



ASSESSMENT OF HISTORICAL THINKING

A Report on the National Meeting of
The Historical Thinking Project

TORONTO

JANUARY 18-20, 2012

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FEBRUARY 2012





THE Historical Thinking PROJECT

Promoting critical historical literacy for the 21st century

UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

**Centre for the Study of
Historical Consciousness**



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histoire et éducation en réseau



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



In addition to serving as a record of what took place at The Historical Thinking Project meeting on assessment, this report serves two other purposes. For those not familiar with The HT Project, it provides a brief introduction, including its Aims and Rationale (Section 1), a History from 2006 to 2011 (Section 2), and a summary of the key ideas (Appendix V). It also serves as an Annual Report of The HT Project, reviewing the major activities and accomplishments of 2011 (Section 3).

The Historical Thinking Project (The HT Project, formerly Benchmarks of Historical Thinking) aims to foster a new approach to history education — with the potential to shift how teachers teach and how students learn, in line with recent international research on history learning. Paradoxically, at the same time, the approach does not involve a radical shift in the history or social studies curriculum. It revolves around the proposition — like scientific thinking in science instruction and mathematical thinking in math instruction — that historical thinking is central to history instruction and that students should become more competent as historical thinkers as they progress through their schooling. Historical thinking requires “knowing the facts,” but “knowing the facts” is not enough.

The HT Project was founded in 2006, as a partnership between UBC’s Centre for the Study of Historical Consciousness and the Historica Foundation. By the end of 2007, expressions of interest in the project from districts, ministries of education, social studies teachers’ associations, and publishers were beginning to outstrip the capacity of the virtually non-existent project infrastructure. Early in 2008, we successfully sought additional financial support from the Department of Canadian Heritage to assemble a national meeting to plan the next step: a strategic “scaling up” of the capacities of The HT Project. Forty-two participants explored four components of educational change: a) curriculum revision; b) resource development; c) professional development; and d) assessment. Discussion generated recommendations reported in

“Scaling Up” the Benchmarks of Historical Thinking (April, 2008). (Report available at www.historicalthinking.ca under the tab Research and Reports.)

In early 2009, in response to the needs identified in the *Scaling Up* Report, the Department of Canadian Heritage committed a major funding contribution to The HT Project to March 2011, enabling The HT Project to hire a full-time National Coordinator, a position ably filled by Jill Colyer. Additionally, The History Education Network/Histoire et Éducation en Réseau (THEN/HiER) provided funds for national meetings in 2010 and 2011. A renewal of this funding contribution extended the life of the project, with two more annual meetings, to March 31, 2013. Each year, since 2009, The HT Project has continued to scale up its activities and to broaden its impact in the four areas defined at the 2008 meeting. Of the four, assessment has posed some of the larger challenges. The 2012 meeting was therefore targeted specifically towards assessment of historical thinking, both large scale and classroom-based.

The 2012 national meeting was different from earlier ones, not only in its specific focus, but also in its invitation to a selection of high-profile international experts in the assessment of historical thinking. All accepted. So the meeting included presentations from scholars from the US College Board History Advanced Placement, the Swedish National Education Agency responsible for its national history tests, the Stanford University History Education Group, as well as Denis Shemilt, a veteran of the UK’s pioneering Schools History Project, and Canadian experts more closely associated with The Historical Thinking Project.

1. INTRODUCTION

Aims and Rationale of The Historical Thinking Project

The Historical Thinking Project offers a dramatically new approach to history education — with the potential to shift fundamentally how teachers teach and how students learn. Paradoxically, at the same time, the approach does not involve a radical shift in the history or social studies curriculum. It revolves around the proposition — like scientific thinking in science instruction and mathematical thinking in math instruction — that *historical thinking* is central to history instruction and that students should become more competent as historical thinkers as they progress through their schooling.

Why this approach and emphasis on historical thinking? Why now? For most of the 20th century, history programs in Canada (like those in other countries) aimed at transmitting knowledge of a coherent national story — in English Canada, within the framework of the British imperial legacy (less so in Quebec). Such programs did not necessarily place the teaching of *thinking* at the centre of their educational objectives.

In a world shaped by new technologies that have revolutionized access to and exchange of information, migrations that have upended older demographic profiles, and new demands for recognition and rights of previously silenced peoples, history is more contentious than ever. Debates over land claims, national borders, origin stories, and collective historical crimes, guilt and reparations are everywhere.

The past is no longer a single narrative of national, political progress. Students need to be equipped, by the end of their high school years, to take an active part in these debates: to be able to sift the wheat from the chaff, to find truths amidst a cacophony of politically and commercially motivated messages, and to contribute, in their own voices, to democratic discussion. History education can play a key role.

Competent historical thinkers understand both the vast differences that separate us from our ancestors and the ties that bind us to them; they can analyze historical artifacts and documents, which can give them some of the best understandings of times gone by; they can assess the validity and relevance of historical accounts, when they are used to support entry into a war, voting for a candidate, or any of the myriad decisions knowledgeable citizens in a democracy must make. All this *requires* “knowing the facts,” but “knowing the facts” is not enough. Historical thinking does not replace historical knowledge: the two are related and interdependent.

The Historical Thinking Project promotes curricula, assessments, professional development and classroom materials that support students gaining these competencies.

“All this *requires* ‘knowing the facts,’ but ‘knowing the facts’ is not enough.”

2. A HISTORY OF THE PROJECT

2006-2011



In Canada, as in the United States, responsibility for education lies outside of federal jurisdiction. Indeed, education is watchfully guarded by the provinces, which are wary of textbooks from the east, politics from the west, and any meddling at all from the government in Ottawa. How, then, did a project with an agenda to re-make history education across the country gain the respect and support of funders, teachers, and officials in ministries of education from coast to coast to coast?

2.1 IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE HISTORICA FOUNDATION

The Historical Thinking Project began in 2006 (as “Benchmarks of Historical Thinking”), with a partnership between the Historica Foundation (then Canada’s leading national organization devoted to the promotion and improvement of history education) and the University of British Columbia’s Centre for the Study of Historical Consciousness (CSHC — which supports research on historical consciousness and history education). With funding from the Canadian Council on Learning and the Department of Canadian Heritage, an international symposium of historians, history education scholars and teachers convened to map the contours of a project which would capture state-of-the-art international research on teaching and learning history and make it a potent force in Canadian classrooms. From the discussions at that meeting, a foundational Framework document was written, defining “historical thinking” around six historical thinking concepts (HTCs: see www.historicalthinking.ca).

Over the next two years, work was undertaken in a variety of locations across Canada to put flesh on the bones of the Framework. Teams of teachers in four pilot districts engaged in professional development around the HTCs, wrote classroom materials and assessment rubrics, piloted these in their classrooms, and selected student exemplars. The website was developed for feedback during development, as well as publication of the classroom materials and student exemplars for a wider audience. The Critical Thinking Consortium (TC2) published *Teaching About Historical Thinking* (2006) using The HT Project’s Framework. In summer 2007, a week long Historica national summer institute (45 participants at University of Winnipeg)

developed further materials. At the same time, a number of commercial publishers began to integrate the HTCs into new textbooks and teachers’ guides.

The HT Project was first presented to representatives of all provincial and territorial Ministries of Education at a meeting preceding the Historica Council meeting in Toronto in November, 2006. An update was presented the following year, October, 2007. The ministries responded positively but expressed the need for more information and support if they were to be able to work productively with the ideas.

2.2 FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF CANADIAN HERITAGE AND THEN/HIER

As a result of escalating opportunities for development and dissemination, but significant limitations to funding and personnel, Historica and the CSHC successfully sought additional financial support from the Department of Canadian Heritage to assemble a national meeting, whose goal was to discuss and plan strategic “scaling up” of the capacities of the project. In February 2008, 42 participants gathered in Vancouver. They included representatives from provincial and territorial ministries and departments of education, major history and social studies textbook publishers, Historica and Canadian Heritage personnel directly involved in the project, teachers who had been leading the pilot districts, and history education scholars from across Canada. The participants explored four components of educational change: a) curriculum revision; b) resource development; c) professional development; and d) assessment.

Discussion generated recommendations reported in *“Scaling Up” the Benchmarks of Historical Thinking* (April, 2008). Through 2008, work in local districts, with

textbook publishers, and several ministries continued. At that time, major funding (\$2.1 million) was announced for The History Education Network/Histoire et Éducation en Réseau (THEN/HiER), a pan-Canadian history education network under the directorship of Dr. Penney Clark, also based at UBC's Faculty of Education, opening up the horizon of possibilities for the reach of The HT Project.

2.3 BUILDING CAPACITY

In early 2009, in response to the needs identified in the *Scaling Up* Report, The HT Project received additional funding to March 2011 from the Department of Canadian Heritage for:

- a full-time project coordinator to support and promote The HT Project
- enhancement of the website
- additional national meetings to bring together ministry of education representatives and other key education stakeholders and
- identification of gaps in historical knowledge and understanding among young people

With the new funding, we formalized an Executive Steering Committee, consisting of Penney Clark (UBC), Carla Peck (University of Alberta), and Peter Seixas (UBC), for consultation on all major decisions.

In June, 2009, after a national search, Jill Colyer was hired as project coordinator, met with the Executive Steering Committee, and set up a national office in Kitchener, Ontario, within striking distance of Toronto. In 2010, Allan Hux, retired Program Coordinator for Social and World Studies and the Humanities, Grades 1-12, with the Toronto District School Board joined the Executive.

In September 2009, the Historica Foundation merged with the Dominion Institute, shifting the partnership configuration in regards to personnel, priorities and logistics. After a series of meetings, by mutual agreement among the newly formed Historica-Dominion Institute (HDI), the Department of Canadian Heritage, and the CSHC, we re-organized the institutional partnership, enabling the Canadian Heritage funding contribution to flow directly to UBC, without the involvement of HDI.

In 2010, thanks to funding from our partner, THEN/HiER, the next Project meeting was held in Toronto, February

18-20, with 60 invited participants from across Canada. Participants included representatives from all but two provincial and territorial ministries, publishers or editors from each of the major history and social studies textbook houses, personnel from the Department of Canadian Heritage, teacher-leaders from the pilot districts, history education scholars from across Canada, representatives from partner organizations, and the presidents of a number of provincial history and social studies teachers' associations. There were seven francophone and three First Nations/Inuit/Métis representatives.

In various formats, the meeting addressed the accomplishments, challenges and needs of the participants in four areas: a) curriculum, b) professional development, c) resources, and d) assessment.

In 2011, our partner THEN/HiER again funded The HT Project's national meeting, February 10-12 in Toronto. The central location for flights from across the country helped to contain costs. The invitation list was again limited to 60 participants from across Canada, despite dozens of requests from others who wanted to attend. Interest in the meeting reflected a growing awareness of historical thinking as an educational issue in general, and in the work of The Historical Thinking Project in particular. That meeting was organized around three themes:

- a) Progress and Challenges of the previous year — breakout groups discussed questions such as "What have you done with historical thinking?" "What has worked?" "What problems have you encountered?" and reported back to the entire group.
- b) Best Practice/Works in Progress — a variety of selected educators presented their work to the larger group.
- c) Strategic Planning — breakout groups worked explored areas of potential interest and concern and reported back to the entire group.

As always, the participants found the ability to engage in serious discussion with history education colleagues from across Canada to be one of the greatest benefits of the meeting. One outcome of the meeting was a change in the name of The HT Project from "Benchmarks of Historical Thinking" to "The Historical Thinking Project." Summaries of presentations and discussions can be found in the Report of the 2011 Meeting, "Continuing the Momentum" available at www.historicalthinking.ca.

3. ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2011



The calendar year 2011 represented major growth in three broad target areas: A) Learning Materials, B) Learning Activities, and C) Networking. Since we devoted the January 2012 Toronto meeting entirely to the question of Assessment, the agenda included no report on our accomplishments. Nevertheless, a picture of the project at this juncture would not be complete without this record.

A. LEARNING MATERIALS

Curriculum Development

Description: Curriculum documents are developed by the Ministries of Education in each province and territory in Canada. These documents outline what will be taught at each grade level, and how. One of the major thrusts of The Historical Thinking Project is to have historical thinking adopted into the history and social studies curriculum guidelines of every province and territory across the country. Though curriculum documents do not, by themselves, automatically produce change at the classroom level, they can serve as one powerful tool in helping teachers introduce historical thinking in their courses.

In the period leading up to the current Contribution Agreement (April 2011-March 2013), historical thinking (HT) concepts and/or language had been adopted in the following curriculum documents:

- Northwest Territories, Grade 5, Canadian History course
- Newfoundland and Labrador, Grade 10, Newfoundland and Labrador Studies course
- Manitoba, Grade 11, Canadian History course
- Nova Scotia, Grade 6, World History course
- Ontario College of Teachers, Additional Qualifications courses for teachers, History (all levels)

In 2011, curriculum documents that incorporated historical thinking were produced in:

- New Brunswick, Grade 11, Modern History
- Ontario, Grades 1-8 History, Geography and Social Studies; and Grades 9-12 Canadian and World Studies (DRAFT)

Student and Teacher Resources

Description: Student and teacher resources are the actual textbooks and other resources used in classrooms. In order for teachers to teach students to think historically, classroom resources must incorporate/integrate historical thinking. Teachers' guides that accompany videos and websites are also excellent venues to integrate historical thinking.

In the period leading up to the current Contribution Agreement, the following student and teacher resources had integrated historical thinking concepts and language:

- *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies* (2010), Grade 10, NL, Ministry of Education
- *Creating Canada* (2010), Grade 10, Ontario, McGraw-Hill Ryerson
- *Adventures in World History* (2010), Grade 12, Ontario, Emond Montgomery Publishing
- *Counterpoints: Exploring Canadian Issues, 2nd edition* (2010), Grade 11, BC, Pearson Education
- Historical thinking classroom worksheets, *CBC: News in Review* (2009 and 2010), Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
- *Horizons: Canada's Emerging Identity, 2nd edition* (2009), Grade 10, BC, Pearson Education
- *CSI: Canadian Sources Investigated* (2009), Grade 10, Ontario, Emond Montgomery
- *Exemplars in Historical Thinking: 20th Century Canada* (2008), The Critical Thinking Consortium (TC2)
- *Their Stories, Our History* (2007), Grade 8, Ontario, Thomson Duval (Nelson) Publishing
- *Close-Up Canada* (2007), Grade 7, Ontario, Oxford University Press
- *Flashback Canada* (2007), Grade 8, Ontario Oxford University Press
- *Teaching about Historical Thinking* (2006), The Critical Thinking Consortium (TC2)

In 2011, the following student and teacher resources were enhanced, developed, and/or published:

- *Canadian Identity* (2011), Grade 8, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nelson Education Canada
- *Shaping Canada* (2011), Grade 11, Manitoba, McGraw-Hill Ryerson Canada
- Teacher Resource package to support the CBC film "*Sir John A: Birth of a Country*" (2011)
- Teacher Resource package to accompany the Historica-Dominion Institute's website, *Sir John A Days* (<http://sirjohnaday.com/>)
- *New Possibilities for the Past: Shaping History Education in Canada*. (2011). Penney Clark (Ed.) Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

Posters

Description: After repeated requests from educators and others involved in our annual meetings, The HT Project developed a series of six classroom posters that explore the historical thinking concepts. Both the text lines and images on the posters are designed to stimulate discussion within classrooms, and can be used by teachers as

anchor charts. They have also proven to be an effective tool to use during Professional Development workshops and sessions with educators. Posters are available in both English and French.

POSTER DISTRIBUTION—2011 (SETS OF 6)

Period	English	French*
Jan-March	800	200
April-June (Name change and revisions to posters during this period.)	245	122
July-Sept	581	409
Oct-Dec	320	83
TOTAL	1956	814

* The French posters were reviewed on three occasions by a team of six French educators.

Our first version of the posters was released in February 2011. We underwent a name change from the Benchmarks of Historical Thinking Project to The Historical Thinking Project in April of 2011, and redeveloped the posters.



B. LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Summer Institute for Educators

Description: The Summer Institute is an intensive, six-day course on historical thinking. Participants are immersed in the six historical thinking concepts, the theory behind them, and ways to integrate the concepts into their own classroom materials, or resources. Participants include a range of stakeholders in education: classroom teachers and administrators, presidents of teaching associations, museums educators, community cultural centre educators, graduate students in history education programs, and ministry of education staff. The Summer Institute is designed in a “train the trainer” model, wherein the aim is that participants will return to their home jurisdictions and further educate or train others in the teaching of historical thinking.

In 2011, the second Summer Institute was held in Vancouver. Forty-three participants spent mornings in-class participating in lectures and developing materials, and the afternoons on field trips or participating in another experiential education component. Travel bursaries were provided by our partner The History Education Network/Histoire et Éducation en Réseau (THEN/HIER) to assist teachers from outside the province to participate in the event. Ten bursaries were awarded. (Bursary recipients, and their home locations, can be found on the THEN/HIER web site at <http://www.thenhier.ca/en/content/thenhier-funding-programs>.)

Two participants’ projects from the Summer Institute have been accepted for presentations at the American Educational Research Association’s annual meeting in April, 2012. A number of the participants have gone on to host workshops and seminars at their own Boards of Education on historical thinking. As well, a few of the participants have continued to contribute to The Historical Thinking Project in other ways, including writing additional historical thinking lessons for teachers, playing a role in the development of a PD Resource on historical thinking for secondary school teachers, and developing their own historical thinking projects.

Workshops

Description: Workshops for educators raise awareness of historical thinking and The Historical Thinking Project, and can be used to target particular historical concepts of interest to a Board of Education or group of department heads (e.g., Historical Perspective-Taking).

In 2011, the following workshops were conducted:

Period	# of Workshops	# of Participants
Jan-March	5	125
Apr-June	5	150
July-Sept	5	425
Oct-Dec	14	550
TOTAL	29	1250

Workshops conducted by Jill Colyer, Janet Thompson, Allan Hux, Lindsay Gibson, and Peter Seixas.

C. NETWORKING

Description: Networking with ministries of education and other education and history organizations is a critical component of The Historical Thinking Project. The HT Project identifies and works with key individuals and organizations that can foster the integration of historical thinking into curriculum documents, classroom resources, and classrooms across the country. We also make strategic links with other organizations that can provide specific avenues of support for the project.

Annual Meeting and Conference—*please see Section 5 for a full report*

Description: The Annual Meeting brings together ministry of education staff, presidents of teaching associations, history education academics, history associations and organizations, museums educators, and selected classroom teachers to explore progress in the area of integration of historical thinking into Canadian classrooms. The meeting also helps us to outline programming and policy for the next year.

Heritage Fair Organizations/Canada's History

Description: Heritage Fairs are held across the country, and are primarily aimed at children in Grades 6 to 8. Thousands of students participate in Heritage Fairs, and these projects provide an avenue for The Historical Thinking Project to have historical thinking concepts incorporated into the requirements for the creation and assessment of Heritage Fair projects. In 2011, Jill Colyer developed a relationship with the Ontario Heritage Fair Association and began exploring areas of collaboration with The HT Project. A senior member of The HT Project — Tom Morton — has become co-chair of the BC Heritage Fair Association and is designing ways to embed the Historical Thinking Concepts into the adjudication process for the BC Heritage Fairs.

We have communicated our desire to become more actively involved in the Heritage Fairs program at the national level to Canada's History — which currently handles some aspects of the Heritage Fairs program — and hope to be included in future awards ceremonies conducted by their organization.

THEN/HIER and other History Education Organizations

Description: Collaboration with other history organizations such as The History Education Network/Histoire et Éducation en Réseau (THEN/HIER), Canada's History, and the Historica-Dominion Institute, is an important way for The HT Project to be part of the larger history education community in the country. As well, collaboration with other history organizations allows us to raise awareness of what historical thinking is, and why it should be incorporated into Canadian classrooms.

It is also important to mention that THEN/HIER continues to provide a significant portion of operating funds for The HT Project. We would not be able to hold our annual meeting, or to deliver other elements of our programming without this financial support. In addition, THEN/HIER ran information items about The HT Project in its e-bulletin and newsletter, and The HT Project members wrote chapters for THEN/HIER's forthcoming anthology on history education.

In 2011, we collaborated with the Historica-Dominion Institute (HDI) in the development of a historical thinking based teacher's resource on Sir John A. Macdonald, and the HDI participated in our Summer Institute in Vancouver. We also submitted Special Project grant requests to the Department of Canadian Heritage in conjunction with Canada's History, and the Historica-Dominion Institute.

Faculties of Education

Description: To increase the use of historical thinking concepts in Canadian classrooms teachers need to be trained in historical thinking within faculties of education. These provide critical sites for the renewal of history teaching in Canada, and provide a key entry point for the ideas of historical thinking. With many teacher candidates relatively fresh from undergraduate history training, they are particularly receptive to the ideas. In 2011, the first step we have taken to meet this objective was to participate in a symposium on teacher education held in Calgary, April 28-30, 2011. Key associates of The HT Project participated and have written chapters for a forthcoming THEN/HIER volume on history teacher education. These associates include Stéphane Lévesque, Lindsay Gibson, Carla Peck, Peter Seixas, Penney Clark, and Alan Sears. The ideas of The HT Project are central to the book.

Jill Colyer also continues to work closely with faculty of education instructors at OISE and York University, in Ontario.

Ontario History Consultants' Association

Description: This key group of Ontario consultants provides input to the Ministry of Education on policy and programming. They also work to develop resources and training to assist teachers in Ontario to meet the challenges of new policy documents.

In 2011, Jill Colyer continued to sit as an executive member of the association. This group, like The Historical Thinking Project, was involved in the history and social science curriculum renewal process in Ontario. We anticipate that we will collaborate on the production of a number of resources in 2012.

4. 2012 ANNUAL MEETING

"Assessment of Historical Thinking": Rationale, Goals and Structure of the Meeting



The Reports from both 2010 and 2011 meetings identified assessment of historical thinking as a major concern. But participants had far less to say on this topic than on curriculum, professional development or new classroom materials. They posed questions about how to deal with the complexity of the ideas, what could be expected from students at different levels of schooling, and whether it was feasible and useful to think about large-scale assessments. The 2012 meeting agenda was an acknowledgement of the urgency and importance of these questions.

FROM THE 2010 REPORT:

The meeting noted that new ways of teaching history would have to be accompanied by new ways of assessing history learning. Participants expressed the need for assessments to support and promote learning while providing information for reporting how well students are doing. As well, they raised the challenge of developing system-wide assessments to monitor uptake by teachers and improvement in student competencies.

Rubrics had been central to the models of assessment in the Benchmarks project to date. Taking these further would require a much clearer sense of progression across grade levels for each of the historical thinking concepts. At the

same time, the dissemination of the use of rubrics for assessing students work would be enhanced by the development of some generic rubrics (not tied to particular lessons or tasks) for each of the historical thinking concepts, to be published on the website.

FROM THE 2011 REPORT:

Assessment was expressed as a major concern for all groups of participants. More attention and development needs to be paid to assessment of student progress in historical thinking, both at the small classroom scale and at the large district or provincial scale. Nunavut has moved to comprehensive projects as final summative assessments: here is an opening for HTC's, and one that might serve as an assessment model elsewhere.



Historical Thinking Project Executive at the 2012 Annual General Meeting and Conference (From left: Peter Seixas, Jill Colyer, Allan Hux, Carla Peck, and Penney Clark)

WHAT HAPPENED IN TORONTO...

In view of this relative lack of attention and progress, we decided to focus the entire annual meeting on the problem of assessment. In order to do so, we broadened our invitation list to include several international presenters with experience in assessing historical thinking. Their presence enabled us to concentrate on *defining ways to move forward* with the task of assessing historical thinking, at both the *large-scale and classroom levels*, utilizing a range of expertise.

The challenges are similar to those we have faced in all aspects of The Historical Thinking Project, but they become much clearer and more pressing when it comes to designing assessments. The challenges include, first, the definition of historical thinking—the six concepts—that we have been working with throughout the project. How do we have to change our own thinking as we move from assessing mastery of factual knowledge to mastery of something as complex as historical thinking? How do we separate—and should we separate—historical thinking from factual knowledge? Can we separate measures of historical thinking from general competencies in reading and writing?

Our questions generated three common elements, some or all of which were addressed by each of the presenters:

The first element is, to use the language of the National Research Council's Committee on the Foundations of Assessment, a "model of history cognition and learning." This is a notion of *how students think*, and how they can *progress* towards competency, or even expertise, in history. The Historical Thinking Project has promoted a clearly defined model of historical cognition: historical evidence, significance, continuity & change, cause & consequence, perspective taking and the ethical

dimension of history. We postulate that, with good teaching, students can become more expert in their use of these concepts, that is, able to handle more complex problems in more sophisticated ways. While every presenter came with a "model of history cognition and learning," none of those from outside The HT Project was entirely consistent with the six concepts of The HT Project. Indeed, the Quebec curriculum, the Swedish curriculum, the Stanford History Education Group, the US Advanced Placement, and the UK's Schools History Project all defined historical thinking in overlapping but incongruent ways.

The challenge of assessment is to measure students' progress, and the second component is the design of *tasks that will generate evidence* of their thinking. Each of the presenters provided samples of the kinds of tasks, and in some cases, the kinds of items in a larger assessment exercise, meant to elicit student responses. These ranged from multiple-choice questions, through a variety of shorter and longer essay formats, to extended projects.

The third and final component is the *analysis and interpretation of the evidence*. Most of the presenters provided some samples of student work, so that the participants could have a hand in, and subsequently discuss, the interpretations of students' cognition that arose from the products of their work. Again, the approaches to analysis were as varied as the student tasks.

The structure of the meeting allowed for plenary presentations of a half-hour, with generous plenary discussion time. The meeting also included two "roundtable" sessions, where participants stayed at the round tables in the plenary room, but engaged in small group discussions about the issues. Finally, we had two breakout sessions of smaller-format presentations (four in each session), allowing for more sustained discussion (see Appendix II, agenda).

"Thank you to the Canadian Heritage Department for providing this rare but valuable opportunity for Canadian educators to learn from experts in the field and to share resources with one another. This opportunity will help to ensure that young people from all across Canada have equal access to learning opportunities and resources. Through the excellent strategies produced by The HT Project, Canadian students are given a universal understanding about their past, present, and future." LINDA CONNOR, MANITOBA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

5. ABSTRACTS OF THE PRESENTATIONS



Presenters submitted abstracts of their sessions prior to the meeting, and we include them here in very lightly edited form. A few of the presentations are available on the website www.historicalthinking.ca/resources/ppts. We are planning an edited volume on Assessment of Historical Thinking that will include more complete and extensive research papers.

KADRIYE ERCIKAN,
University of British Columbia
Assessment of Historical Thinking

This presentation will report on an ongoing project on designing, developing and validating assessments of historical thinking. The objectives are (1) to describe and discuss designing and developing assessments of historical thinking; (2) to share findings from validation of an assessment of historical thinking; (3) to demonstrate the use of validation investigations to refine the definition of historical thinking; and (4) to discuss implications for and challenges in using similar types of assessments in large-scale contexts.

The assessment design and development was based on the evidence centered design approach and focused on three of the six elements of historical thinking: Evidence, Perspective-taking and the Ethical dimension. Evidence-centered design rests on three mutually dependent models: a) student cognition; b) task; and c) scoring. In my presentation, I will describe how a definition of the construct of “historical thinking” (student cognition) was used to guide the task development process and to develop the scoring rules. Elaboration of these three models is essential for communicating how

to develop similar assessments, as well as how to use assessments to guide student learning and progression in the student model.

The validation research involved in-depth investigation of students’ cognitive processes in responding to assessment tasks using think-aloud protocols (TAPs), as well as psychometric analyses based on large-scale administration of the assessments to approximately 500 students in grade 11. I will present findings from the validation investigation and share insights gained about the assessment tools and historical thinking concepts. The last part of the presentation will focus on discussing implications of our research for design, development and use of large-scale assessments of historical thinking.

THOMAS MATTS AND LAWRENCE CHARAP,
Advanced Placement Program, US College Board
Large-scale Assessment of History in the United States

The College Board’s Advanced Placement Exams in history have been criticized for sacrificing depth of conceptual understanding to breadth of content coverage and for sacrificing the development of historical thinking to the memorization of countless, disconnected facts. Responding to this criticism, the College Board has undertaken to redesign its European History, United States History, and World History courses and exams in ways that foster the development of conceptual understanding and historical thinking, all while not losing sight of the importance of accurate

“[We] need to consider/evaluate Dr. Ercikan’s research re: the possibility (and utility) of a single scale, perhaps based on factor scores, of [historical thinking] ...”

DENIS SHEMILT, UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS, UK

historical knowledge. The challenges of articulating an AP US History curriculum and developing its exam, to be used by 10,000 teachers in service to 400,000 students, have been numerous. How can we develop multiple choice questions that move beyond exercises in factual recall? How can we reduce our reliance on multiple choice questions yet still sample across the nine periods of US history within the 3-hour constraint of the exam? And with this reduction in multiple choice questions, how can we ensure the exam's reliability and the comparability of our scores across forms? How many writing samples, and at what length, will students need in order to provide sufficient evidence of their historical thinking? Presenters will describe proposed solutions to these and other challenges to a large scale, high stakes testing program.

CATHERINE DUQUETTE,
Université du Québec à Chicoutimi

The connection between historical thinking and historical consciousness: proposition of a new taxonomy

The competency-based program introduced in secondary schools by Quebec's ministry of Education (MELS) in 2003, underlines the importance of learning historical

thinking at school. To promote the learning of historical thinking means, in short, to encourage a vision of history as a science that allows the interpretation of the past rather than a teaching of the discipline based on memorizing facts.

However, numerous studies (Barton, 1997; VanSledright, 2001; Martineau, 1999 and Sandwell, 2005) tend to show that students rarely master this type of thinking without difficulty. This problem has brought us to study the possible connections that exist between historical thinking and historical consciousness since the development of historical consciousness seems a possible solution to the difficulties linked with the learning of historical thinking. In order to observe this possible connection, we have completed an empirical study, qualitative in nature, with 148 students in their fifth year of secondary school in the province of Quebec.

The results of this research tend to show the possibility of dividing historical consciousness into four stages of development. We notice, as well, a strong correlation between the more reflexives stages of historical consciousness and the development of historical thinking. Moreover, the precisions brought forth by this study, allows us to better understand how student progress in their learning of historical thinking and the different stages of historical consciousness and can be considered as a promising tool to evaluate this progression.



"Professor Duquette's presentation was valuable both for reasons of research (many similarities but also differences in the approach to historical consciousness) but also for the implications for a test..."

PER ELIASSON, MALMÖ UNIVERSITY, SWEDEN

Catherine Duquette presenting at the 2012 AGM. Peter Seixas in background. Joel Rudnert and Fredrik Alven from Malmö University in the foreground.

**PER ELIASSON, FREDRIK ALVÉN,
DAVID ROSENLUND, AND JOEL RUDNERT,
Malmö University**

Historical Consciousness in Sweden

In 2011 there is a new syllabus in history in Sweden based on the concept of historical consciousness in the way it is used by Jörn Rüsen. The utmost goal for the history education in Swedish schools is consequently to promote the development of the pupils' historical consciousness. In order to do that pupils should elaborate their abilities to use historical knowledge as a frame of reference, to understand how history is made i.e. the use of sources, and also to understand how and why history is used by individuals in society.

Malmö University has the assignment to develop a national test for the compulsory school in history. The first test will be performed on trial basis in springtime 2013 and should be based on the goals and central content in the syllabus and made according to the assessment criteria. For two years we have been working with these criteria for the new goal named "use of history." The construction of the criteria is that the pupil should be reasoning about the object and the qualities in this reasoning are assessed. Our line of work has been firstly to identify the object (What should be the content of the reasoning?) and secondly to describe the different qualities. In order to do this we have made tests with 600 pupils and drawn conclusions from our results.

"The utmost goal for history education in Swedish schools is...the development of pupils' historical consciousness:...to use historical knowledge as a frame of reference, to understand how history is made...and to understand how and why history is used by individuals in society."

What we present is a brief overview of the new syllabus, our previous work with the new assessment criteria concerning use of history and our conclusions from this in relation to the new test. We concentrate on the issue of how to assess the abilities that we relate to the pupil's historical consciousness.

**MARC-ANDRÉ ÉTHIER,
Université de Montréal
DAVID LEFRANÇOIS,
Université du Québec en Outaouais**

Analysis of ministry examinations of 2010, for Quebec students enrolled in History and Citizenship Education (Secondary IV)

This presentation aims to present an analysis of the instructions, documents and marking guides of the Quebec provincial final examinations of 2010, in History and Citizenship Education in Secondary IV. These tests focused on the history of Quebec and Canada. Student responses are also analyzed. The analysis compares the operations of thought solicited and evaluated in this examination with the content of the official curriculum, and with the concepts and benchmarks of historical thinking.

**TOM MORTON,
BC Heritage Fairs**

This presentation will demonstrate how one shy grade 5 student from Richmond, British Columbia demonstrated the historical significance of world champion professional wrestler Gene Kiniski in a Heritage Fair project. This project reveals the promise of the Heritage Fairs program: the student engagement, the network of dedicated volunteers, the close ties of museums and schools, the nascent historical understanding of young students, and the assessment process — notably clear criteria and feedback — that guides that understanding.

The presentation will also point to the gaps in the support system and assessment process of the Heritage Fairs program in British Columbia.

CHARLES HOU,**The Begbie Canadian History Contest**

The Begbie Canadian History Contest, now in its nineteenth year, was originally inspired by the internationally recognized Advanced Placement program. The Begbie Contest tries to find a balance between content and process. The most challenging aspect of creating the contest is finding good primary sources suitable for use at the grade 10 to 12 level, and designing multiple choice, short answer and essay questions that test critical thinking.

Sources for the document-based essay question should be short, relevant and clearly written, and reflect a variety of points of view. Marking the subjective part of the contest is also a challenge. Each essay is marked on the basis of content and expression by two student teachers who then compare their marks and come to a consensus. Essays in contention for an award are then reread.

Does the Begbie Contest meet the objectives promoted by The Historical Thinking Project? If not, can it be adjusted to meet the needs of the project, or is there a better way to assess historical thinking?

**JENNIFER FARRELL-CORDON,
IRENE LANDRY AND KIM WALLACE,
Ontario Ministry of Education**

*Revisions to the Ontario History and
Social Science Curriculum*

This session will focus on the challenges of including the concepts of historical thinking in writing Ontario Ministry curriculum expectations. The discussion will focus on how to ensure the concepts are clearly framed and evaluated. Frameworks will be shared.

**TINO BORDONARO, MA, AND LUC LÉPINE, PhD,
Montreal**

*The Evaluation of the Historical Competencies in the
Quebec History and Citizenship program: The Experience
of Two Pedagogical Consultants.*

From 2007 to 2009, the reform in Quebec was implemented in the Secondary III and IV History and Citizenship program, and as a result a set of competencies replaced the previously applied objectives.

The three competencies are:

COMPETENCY 1

Examines social phenomena from a historical perspective

COMPETENCY 2

Interprets social phenomena using the historical method

COMPETENCY 3

Strengthens his/her exercise of citizenship through the study of history

In addition to using these three competencies, Quebec students use ten intellectual operations to develop their historical understanding and apply this historical thinking. In so doing, Quebec's approach is similar to the six concepts advanced by The Historical Thinking Project.

Our presentation will demonstrate the similarities between the three competencies, the ten intellectual operations in the Quebec history program and the six concepts in The Historical Thinking Project. Then, based on our experiences, a demonstration on how to effectively evaluate the different intellectual operations will be provided using students' sample answers on final complementary examinations.

**JOEL BREAKSTONE AND MARK SMITH,
Stanford University**

New Directions: History Assessments of Thinking

The history education community wants students to think critically, contend with competing interpretations, and use evidence to support arguments. Recent educational initiatives in the United States, including the Common Core State Standards and the 21st Century Skills movement, have similar objectives. Good assessments are necessary in order to achieve these goals. Unfortunately, there is a poverty of imagination in history testing in the United States. Teachers are primarily presented with two disparate models: the multiple-choice question and the document-based question (DBQ).

Most standardized history exams in the United States only use multiple-choice questions to gauge historical understanding. Multiple-choice questions may be adequate for assessing factual knowledge, but are limited in their ability to measure higher-order skills and only leave shaded bubbles as evidence of student learning. DBQs are rich exercises if students can already cope with the complex task of reading multiple sources, formulating an argument, and composing an analytic essay in an hour. But what if they cannot? What about all the other possibilities for assessing students' historical understanding?

The Stanford History Education Group is engaged in research and development of short, formative assessments that better measure aspects of historical understanding than multiple-choice questions and provide teachers a more precise understanding of their students' historical knowledge than they can discern from the many pages of DBQ essays. We believe that when students engage in legitimate historical tasks and provide short written responses, teachers see more student thinking and are better equipped to revise instruction in response.

"The Stanford examples and Charles Hou's work prompt me to think that it should be possible with the leadership of The HT Project to create banks of primary evidence items for short responses targeted at the different HT concepts..."

ALLAN HUX, EXECUTIVE MEMBER, THE HT PROJECT

DENIS SHEMILT,
University of Leeds

Assessing Historical Thinking in the UK: the Long View

In the last quarter of the twentieth century, several attempts were made to assess procedural aspects of historical thinking (see the Schools History Project, the Cambridge A Level History Project and Project CHATA). Assessments focused on the concepts of *evidence, accounts, change, causation and empathetic explanation*. Much was learned about how students made sense of what they are taught, but some technical problems proved incorrigible: (1) Assessments were insufficiently reliable, valid or generalisable for high-stakes decisions to be made about individuals. (2) Assessments against discrete concepts defied aggregation into valid unitary measures of progress in historical thinking. (3) The size and complexity of assessment instruments and mark schemes remained prohibitively expensive.

In recent years large-scale history assessment in the UK has become increasingly mechanical, predictable and litigation-proof. We may, however, be entering a new Age of Assessment Anxiety. There is general unease about negative backwash, fear lest training to meet assessment demands displaces the teaching of history. More specific is the accusation that, in consequence of negative backwash, students' knowledge of the past is fragmenting into disconnected stories and, thereby, becoming less useful. Small-scale research into ways of promoting and assessing the formation of bigger and more joined-up 'pictures of the past' and of 'usable historical knowledge' has been funded. Analyses of data pertinent to 'big picture formation' and the perceived relevance of historical knowledge are ongoing, but stable learning constructs have yet to be identified.

6. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS



Over the course of the meeting there were two roundtable sessions — discussions at the tables in the plenary room — which provided participants with an opportunity to expand on and respond to ideas that had been presented by the speakers. There were eight reports from the first session and seven from the second. They provide evidence of rich and varied discussions. They coalesced around a number of themes. What appears below is an attempt to provide a sense of the richness and variety of the key ideas, without reproducing the reports in their entirety.

ROUNDTABLE 1: DAY 1 THEMES AND ISSUES

1. **Classroom-based assessment and large-scale assessment.** While there were appreciations for the demand for large-scale assessments, most of the comments urged more attention to supporting improvement in classroom-based assessment. This overlapped with discussion of formative vs. summative assessment, and the notion of assessment *as* and *for* learning. Many participants saw more potential for enhancing learning through formative, classroom-based assessment. How about provincial support for classroom-based assessment? This might start to address the need to coordinate progress over multiple years: vertical alignment. This is even more urgent for historical thinking than it is for a more fact-accumulation oriented curriculum. One group noted that an external test can create a healthy alliance between students and teachers, working together for high performance. Another remarked on the inertia of past practice: it is “hard to change old ways” and accountability beyond the classroom can be one factor in that change.
2. **Basic conceptual issues.** Is there one construct of historical thinking; or is it a collection of competencies? The need for progression models or achievement charts, as well as exemplars that demonstrate increasing levels of competence, came up in one form or another at many tables. There is not interprovincial consensus on what constitutes historical thinking: this might be helpful, but it would be politically difficult. We need to have a framework in which indigenous perspectives have a place.

“The small group sessions were particularly interesting as we spoke about policies and initiatives across many jurisdictions (provinces, territories and countries)...”

MATTHEW LUTHI, LESTER B. PEARSON SCHOOL BOARD, QUEBEC

3. **The ethical dimension, citizenship** (Quebec) and **historical consciousness.**
 - a. The notion of values in the curriculum poses a challenge for educators. There may be good reason to soft pedal the “ethical dimension” in curriculum documents. On the other hand...
 - b. This raises the related question of “citizenship education” which is front and centre in the Quebec curriculum. Quebec is tackling the assessment of citizenship competencies.
 - c. “Historical consciousness” takes on the difficult question of the relationship of what is learned about the past, to what can/should be done with that knowledge today, so it is directly related to the ethical dimension in The Historical Thinking Project’s scheme of concepts.

4. **Assessment types and formats.**

- a. We should be exploring the full range of types: examinations, projects, group vs. individual, oral. There is too much focus on exam-based assessments. We should be equally considering other kinds of products, including those that utilize new technologies: group tasks, think alouds, take-home tests or take home the documents, for reading prior to a classroom task (to eliminate some of the reading proficiency demands).
 - b. Question format and scoring: can multiple-choice questions be used effectively to assess historical thinking? Open-ended questions take more time and delays have an impact on their potential to contribute to learning: there are costs associated with moving beyond machine scoring.
5. **Elementary schools.** This is where the foundation could be laid for historical thinking in the upper grades. Yet the competition for curricular time is intense and teachers' education in particular disciplines is similarly spread thin. What are the "basics" of historical thinking, for elementary schools?

ROUNDTABLE 2: NEXT STEPS FOR ASSESSMENT AND THE HISTORICAL THINKING PROJECT

6. We should attempt to construct an **assessment framework** for historical thinking, with sample assessments that can then be replicated for other grade levels and curricular topics. (Either for classroom or large-scale assessments). These should be accessible (i.e., downloadable) and adaptable. Where would validity issues get sorted out?
7. Provide a possible menu of **alternative methods/formats** of products that allow for evaluation by other means than writing alone (oral, written, performance). This will encourage and support teachers to differentiate instruction and assessment for their students.
8. **Evidence-based tasks** (like the Stanford model) should be developed, with student samples at various levels.
9. Assessment of historical thinking raises issues in respect to **modified classes**, low literacy, English language learners, and learning disabled students. We will need to confront these.
10. Create and share more sample lessons that **reinforce clearly the link between instruction and assessment**. This will reinforce how teaching and learning are linked.
11. Create and maintain **links and communication with international jurisdictions**, initiatives and projects that are engaged in this type of work.
12. Host interim or quarterly online rendezvous/sessions that can sustain the dialogue between AGM's.

Thanks to note-takers: Heather MacGregor, Roland Zimmerman, Sylvie Lebel, Kadriye Ercikan, Lindsay Gibson, Catherine Duquette, Linda Cannon, Gary Renouf, Joel Breakstone, Kim Wallace, Allan Hux, Bethany Doiron, Ian Pettigrew, Dale Martelli, anonymous.

"Many thanks for the invitation to this session, and to the organizers who always do a wonderful job... As always, we appreciate the opportunity to be able to connect with fellow educators across the country, especially in these fiscal times when there are so few opportunities to do so." BETHANY DOIRON, PEI DEPT.

OF EDUCATION & EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

7. MEETING EVALUATIONS



A post-meeting evaluation form was completed by 58 of the invited participants (see Appendix IV) and provided important information for this report.

The vast majority of participants rated the meeting as very useful. The evaluation included 5 questions that asked participants to rate their level of satisfaction from 1 to 5 (5 being the highest score). For each of the 5 questions, the mean ranged from 4.15 to 4.52.

Participants felt that the meeting equipped them with new information and/or tools to work with historical thinking in their particular educational environment. Academics and researchers who participated reported higher levels of overall satisfaction with the plenary presentations than did classroom teachers. This was expected, because the plenary presentations focused on large-scale assessment this year, rather than classroom practice. Previous annual meetings have more specifically targeted the needs of classroom teachers, and our next meeting will do so again.

Once again we were very pleased with the level of appreciation on the part of participants. They truly value the opportunity to meet with colleagues from across the country to explore ways to improve education.

Respondents provided very specific feedback that will be used for setting goals and planning activities, particularly in the development of assessment frameworks and model assessment tasks in the coming year.

"I was able to see that 'the experts' are grappling with many of the same issues as me (a classroom teacher) and that they have come up with some strategies/ideas/theories to deal with the challenges of assessing students' historical thinking. I can now build on their work in my own way, and I have some people who I can contact if I have any new ideas myself."

JANET THOMPSON, VANCOUVER SCHOOL BOARD

8. CONCLUSION



At the time of writing of the 2011 Meeting report, we were awaiting word on whether the Canadian Studies Program would extend its crucial financial contribution to The Historical Thinking Project (word that had been delayed by an inconveniently timed federal election.) Needless to say, the Program came through with generous funding for a period ending March 31, 2013.

Now, once again, with federal cuts looming across the board, whether or not The HT Project will be able to continue over the long term with the kind of energy and success that we have maintained over the past several years, is a question that we cannot answer confidently at this point. What we can say, is that a core of history education “activists” from schools, ministries, publishing houses, and public history agencies, from every region of the country, Anglophone and Francophone, Aboriginal

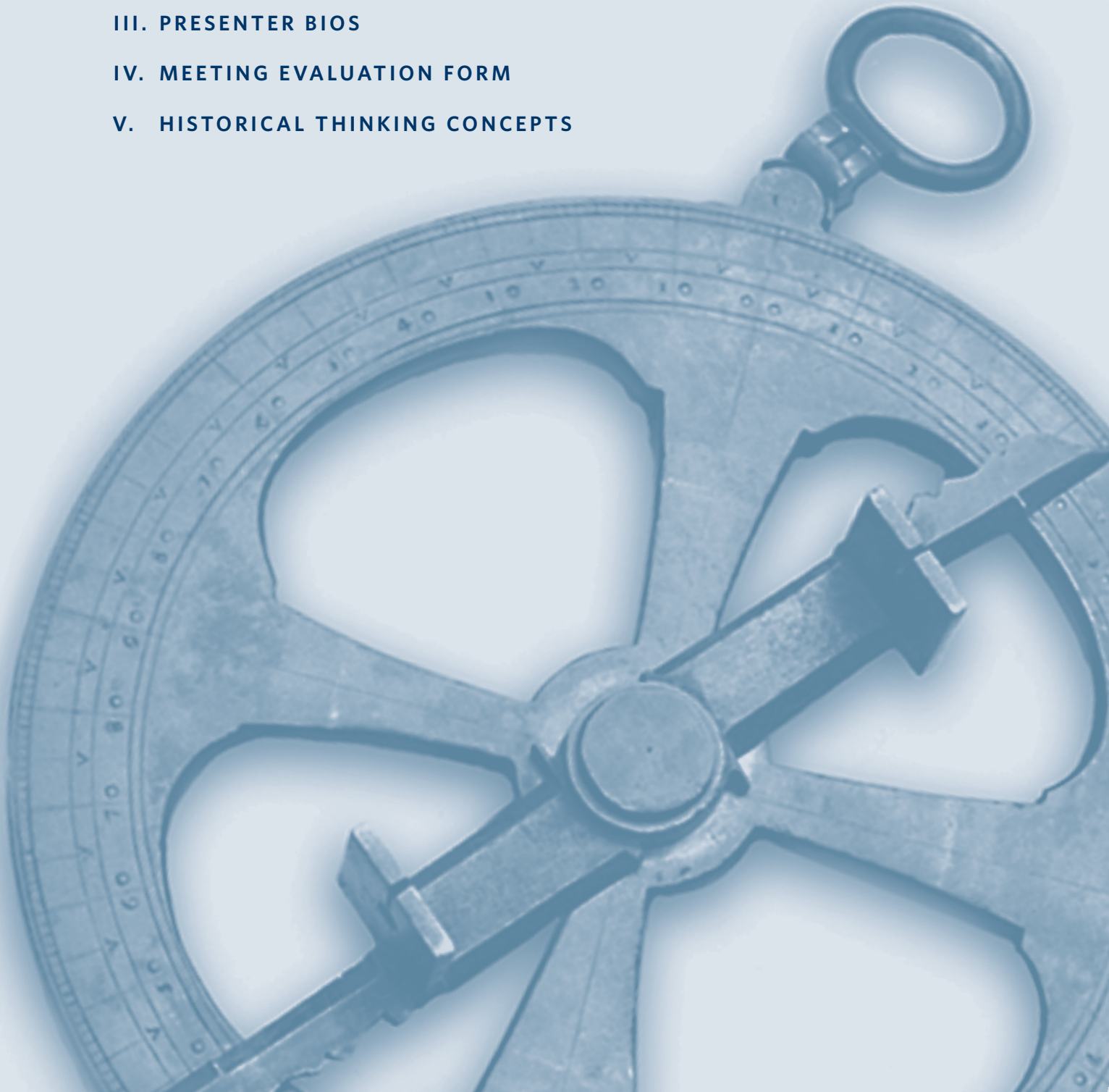
and non-Aboriginal, have grown together as a community. And what has brought us together is *not* a search for one common narrative, an official Canadian story that would once and for all put an end to debate, contention, revision and discord. Rather, our common thread has been the search for ways to educate young people so that they can *participate* in those debates, actively, rationally and knowledgeably, with a novice’s grasp of the best tools that the discipline of history has to offer.



Participants at the Toronto meeting.

9. APPENDICES

- I. PARTICIPANT LIST
- II. MEETING AGENDA
- III. PRESENTER BIOS
- IV. MEETING EVALUATION FORM
- V. HISTORICAL THINKING CONCEPTS



APPENDIX

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APPENDIX

II. MEETING AGENDA

WEDNESDAY, 18 JANUARY 2012

7:00 pm **Reception** — light fare, cash bar (Vista foyer, 1st floor, Hilton)

THURSDAY, 19 JANUARY 2012

8:30 am **Breakfast**, Vista room (1st floor, Hilton)

9:00 am **Welcome, introductions, background, and goals for the meeting**

- Peter Seixas, Director, Historical Thinking Project, University of British Columbia
- Penney Clark, Director, THEN/HiER, University of British Columbia
- Carla Peck, University of Alberta

9:30 am **Plenary Session 1: Large-scale assessment: issues and challenges**

Speaker:
Kadriye Ercikan, University of British Columbia

Speaker:
Thomas Matts and Lawrence Charap, US Advanced Placement History

Open response and discussion

11:00 am **Nutrition break and Publishers' Displays** (Vista foyer)

11:15 am **Plenary Session 2: Historical thinking, historical consciousness and how to measure them**

Speaker:
Catherine Duquette, Université du Québec à Chicoutimi

Speakers:
Per Eliasson, Fredrik Alvéén, David Rosenlund, and Joel Rudnert, Malmö University, Sweden

Open response and discussion

12:45 pm **Lunch and Publishers' Displays** (Vista foyer)

1:45 pm **Small Group Sessions: Assessing historical thinking across Canada** (2 x 45 mins)

Participants will attend two of the four sessions. More on format below*

GROUP 1:
Tom Morton, BC Heritage Fairs;
Charles Hou, Begbie Contests

GROUP 2:
Kim Wallace, Irene Landry,
Jennifer Farrell-Cordon; Ontario Min. of Ed.

GROUP 3:
Marc André Éthier, Université de Montréal; David Lefrançois, Université du Québec en Outaouais

GROUP 4:
Plenary session follow-up (further discussion of plenary sessions)

3:30 pm **Break and Publishers' Displays** (Vista foyer)

3:45 pm **Roundtable 1:** Debriefing the issues so far (at plenary room tables)

6:00 pm **Dinner** (Vista room)

FRIDAY, 20 JANUARY 2012

8:30 am **Breakfast** (Vista room)

9:00 am **Plenary Session 3: New Directions**

Speakers:
Luc Lépine, Tino Bordonaro, Montreal, Quebec

Speakers:
Joel Breakstone, Mark Daniel Smith, Stanford University
Open response and discussion

10:30 am **Nutrition break**

10:45 am **Plenary Session 4: The long view from the UK**

Denis Shemilt, University of Leeds

11:45 am **Roundtable 2: Key Issues and Next Steps** (at plenary room tables)

12:30 am **Concluding remarks and lunch**

*FORMAT OF SMALL GROUP PRESENTATIONS, THURSDAY 19 JANUARY

Session 1: 1:45 to 2:30

BREAKOUT RM 1
Tom Morton and Charles Hou (English)

BREAKOUT RM 2
ON Ministry of Ed group (English)

PLENARY ROOM
Professors Éthier and Lefrançois (French)

BREAKOUT RM 3
Plenary Session 1 Follow-up (English)

Session 2: 2:45 to 3:30

Tom Morton and Charles Hou (English)

ON Ministry of Ed group (French)

Professors Éthier and Lefrançois (English)

Plenary Session 1 Follow-up (English)

APPENDIX

III. PRESENTER BIOS

THE HISTORICAL THINKING PROJECT,
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

PETER SEIXAS is Director of The Historical Thinking Project; Professor and Canada Research Chair in the Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy at the University of British Columbia; Director of the Centre for the Study of Historical Consciousness; and a member of the Royal Society of Canada. He taught high school social studies in Vancouver for 15 years and earned a PhD in history from the University of California at Los Angeles. He is editor of *Theorizing Historical Consciousness* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), and co-editor, with Peter Stearns and Sam Wineburg, of *Knowing, Teaching and Learning History: National and International Perspectives* (New York: NYU Press, 2000).

PENNEY CLARK is a faculty member in the Faculty of Education, the University of British Columbia and Director of The History Education Network/Histoire et éducation en réseau (THEN/HiER). Her research interests include history teaching and learning and curriculum in historical and political contexts. Her most recent publication is the edited collection, *New Possibilities for the Past: Shaping History Education in Canada* (UBC Press, 2011). She is a Canadian history textbook co-author and co-editor of anthologies used in teacher education courses. Dr. Clark was awarded the Killam Faculty Teaching Prize in 2006 and received the British Columbia Social Studies Teachers' Association Innovator of the Year Award in 2008.

JILL COLYER is the national coordinator of The Historical Thinking Project. In this role she runs large-scale professional development session for educators, works with education officials and educational publishers on resource and curriculum development, and manages all large-scale projects and collaborations for the The HT Project. A history and social science educator for 20 years, she is also a writer who has co-authored 7 textbooks in the areas of history, social science and civics. She also works as a writer and editor for the CBC; most notably on the current affairs program *News in Review*, the geographic series *Geologic Journey*, and the east coast series *Land and Sea*.

ALLAN HUX taught at two universities and five secondary schools over a 20-year period in Toronto, Ontario. He was the Program Coordinator for Social and World Studies and the Humanities, grades 1-12, at the Toronto District School Board for 15 years prior to his retirement on June 30, 2010. He co-authored 8 history, law and politics textbooks, including 2 grade 10 Canadian History texts. Most recently, he wrote the national curriculum resources for the Historica-Dominion Institute's John A. Day website based on the 6 Historical Thinking Concepts developed by Professor Peter Seixas. Currently, he is working with Professor Carla Peck and the University of Alberta Library on developing curriculum resources on Sir Sam Steele.

CARLA L. PECK is Assistant Professor of Social Studies Education in the Department of Elementary Education at the University of Alberta. From 2008-2010, she directed the Alberta portion of The Historical Thinking Project. Her research interests include students' understandings of democratic concepts, diversity, identity, citizenship and the relationship between students' ethnic identities and their understandings of history. She is Principal Investigator and Co-Investigator on two SSHRC-funded projects related to her work in diversity and citizenship education. Recently, Dr. Peck was awarded the Canadian Education Association's Pat Clifford Award for Early Career Research in Education (2010).

PRESENTERS

KADRIYE ERCIKAN is Professor of measurement and research methods in the department of Educational and Counseling Psychology and Special Education, at the University of British Columbia, Canada. She received her doctorate in 1992 from Stanford University in Research and Evaluation Methods. Her research focuses on design, validity, and fairness issues in large-scale assessments and the links between validity of interpretations and research methods. In recent years her research focused on constructing data as a measurement activity, validity and comparability issues in multi-lingual assessments and links among research questions, data and research inferences.

TOM MATTS serves as Senior Director for Assessments in the College Board's Advanced Placement Program, overseeing the program's suite of 34 AP Examinations. In 2011, 3.4 million AP Exams were administered to nearly 2 million students worldwide. Prior responsibilities at the College Board include the development of new courses and exams in Chinese, Italian, and Japanese Language and Culture, as well as overseeing the launch of the AP Course Audit in 2007. Previous experience in large scale assessment, at Educational Testing Service, included leading the development of the portfolio assessments in various disciplines for National Board® Teacher Certification.

LAWRENCE CHARAP is a Director for US History in the Advanced Placement Program at the College Board. For the past 10 years, he has worked on teacher professional development and history curriculum design at the Board and as a research Fellow at the Institute for Learning at the University of Pittsburgh. Charap received his PhD in US history from Johns Hopkins University and taught until recently at the University of Rhode Island. He currently lives near Philadelphia.

CATHERINE DUQUETTE est professeure de didactique de l'histoire à l'Université du Québec à Chicoutimi (UQAC). Elle s'intéresse au rapport qu'entretiennent la pensée historique et la conscience historique chez les élèves du secondaire, à l'évaluation de la pensée historique dans le contexte de la classe et à l'enseignement des sciences humaines grâce aux controverses. Elle s'est penchée, pendant ses études doctorales, sur l'influence de la conscience historique sur l'apprentissage de la pensée historique et inversement lors d'une recherche empirique auprès de 150 élèves francophones du Québec.

PER ELIASSON is associate professor in history at Malmö University. He was a history teacher from 1976-1997 at secondary and upper secondary schools. He was the Coordinator for the Swedish National Agency for Education during the work with the new syllabuses in history in secondary and upper secondary schools, as well as Project Leader for the coming national test in history for secondary school. His publications address historical consciousness, syllabuses, and the use of history.

JOEL RUDNERT, PhD, is a student in history and history didactics at Malmö University. He was a teacher in history, social science, religion, and geography for secondary school from 1993-2011. In 2010 he worked on the new Swedish curriculum with the The Swedish National Agency for Education. He is currently working for the Agency on the upcoming national tests in history. He has written and published texts about younger students' historical thinking.

FREDRIK ALVÉN, licentiate of Philosophy, Master of Education in 1998 in history and geography. He has worked as a teacher in history and geography in primary schools since 1998 and is now also working for the National Agency of Education on the upcoming national tests in history in Sweden. His thesis is: "Testing Historical Consciousness, an analysis of students answers in history tests." He has published articles about teaching and assessing the use of history and about ethnic segregation in Sweden.

DAVID ROSENLUND, licentiate of Philosophy. He has worked as a teacher in history and social science in the upper secondary school since 1999. Now working for the National Agency of Education on the upcoming national tests in history in Sweden. Licentiate thesis: "Handling history with one eye shut. Alignment between standards and assessment in upper-secondary history education."

TOM MORTON is the provincial coordinator of the BC Heritage Fairs Society. He taught for over thirty years in Kabala, Sierra Leone; Montreal; and Vancouver at the high school and university level. He is the author of numerous articles and books on education. Tom has received the British Columbia Social Studies' Teacher of the Year award, the Governor-General's Award for Excellence in Teaching Canadian History, and the Kron Award for Excellence in Holocaust Education. He lives in Vancouver with his wife Rose-Hélène and daughter Chloé.

CHARLES HOU taught in Burnaby, BC, for 34 years. Over the years he has produced many teaching materials, given numerous workshops and co-authored books on The Riel Rebellion and Canadian political cartoons. He received the first annual Governor General's Award for Excellence in Teaching Canadian History in 1996 and served on the board of directors of Canada's National History Society from 1999 to 2005. For the last nineteen years he has worked with a group of teachers to produce The Begbie Canadian History Contest, a national contest for secondary school students.

KIM WALLACE has been working in education with the Halton District School Board in Ontario and is currently on secondment to the Ontario Ministry of Education as an Education Officer leading the Canadian and World Studies policy document curriculum revision. Her experiences have ranged from classroom teacher to board consultant, teaching additional qualification courses, textbook writing, and project leadership. Areas of interest include curriculum instruction, particularly thinking and learning processes.

IRÈNE LANDRY détient une maîtrise en histoire et a enseigné cette matière pendant toute sa carrière d'abord au N.-B. et par la suite à Toronto. Elle œuvre dans le domaine de l'éducation en tant que consultante depuis une dizaine d'années et dirige présentement la révision des programmes-cadres d'Histoire et géographie, 7e et 8e année, et d'Études canadiennes et mondiales, 9e à 12e année pour le secteur francophone du ministère de l'Éducation de l'Ontario. L'intégration de la pensée historique dans le curriculum de l'Ontario couronne bien pour elle toute une carrière consacrée au développement de la pensée chez les élèves.

JENNIFER FARRELL-CORDON is an intermediate teacher with the Toronto District School Board in Ontario. She is currently on secondment to the Ontario Ministry of Education as an Education Officer leading the Social Studies, Grades 1-6; History and Geography Grades 7 & 8 policy document curriculum revision. She has co-authored two Geography textbooks and has served on a variety of writing teams concerning the elementary curriculum through the Toronto District School Board and The Critical Thinking Consortium. Areas of interest include cross-curricular integration, differentiation and thinking processes.

MARC-ANDRÉ ÉTHIER (professeur agrégé en didactique de l'histoire, Université de Montréal) et **DAVID LEFRANÇOIS** (professeur agrégé en histoire et théories de l'éducation, Université du Québec en Outaouais) sont chercheurs au sein du Groupe de recherche sur l'éducation à la citoyenneté et l'enseignement de l'histoire (GRECEH) et du Centre de recherche interuniversitaire sur la formation et la profession enseignante (CRIFPE).

Au cours des quatre dernières années, leurs recherches ont porté sur quatre grands axes thématiques : l'analyse critique des programmes québécois d'histoire et d'éducation à la citoyenneté au primaire et au secondaire ; le développement de la pensée critique en histoire ; le transfert des apprentissages dans la pratique politique et communautaire ; la délibération démocratique en classe d'histoire et ses problèmes. Plus récemment, ils ont examiné les contenus et les activités de l'un des outils didactiques offerts aux élèves (le manuel scolaire), afin de voir s'ils peuvent être vus comme présentant des conditions favorables ou défavorables à l'apprentissage de la pensée sociohistorique et critique.

Ils ont présenté certains résultats de leurs recherches aux enseignants, coanimé des ateliers de formation continue des maîtres, coprésidé des séminaires réunissant des conseillers pédagogiques et codirigé deux livres en 2011: Enseigner et apprendre l'histoire: manuels, enseignants et élèves (PUL) et Didactique de l'univers social au primaire (ERPI).

LUC LÉPINE received his PhD, in military history, from Université du Québec à Montréal in 2005. He has an MA in History from Université de Montréal, 1987, and a BA honours History from Concordia University, 1982. He worked on the Montcalm Project about French soldiers in America during the Conquest. He is preparing many publications about the War of 1812 in Lower Canada. From 2007 to 2009, Luc was a pedagogical consultant for the Lester B. Pearson school board. He helped teachers implement the reform in History at grade 9 and 10.

TINO BORDONARO is the Secondary Social Sciences Consultant at the English Montreal School Board, and an Adjunct Professor in Education at McGill University. For the past 20 years, he has taught the social sciences in Quebec high schools as well as Quebec educational policy at McGill.

JOEL BREAKSTONE teaches in the Stanford Teacher Education Program and is Assistant Director of the Stanford Teaching with Primary Sources Program. He is also a doctoral candidate in the Stanford University School of Education. His research considers how history teachers use assessment data to inform instruction. Joel previously taught high school history in Vermont.

MARK SMITH is a researcher with the Stanford History Education Group (SHEG) and serves as the Assistant Director of the Stanford Teaching with Primary Sources Program, a teacher professional development program funded by the Library of Congress. Mark is also a doctoral candidate in history education at Stanford University. His research focuses on the development and validation of innovative history assessments.

DENIS SHELMT taught history, mathematics and physics in comprehensive and selective secondary schools before moving to University of Leeds and Leeds Trinity. In 1974, he became Evaluator of the Schools History Project 13-16 and went on to serve as Project Director in 1978. In partnership with Peter Lee, he was Co-Director of the Cambridge A-Level History Project from 1985. He served as Head of INSET and the Faculty of Education between 1983 and 2000. Major research interests include 'big history' and constructivist approaches to the teaching and learning of history.

"Historical thinking...as students display it in solving problems, is much richer and more complex. Often in real life contexts, students will use a combination of [HT] concepts with various degrees of sophistication."

STAN HALLMAN-CHONG, TORONTO DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

APPENDIX

IV. MEETING EVALUATION FORM

**2012 ANNUAL MEETING AND CONFERENCE:
ASSESSMENT OF HISTORICAL THINKING**
18-20 January 2012, Hilton Toronto Airport

PLEASE NOTE: Your responses are very important to us, certainly because they help us to improve the usefulness of our meetings, but also because they are a critical reporting component tied to our federal funding. Please insert comments between questions and at the bottom.

1. Name and position:

(1 = not at all, 5 = very useful)

2. How useful/helpful did you find the Plenary Sessions (1, 2, 3 and 4)?

1 2 3 4 5

3. How useful/helpful did you find the Small Group sessions?

1 2 3 4 5

4. How useful/helpful did you find the Roundtable discussions?

1 2 3 4 5

5. Did you have enough time to network/connect with others at the meeting?

1 2 3 4 5

6. Will you be able to incorporate ideas from these meetings into your practice?
If so, how?

1 2 3 4 5

7. Would you like us to contact you directly to do some brainstorming/planning about a collaborative initiative between your jurisdiction/board and The Historical Thinking Project?

8. Other comments:

APPENDIX

V. HISTORICAL THINKING CONCEPTS

The six concepts that serve as the framework for The Historical Thinking Project provide a way of mapping historical thinking to make it manageable for teaching and learning. Since circulating the Framework Document (2006) that defined the historical thinking concepts, further work has refined “powerful understandings” entailed by each of them. Tom Morton has made invaluable contributions to the refinement. Each of the concepts can be explained in a way that a 9 or 10 year old would understand. On the other hand, they can also be identified in the writings of expert historians. This range of applicability—from the simple to the sophisticated—makes them useful for teachers of history across the school years, certainly from middle school, through high school, to undergraduate and graduate training.

Each historical thinking concept asks us to come to grips with a problem:

- From the entire human past, what is worth learning about? The problem of historical significance.
- How do we know what we know; how can we use the traces, the leftovers, of the past to support claims about what happened? The problem of evidence.
- How are historical changes interwoven with continuities? The problem of continuity and change.
- What are the layers of cause that led, over time, to any particular event? What are the consequences that rippled out afterwards? The problems of cause and consequence.
- What was it like to live in times so different from our own; can we truly understand? The problem of historical perspective-taking.
- And finally, how can we, in the present, judge actors in different circumstances in the past; when and how do crimes and sacrifices of the past bear consequences today; and what obligations do we have today in relation to those consequences? The ethical dimension of history.

What do powerful understandings of the concepts enable students—and historians—to do? Below are brief summaries.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

1. Explain the historical significance of a particular event, person, or development, linking them to larger, meaningful narratives, using appropriate criteria: Did it result in important change (on the basis of profundity, quantity, durability)? Does it offer insights on issues of contemporary concern?
2. Identify how significance is constructed in history books or other historical accounts.

3. Explain how significance can change over time and may vary depending on the perspective of different groups.

EVIDENCE

1. Understand how history is an interpretation based on inferences from primary sources; understands that traces, relics and records (primary sources) are not necessarily accounts.
2. Ask questions that turn primary sources into evidence for an inquiry, argument or account.

3. Read sources in view of the conditions and worldviews at the time when it was created.
4. Infer the purposes of sources’ authors/creators.
5. Validate inferences from a single source with inferences from other sources (primary and secondary).

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

1. See change in the past as a process, with varying paces and patterns (with continuity at one end of a continuum; turning points at the other)
2. Identify complex patterns of progress and decline, with differing impacts on different peoples. (Progress for some is not necessarily progress for all.)
3. Understand periodization as interpretation. (How history is organized depends upon the scale, questions and assumptions of the historians).

CAUSE AND CONSEQUENCE

1. Recognizes multiple causes and consequences both short and long term.
2. Sees the interplay of human actions and ongoing structures and conditions.
3. Understands the openness of human choice and chance in the past (as in the present).

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE-TAKING

1. Recognizes the depths of difference between current beliefs, values and motivations (worldviews) and those of earlier peoples.
2. Explains the perspectives of people in the past in their historical context (see Evidence #3).
3. Makes factually accurate, evidence-based interpretations of the beliefs, values and motivations of people in the past, but recognizes limitations of our understanding.
4. Distinguishes various perspectives among historical actors.

THE ETHICAL DIMENSION OF HISTORY

1. Recognizes implicit and/or explicit ethical stances in historical narratives in a variety of media (e.g., film, museum exhibits, books).
2. Makes reasoned ethical judgments about actions of people in the past, recognizing the historical context in which they were operating.
3. Assesses fairly the implications for today of sacrifices and injustices in the past.
4. Uses historical accounts to inform judgments and action on current issues, recognizing the limitations of any direct “lessons” from the past.





THE Historical Thinking PROJECT

Promoting critical historical literacy for the 21st century

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