

Parallel Histories notes from Bolton Hub discussion 18th March

Table 1.

To demonstrate the highly generative Parallel Histories dual narrative approach to learning about conflict.

Through evidence led investigation of contested histories, disciplinary and substantive knowledge are developed simultaneously in a safe, supported, sustained way.

Key point	Where in PH	Appeal
Disciplinary knowledge: Students build the skills to learn to enquire about the past as historians .	Direct teaching of disciplinary knowledge through -learning tasks in E-Books -<i>chronological</i> approach -disciplinary knowledge explicitly taught through demonstration, teacher instruction, and developmental feedback by teachers tailored to individual students learning needs for <i>Progression as they draw historical claims from sources as evidence:</i> -<i>authorial</i> (provenance) -<i>archival</i> (How or what the author could have known given the context) (inconsistencies/variations) -<i>hermeneutic</i> (students informed by variations in historical constructions/inconsistencies) -<i>inquisitorial</i> (aware of variations in questions author has based account upon.)	Starts simple... As knowledge grows so students realise that the task /debate expands as the students' become more sophisticated in their questioning of sources as evidence. This is key to helping students navigate polarising effects of social media. Students love the interactivity of the learning. Targeted feedback from the teacher accelerates learning by pinpointing developmental steps towards gauging the credibility of historical claims.

		Each investigation/debate is a genuine historical enquiry that equips young people with transferable critical thinking skills.
Substantive knowledge Deeper, secure and highly generative knowledge, building tacit knowledge	-chronological approach invites repeat encounters with key concepts and events through the Programme. (Building blocks re-visited) - learning through analysis in process of historical claim-making means students are more likely to remember. -learning through retrieval and articulation of ideas in debates (applying substantive knowledge)	Month by month episodic focus of the PH Is/Pal Programme '25 reinforces previous learning, and each debate informs the next.
Repeat encounters developing disciplinary knowledge universal to all schools	-in use and understanding of language -cause, consequence, change and continuity, similarity and difference, sources and evidence, historical interpretations and significance.	Opportunities for fine grained teacher evaluation of students understanding/progress and focus for student progression designed into the workshop debate process.
Repeated encounters with core knowledge, substantive concepts and specific knowledge breeds understanding	Imperialism, empire, invasion, Unique concepts: Nakba/Law of Return Repeated encounters build embedded knowledge and leads to 'fingertip' knowledge	Embedded knowledge builds 'fingertip' knowledge
Embedded knowledge and 'Fingertip' knowledge	Preparation stage builds synthesis and summative skills and leads to selection of key knowledge. Debate and rebuttal process aids retrieval	Students articulate evidence led claims substantiated by evidence they select from their growing body of knowledge.

Tolerance and engagement in diverse opinions	Students investigate from both positions on each debate and by articulating each and defending each they learn the strengths and limitations of each claim.	Evidence led independent minded investigation
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Table 2. How does Parallel Histories promote ‘oracy’ in students? ¹ Listening and speaking skills in workshop debates to build skills and break down barriers:

Aspect of Oracy	In Parallel Histories workshop process
Learning through talk	Collaborative process. Students put their speeches in order, they talk to each other to collaborate in connecting historical claims/speeches, they rehearse, remodel and redeploy ideas in subsequent debates.
Learning how to talk	Listen and act on feedback from teachers. This reinforces good practice and helps focus development. Listening to peers and (teacher response to peers) endorses good practice, choice of vocab, grammar, rhetorical devices, humour, building on other claims, structure, pace, tone, projection, etc Seeing good practice; posture, body language, poise, eye contact
Listening	Students acquire phrases/approaches that they like. Hearing views/first from one perspective and then the other and responding to views at each stage of debate, introducing rebuttal to speeches
	Impartial Teacher sets the tone and keeps things developmental and noncompetitive

¹ Cambridge Assessment Education Brief: <https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/Images/661428-education-brief-oracy-.pdf>

	Authoritative: instructions/safe space through rules/demonstration Interactive: to help students work out what they think; dialogic approach Teachers promote respectful questioning of student ideas to explore misunderstanding
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Steps in process:²

1. In class before the workshop:

- a. whole class demonstration by teacher
- b. draw responses from students, use to these model examples of good practice first from one side then the other. Students actively listen to build and respond.
- c. set ground rules/parameters/create safe space and starting positions (perspectives) set by teacher
- d. listening as an achievable skill; repeat the essence of the argument you have just heard/ repeat and critique, repeat, critique and counter...

2. In groups preparation for debate (workshop)

- a. all participate (highly inclusive, safe space, each has a role, no-one left out)
- b. all share the relevant resources (element of autonomous choice within each group as to which sources)
- c. all engage critically in the investigation (historical claims drawn from sources and look for correlation)
- d. all engage constructively as a team to achieve the same goal (collaboration, sequence of speakers, who to say what..)
- e. understanding of all checked by questioning, from teacher, by group at prep stage, through rebuttals, and through 2nd debate, recall...and subsequent debates.
- f. build on responses within team and post-debate teacher feedback, build confidence and develop, plenary

² Ibid

3. Development over time.

- a. Re-visiting, recall builds and reinforces substantive knowledge and informs the next debate
- b. Disciplinary knowledge develops through fine grained teacher evaluation of student understanding/progress and discussion of focus for progression
- c. As knowledge grows so students realise that the task /debate gets more complicated and harder rather than easier
- d. Topic focus may become more controversial as chronology progresses (Israel/Palestine)
- e. Level of analysis of credibility of claims progresses. Our resources work at different age groups because the sources are analysed with increasing levels of sophistication
- f. Debates become longer as depth of student speeches builds. (See chart 1)
- g. Sample student speeches: