 Glossary of terms

Constructing history and the teacher-developed study

| Term | Definition |
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| Academic History | History written by and for experts (professionals) in the discipline of history. |
| Accidents or ‘Chaos Theory’ | History is ‘one damn fact after another’ without connection. Events happen as a chain of consequences, but the catalyst for change is random and unorganised. Any connections made between events are constructs of human thought. |
| Ancient | The Ancient period covers history from the development of early human communities to the end of late antiquity (around AD 650). |
| Anti-progress (regression) | Mistakes, disasters, problems, and issues have become bigger and more significant than other factors when determining the reasons for the change of History.Returning to a former or less developed state.  |
| Antiquity | The ancient past, especially the period of classical and other human civilisations before the Middle Ages. |
| Colonisation | A process by which a different system of government is established by one nation over another group of peoples. It involves the colonial power asserting and enforcing its sovereignty according to its own law, rather than by the laws of the colonised, and may involve dispossession of land. |
| Concepts | The key ideas that shape the practice of the discipline of history, including causation, continuity, change, and significance. They provide the scope for judgment, interpretation and argument and are the major means by which knowledge is constructed, analysed, questioned and represented. |
| Contestability | Contestability involves examining how interpretations and representations of the past differ, for example, as a result of using differing evidence or resulting from different perspectives. |
| Continuity and change | Aspects of the past that have remained the same over a period of time or have changed over time. Change can be understood as a ‘process’. |
| Counterfactual History | A form of historiography that attempts to respond to "what if" questions known as counterfactuals. |
| Determinism | Occurrences in History phenomena are determined by preceding events |
| Enlightenment | An intellectual movement of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries marked by a celebration of the powers of human reason, a keen interest in science, the promotion of religious toleration, and a desire to construct governments free of tyranny. |
| Evidence | The information elicited (drawn from/ found) and interpreted from a source that is used to support an historical argument or inform a specific historical inquiry. |
| Feminism | A movement for granting women political, social, and economic equality with men. |
| Forces & Ideas | Great or noticeable forces or special ideas that change and shape history (including religion, nationalism, revolutions, etc.) |
| Great men | The study of great people, guided by the idea that one person can change history. |
| Historical authentication | A process of verifying the origins of an artefact or object and establishing it as genuine. |
| Historical inquiry | The process of developing knowledge and understanding by posing questions about the past, and applying skills associated with locating, analysing, evaluating and using sources as evidence to develop an informed argument or interpretation. |
| Historiography | The study of how history is constructed. It involves the critical analysis and evaluation of historical methodologies and the way history has been written over time. The study of written history.  |
| Ideology | A framework of beliefs that guides actions, for example fascism and communism. |
| Indigenous cultural and intellectual property | Includes objects, sites, cultural knowledge, cultural expression and the arts, that have been transmitted or continue to be transmitted through generations as belonging to a particular Indigenous group or Indigenous people as a whole or their territory. |
| Modern | The period of time in the modern world generally starting around 1500 to 1750 till the present. |
| Objectivity | Having no intent or bias, achieving or attempting to achieve accurate truth. |
| Orthodox history | Adherence to traditional ways of thinking about history and the adoption of traditional and customary methodologies to achieve those conclusions. |
| Patronage | Working for or on behalf of an institution or someone else. Support that an individual or organisation has given to another.  |
| Perspective | A point of view from which historical events, problems and issues can be analysed, for example the perspective of an individual or group in the past. This may involve empathetic understanding – the capacity to enter into the world of the past from the point of view of a particular individual or group from that time, including an appreciation of the circumstances they faced, and the motivations, values and attitudes behind their actions. |
| Popular History | An approach of History that aims at a wide appeal, and usually emphasises narrative, personality and vivid detail over scholarly analysis. |
| Progress | The notion that we are progressing and constantly moving forward to a better world, an improved state of affairs. Everything is better than it used to be, and history illustrates this.  |
| Public History | The production of history by government institutions and the collective commemoration of history by the public. History that has not been developed by academics.  |
| Reconstruction | A process of piecing together evidence from sources to develop an understanding or picture of the past. It may include the physical reconstruction of ancient sites. |
| Reliability | Consideration of the context, purpose, origin and audience of a source, in order to determine how accurately an area of historical study is represented. A source is neither reliable nor unreliable in and of itself. It can only be judged reliable or useful for the question that is asked. Reliability requires an understanding of perspective. |
| Revisionist History | The re-interpretation of the historical record. It usually means challenging the orthodox views held by professional scholars about a historical event, or introducing new evidence, or of restating the motivations and decisions of the participant people. |