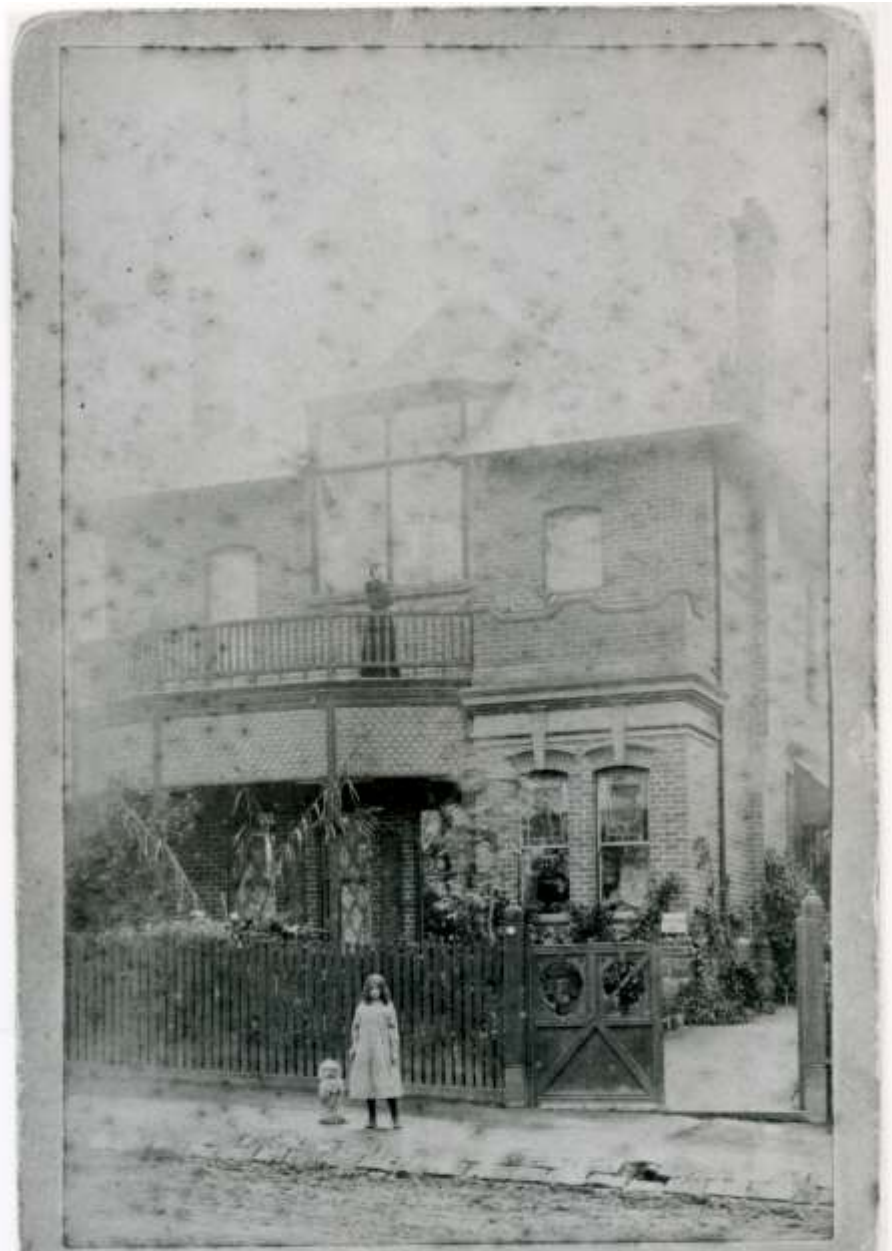
Are Knowledge & Memorisation 'Lower Order'?



Revised Bloom's Taxonomy



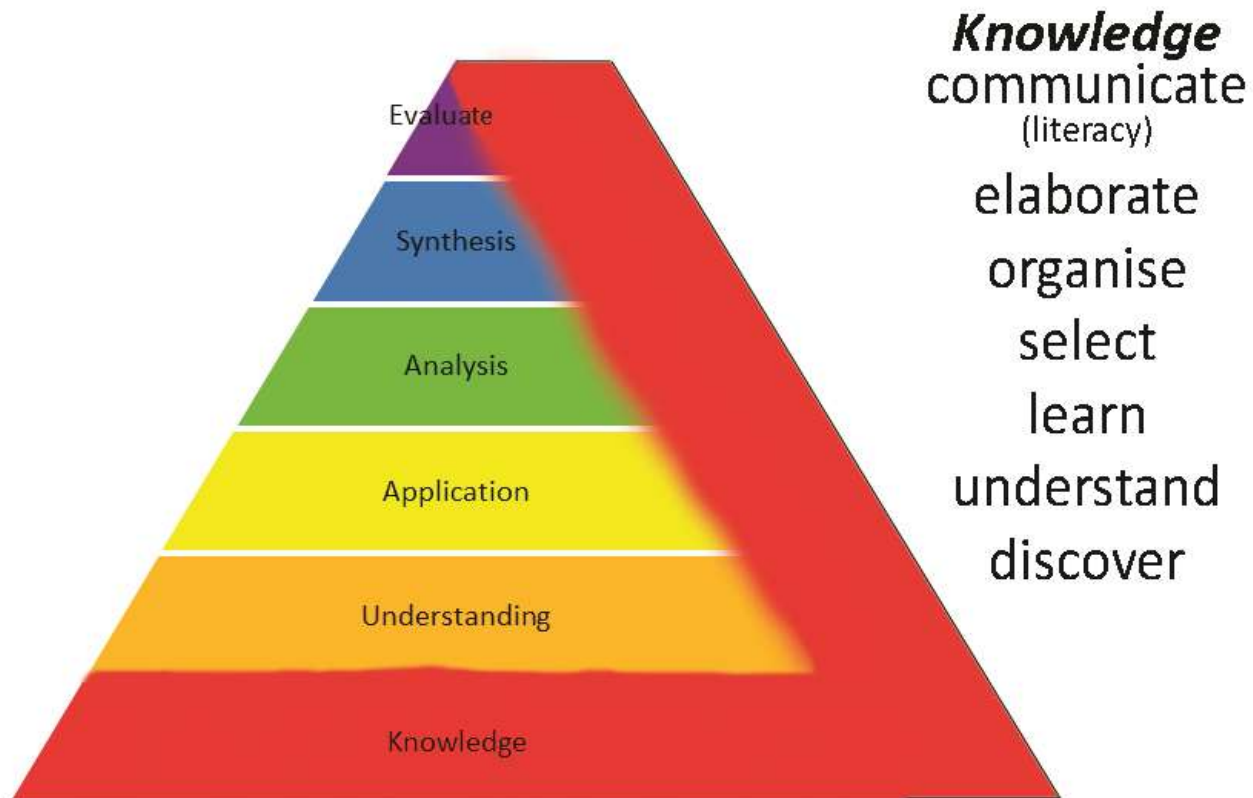
Bloom's Taxonomy



Neglecting knowledge is 'anti-history'

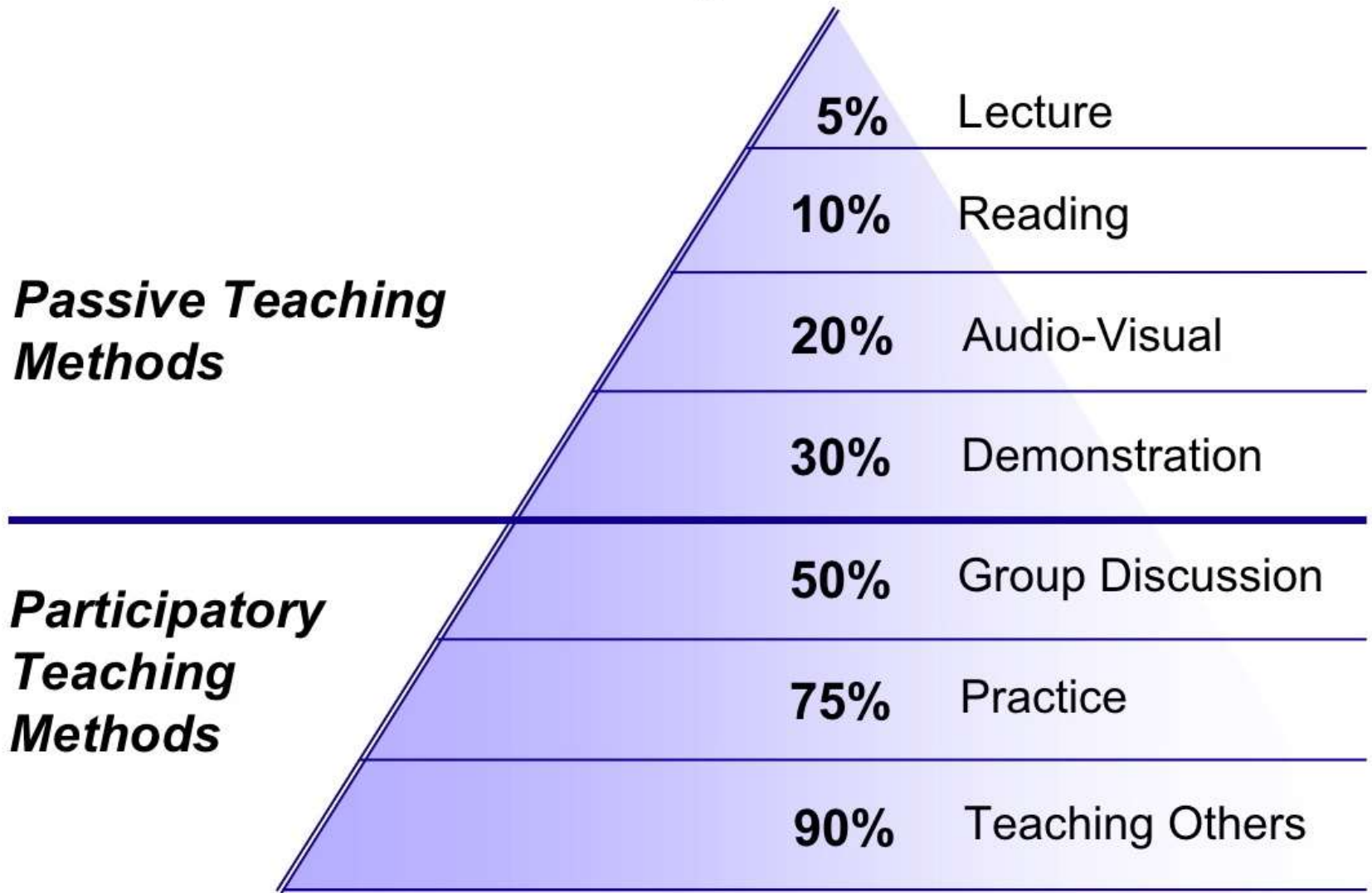
Respecting and working with knowledge is a priority skill that needs to be developed

Knowledge is NOT 'Lower Order'



Kiem's Taxonomy *for essay writing in exams.*

Average Retention Rates



*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 ...

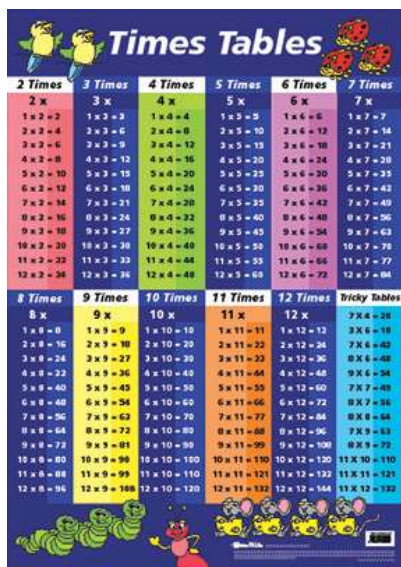
Use what works ... for learning
Look critically at the dominant rhetoric...
Rehabilitate **Knowledge & Teacher Transmission**

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!



| basic French Vocabulary and Word | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|--------|-------|--------------|------------|-------|
| English | Franch | Image | English | Franch | Image |
| I | je | | Hello | bonjour | |
| We | nous | | Goodbye | Au Revoir | |
| You | vous | | Sorry | désolé | |
| He | il | | Thank you | merci | |
| She | elle | | Welcome | bienvenue | |
| They | ils | | Good Morning | bonjour | |
| There | là | | Good night | bonne nuit | |
| Boy | garçon | | How? | Comment? | |
| Girl | fille | | Fine | amende | |

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’

Cleese, J. (2014), *So, Anyway . . .*,
London: Random House



Memory & Knowledge



**Knowledge Infrastructure
+
Residual Knowledge**





MICHAEL FORDHAM

Clio et cetera:

clioetcetera.com/author/mfordham/

CHRISTINE COUNSELL

Keynote at HTANSW Curriculum Conference

State Library NSW, 9-10 April 2019

A Learning Sequence Template

| | | |
|---------|---|----------|
| Teacher | Introduction, Overview, Topic Detail, Discussion | |
| | Organising & Understanding Tasks: Maps, Timelines, Quizzes | Students |
| Teacher | Source Work: Skills Development | |
| | Student Research: Focus + Present to Class Creative options + Engagement | Students |
| Teacher | Essay Writing Preparation with Sources | |
| | Essay Writing Assessment Task | Students |
| Teacher | Essay Writing Feedback | |

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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.**

Keith Barton (2005) ‘Primary sources in history: Breaking through the myths’,
Phi Delta Kappan, Vol.89, No.10, pp. 745-754

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:

Analyse 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 |

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A Historian's View

Marc Bloch *The Historian's Craft*

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Issues and Questions

- Use of Sources: Assessment
 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

∨

Simulated Source Work

Rich Sources – Supportive/Contradictory – Use as Evidence – Desired Outcome
What about the research journey?

‘Chinese Improvements’, *The Northern Territory Times and Gazette*, 1 July 1882, p. 2

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

Source D Headline & extract from the German newspaper *Deutsche Zeitung*, 28 June 1919

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.

Source F Letter from German Foreign Minister Dr Gustav Stresemann to the former Crown Prince of Germany, 7 September 1925

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.

Source B, C, D and E can be used as evidence to argue that ...

Hitler Ruled by Terror and Force

Hitler was Popular

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



Source B, C, D and E can be used as evidence to argue that ...

Hitler Ruled by Terror and Force

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



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Source B Extracts are from Albert Speer's memoir *Inside the Third Reich*, 1970.

C





Working with primary sources + own knowledge to do extended research.

The question

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

[Previous questions](#)

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

| | |
|----------------|---|
| OBSERVE: | Look, think, identify, comprehend. EASY QUESTIONS! |
| PERSPECTIVE: | How does it matter? |
| CONTEXT: | What was going on at the time? Purpose? Audience? |
| CORROBORATION: | How does evidence work? Primary and Secondary. |
| ASSESS: | How useful is the source as evidence? Uses and limitations . |
| USE SOURCES: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 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

| | | |
|----------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| OBSERVE | Look, think, identify, comprehend. EASY QUESTIONS! | What happens to the weakest students? |
| PERSPECTIVE: | How does it matter? | |
| CONTEXT: | What was going on at the time? Purpose? Audience? | |
| CORROBORATION: | How does evidence work? Primary and Secondary. | |
| ASSESS: | How useful is the source as evidence? Uses and limitations . | |
| USE SOURCES: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Select the ones you want to use.- Use source and knowledge.- Use the sources critically.- Assess a statement with S + K. | How will marking criteria work? |

Resources

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