



Helping primary students think about history

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Recognizing temporal concepts

1. **Key attributes:** Identify the key attributes or defining features of each of the three sets of examples.
2. **Other examples:** Identify several other examples that belong in each set (including some that are not merely variations on the existing examples).
3. **Label:** Agree on a name or label for each set of concepts.

Set A:	Set B:	Set C:
minute day week long time short time soon	younger older now then before	Tuesday Wednesday 1920 fall spring at Christmas in the evening

Where would you locate these temporal concepts?

	Duration measuring length of time	Seriation sequencing the relative order of events in time (relative dating)	Periodization identifying ranges or periods in time (absolute dating)
the future			
a.m. or p.m.			
yesterday afternoon			

Sample: Teaching the concept of “past events”

Sorting memories



I had such a great time at the beach this summer.



My birthday is next week.



I am sitting on the floor.



When I was little I ate dog food once.

Finding opportunities for temporal thinking in the curriculum— Skills or dimensions of thinking

1. *Look at the historical thinking outcomes in the skill section of the K-4 curriculum (Dimensions of Thinking) and identify those that involve “temporal thinking.” Indicate which kind of temporal concept is invoked.*
2. *Ignore the critical and creative thinking outcomes for the time being.*

Kindergarten

K.S.1 Develop skills of critical thinking and creative thinking:

- _____ a) Consider ideas and information from varied sources
- _____ b) Compare and contrast information provided

K.S.2 Develop skills of historical thinking:

- _____ a) Recognize that some activities or events occur at particular times of the day or year
- _____ b) Differentiate between events and activities that occurred recently and long ago

Grade 1

1.S.1 Develop skills of critical thinking and creative thinking:

- _____ a) Examine ideas and information from varied sources
- _____ b) Choose and justify a course of action
- _____ c) Compare and contrast information from similar types of electronic sources

1.S.2 Develop skills of historical thinking:

- _____ a) Recognize that some activities or events occur on a seasonal basis
- _____ b) Differentiate between activities and events that occurred recently and long ago

Grade 2

2.S.1 Develop skills of critical thinking and creative thinking:

- _____ a) Distinguish between a fictional and a factual account about Canadian communities
- _____ b) Choose and justify a course of action
- _____ c) Compare and contrast information from similar types of electronic sources, such as information collected on the Internet

2.S.2 Develop skills of historical thinking:

- _____ a) Correctly apply terms related to time (i.e., long ago, before, after)
- _____ b) Arrange events, facts and/or ideas in sequence

Grade 3

3.S.1 Develop skills of critical thinking and creative thinking:

- _____ a) Evaluate ideas and information from difference points of view
- _____ b) Choose and justify a course of action
- _____ c) Generate original ideas and strategies in individual and group activities
- _____ d) Compare and contrast information from similar types of electronic sources, such as information collected on the Internet

3.S.2 Develop skills of historical thinking:

- _____ a) Correctly apply terms related to time, including past, present, future
- _____ b) Arrange events, facts and/or ideas in sequence

Grade 4

4.S.1 develop skills of critical thinking and creative thinking:

- _____ a) evaluate significant local and current affairs, distinguishing between fact and opinion
- _____ b) critically evaluate ideas, information and positions from multiple perspectives
- _____ c) re-evaluate opinions to broaden understanding of a topic or an issue
- _____ d) generate original ideas and strategies in individual and group activities
- _____ e) seek responses to inquiries from various authorities through electronic media

4.S.2 develop skills of historical thinking:

- _____ a) use photographs and interviews to make meaning of historical information
- _____ b) use historical and community resources to understand and organize the sequence of local historical events
- _____ c) explain the historical context of key events of a given time period

4.S.3 develop skills of geographic thinking (partial):

- _____ a) use historical maps to make meaning of historical events and issues

Key concepts in historical thinking for primary students

- **Evidence and interpretation:** using information (clues) to reach conclusions about the past.
- **Cause and consequence:** deciding who or what in the past influenced things and what was/is the result.
- **Continuity and change:** considering how lives and people are alike and different over time.

Support from the On-line Guide

Evidence and interpretation

Support Material : Imagining the sensations

http://www.onlineguide.learnalberta.ca/content-og/sssm/html/imaginethesensations_sm.html

Sample classroom example: Investigating pictures

<http://www.onlineguide.learnalberta.ca/content-og/ssip/index.html>

Modelling the tools: Investigating pictures

http://www.onlineguide.learnalberta.ca/content-og/ssmt/html/investigatingpictures_mt.html

Cause and consequence

Support Material : Webb of effects

http://www.onlineguide.learnalberta.ca/content-og/sssm/html/webbofeffects_sm.html

Continuity and change

Support Material : Comparing differences

http://www.onlineguide.learnalberta.ca/content-og/sssm/html/comparingdifferences_sm.html

Modelling the tools: Comparing then and now

http://www.onlineguide.learnalberta.ca/content-og/ssmt/html/comparingthenandnow_mt.html

Recognizing clues and guesses (conclusions)

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Clues and guesses

Which is the clue and which is the guess?

It is something to eat.



?

Is it a hot dog?



?

Which is the clue and which is the guess?

Is it an ice-cream cone?



?

It comes warm.



?

Think of a clue and a guess for an animal.



?

Assessing understanding of the concepts

Think of a clue and a guess for a room at home.

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?

Explain the words.

?

A guess is _____



A clue is _____