

## **National History Curriculum: Framing paper**

For consultation – November 2008 to 28 February 2009

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## PREAMBLE

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### **Purpose of the *National History Curriculum: Framing paper***

- 1 The *National History Curriculum: Framing paper* proposes broad directions for what teachers should teach and young people should learn in the national history curriculum from Kindergarten<sup>1</sup> to Year 12.
- 2 The purpose of this paper is to generate broad-ranging discussions about curriculum development. The paper is posted on the National Curriculum Board's website ([www.ncb.org.au](http://www.ncb.org.au)) with an invitation to all those interested to provide feedback and advice up to 28 February 2009.
- 3 The Board will then examine all feedback and determine its final recommendation to guide curriculum development.

### **Process to develop the *National History Curriculum: Framing paper***

- 4 The National Curriculum Board began its consultation with the publication of the *National Curriculum Development Paper* on its website. This paper described the context of its work and set down questions that needed to be answered to determine the kind of curriculum that would be developed.
- 5 *The Shape of the National Curriculum: A Proposal for Discussion* was developed following feedback from the 'Into the Future: National Curriculum Board Forum' and state and territory consultation forums. Appendix 1 provides details about its principles and specifications for curriculum development. This paper is posted on the Board's website with an invitation to all those interested to provide feedback during Term 4, 2008.
- 6 The Board began work on framing the national history curriculum by recruiting a writer who worked with a small advisory group (see Appendix 2) to draft an initial advice paper that provided a broad scope and sequence from Kindergarten to Year 12.
- 7 The initial advice paper was discussed at a national forum in October. On the day after the forum a small group of nominees from the Australian History Teachers' Association met with the writer to discuss the feedback from the forum and its implications for developing the curriculum.
- 8 The *National History Curriculum: Framing paper* is built on the initial advice, advisory group feedback, submissions through the Board's website, individual responses by academics and teachers, responses from national, state and territory forums and responses received by email and letters.
- 9 The *National History Curriculum: Framing paper* is best read in conjunction with *The Shape of the National Curriculum: A Proposal for Discussion* to provide a context for the shape of the curriculum overall. The framing paper focuses on what the content for the national history curriculum might be; assessment and pedagogy, although key considerations for any curriculum, are addressed only briefly in the paper.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Kindergarten' refers to the first year at school. In some jurisdictions this is called 'Reception' or 'Preparatory'.

## **Providing feedback about the *National History Curriculum: Framing paper***

10 The Board welcomes feedback on this paper. Survey questions are included in Appendix 3 and there are several ways to participate. Survey forms can be emailed to [feedback@ncb.org.au](mailto:feedback@ncb.org.au) and written feedback can be mailed to: National Curriculum Board Feedback, PO Box 177, Carlton South, Victoria 3053.

11 From 21 November online feedback for this paper can be submitted through the Board's website link:

[http://www.ncb.org.au/get\\_involved/subscribe/ways\\_of\\_participating.html](http://www.ncb.org.au/get_involved/subscribe/ways_of_participating.html)

Register from this link. Once you have joined, a username and password provide easy access to online surveys, discussions and summaries of feedback comments. This is an opportunity to be fully involved and up-to-date with national curriculum development.

## INTRODUCTION

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12 The development of a national history curriculum provides an invaluable opportunity to ensure that all Australian students learn history. Awareness of history is an essential characteristic of any civilised society; historical knowledge is fundamental to understanding ourselves and others, and historical understanding is as foundational and challenging as the disciplines of science, mathematics and English. By teaching history systematically and sequentially across the years of schooling we will enrich educational outcomes.

13 History is the study of the past. It provides knowledge, understanding and appreciation of previous events, practices and ideas. It orders them and renders them intelligible, and discerns patterns of continuity and change. It provides the means whereby individual and collective identities are formed and sustained.

14 History is a distinctive and indispensable form of understanding practised across many generations. Human civilisation is marked by a preservation of the past in oral memory, documents, artefacts, monuments and traditions, the veneration of exemplary figures and commemoration of formative events.

15 History sits across the social sciences and the humanities. Like the social sciences it employs explanatory models and evidence to test hypotheses and reach conclusions about social behaviour. Like the humanities, it deepens our understanding of humanity, creativity, purposes and values.

16 History draws on and contributes to other bodies of knowledge, but it is a discipline with its own methods and procedures. Like other disciplines, its practice is bound by powerful norms, yet at the same time it moves as the result of innovation and discovery. The discipline of history was shaped powerfully in the nineteenth century by the rise of scientific research, yet marked itself off by the distinctive feature of its subject matter. Each event is unique, bound by its particular context and culture.

17 Historical inquiry involves interpretation and judgment, guided by principles that are intrinsic to the discipline. It yields knowledge that is faithful to the available evidence, but remains open to further debate and future reinterpretation.

18 History stretches from the distant past to the present, and provides a deeper understanding of present-day events as well as the enduring significance of earlier ones. It introduces us to a variety of human experience, enables us to see the world through the eyes of others, and enriches our appreciation of the contingent nature of change.

19 For all these reasons history is an essential component of school education.

## AIMS

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20 The fundamental objective of school history is to provide students with knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the past in order to appreciate their and other's culture, to understand better the present and to contribute to debate about planning for the future.

21 The futures orientation gives that objective a particularly urgency, for the challenges and opportunities that confront young Australians — globalisation, the rise of the knowledge economy, the rich diversity of the Australian people and their distinctive position within the Asia-Pacific region — make an informed historical understanding all the more important.

22 Young Australians come to school from different backgrounds that are shaped by different family and community narratives. These influences continue to operate as they progress through school, and subsequently they will be exposed to other forms of collective memory. The school is thus but one agency that shapes historical consciousness.

23 One reason for teaching history is to foster the capacity to respond to these influences in an intelligent and informed manner so that their full potential for enriching experience is realised.

24 Another is to develop a critical perspective on received versions of the past, and learn how to compare different accounts so that the conflicts and ambiguities are appreciated. A historical education should increase self-awareness and the awareness of others. Through comparative historical analysis and critical appraisal of evidence, history contributes to an active and informed democratic citizenship.

25 Introducing students to historical understanding involves teaching methods of historical inquiry. Students need to know history and practise it. Factual knowledge is essential to historical understanding. Without knowledge of chronology, geography, institutional arrangements, material circumstances and belief systems, no student project on a past period — however well intended — will lead to understanding. Accordingly, a complementary objective of school history must be to provide students with this knowledge.

26 In broad terms, students should be introduced to world history from the time of the earliest human communities: they should have sufficient familiarity with the course of human history to the present to be able to grasp the major phases of that history and the transformations that determined them.

27 Students should have an appreciation of the major civilisations of Europe, Asia, Africa, America and Australia. They should understand Australian history within a comparative framework that embraces the Indigenous and settler components, and they should be aware of its regional and global dimensions.

28 While this knowledge will necessarily be broad, students should have the skills to extend it: if they are not familiar with a specific historical reference, they should be able to locate it in place and time, know how to find sources of information about it and to appraise them, familiarise themselves with context and grasp the import of the reference. No-one possesses an exhaustive historical knowledge, but a historical education should furnish both the capacity to acquire new knowledge and a continuing desire to do so.

## **TERMS USED IN THIS PAPER**

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### **Historical understanding**

29 Historical understanding denotes the methods, procedures and tools that constitute the discipline of history. It involves investigation, debate and reasoning about the past on the basis of informed historical knowledge.

30 A history curriculum that develops historical understanding of world history from the earliest times must encompass stretches of time across different parts of the world. It will therefore draw on three related study components: Overview, Bridging, and Study in depth.

### **Overview**

31 An overview provides a summary and general grasp of a period or topic that shows how events are connected in time, in character and by causal relationships. An overview can occur at the beginning of a unit (providing students with a clear sense of where they are heading), at the end (to consolidate understanding), or within a unit (to ensure coherence and direction). An overview is relatively brief, occupying just a few lessons at most. It typically involves substantial teacher exposition and does not necessarily include a significant component of student inquiry.

### **Bridging**

32 A bridging study helps students fill the temporal and spatial gaps between studies in depth. For example, consecutive depth studies of World War Two and the Vietnam War might require a bridging study of the United Nations, the Berlin Airlift, the Chinese Revolution, the Korean War, the death of Stalin and administration of John F Kennedy; they would necessarily be treated summarily to provide contextual background for the study in depth. Depth studies of the Spanish and British empires might employ a bridging study that identified the European imperial powers, the parts of the world they occupied, and the duration of their presence. A bridging study is relatively brief and does not usually include substantial student inquiry.

### **Study in depth**

33 A study in depth is a closer study, usually allocated two to three weeks in upper primary/ lower secondary and increasingly more time in later years, of a particular topic (for example, the building of the Great Wall of China, or the Cuban missile crisis) that allows time for more detailed discussion. It will commonly employ close reading of historical texts, investigation of primary sources, activities (such as site and museum visits), teacher exposition and student projects. It is a sustained, concentrated and resource-rich exercise in historical understanding.

## CONSIDERATIONS

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### Incorporating a futures orientation

34 The French historian Pierre Nora suggests that the present conviction that we are experiencing an ‘acceleration of history’ does not result from an unprecedented number of events of significance. Rather, he contends, globalisation and the pervasive influence of mass culture make this a period of remarkable and profound change.

35 Globalisation itself has a longer history but in its common usage it refers to the movement of capital, goods, people, information and cultures across national boundaries. Australia is marked particularly by migration: one-quarter of all Australians were born elsewhere, and they have come from all over the world, bringing with them their own experiences, belief systems and aspirations. Australia has a particular awareness of its first people and an enlarged appreciation of the Aboriginal dimension of Australian history coincides with a commitment to improving educational and other outcomes for Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders. Australia has engaged with its immediate region and the attainment of deeper knowledge of the Asia-Pacific is a national priority. The growth of the global economy, and the transformation of the newly industrialised countries, has placed severe strains on the environment. And the opening up of Australia to global competition has placed greater emphasis on educational outcomes.

36 These changes find recognition in the *National Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians – Draft* recently issued by the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training & Youth Affairs (MCEETYA). Looking back on the first *Declaration of Goals* in 1989, the ministers note that ‘Increasing global integration and interdependence are driving the need for greater religious tolerance, an appreciation of cultural diversity and a sense of global citizenship and commitment to peaceful conflict resolution among all Australians’. The new draft declaration observes that the growing importance of India, China and other Asia-Pacific nations sparks the need for Australians to become ‘Asia literate’, as well as the need for greater environmental awareness, information and communication technology (ICT) skills and the augmented importance of educational attainment.

37 A guiding principle of this paper is that the restriction of the national history curriculum to Australian history is inappropriate. If only to equip students to operate in the world in which they will live, they need to understand world history. That history should have a broad and comprehensive foundation from which its implications for Australia can be grasped. It is only from such a foundation that the longevity and richness of Aboriginal history will be appreciated; that the dimensions of our migrant experience and cultural diversity will be intelligible; that our relations with the Asian region will be comprehended; that the ecological limits of our current practices will be grasped, and the distinctive as well as the shared and derivative character of our past will be revealed.

38 Australian history will retain an important place in a national history curriculum. We fail students — both those who have arrived recently and those with many earlier generations in this country — if we deny them a familiarity with the national story, so that they can appreciate its values and binding traditions. We fail them also if we do not foster the skills of historical understanding that equip them, by the end of their studies, to take an active part in the debates over the legacy of the past, to understand and make use of new sources of information, to sift the wheat from the chaff, to find truth and meaning in history and contribute to democratic discussion of national issues. A good understanding of Australian history is essential to civics and citizenship education.

## Historical understanding

39 Historical understanding requires the mastery of the methods, procedures, tools and methods of thinking that constitute the discipline of history. As Sam Wineburg, a professor of education and history at Stanford, puts it, historical thinking is not a natural act. Historical understanding differs from the intuitive, memory-based understandings of the past because it requires negotiating between the familiar and unfamiliar, and involves investigation, debate and reasoning about the past.

40 International research on historical pedagogy has identified core components of historical understanding. These concepts, it should be noted, are not skills divorced from content, for they operate in conjunction with historical knowledge to guide and shape the practice of the discipline. There are various articulations of these core components, which comprise:

1. Historical significance: the principles behind the selection of what should be remembered, investigated, taught and learned. Establishing historical significance involves going beyond what is personally interesting or congenial: it requires judgments of contemporary import, consequence, durability and relevance.
2. Evidence: how to find, select and interpret historical evidence. This involves understanding the nature of a primary source, locating its provenance and context, asking questions about it, distinguishing between the claims it makes and the assumptions and values that give it its present shape, and the ability to compare competing primary sources.
3. Continuity and change: dealing with the complexity of the past. This involves the capacity to understand the sequence of events, to make connections by means of organising concepts including periodisation, and to evaluate change with an informed understanding of the principles of progress and decline.
4. Cause and consequence: the interplay of human agency and conditions. This involves an appreciation of motivation and contestation, short-term events and embedded circumstances, the ways that the legacy of the past shapes intentions and the unintended consequences that arise from purposeful action.
5. Historical perspectives: the cognitive act of understanding the different social, cultural and intellectual contexts that shaped people's lives and actions in the past. This involves an understanding of the dangers of anachronism and an appreciation of diverse perspectives on the past.
6. Historical empathy and moral judgement: the capacity to enter into the world of the past with an informed imagination and ethical responsibility. The discipline of history constrains the practitioner from imposing personal preferences on the evidence but all meaningful historical accounts involve explicit or implicit moral judgement, and historians require an awareness of their own values and the impact of these values on their historical understanding.
7. Contestation and contestability: dealing with alternative accounts of the past. History is a form of knowledge that shapes popular sentiment and frequently enters into public debate. This requires the ability to connect the past with the self and the present, and appreciation of the rules that apply to professional and public debate over history.

41 To these can be added the general capability of problem solving. Problem solving is not fully transferable across domains of knowledge so that problem solving in history is not the same as problem solving in physics. It is, therefore, useful to suggest the nature of problem solving in history.

8. Problem solving: applying historical understanding to the investigation, analysis and resolution of problems. History seeks explanation with a particular awareness of context and contingency. Through the components of historical understanding it fosters the capacity to formulate problems in a manner amenable to informed reasoning. One of the most powerful tools of problem solving, the hypothetical, depends on historical understanding for the plausibility of its assumptions and the adequacy of its consideration of outcomes.

### **Cross-curriculum implications**

42 Historical inquiry also provides opportunities for the incorporation of ICT, languages, the creative arts, geography, and civics and citizenship. Accordingly, the national history curriculum should identify relevant elements of each of these cross-curriculum areas. With the integrated approach to history favoured in primary schools, teaching times dedicated to these curriculum components can incorporate relevant elements of historical inquiry. Equally, secondary teachers can enhance learning in these areas.

43 The successful balancing of competing curriculum demands and the need to provide adequate time for students to fully develop historical understanding as well as to develop understanding in the identified cross-curriculum areas requires that such connections be made explicitly. This should be done in a way that does not displace the fundamental importance of historical content and historical understanding, but enhances them. One reason for the attenuation of history teaching has been that the subject is made to serve other purposes, so that the curriculum has been determined by cross-curriculum connections at the expense of a systematic attention to historical understanding. The connections should arise naturally out of the history curriculum.

### **Literacy**

44 Literacy is deeply embedded in historical understanding. Through the study of history students learn how to find information, how to read texts with critical discernment and how to create their own texts that present the results of historical understanding clearly and logically. These skills should be developed across a range of textual genres and formats, including art, photography, film, music, fiction and multimedia. With a growing range of multimodal texts in the areas of film and ICT, students should also develop the capacity to use such texts to undertake and present research that demonstrates historical understanding.

45 From Edward Gibbon to Geoffrey Blainey, writers of history provide models of literary distinction that engage students and enhance their appreciation of prose. Students should be exposed to secondary sources that exemplify these qualities, and opportunities should be taken to include such nonfiction texts in the English curriculum.

### **Numeracy**

46 Much of the evidence and reasoning in historical understanding is quantitative: chronology, demography, economic activity, and changes in the size and reach of institutions. All of these call for an appreciation of numerical scale and proportion. Ancillary disciplines of history such as archaeology, and its use of carbon dating, call for mathematical skills.

47 Using the five 'broadly defined and inter-related aspects of mathematics curriculums that are considered essential and common' outlined in the Statements of Learning for Mathematics, it is clear that history has an integral part to play in the area of numeracy. In undertaking historical inquiry students need to: (a) work with and use number and measurement, (b) understand dimensions of space, including location, (c) gather, interpret and present data, and (d) identify patterns in numerical and spatial data.

## **ICT**

48 Through digitised online materials such as historical documents, books, newspapers, images and items from museum collections, as well as other online resources including databases, reference works (such as dictionaries of biography), and indexes to archival museum and library holdings, students and teachers have access to a growing range of online information critical for historical understanding.

49 A range of computer applications provides new and less linear ways of thinking about, interpreting and representing data. These include new ways for capturing oral history, such as digital audiovisual recording. Tools such as global information systems (GIS), applications for the creation of online timelines and graphic organisers, and a range of other programs and applications for data collection and management enhance opportunities for gathering, interpreting and presenting historical material.

50 Online learning objects, learning sequences and other resources provide additional resources. The new curriculum should use and build upon such resources to provide support in navigating the ever-increasing amount of online materials available for historical inquiry.

## **Languages**

51 The national history curriculum is concerned with a large number of non-English-speaking societies, and provides substantial opportunities to draw on materials in Languages Other Than English (LOTE). Language study is enriched by an appreciation of history, literature and culture. By providing substantial opportunities to study Asian history, the curriculum also supports the *National Statement for Engaging Young Australians with Asia in Australian Schools* agreed by all Australian ministers of education in 2006.

## **The Creative Arts**

52 Historical understanding enhances student appreciation of the creative arts and, in turn, can be enhanced by drawing on a wide range of artistic forms and considering them in their historical context.

## **Geography**

53 The discipline of history has always had a close relationship with geography, and world history is dependent upon geographical knowledge. The national history curriculum should make use of historical atlases, including those that are enhanced with digital capacity, and it should ensure that students develop and employ skills of mapping and map interpretation. It will draw on physical and social geography to enhance understanding of human interaction with a diverse and changing natural environment.

## **Civics and citizenship education**

54 The teaching of civics is commonly linked with history. It allows students to follow the emergence of key principles of citizenship, the arguments they engendered, the changing institutional forms of government and civil society, and the circumstances in which they have flourished or failed. The skills of historical understanding equip students to make informed and morally responsible judgments.

55 The proposed national history curriculum includes some of the skills, knowledge, understandings and capacities in civics and citizenship specified in the 2006 national *Statements of Learning for Civics and Citizenship*, particularly in the Historical Perspectives aspect as well as the historical understandings tested in the National Assessment Program: Civics and Citizenship. It will make use of the materials developed by the Discovering Democracy program.

## **STRUCTURE OF THE CURRICULUM**

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56 The development of historical understanding requires sustained attention to key concepts and skills, which in turn are grounded in specific bodies of historical knowledge. Some of the most useful recent research distinguishes between substantive and procedural knowledge of history: substantive knowledge incorporates knowledge of events, historical actors and other information; procedural knowledge refers to the concepts and vocabulary that are used to make sense of the substance of the past. The distinction does not imply a hierarchy or sequence of learning, for both forms of knowledge are mutually dependent.

57 The efficacy of this approach was demonstrated by an evaluation of the British Schools History Project (SHP). The SHP model combined a historical survey with studies in depth, and demonstrated that many more of the students in the Australian equivalent of Years 9 to 11 who followed this model achieved historical understanding than those who worked with the more traditional British curriculum.

58 The attention to both domains of knowledge places limits on the extent of substantive knowledge that can be covered, and calls for careful curriculum design. The curriculum needs to incorporate Overview, Bridging and Study in depth components. Overview components will use an expansive chronology and help students understand broad patterns of historical change. Bridging components will provide a context for closer studies in depth. Depth studies will provide students with the opportunity to bring the skills of historical understanding to bear on well-defined events of particular significance.

59 The curriculum should provide for a sequence of learning, building on and consolidating earlier studies, but avoid excessive repetition — for a consistent complaint of students in history, especially Australian history, is that they repeatedly cover the same ground.

60 The curriculum should be substantial and flexible. It should be sufficiently rich and descriptive to guide teachers with limited experience, but avoid excessive prescription that would hamper experienced and able teachers from exercising their skills. The curriculum document should be expressed clearly in terms that are accessible to a new teacher, while allowing all teachers to enhance it with their interests and expertise.

61 The curriculum should allow for differences in interests, capabilities and future pathways of students. It should include components that provide the opportunity for able students to undertake more advanced studies.

## **Stages of schooling**

62 Although it is proposed that the curriculum will be developed year by year this document provides a guideline across the four stages of schooling:

Stage 1, which typically involves students from 5 to 8 years of age

Stage 2, which typically involves students from 8 to 12 years of age

Stage 3, which typically involves students from 12 to 15 years of age

Stage 4, which typically involves students from 15 to 18 years of age.

### **Stage 1 (typically from 5 to 8 years of age)**

#### **Curriculum focus**

63 The curriculum has traditionally moved from the child's personal and family history through to studies of the local, state and national levels, with a limited coverage in the upper grades of some aspects of world history. This model is based on the need to build from the concrete experiences of lower primary students towards a more abstract understanding of elements further removed in terms of both space and time for upper primary students.

64 Yet modern technologies have broadened the personal experiences of many young children beyond the immediate sphere of family, home and locality. While these remain major factors of influence, they are not the only influences in young children's lives. Moreover, students come from a far wider range of backgrounds and their personal histories can often have far greater connection to the history of distant countries than that of the local area. The national history curriculum in the early years of schooling, while building from direct experience towards more abstract understanding, must ensure that learning opportunities allow for relevant global and national connections to be made to personal, family and local history.

#### **A proposed outline program of study**

65 In the early years of schooling the curriculum should enable students to make connections between their own direct experiences and understandings of the past that result from their exposure to artefacts, images, appropriate primary sources and oral histories. Through questioning and sharing understandings, students begin to make comparisons between their own personal past and the pasts of others.

66 Initially, students will examine events in their lifetime and in the lifetimes of family members and place them in chronological order; they will use words and phrases that are associated with the passage of time (for example, *yesterday* and *long ago*). Students will also learn how to place significant people and events in a correct chronological order; they will develop a basic understanding of why people behaved as they did and why events occurred as they did; they will find out about how people lived in different eras in the past; they will grow to understand measurements of historical time, for example a decade, a century, ancient, modern, AD, BC,

CE; they will distinguish between past and present ways of living, for example in means of transport, styles of housing and modes of communication, and they may also use fictional stories to provide a deeper understanding of changes over time.

## **Standards**

67 By the end of Stage 1, students should be able to remember, discuss and organise information about the past in a way that shows comprehension of common historical expressions of time measurement; they should show an understanding of the sequencing of events; they should know how life in the past differed from life today and they should have developed a basic appreciation of how and why people in the past acted in the way that they did.

## **Stage 2 (typically from 8 to 12 years of age)**

### **Curriculum focus**

68 History is generally taught in the primary school in conjunction with cognate fields of study such as geography, social studies, environmental studies and civics, usually in an inquiry-based, integrated curriculum. This is appropriate, for history should be informed by and contribute to these parallel studies, though it is at this stage in primary school that history should be introduced as a distinctive branch of learning, with its own concerns and procedures.

69 The curriculum at this stage of schooling must be feasible for primary teachers who are responsible for teaching across a range of learning areas.

70 The primary school curriculum should introduce students to the traditions, stories, myths and legends that makes connections with the values, beliefs and the sociocultural elements of past societies. It should also lead to an appreciation of the legacy of that past on present society.

71 It would make use of local and community history, with strong links to national, regional and global perspectives. Students would use local and community history, as well as the study of local and national figures and groups, to acquire an initial understanding of key events in Australian history, particularly significant events in the development of Australian democracy.

### **A proposed outline program of study**

72 The outline program consists of four topics based on questions about how Australia has developed since the earliest times. The outline below is a suggested sequence but the four topics may be studied in any order as long as (a) they are all covered both in designated history sessions and in cross-curriculum sessions, and (b) the final chronology research task is undertaken and completed by the end of Year 6.

*What is Australia and who are Australians?*

73 Students will study the development of Australia in a global context through the histories of the local members of Indigenous communities and the pre-arrival and post-arrival histories of settler and migrant members of the community, using studies of the family, community members, and the locality. Students will examine the significance of commemorative days, icons and symbols, how these are observed locally, nationally and internationally, and how they relate to the development of community, national identity and Australia's place within the world. Australian national commemorative events studied might include Australia Day, Anzac Day, NAIDOC Day and Remembrance Day. Icons and symbols might include avenues and streets named after particular people, places or events, commemorative statues, posters, artworks, musical works, and other artefacts or artistic forms.

74 The changing nature of social and cultural interaction and artistic representations of the past might form a research basis for this unit. International dimensions might include a comparative examination of how other nations commemorate their pasts; for example, students might examine the significance of commemorative events or days in the societies and cultures of the nations whose language they are learning in their Languages Other than English program, or assess the significance of other well-known commemorative days such as the United States and Independence Day, 4<sup>th</sup> July, or India and Independence Day, 15<sup>th</sup> August.

*What problems did successive peoples encounter in living in early Australia and were these problems resolved?*

75 Students will study the problems, local, national, or both, encountered in settling new lands. The topic will examine Aboriginal use of trade routes, traditional land use practices and how European arrival altered Aboriginal land use and its social organisation. Students should also examine regional and national relationships of the First Australians, as well as relationships within the local area. This unit will also contextualise local and national exploration by adopting a global perspective including discussing such topics as survival at sea and the difficulties of European settlement in a new land that, at first, seemed harsh and unsuited for European-style agriculture.

76 History, technology, mathematics and spatial skills might form a research basis in this unit by looking at the ways in which history and technology have been used and developed for exploration, survival and settlement, how mathematics helps us understand the past and how we map history. These perspectives could allow, for example, hands-on experimentation, model building, calculation and interaction with the surrounding built and natural environment. Students would use old maps, photographs and other forms of evidence to construct, for example, a settlement/migration project using evidence to construct a map of Australia, showing how the continent was peopled by successive waves of migration, with student connections to the different waves being explored in detail. Students may also briefly explore how one other Indigenous society engaged in exploration and the opening up of new lands, for example Maori arrival and settlement in New Zealand or Inuit exploration and settlement and land/sea use in northern Canada.

*How did we create a 'new' nation and develop a national identity?*

77 Students will examine the way in which Australians managed to live together over time at the local and national level, how they have interacted with each other and how local and national Australian identities have changed. They will examine how, at a local and national level, Australia was governed, from colonisation to Federation, and will understand the historical origins of those important civic terms and concepts which have been and which are in

use in Australia. They will also investigate the importance of significant individuals and events on the development of local and national democracy in Australia.

78 Civics and citizenship education, including the formation of Australia's democracy, may form a research basis in this unit through considering key events in the development of self-government and democracy in Australia, including traditional Indigenous governance processes, settlement of a penal colony in Sydney Cove in 1788, the establishment of British law in Australia, the emergence of self-government in the colonies, Federation, extensions of the franchise and the Aboriginal referendum in 1967. Students may also examine an instance of how other societies have governed or continue to govern themselves. For example one case study could be taken from republics, absolute monarchies, theocracies and dictatorships.

#### *How did we live then?*

79 Students will investigate how daily life in the local area has changed over time by examining social and economic aspects of successive historical periods, from pre-contact to modern. Research into the local area could focus on oral histories, discussion of significance of surviving artefacts, the design and function of vernacular architecture and public buildings, the use of cemeteries as historical sources, the succeeding layouts of streets and roads, and other clues to the past, to build up a picture of the period under investigation. Heritage sites might be examined as a way of understanding how people from various levels of society and from the various colonies and states and territories lived their daily lives. Students may also examine surviving remnants of pre-contact ways of life and post-contact industrial, commercial and agricultural remains. Students may use primary source materials such as maps, paintings, newspapers, diaries, directories, online databases and transcriptions, and published secondary sources.

80 Health and the economics of everyday life and work may form a comparative research basis in this unit. Students may, for example, undertake a case study of how a local migrant group would have compared everyday conditions of life and work in their home nation with life and work in their adopted homeland of Australia. Such case studies might include the perspectives on the past of, for example, Italians in the cane fields of North Queensland, Irish and Scottish farmers in eastern Victoria, Maltese migrants involved in the Tasmanian mining industry, Lebanese refugees in New South Wales, migrant hospitality and service workers in the Australian Capital Territory, German settlers in South Australia, English and South African migrants to Western Australia and Japanese pearl fishers in the Northern Territory. Again, it is possible to link these migrant experiences into LOTE programs on the understanding that present-day overseas societies would also be studied to show change over time in Australia and in former home nations.

#### *Developing a chronology and an overview*

81 Towards the end of this stage students will focus on one aspect of the lives of individual(s) or groups in the local area, and briefly go back to explore earlier origins of the object of study (for example local family, local organisation, local buildings) and then trace the development of the object of study through to the present day. This project could range across the whole period or part of the period; for example, in recently settled areas, a modern local study might take in the past twenty years or so and place these local events in a national, regional and global context.

## Standards

82 By the end of this stage, students should know and understand the:

- histories of their own localities as they relate to the development of Australian history nationally, and, where appropriate, comparative cases in global history
- local, national and broader significance of Australian commemorative events and icons as well as a comparative example
- problems — local, national and global — encountered in exploring and settling new lands
- ways in which Australians and others have managed to live together at the local, national and global level, how they have interacted with each other and how local and national Australian identities have changed over time
- general outline of how daily life in the local area, as well as in one other non-Australian society, has changed over time and how heritage sites might provide an understanding of how people from various levels of society and from the various colonies and states and territories lived their daily lives.

Finally, students should know and understand the longitudinal historical context of a relevant object of study within the topics and the time period of the primary program of study.

83 In achieving these standards, students will understand that history is a distinct form of study; they will know and understand significant events in Australian history as they apply to their own lives and to the development of their own communities; they will be able to make links to parallel regional and global events; they will understand Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and gender perspectives; they will be able to, within a broad topic framework, describe chronological sequences of events using common historical terms and a range of communication techniques. In doing this, they will be able to examine and critically assess the value of available primary and secondary sources, study human motivation, develop an understanding of viewpoints held by the people of the past, and recognise causal relationships between events and draw conclusions about their historical investigations. At the same time they should be able to develop an appreciation of the use of history, technology, mathematics and mapping in historical understanding, begin to differentiate between, and in some cases use, various forms of historical representation such as drawings, cartoons, paintings, photographs, documentary film, feature film and fiction, and understand that there can be differing points of view about past events.

## **Stage 3 (typically from 12 to 15 years of age)**

### **Curriculum focus**

84 It is recognised that the transition from primary to secondary school occurs at Year 7 in some jurisdictions, and Year 8 in others. The proposals set out here describe studies that would begin in Year 7.

85 It is proposed that the history curriculum should follow a sequence:

1. History from the time of the earliest human communities to the end of the Ancient period (c. 60,000 BC — c. 500 AD)
2. History from the end of the Ancient period to the beginning of the Modern period (c. 500–1750)
3. The Modern World and Australia (1750–1901)
4. Australia and the Modern World (1901–present)

86 The units should be taught as world history; that is, they should encompass all five continents. The history of human activity in Australia would be a significant component of the first two units, so that Aboriginal history, as well as early Asian and European contact, would be taught comparatively within them. And just as there will be a clear strand of Australian history in these units, so the treatment of Australian history in units 3 and 4 will be given a global context.

87 The global perspective is crucial, but not all of the world's history can be considered. World history is a distinct field of historical study, with its own practitioners, practices and literature that seeks to comprehend the forms and patterns of all human societies, and it is a popular field in the teaching of history in the United States. The approach to world history envisaged in this paper draws on the insights of that field but uses it to enrich the study of world history as it bears on Australia and its place in the world.

88 Each unit will employ Overview, Bridging and Study in depth, and the curriculum will provide advice on them. Several depth studies will be specified for each unit, but room will be left for further optional studies. This will allow students in units 3 and 4 to take up aspects of Australian history of particular significance for their state or territory, and also ensure that some of the excellent current teaching in ancient, medieval and modern world history is preserved. The curriculum in units 3 and 4 will ensure that episodes of key national significance are treated in depth studies.

89 The larger themes in Years 7–10 may be successfully dealt with using standard differentiation strategies applicable in all mixed ability classes such as starting with specific incidents, questions or problems, carefully choosing place and emphasis of the more abstract topics, using illustrative conceptual examples, storytelling, grading demanding tasks by order of difficulty, scaffolding, varying in-class learning outcomes, student self-assessment and setting challenging and interesting extension activities.

90 Careful attention needs to be given in the secondary curriculum to the coverage of history in the primary years, so that teachers in Stage 3 are fully aware of what students have studied at Stage 2 and build on this knowledge. The secondary curriculum will extend the earlier study of

history, deepen understanding and introduce new emphases, but needs to guard against the common student complaint of repetition.

### **Unit 1: History from the time of the earliest human communities to the end of the Ancient period (c. 60,000 BC — c. 500 AD)**

91 Students will explore the ways of life and global migrations of the earliest human communities, noting their social structures, economic activities, technologies, forms of communication, rituals and exchange networks across continents and bodies of water. They will thus follow the peopling of the continents by c.15,000 BC.

92 Students will examine the parallel origins of fixed settlement and then agriculture in various locations across the globe, including the Pacific region. In turn, they will consider the diffusion of agricultural activities and the emergence of cities, states and empires and their associated social, economic, political and religious systems.

93 This coverage should enable students to understand how northern Africa and the Near East, Europe and Asia, came to form a Eurasian world system, and they should develop a comparative understanding of the Mediterranean and Asian empires. Students should also be familiar with the course of development of Aboriginal and Melanesian societies, and those of the Americas.

94 Within this context students will draw on their encounter with Aboriginal history in Stages 1 and 2 to draw out a comparative understanding of Aboriginal history in a global setting.

### **Unit 2: History from the end of the Ancient period to the beginning of the Modern period (c. 500–1750)**

95 Students will study the expansion and collapse of states and empires, and the emergence of global networks of exchange. Their study will highlight the consolidation of complex urban states and associated social, political, economic and religious developments. Changes in the family and the household, in social hierarchies and the exercise of power, the growth of commerce and the spread of literacy are to be considered. It is here also that the major world religions will be studied.

96 Students will pay special attention to Europe, for the settler society of Australia derived many of its core institutions and values from Britain and continental Europe, and their expansion into the rest of the world from the sixteenth century had decisive consequences. The medieval period, the Renaissance and Reformation are thus to be included, along with the scientific revolution, and European exploration, conquest and settlement up to 1750.

97 Students will also consider other major civilizations — particularly those located in the Near and Middle East, China, Japan and India, and the Americas.

98 This unit provides an important opportunity to understand the context for the settler society of Australia, and the acceleration of Aboriginal technologies on the eve of European settlement.

### **Unit 3: The Modern World and Australia (1750–1901)**

99 Students will consider the American and French revolutions, and the principles of freedom and democracy they enunciated. They will see how the French republic led to Napoleon's rule, war and the settlement of 1815 that followed his defeat. They will follow the rise of the nation-state and associated ideas of national identity, with particular reference to Italy, Germany and the United States.

100 The industrial revolution in Britain will be studied chiefly for the creation of a trading economy and an urban society. The spread of economic growth will be considered by reference to its conditions and periodic contractions. This will allow students to explore the influence of the market on the family, work and leisure, and the spread of education.

101 Students will examine the different forms of European empire, including colonies based on plantation economies and settler colonies, and the institution of slavery will be considered in this context. The extension of European empires in Asia and Africa will take in movements of resistance, including the responses of China, Japan and India.

102 The unit will give particular attention to the consequences of these transformative changes for the region. Students will consider the European discovery and settlement of Australia in a broader context of mass migration from Europe during the nineteenth century. They will be able to identify the particular characteristics of the British overseas, and will appreciate the proportions of English, Scottish and Irish who came to the Australian colonies. Australia's interaction with the Pacific region should be included.

103 Students will examine the consequences of British settlement for Aboriginal Australians, from first contact to frontier conflict, missions and reserves.

104 In their study of Australian colonial history, students will examine convict society, pastoralism and its consequences, the advent of self-government, urbanisation, and the economic difficulties and social unrest at the end of the nineteenth century. They will follow the ways that Australia sought to be a 'better Britain' and also the emergence of national feeling in sport, art and literature.

105 Australian history will occupy approximately 40 per cent of this unit.

### **Unit 4: Australia and the Modern World (1901–present)**

106 The study begins with Australian Federation, the national sentiment it embodied and the federal and British attachments it accommodated. The innovations of the new nation in franchise, industrial relations, and social welfare will be examined so that students understand its reputation as a social laboratory of the world. The nation's racial identity and defence concerns will be followed in immigration control, the exclusion of Aboriginal Australians, the creation of an Australian navy and universal military training. The bipartisan enthusiasm for joining Britain in the war in Europe will complete this segment.

107 The origins, course and consequences of World War One will be studied in its own right as a world event, which will provide the context for an examination of the nature of Australia's participation and its effects: the argument over conscription, the split in the Labor Party and the

ascendancy of non-Labor, Gallipoli and the emergence of the digger as a national hero, and Hughes' role at Versailles.

108 Between the two world wars the focus of the world study will be on the crisis of liberal democracy, and the failure of the League of Nations to preserve the international order. Students will examine Fascism in Italy, Nazism in Germany, and Communism in the Soviet Union, and the wider influence of these ideologies. The Depression of the 1930s and its effects (particularly on Germany and the United States) will be part of this study and the Depression will then be examined in Australia, as a political crisis and social trauma.

109 Students will follow the course of World War Two, how it affected Australia and how Australia determined its response. They will consider the participation in the Mediterranean theatre (and the role of the Rats of Tobruk), the threat from Japan, the conflict with Britain over the use of Australian troops, the 'turn' to America, the Kokoda Track, and the social effects on the home front, particularly on the new roles for women.

110 The Holocaust that Hitler and the Nazis inflicted on European Jewry will be studied in its own right. Its enduring consequences will also be considered, including the international turn against racism, the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, the establishment of Israel and its effects on Palestinians, and the development of protocols on refugees. Postwar movements of national liberation and decolonisation will also be considered.

111 In their study of the second half of the century students will give more sustained attention to Australia but with an international context. Thus the Cold War and its conflicts (particularly Vietnam), the movements for civil rights in the United States and against apartheid in South Africa, and feminism will be explored as part of an examination of how British, White Australia, with a highly protected economy, became multicultural, more committed to equality for all its citizens, more independent, and more open to the world. The policies of assimilation and self-determination for Aboriginal Australians will be studied here.

112 Students will also study the new world order following the collapse of Communism, globalisation and the rise of the Asia-Pacific region.

113 Australian history will occupy approximately 60 per cent of this unit.

114 All four units will employ the Overview, Bridging and Study in depth. The national history curriculum will make particular use of narrative, applying the skills of historical thinking to the depth studies, and working to a comparative overview by the completion of each unit. Year 10 should include a larger retrospective overview of the four units.

## **Standards**

115 By the end of this stage, and bearing in mind different levels of attainment, students know and understand — through a comprehension of sequenced historical overviews, awareness of bridging periods and involvement in studies in depth — broad aspects of the development of world history from c. 60,000 BC to c. 500 AD, including an examination of the mythical and archaeological background to Australian Indigenous culture; how post-Ancient period societies developed and functioned up to the beginning of the Modern period; how world societies in the Modern age, particularly European societies, grew, transformed themselves and were transformed during a period of increasingly rapid social, political, economic and religious change; how Modern world societies, including the colony (and later dominion) of

Australia, were yet again changed by accelerating and turbulent circumstances; how selected major world crises in the twentieth century affected the course of global history and how the new nation of Australia responded to internal and external social, political economic and religious developments during this latter period.

116 Students should apply relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and gender perspectives to past events; be able to examine and draw conclusions about the relationship between events in Australia and the wider global community, and vice versa; know, and be able to clarify for themselves, issues associated with the use of evidence, including location of sources, provenance, reliability, completeness and the use of the internet as a source; understand the value of significance, motivation, causation and empathy as historical concepts; describe and assess the significance of key events; understand the broader context of these key events by making connections to wider social, political and economic factors; test out moral and ethical dilemmas in past events; have an understanding of the differences of opinion that exist about historical interpretation of key events; be able to assess the contribution of creative representations of the past to historical explanation and the impact of scientific and technological investigation on historical understanding and, finally, be able to construct a sequenced narrative in world and Australian history.

#### Stage 4 (typically from 15 to 18 years of age)

##### Curriculum focus

117 It is recognised that the transition to senior secondary studies occurs at Year 11 in some jurisdictions, and Year 10 in others. The proposals set out here assume that the studies begin in Year 11. Some jurisdictions offer senior secondary studies over two years, and some allow greater flexibility. It is proposed that the curriculum at Stage 4 consist of year-long units.

118 Senior secondary students exercise a choice of subjects, so not all of them will be enrolled in history; but it is to be hoped that the majority will continue with history. History at the senior secondary level typically offers a range of choice of more specialised units that are studied in greater depth. There should be options to pursue more advanced studies in the histories taught in Years 7–10.

119 New South Wales offers extension studies in history at Year 12, which allow students to explore traditions of historical research and writing, including debates among historians, and engage in the production of an extended research project. This option provides a valuable opportunity for able students to work with primary and secondary materials and to examine varying methodologies and approaches, and should be offered nationally.

##### Program of study for Stage 4

Year 11		Year 12	
Medieval History	Asia-Pacific History	Ancient History	Extension Study in History
Modern History	Option*	Australian History	Option*
*The option recognises that states and territories offer some highly successful units of history at Year 11.		*The option recognises that states and territories offer some highly successful units of history at Year 12.	

## CONCLUSIONS

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120 The approach set out in this paper is premised on schools making a substantial commitment to teaching history. This will require making space in the timetable for a sustained and sequential program. At present there is little guidance for the allocation of time to history. It is anticipated that the curriculum described in this paper would require at least ten percent of teaching time over the primary school years, and a hundred hours per year in Years 7–10.

121 It will also require empowering teachers to meet the substantial challenge of developing the knowledge and skills required for historical understanding. There are many able teachers of history who are trained in the discipline and its pedagogy; we should recognise and support their expertise, and draw on it to develop the new national history curriculum. The involvement of their professional associations will be crucial.

122 There are, however, many schools in which the teaching of history is undertaken by teachers who lack the training and confidence to undertake the task. Hence successful implementation will require attention to teacher preparation: we need teachers who have undertaken a rich major in history as part of their first degree (and it is to be hoped that an increasing proportion will have also undertaken honours and postgraduate research) as well as attention to history in their teacher training. We need recruitment policies that emphasise such qualifications. We need provision for professional development that allows history teachers to keep abreast of developments in the discipline, and to enrich their teaching through familiarity with current research. We need resources to be available for use in the classroom that will support the history curriculum that this paper describes.

123 Finally, in order to ensure that rich, effective and authentic teaching and learning occurs in history, there needs to be appropriate assessment and reporting of outcomes. The assessment should be appropriate to the goal of developing historical understanding.

## RESEARCH BASIS

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124 This paper draws on the research of the National Centre for History Education at Monash University, as well as the Centre for the Study of Historical Consciousness at the University of British Columbia. It has used the advice provided by a group of history teachers, educators, and historical practitioners, who met on 22 September 2008, suggestions made at the forum on 15 October 2008, and further discussion with senior members of the History Teachers' Association on 16 October 2008.

125 Some of the works referred to in the paper are listed below.

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Sam Wineburg, *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts: Charting the future of reading the past* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001).

## APPENDIX 1:

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### **The national curriculum: principles and specifications for development**

The National Curriculum Board's work will be guided by the following principles and specifications for development:

- a) The curriculum should make clear to teachers what has to be taught and to students what they should learn and what achievement standards are expected of them. This means that curriculum documents will be explicit about knowledge, understanding and skills and will provide a clear foundation for the development of a teaching program.
- b) The curriculum should be based on the assumptions that all students can learn and that every child matters. It should set high standards and ensure that they apply to all young Australians while acknowledging the markedly different rates at which students develop.
- c) The curriculum should connect with and build on the early years learning framework being developed for the pre-K phase.
- d) The curriculum should build firm foundational skills and a basis for the development of expertise by those who move to specialised advanced studies in academic disciplines, professions and technical trades. It should anticipate and provide for an increase in the proportion of students who remain in education and training to complete Year 12 or equivalent vocational education and training and the proportion who continue to further study.
- e) The curriculum should provide students with an understanding of the past that has shaped the society and culture in which they are growing and developing, and with knowledge, understandings and skills that will help them in their future lives.
- f) The curriculum should be feasible, taking account of the time and resources available to teachers and students and the time it takes to learn complex concepts and ideas. In particular, the curriculum documents should take account of the fact that many primary teachers are responsible for several learning areas and should limit the volume of material which they must read in order to develop teaching programs.
- g) The primary audience for national curriculum documents should be classroom teachers. Documents should be concise and expressed in plain language which, nevertheless, preserves a complexity in ideas appropriate for professional practitioners. Documents should be recognisably similar across learning areas in language, structure and length.
- h) Time demands on students must leave room for learning areas that will not be part of the national curriculum.
- i) The curriculum should allow jurisdictions, systems and schools to implement it in a way that values teachers' professional knowledge and reflects local contexts.
- j) The curriculum should be established on a strong evidence base on learning, pedagogy and what works in professional practice and should encourage teachers to experiment systematically with and evaluate their practices.

(National Curriculum Board 2008:4)

## **APPENDIX 2: HISTORY ADVISORY GROUP**

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*The advice in this paper was provided by an advisory group led by Professor Stuart Macintyre.*

Professor Stuart Macintyre, Ernest Scott Professor of History, University of Melbourne, Chair of Australian Studies at Harvard in 2007–08, President of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia

Dr John Hirst, La Trobe University

David Boon, Illawarra Primary School, Blackman's Bay, Tasmania

Dr Dawn Casey, Director, Powerhouse Museum, Sydney

Louise Secker, History Teachers' Association of WA, Shenton College

Julie Hennessey, Head of History Department, Brisbane Girls Grammar School

Associate Professor Tony Taylor, Monash University

Associate Professor Marnie Hughes-Warrington, Macquarie University

Dr Declan O'Connell, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

### **Special acknowledgment**

Special acknowledgment goes to Associate Professor Tony Taylor, for providing extensive comment and input during development of this paper, and to David Boon and Dr John Hirst for assistance with the program of study.

## APPENDIX 3: FEEDBACK QUESTIONS

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To provide us with feedback on this paper, please respond to the questions below. Your replies are a rich source of information and are of great value to us.

Name:			
Organisation (if applicable):			
Postal address:			
Please nominate your area/areas of interest			
<input type="checkbox"/> English	<input type="checkbox"/> mathematics	<input type="checkbox"/> science	<input type="checkbox"/> history
Please choose:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Academic	<input type="checkbox"/> Business or industry professional	Education professional <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Chief executive officer</li> <li>○ Curriculum director</li> <li>○ Curriculum manager</li> <li>○ Departmental/sector representative</li> <li>○ Principal</li> <li>○ Professional organisation representative</li> <li>○ School administrator</li> <li>○ Teacher</li> <li>○ Teacher's aide</li> </ul>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Community member	<input type="checkbox"/> Journalist		
<input type="checkbox"/> Parent	<input type="checkbox"/> Student		
<input type="checkbox"/> Union representative	<input type="checkbox"/> Youth leader		

***If there is not enough space, please write on a separate sheet***

### Introduction

1. Please comment on the Introduction.

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**Considerations**

6. To what extent do you agree with the proposals for incorporating a futures orientation?

Strongly Disagree       Disagree       Agree       Strongly Agree

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7. Please comment.

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8. To what extent do you agree with the proposed components of historical understanding?

Strongly Disagree       Disagree       Agree       Strongly Agree

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9. Please comment.

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10. To what extent do you agree with the proposed cross-curriculum implications for national history curriculum?

Strongly Disagree       Disagree       Agree       Strongly Agree

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11. Please comment.

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