



KA-220-SCH Erasmus+ “Clean Environment-Clean School Climate” with Creative Environmental Practices in School Education- Clean&Creative” project

2023-1-NO01- KA220-SCH-000159229

Environmental Education in History Curriculum

Introduction

Education and training in primary and secondary school ensure the acquisition of fundamental knowledge and skills necessary for a young person’s future life and the possibility of further education. Understanding history contributes to comprehending the processes that have shaped humanity from the earliest times to the present by explaining the development of human societies, past and present human experiences, and social phenomena in their historical perspective. By learning about their own nation, state, society, cultural and historical heritage, as well as about other nations, cultures, and societies in the past and present, students acquire knowledge and develop skills that enable them to understand their own identity and the identities of others. Today, in the era of globalization, where there is a strong mixing of different cultures, worldviews, and religions, a young person needs to become a citizen of Europe and the world while preserving their own national identity, appreciating, and protecting their cultural and spiritual heritage.



The purpose of teaching and learning History

The development of attitudes, opinions, motivation, and readiness to coexist with others and those who are different is an integral part of teaching and learning in History classes. Studying past events that have pronounced moral and ethical dimensions contributes to understanding the actions of people in the past and simultaneously allows students to reevaluate and consolidate their personal system of values, attitudes, and beliefs.

The purpose of teaching History is to stimulate students' interest in studying the past, to enable the understanding of the present, and to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for informed and active participation in society as citizens of the local community, Croatia, Europe, and the world. Active citizens recognize the value of solidarity, think critically about society, and act towards collective change for the benefit of humanity.

The purpose of teaching and learning History is to develop in students the ability to think historically within five areas of human activity: social, economic, scientific-technological, political, and philosophical-religious-cultural. By learning History, students develop fundamental skills related to questioning sources, considering context, viewing events from different perspectives, reevaluating viewpoints and conclusions, and forming opinions based on well-founded assumptions. Fundamental historical knowledge is a necessary prerequisite for such work. However, the selection of significant historical events, processes, and phenomena in specific areas and historical periods is crucial.

Educational goals of teaching and learning

The Student:

1. Understands the periods and societies studied, including important events, individuals, processes, phenomena, and significant characteristics of the historical periods and societies studied. This includes social, economic, scientific-technological, political, and cultural development of people in the past. In doing so, they use appropriate terminology and understand the present as a consequence of historical societal development.
2. Views the past using skills and technical concepts of time and space, cause and effect, continuity and change, working with historical sources, historical perspective, and comparison and confrontation.
3. Formulates a research question for active learning derived from historical content and engages in reasoned discussion while accepting different well-founded viewpoints.
4. Understands professional-ethical norms and value aspects related to the study of history, based on which they form a personal system of values, attitudes, and beliefs, develop work habits, responsibility, creativity, and confidence, and openness to lifelong learning.
5. Uses the knowledge and skills acquired through learning history to realize personal potential and act responsibly in public life within the local, national, European, and global community.
6. Understands the importance of preserving local, national, and global cultural, historical, and spiritual heritage.



Structure of the History Curriculum

The subject curriculum for History is organized into five domains: society, economy, science and technology, politics, and the philosophical-religious-cultural area. This approach is rooted in the historical science that studies the past within five different areas of human activity: social, political, scientific and technological, economic, and cultural.

A. Society

By studying different societies, students gain a deeper understanding of them and accept the value of human dignity. They learn about varying and changing views on family structures, male and female roles, childhood, the role of children, the status of different groups in society (religious communities, ethnic communities, peoples, nations), and the relationships between individuals and social groups. This area also considers how economic, religious, cultural, and political changes have affected social life. It includes phenomena that have shaped the destinies of millions of people, such as slavery, social conflicts, migration and immigration, the consequences of diseases, wars and famines, life expectancy, and the increase in living standards as a result of medical, technological, and economic inventions.

B. Economy

Within the framework of economic history, students learn about the importance of economic achievements that affect the quality of life and the structuring of societies, including the impact of the economy on the entire historical development. Exchange relations within a community and between different cultures and states have had a significant impact on society and politics, creating changing patterns of regional, hemispheric, and global economic dominance. The exchange of products and ideas in the 21st century paves the way for the emergence of a global international economy with far-reaching consequences for all other areas of human activity.

C. Science and Technology

Students learn that the need to understand nature and the world we live in is as old as humanity itself. They learn how humans have sought to improve their way of life and work, from food production, transport of goods, to increasing economic security, improving health, and enhancing the welfare of individuals and various social groups. Understanding the scientific and technological development that has driven change and how innovations have altered all other spheres of human activity is crucial for studying the past.

D. Politics

Through knowledge of political history, students understand the political actions of individuals and groups in local communities, states, societies, and nations in Europe and the world. They learn about the process of building power and state institutions, the efforts of individuals and groups to seize and maintain power over others, the struggle to achieve and preserve fundamental human rights, justice, equality before the law, respect for law and order in societies, and regional and global mechanisms for promoting international law.

E. Philosophical-Religious-Cultural Area



By learning about philosophy, religion, and art, students understand how ideas, beliefs, and values have profoundly influenced human actions throughout history. Religion, philosophy, and culture have been at the center of the aspirations and achievements of all societies and are the source of historical changes from the earliest times. In this area, students learn about the creative human activities and creativity of individual societies, arts, political and philosophical ideas, deepening their understanding of the human experience in the past.

Main technical concepts in History teaching

1. Time and Space

This concept builds a sense of the flow, sequence, and duration of events. Without a temporal framework, it is impossible to understand the past and present or explore the relationships between events. Therefore, during history lessons, students will adopt a general temporal framework (historical periods) and the basics of time calculation. They will use vocabulary that describes the passage of time, place events, individuals, and phenomena in appropriate periods. In later years of learning, they will understand the constructive nature of various periodizations and question the meanings attributed to events marked as turning points. The physical space surrounding humans conditions their way of life, economy, social development, and political actions. The expansion of transportation networks, ideas, products, diseases, human migrations, etc., are also deeply connected with geographical space and its characteristics. Thus, the concept of space entails complex relationships between humans and the natural environment that surrounds them.

2. Causes and Consequences

The concept of causes and consequences explains the factors that led to individual historical events, phenomena, and processes, as well as the results of these occurrences. This concept explains why events happened as they did, how one occurrence leads to another, and why one event can have multiple causes and consequences. Students distinguish between causes, triggers, and consequences and explain categories of causes. They identify directly stated causes and consequences or infer them when not explicitly mentioned. They understand that some causes and consequences are more significant than others, around which different viewpoints exist.

3. Continuity and Change

In seeking sources of continuity, we look for signs of uninterrupted or growing evolutionary development. Conversely, the sources of change we seek are signs of breaks with the past. Students study changes over time, but also what remains the same or similar (institutions, traditions, political systems, values, ways of life of certain social groups). Explaining the rhythm of changes is also important: some changes are slow and gradual, while others (wars, revolutions, economic crises) are rapid and tumultuous, causing sudden disruptions and changes in society. Learning about this concept includes understanding the characteristics of a period and assessing to what extent certain phenomena meant change for the people of that time. Furthermore, students must understand that changes do not always mean progress. The notion of progress carries a certain valuation, linked to values that may differ from one society or culture to another.



4. Working with Historical Sources

The steps in learning this concept for students include using various types of historical sources, understanding the significance of sources in studying the past, and forming responses that incorporate data from the sources. Students learn to analyze and evaluate sources, asking questions about the time, place, and circumstances of their creation, as well as about the author, their viewpoints, and intentions. By learning about sources, students become acquainted with the importance and role of cultural-historical heritage and the institutions that preserve such heritage.

5. Historical Perspective

The concept of historical perspective enables students to view the past considering the temporal and social context of the period they are studying. Developing a historical perspective, students will identify the values, beliefs, and practices of individuals and communities in different periods and distinguish them from those of today. They will also determine to what extent a phenomenon or process from the past was representative of numerous individuals and/or groups in the past. At a higher level of education, students will be able to explain the influence of the present on the interpretation of past events and the importance certain phenomena or processes had for people in the past, as well as their significance for us today.

6. Comparison and Confrontation

The concept of comparison and confrontation allows for a better understanding and explanation of historical events, phenomena, and processes, as well as works of human creativity, by placing them in a context where they can be assessed and interpreted. Through comparison, their similarities, common characteristics, or mutual differences and influences are identified. By comparing, we categorize events, phenomena, and processes, as well as works of human creativity, into groups (classification), which allows us to formulate general conclusions and historical generalizations.

Connection with Other Subjects and Interdisciplinary Themes

The subject of History is connected with other subjects and interdisciplinary themes by achieving related goals, outcomes, and content, and by developing fundamental competencies.

1. Language Connections

- Native Language and Foreign Languages: History is linked to these subjects through the development of media culture, the history of literature, critical reading and writing, and clear, appropriate, and professional expression.

2. Geography

- History correlates with Geography in studying the space where people act as individuals and communities with their culture, religion, economy, and way of life.



3. Philosophy, Sociology, Logic, Politics, and Economy

- History is connected through content that promotes the development of critical thinking and argumentation skills, analysis of social issues, the development of political thinking and economic literacy, the study of human rights, and democratic citizenship.

4. Mathematics

- History is connected with Mathematics through examples of time calculation, analysis of demographic data, tables, and diagrams.

5. Information Technology

- History is linked to Information Technology in developing affirmative and responsible use of digital literacy.

6. Music and Visual Arts

- History connects with these subjects through the study of music, painting, sculpture, and architecture in a broader historical and cultural context.

Realization of Interdisciplinary Themes in History

1. Learning to Learn

- This is realized through the application of various learning strategies, using information from different sources, and creating an encouraging learning environment.

2. Entrepreneurship

- Realized by acquiring knowledge about the economy and economic trends that have influenced the contemporary world.

3. Personal and Social Development

- Achieved through the application of various forms of work. By collaborating in pairs or groups, students take responsibility for learning, evaluate their work and the work of others, and develop self-image and understanding of others.

4. Use of ICT

- Realized through the use of digital tools and the development of a sense of responsibility and critical thinking about the use of technology and information sources.

5. Health

- Realized through content about health, diseases, medicine, hygiene, nutrition, and housing in the past.



6. Sustainable Development

- Realized through content about the impact of humans on the environment in the past and present.

7. Civic Education

- Realized by studying content about human and minority rights, national and international instruments for their protection, the functioning of democracy and democratic society, the struggle for social and political equality, the values of active citizenship, and cultural pluralism. Students explain the creation of the Republic of Croatia, the organization of government, the role of state institutions in Croatia, and the role of European Union institutions.

Integration of Environmental Education in History Curriculum

Integrating sustainable development into a history curriculum can provide students with a broad understanding of how historical events and decisions have impacted our world and how these lessons can inform sustainable practices today. Here are some steps and strategies to help incorporate sustainable development into history curriculum:

1. Identify Key Themes and Topics

Identifying historical themes and topics where sustainable development can naturally intersect. Some examples might include:

- **Industrial Revolution:** Discuss the environmental impact of industrialization and how it led to modern sustainability movements.
- **Agricultural Practices:** Examine historical agricultural practices and their effects on the environment, and compare them with modern sustainable farming techniques.
- **Colonialism and Resource Exploitation:** Explore the exploitation of natural resources during the colonial period and its long-term impacts on both the environment and societies.
- **Environmental Movements:** Study the history of environmental movements and legislation, such as the creation of national parks or the establishment of Earth Day.

2. Use Case Studies and Historical Events

Incorporate case studies and specific historical events that highlight the principles of sustainable development. For instance:





- **Dust Bowl (1930s):** Analyze the Dust Bowl as a case study of unsustainable agricultural practices and their environmental and social consequences.
- **Chernobyl Disaster (1986):** Discuss the Chernobyl nuclear disaster and its impact on environmental policy and sustainable energy debates.
- **Rachel Carson's "Silent Spring" (1962):** Explore the publication of "Silent Spring" and its role in raising awareness about the environmental impact of pesticides, leading to the modern environmental movement.

3. Connect Past and Present

Draw connections between historical events and current sustainability challenges. Encourage students to consider:

- How historical practices have shaped current environmental issues.
- What lessons can be learned from the past to address today's sustainability challenges.
- Examples of how past innovations in sustainability can be applied to modern contexts.

4. Incorporate Interdisciplinary Approaches

Blend history with other disciplines, such as geography, economics, and science, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of sustainable development. For example:

- **Geography:** Examine how geographical features influenced historical settlement patterns and resource use.
- **Economics:** Discuss the economic impacts of historical resource exploitation and the development of sustainable economic models.
- **Science:** Explore scientific advancements and their role in both creating and solving environmental issues.

5. Promote Critical Thinking and Debate

Encourage students to critically assess historical decisions and their long-term impacts on sustainability. Facilitate debates and discussions on:

- The balance between economic development and environmental preservation.
- The ethical considerations of resource use and environmental management.
- Different perspectives on sustainability from various historical contexts.

6. Incorporate Project-Based Learning





Engage students in project-based learning activities that require them to research and present on topics related to sustainable development in history. Some project ideas include:

- Creating a timeline of key events in the history of environmentalism.
- Developing a case study analysis of a historical event with a focus on sustainability lessons.
- Designing a sustainability plan based on historical practices adapted for modern use.

7. Use Diverse Resources

Utilize a variety of resources to provide a well-rounded understanding of sustainable development in history. These can include:

- Primary source documents, such as historical texts, letters, and photographs.
- Documentaries and films that cover historical events and their environmental impacts.
- Guest speakers and experts in sustainability and history.

By integrating sustainable development into your history curriculum, you can help students understand the interconnectedness of past and present and empower them to make informed decisions for a sustainable future.

Conclusion

The purpose of teaching History is to stimulate students' interest in studying the past, to enable the understanding of the present, and to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for informed and active participation in society as citizens of the local community, Croatia, Europe, and the world. Active citizens recognize the value of solidarity, think critically about society, and act towards collective change for the benefit of humanity. By learning History, students develop fundamental skills related to questioning sources, considering context, viewing events from different perspectives, reevaluating viewpoints and conclusions, and forming opinions based on well-founded assumptions. Fundamental historical knowledge is a necessary prerequisite for such work. By integrating environmental education into history curriculum, we can help students understand the interconnectedness of past and present and empower them to make informed decisions for a sustainable future.



Resources

- National Park Service Education: <https://www.nps.gov/>
- Smithsonian Institution Education: <https://www.si.edu/education>
- Environmental Protection Agency Education: <https://www.epa.gov/education>
- United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): <https://www.epa.gov/education>
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO):
<https://www.unesco.org/en/education>
- National Park Service: <https://www.nps.gov/>
- National Council for Geographic Education (NCGE) Standards: <https://ncge.org/teacher-resources/national-geography-standards/>
- National Council for Social Studies (NCSS) Standards:
<https://www.socialstudies.org/standards>