Cunning Plan for the teaching of citizenship through Key Stage 3 history

Big theme: dissent and the formation of the concept of ‘rights’

You can teach citizenship not only without compromising National Curriculum content, processes and concepts, but in such a way as to improve them. Review your department’s ‘whole Key Stage’ planning. Secure rigour and high levels of challenge by remembering these two tricks:

(i) keep your eyes on long-term planning for progression, not just the medium-term (e.g. will your Year 7 enquiries provide a sufficiently strong knowledge-base for your Year 8 enquiry on toleration and persecution? how will you ‘warm-up’ that knowledge with other Year 8 enquiries?);
(ii) make sure that your enquiry question is historically valid and not distorted by presentism. NEVER sacrifice historical rigour in the interests of other education agendas—there’s no need to as long as the objectives coincide.

Each of the following are sample ideas for c.5-week enquiries (which, of course, you would need to balance with other enquiries in the same Study Unit) across the three years of Key Stage 3:

**Year 7**
Britain 1066 -1750/past non-European society
Enquiry question: Why did Moslems only tolerate Jews and Christians but not other faiths?
pupils will learn about • tolerance in the Islamic world towards “peoples of the Book”;
• role of religion in the construction of political ideology.

**Year 8**
Britain 1500-1750
Enquiry question: Why did European Christians stop burning each other?
pupils will learn about • decline of religious persecution and emergence of tolerance in 17th century Europe;
• role of political change in the shifting of religious ideas and practice.

**Year 8**
European turning point
Enquiry question: Why did the French revolutionaries fail to stick to the Rights of Man?
pupils will learn about • the contrast between the Rights of Man and the Terror;
• how politics, ideology, power and practical expediency sometimes distort each other.

**Year 9**
A past non-European society
Enquiry question: Why did the Americans who signed the US constitution not free black slaves?
pupils will learn about • attitudes to black slavery;
• how constitutions are formed and interpreted.

**Year 9**
The twentieth-century world
Enquiry question: Has the UN Charter made any difference to human rights in the last 50 years?
pupils will learn about • effectiveness of the UN Charter
• the power and the limits of the concept of rights and of international agreements

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On a different but related theme, we could use Key Element 3 (Interpretations) to explore whether perceptions of British identity and citizenship have changed over time. We might catch pupils’ interest by starting in the present and so gain pupils’ curiosity to dig back into the past. Tory leader William Hague recently emphasised “The British Way”. According to Hague, Tories have to accept that Britishness ‘is not just the sleeping villages, polite manners, friendly vicars and novels of Scott and Austen’. It is also where ‘thousands go to the Notting Hill Carnival and the Eisteddfod, the Britain that watches MTV and Changing Rooms—a brassy self-confident Britain’. McAleavy defined an ‘interpretation’ as ‘any curious reflection on the past’. In the influential non-statutory guidance booklet, Teaching History at Key Stage 3, produced by the then National Curriculum Council, but largely written by McAleavy, he also stated:

- Interpretations combine fact and fiction, imagination and points of view.
- Interpretations are dependent, if they are of historical worth, on evidence.
- Differences between interpretations can be explained by reference, among other things, to purpose and intended audience. 

To translate this into a practical learning activity might mean asking the pupils to put their opinion of Hague’s speech into an interpretive frame, such as that in Figure 1. The pupils could position either the whole speech, or segments of it (each option would provoke interesting debate!) into the part of the triangle in which they think it belongs. History teachers are used to such devices for structured reflection, requiring pupils to question their own or others’ assumptions and to submit them to critical scrutiny.

Tracing the roots of British identity back into the past, an effective and exciting method of judging how the British saw themselves is to examine how they treated a subject people under colonialism. Supposing a department were examining the settlement of Australasia as a case study of Victorian imperialism as part of Britain 1750-1900. An extract from this Edwardian children’s book Glimpses of the British Empire might be an excellent starting point into an enquiry concerning the contemporary construction of identity and notions of citizenship:

'The Maoris are the most intelligent of the native races of Polynesia, and have rapidly become civilised. They have abandoned most of the practices and customs of their ancestors, and have adopted the trades, professions, habits, dress, and opinions of the British. You may see men of middle age with tattooed heads, and some of the women still stain their lips a dark blue, and tattoo the chin, but few young men disfigure themselves... Some of them have become journalists, teachers, and clergymen. They are represented in both Houses of Parliament by men of their own race; and were it not for their swarthy skin, the most refined among them might be taken for English gentlemen.'

As part of a class discussion, a history teacher might read through this source with a group of, say, lower attainers in Year 9, pausing to explain and discuss the many unfamiliar words. The teacher might ask the class to underline phrases or words about the Maoris which showed what the British admired about them in red and what they despised about them in blue. From this example, the pupils might then brainstorm a list of characteristics the author of the book thought made the British superior. In doing so we move the lower attainers from specific, concrete details in the source such as ‘were it not for their swarthy skin’ into a general, more abstract attitude like ‘To be British you had to be white’. Such a learning exercise equips pupils to be alert to different perspectives. It is, moreover (as the citizenship proposals require) an insight into tacit and skilful (or unwitting) forms of ‘persuasion and manipulation’, used at the time. By cross-referencing with other evidence, the rigorous history teacher might then ask how typical the views in this popular interpretation of the time happen to be. Incidentally, this extract could be used as either part of Study Unit 3, Britain 1750-1900, with learning objectives in the area of Key Element 3 and exploring Edwardian interpretation of the Victorian settlement of New Zealand; or as part of Study Unit 4, ‘The twentieth-century world’, with learning objectives in the area of Key Element 4 and showing how the British viewed themselves and the Maoris at the turn of this century. The well-organised department might well do both, using the issue to strengthen learning by making ‘overview’ links between the Study Units.

In Britain, as in other states, people’s identities and therefore their experiences or definitions of citizenship, may be multiple and complex. Technically
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identity shaper</th>
<th>Examples of groups</th>
<th>Examples of historical factors</th>
<th>Opportunities for teaching about interpretations &amp; identity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. We are specially blessed - God, gods or myth reinforces our rights and identity.</td>
<td>Japan (Shinto), Israelis and Palestinians re: Jerusalem</td>
<td>The Imperial family claim descent from the Sun God. Israelis and Muslim Palestinians both claim Jerusalem on partly religious grounds</td>
<td>The Twentieth Century World: (KS3) (GCSE: Modern World) Arab-Israeli conflict (GCSE Modern World and SHP)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Our blood and identity is specially pure.</td>
<td>Israelis. Germans.</td>
<td></td>
<td>(GCSE: Modern World and SHP) (GCSE: Modern world)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Our identity was forged on defeat and suffering.</td>
<td>Israelis.</td>
<td>Biblical exiles, Holocaust.</td>
<td>Twentieth Century World (KS3) (GCSE: Modern World)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Look at our list of unique ideals and achievements.</td>
<td>Scottish</td>
<td>Robert the Bruce, Bannockburn, Alexander Graham Bell, Fleming.</td>
<td>All KS3 British Study Units</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 3**: Identity shapers and the history curriculum
these are known sometimes as multiple or ‘layered’ citizenships (see Figure 2). In some cases, pupils need to understand that the situation is much more complex than even the diagram in Figure 2 suggests. As Nicholas Tate, Chief Executive of QCA, commented in his address to the Historical Association Education Conference in September 1997, many identities jostle within the term British ‘subject’ or ‘citizen’. So how can we help pupils, especially lower-attaining pupils, to understand the ways in which these are constructed so that they can be alert to manipulation or propaganda which uses the past to serve a partial or pernicious message?

In The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History, David Lowenthal draws conclusions about how the past is manipulated to justify or bolster definitions of identity in the present. These ideas can be expressed as ‘identity shapers’, common across most cultures, though they do not necessarily apply to all at the same time. Pupils need to learn that histories are not given; they are constructed and used. Figure 3 shows how some examples might relate to the content of Key Stage 3 and GCSE history syllabuses. Myths and traditions about racial purity or uniqueness reinforce cultural and national pride in the present, creating a strong vested interest in preserving them, regardless of how history or science might challenge their validity. Archaeologists were halted from excavating imperial tombs in the 1980s when they identified the Japanese imperial family as possibly Korean in origin. Not only does this undermine Shinto tradition of descent from the Sun God, it links Japan’s ancient dynasty to a nationality sometimes regarded with hostility in modern Japan. In the desert to the north of China, Chinese archaeologists substituted the remains of an ancient Chinese body for that of the actual Eurasian buried on the site. They did not want their certainty in the early Chinese settlement of the area undermined by evidence of a different people which predated it. Let us take a practical example of this process from the teaching of the American West, commonly taught at Key Stage 3 as a past non-European society (Study Unit 6) and as a popular option for the GCSE SHP syllabuses. Look carefully at the letter from Chief Seattle in Figure 4.

Unfortunately:

- Chief Seattle’s tribe lived over 600 miles from any buffalo.
- The railroad crossed the plains only in 1869, three years after he died.
- The slaughter of the buffalo happened a decade later.
- The letter was forged in 1971 by a white scriptwriter from Texas, Ted Perry, who claimed ‘the environmental awareness was based on my own feelings’.

Teachers using this as a modern interpretation for understanding Key Element 3 and its GCSE equivalent might ask pupils to place this modern interpretation in the interpretations frame in Figure 1. In one sense, of course, it is a wholesale piece of anachronistic fraud. But let’s be careful here: isn’t it superb evidence of white environmentalist sentiments in the early 1970s and their attitudes towards the Indians. This interpretation takes us to the heart of the National Curriculum purpose of ‘Interpretations’. It tells us more about the thinking of the subsequent period than about the American Indians themselves.

In the same way, for example, a study of South Africa, as part of one GCSE course, can show how present politics shapes the way the past is remembered. The creation of a mythic or notorious reputation around a single past event is particularly useful as an illustration for those pupils who might otherwise find such abstract ideas prohibitively challenging. Until 1994, South Africa commemorated December 16th as a public holiday. This celebrated Boer defiance of a large Zulu army in the 19th Century. Pretorious, leader of a party of Great Trekkers prayed for victory and converted his train of settler wagons into a laager. The Zulus were defeated at the Battle of Blood River and not one Afrikaaner died. After the reversion to majority rule in 1994, the ANC recognised the importance of the anniversary to Afrikaaners and the public holiday stayed but as a day of national reconciliation. Since then, the annual tribute of Afrikaaners at the battle site on December 16th has been challenged by a Zulu commemoration nearby. This was a new phenomenon since the Zulus had never commemorated this defeat before. Notice how the significance attributed to this one event reflects changes in South African identity: celebrated first as a miraculous Afrikaaner victory, then commemorated as a symbol of reconciliation under majority rule and lastly acknowledged by the Zulus themselves. Its meaning has changed as subsequent events have shaped how and why it is remembered. Pupils need to learn (and the best history teachers have shown that they can learn) that the meaning or significance of any fact is relative to its frame of reference and that such meanings will, therefore, always be hotly contested.
Citizenship education will be working when children see how patterns of loyalty and allegiance are constructed, represented or imposed.

Figure 5: One curriculum model

As I write, British national identity is being re-shaped. I listened to a debate on Radio 4 in January. The Director of the National Maritime Museum was justifying sweeping away glass cases of model ships in favour of themed, interactive galleries on the slave trade, Opium Wars and modern environmental pollution. Sean Gabb, a writer on The Libertarian, a right-wing publication, complained that Nelson’s uniform would no longer form a centrepiece of the exhibition: ‘Once you drain a symbol of its history, it must becomes an old piece of cloth with a hole in it ... England’s history, as mistress of the seas, is being erased ... destroying British identity’. Of course, what he meant was that the power of this symbol and the historic heroism and sacrifice of British character that it represented to him would lose its meaning if the museum did not represent the relic in its traditional setting. Citizenship education will be working when our children are able to use their historical knowledge to appreciate the significance of such controversies, and so to see how different patterns of loyalty and allegiance are constructed, represented or imposed.

The relevance of all this to the chalk face is brought home all the more sharply by this image. Remembrance Sunday in Cambridge 1996. A frail Japanese woman in a kimono kneels at the foot of the war memorial. She is surrounded by veterans of the Burma Campaign. After begging for their forgiveness, she attempts to shake each veteran by the hand. Some do so, others refuse, unable to forgive. The woman is a Japanese historian, Kosuke Koyama, who supported a campaign in her country to edit national history textbooks so they were more explicit about Japan’s war record and atrocities. Teaching children how historical myths are made and broken in our classrooms will equip them to become mature citizens of the future.

Schools are already experimenting. At Ernulf School, an 11-16 comprehensive in Cambridgeshire, Year 7 pupils follow a special History and Citizenship unit set up by the Head of History, Sue Arnold. Through roleplay and discussion the pupils follow the history of parliament, analysing the changing significance of incidents such as the expulsion of the Rump by Cromwell, the Chartists and the Suffragette campaigns. This leads into elections for the School Council, thus taking a ‘lead subject’ (History) combined with citizenship through into an ‘enrichment’ activity. See Figure 4 for a representation of this curriculum model.

On the back of a Comenius project with a Polish middle school in Krakow, Andy Fisher, a history teacher at Katherine Lady Berkeley Language College (11-18 comprehensive) in Gloucestershire, set up a link to support GCSE history. His Year 10 pupils composed questionnaires for Polish adults living under communism for 1948-1964. The questions were designed to probe the extent of opposition to the communist regime. The Polish pupils translated the questionnaires, conducted interviews and sent back the manuscripts translated into English. This evidence formed the bones of GCSE history coursework. Thus effective citizenship is secured by being built-in rather than bolted-on. Far from being compromised, history’s vital role as the evidence-weighing, critical-thinking discipline (much of whose subject matter is about development of political ideas) is strengthened in the curriculum as a whole.

REFERENCES
5. DfE, op.cit.
13. QCA, op.cit.
14. Heater, D. (1998) The Elements of Citizenship, Citizenship Foundation, Council for Education in World Citizenship. The term layered citizenship usually refers to citizens of federal states. According to Wilf Kymlicka (1995) in Multi-Cultural Citizenship, O.U.P., these issues are especially complex in Canada, a society based on an unequal partnership between Anglophone and Francophone speakers and continuous multi-ethnic immigration, especially since 1945. The ‘rights’ of minority citizens such as the French speakers of Quebec and those of native Americans such as the Inuit are sometimes at odds. It is increasingly relevant in a multi-nation state such as Britain with powers being devolved to constituent parts of the United Kingdom. This makes the study of history even more important if pupils are to understand how this complicated situation has arisen.
16. Sean Gabb, writer on The Libertarian, Radio 4 interview, 27.1.99
Translation for 'cunning plan' in the free English-Russian dictionary and many other Russian translations. Context sentences for "cunning plan" in English. These sentences come from external sources and may not be accurate. bab.la is not responsible for their content. And the additional claim that there is, somewhere, a cunning plan to deal with all contingencies. cunning plan. a conspiracy in writing. About us. cunning a cunning opponent 2.) Dictionary of contemporary English. plan a cunning opponent 2.) Dictionary of contemporary English.

Formulated scheme for getting