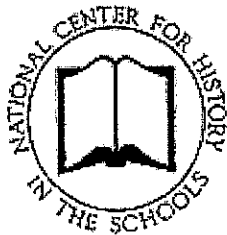


National Standards for History: Part Two Chapter One**National Standards for History****Grades 5-12****Developing Standards in
United States and World History**

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Significance of History for the Educated Citizen

Setting standards for history in the schools requires a clear vision of the place and importance of history in the general education of all students. The widespread and growing support for more and better history in the schools, beginning in the early grades of elementary education, is one of the more encouraging signs of the decade. The reasons are many, but none are more important to a democratic society than this: knowledge of history is the precondition of political intelligence. Without history, a society shares no common memory of where it has been, what its core values are, or what decisions of the past account for present circumstances. Without history, we cannot undertake any sensible inquiry into the political, social, or moral issues in society. And without historical knowledge and inquiry, we cannot achieve the informed, discriminating citizenship essential to effective participation in the democratic processes of governance and the fulfillment for all our citizens of the nation's democratic ideals.

Thomas Jefferson long ago prescribed history for all who would take part in self-government because it would enable them to prepare for things yet to come. The philosopher Etienne Gilson noted the special significance of the perspectives history affords. "History," he remarked, "is the only laboratory we have in which to test the consequences of thought." History opens to students the great record of human experience, revealing the vast range of accommodations individuals and societies have made to the problems confronting them, and disclosing the consequences that have followed the various choices that have been made. By studying the choices and decisions of the past, students can confront today's problems and choices with a deeper awareness of the alternatives before them and the likely consequences of each.

Current problems, of course, do not duplicate those of the past. Essential to extrapolating knowledgeably from history to the issues of today requires yet a further skill, again dependent upon one's understanding of the past: differentiating between (1) relevant historical antecedents that properly inform analyses of current issues and (2) those antecedents that are clearly irrelevant. Students must be sufficiently grounded in historical understanding in order to bring sound historical analysis to the service of informed decision making.

What is required is mastery of what Nietzsche once termed "critical history" and what Gordon Craig has explained as the "ability, after painful inquiry and sober judgment, to determine what part of history [is] relevant to one's current problems and what [is] not," whether one is assessing a situation, forming an opinion, or taking an active position on the issue. In exploring these matters, students will soon discover that history is filled with the high costs of decisions reached on the basis of false analogies from the past as well as the high costs of actions taken with little or no understanding of the important lessons the past imparts.

These learnings directly contribute to the education of the public citizen, but they uniquely contribute to nurturing the private individual as well. Historical memory is the key to self-identity, to seeing one's place in the stream of time, and one's connectedness with all of humankind. We are

part of an ancient chain, and the long hand of the past is upon us-for good and for ill-just as our hands will rest on our descendants for years to come. Denied knowledge of one's roots and of one's place in the great stream of human history, the individual is deprived of the fullest sense of self and of that sense of shared community on which one's fullest personal development as well as responsible citizenship depends. For these purposes, history and the humanities must occupy an indispensable role in the school curriculum.

Finally, history opens to students opportunities to develop a comprehensive understanding of the world, and of the many cultures and ways of life different from their own. From a balanced and inclusive world history students may gain an appreciation both of the world's many peoples and of their shared humanity and common problems. Students may also acquire the habit of seeing matters through others' eyes and come to realize that they can better understand themselves as they study others, as well as the other way around. Historical understanding based on such comparative studies in world history does not require approval or forgiveness for the tragedies either of one's own society or of others; nor does it negate the importance of critically examining alternative value systems and their effects in supporting or denying the basic human rights and aspirations of all their peoples. Especially important, an understanding of the history of the world's many cultures can contribute to fostering the kind of mutual patience, respect, and civic courage required in our increasingly pluralistic society and our increasingly interdependent world.

If students are to see ahead more clearly, and be ready to act with judgment and with respect for the shared humanity of all who will be touched by the decisions they as citizens make, support, or simply acquiesce in, then schools must attend to this critical field of the curriculum.

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5-12 Thinking Standards

Overview of Standards in Historical Thinking

The study of history, as noted earlier, rests on knowledge of facts, dates, names, places, events, and ideas. In addition, true historical understanding requires students to engage in historical thinking: to raise questions and to marshal solid evidence in support of their answers; to go beyond the facts presented in their textbooks and examine the historical record for themselves; to consult documents, journals, diaries, artifacts, historic sites, works of art, quantitative data, and other evidence from the past, and to do so imaginatively--taking into account the historical context in which these records were created and comparing the multiple points of view of those on the scene at the time.

Real historical understanding requires that students have opportunity to create historical narratives and arguments of their own. Such narratives and arguments may take many forms--essays, debates, and editorials, for instance. They can be initiated in a variety of ways. None, however, more powerfully initiates historical thinking than those issues, past and present, that challenge students to enter knowledgeable into the historical record and to bring sound historical perspectives to bear in the analysis of a problem.

Historical understanding also requires that students thoughtfully read the historical narratives created by others. Well-written historical narratives are interpretative, revealing and explaining connections, change, and consequences. They are also analytical, combining lively storytelling and biography with conceptual analysis drawn from all relevant disciplines. Such narratives promote essential skills in historical thinking.

Reading such narratives requires that students analyze the assumptions--stated and unstated--from which the narrative was constructed and assess the strength of the evidence presented. It requires that students consider the significance of what the author included as well as chose to omit--the absence, for example, of the voices and experiences of other men and women who were also an important part of the history of their time. Also, it requires that students examine the interpretative nature of history, comparing, for example, alternative historical narratives written by historians who have given different weight to the political, economic, social, and/or technological causes of events and who have developed competing interpretations of the significance of those events.

Students engaged in activities of the kinds just considered will draw upon skills in the following five interconnected dimensions of historical thinking:

1. Chronological Thinking
2. Historical Comprehension
3. Historical Analysis and Interpretation
4. Historical Research Capabilities
5. Historical Issues-Analysis and Decision-Making

These skills, while presented in five separate categories, are nonetheless interactive and mutually supportive. In conducting historical research or creating a historical argument of their own, for example, students must be able to draw upon skills in all five categories. Beyond the skills of conducting their research, students must, for example, be able to comprehend historical documents and records, analyze their relevance, develop interpretations of the document(s) they select, and demonstrate a sound grasp of the historical chronology and context in which the issue, problem, or events they are addressing developed.

In short, these five sets of skills, developed in the following pages as the five Standards in Historical Thinking, are statements of the outcomes that students need to achieve. They are not mutually exclusive when put into

practice, nor do they prescribe a particular teaching sequence to be followed. Teachers will draw upon all these Thinking Standards, as appropriate, to develop their teaching plans and to guide students through challenging programs of study in history.

Finally, it is important to point out that these five sets of Standards in Historical Thinking are defined in the following pages largely independent of historical content in order to specify the quality of thinking desired for each. It is essential to understand, however, that these skills do not develop, nor can they be practiced, in a vacuum. Every one of these skills requires specific historical content in order to function--a relationship that is made explicit in Chapters 3 and 4, which presents the standards integrating historical understandings and thinking for history for grades 5-12.

>> Contents of Standards in Historical Thinking

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Contents of Historical Thinking Standards for Grades 5-12

<p>Standard 1: Chronological Thinking</p>	<p>A. Distinguish between past, present, and future time. B. Identify the temporal structure of a historical narrative or story. C. Establish temporal order in constructing historical narratives of their own. D. Measure and calculate calendar time. E. Interpret data presented in time lines and create time lines. F. Reconstruct patterns of historical succession and duration; explain historical continuity and change. G. Compare alternative models for periodization.</p>
<p>Standard 2 : Historical Comprehension</p>	<p>A. Identify the author or source of the historical document or narrative and assess its credibility. B. Reconstruct the literal meaning of a historical passage. C. Identify the central question(s) the historical narrative addresses. D. Differentiate between historical facts and historical interpretations. E. Read historical narratives imaginatively. F. Appreciate historical perspectives. G. Draw upon data in historical maps. H. Utilize visual, mathematical, and quantitative data.</p>
<p>Standard 3 : Historical Analysis and Interpretation</p>	<p>A. Compare and contrast differing sets of ideas. B. Consider multiple perspectives. C. Analyze cause-and-effect relationships and multiple causation, including the importance of the individual, the influence of ideas. D. Draw comparisons across eras and regions in order to define enduring issues. E. Distinguish between unsupported expressions of opinion and informed hypotheses grounded in historical evidence. F. Compare competing historical narratives. G. Challenge arguments of historical inevitability. H. Hold interpretations of history as tentative. I. Evaluate major debates among historians. J. Hypothesize the influence of the past.</p>
<p>Standard 4 : Historical Research Capabilities</p>	<p>A. Formulate historical questions. B. Obtain historical data from a variety of sources. C. Interrogate historical data. D. Identify the gaps in the available records, marshal contextual knowledge and perspectives of the time and place. E. Employ quantitative analysis. F. Support interpretations with historical evidence.</p>
<p>Standard 5 : Historical Issues-Analysis and Decision-Making</p>	<p>A. Identify issues and problems in the past. B. Marshal evidence of antecedent circumstances. C. Identify relevant historical antecedents. D. Evaluate alternative courses of action.</p>

- E. Formulate a position or course of action on an issue.
- F. Evaluate the implementation of a decision.

>> Standard One: Historical Thinking

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