

Student Teacher	J. Bloggs	Observer	T. Jones
Topic / Unit	'Are people right to be so negative about life in the Middle Ages?'	Date	5.1.27
Class / Key Stage	Y7	Room	5

My related targets this week are:

Increased use of modelling and exemplar answers to support pupils' historical thinking
Develop pedagogical strategies for teaching change and continuity including annotated graphs.

After discussions about my progress, I have identified the following focus for my observer:

Use of exemplar paragraphs to explicitly model how pupils can construct a historical response about change and continuity over a period of time.

What do I want the students to learn? What are the objectives of this lesson?

By the end of the lesson, pupils will be able to:

- Explain what life was like for ordinary people in medieval towns and villages.
- Identify and explain change and continuity across the Middle Ages.
- Evaluate whether it is reasonable to be so negative about life in the Middle Ages, using evidence to support their judgement.

Key understanding: Life in the Middle Ages was not consistently good or bad. Experiences varied according to factors such as time, place, occupation and wealth, with periods of hardship alongside development and prosperity.

What is this lesson building on, and building towards?

Pupils have previously studied change and continuity, the use of evidence and the Norman Conquest, alongside aspects of medieval life.

This lesson develops pupils' ability to identify patterns of change and continuity, use evidence to construct explanations and make supported judgements about a historical period.

What might the pupils find difficult, or what misconceptions might they already have?

Pupils may think that:

- the Middle Ages was uniformly miserable and little changed;
- change automatically means progress;
- change happened evenly across the period;
- one negative aspect means that life was generally bad;
- a source is simply 'useful' or 'not useful', rather than useful for a particular question.

Pupils may also find it difficult to distinguish between change, continuity, progress and regression, weigh positive and negative evidence, and explain evidence rather than describe it.

What key / new terminology am I introducing?

Progress, Change, Continuity, Regression

What resources do I need?

Card sort worksheet, Period worksheet, Graph worksheet, PowerPoint, Post-it notes

What health and safety considerations do I need to make?

N/A

Lesson Parts**How will the pupils enter the classroom?**

Who is doing what?	What adaptations are needed?
Pupils line up outside. The teacher greets pupils at the door and directs them to enter silently and begin the retrieval task: Write down three words that you think sum up the Middle Ages.	Instructions on the PowerPoint Teacher circulates to check pupils' prior knowledge.

Part 1 Key Learning

Who is doing what?	What adaptations are needed?	How do I check understanding?
<p>Pupils complete the three-word starter.</p> <p>Teacher introduces the enquiry: Are people right to be so negative about life in the Middle Ages?, LOs and key vocabulary, establishing that the lesson will explore variation and change over time, rather than whether medieval life was simply 'good' or 'bad'.</p>	<p>Key vocabulary displayed.</p> <p>Teacher selects pupils strategically for feedback</p>	<p>ACE questioning to probe pupils' initial conceptions: Do pupils associate the period with words such as <i>war, death, disease, dirt</i> and <i>poverty</i>?</p> <p>Accept: What makes you associate that word with the Middle Ages?</p> <p>Challenge: Does that describe everyone's experience?</p> <p>Extend: What might complicate this view?</p>

How will I transition to the next part?

Where do our ideas about medieval life come from? Let's look at evidence from the period itself.

Part 2 Key Learning

Who is doing what?	What adaptations are needed?	How do I check understanding?
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<p>Teacher models source analysis through questioning. Pupils use think-pair-share to make inferences about life for ordinary people.</p> <p>Image from the Luttrell Psalter. What can we infer from this source about life for ordinary people in the Middle Ages?</p>	<p>Sentence stems: <i>I can see... / This suggests... / However, the source cannot tell us...</i></p> <p>Question sequencing Accept What can you see?, What are the people doing? Challenge What does this suggest about the work people did?, What might the birds tell us?, What does this suggest about the relationship between people and the environment? Extend How far does this source challenge the idea that life was miserable?, What can this source tell us confidently? What can't it tell us?</p>	<p>Teacher takes responses from a range of pupils and probes using ACE questioning.</p> <p>ACE questioning moves pupils from observation → inference → evaluation.</p> <p>Teacher reinforces that source utility depends on the question being asked e.g., the source may be useful for investigating aspects of agricultural work, but less useful for determining how ordinary people felt about their lives.</p>
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How will I transition to the next phase?

The source gives us one window into medieval life. But one source cannot tell us what life was like for everyone. We're now going to look at a wider range of evidence.

Part 3 Key Learning

Who is doing what?	What adaptations are needed?	How do I check understanding?
<p>Card-sort activity: What was life like for ordinary people in medieval towns and villages?</p> <p>Teacher models the first two cards, thinking aloud about how evidence can be categorised and recognising that some evidence may fit between categories. Pupils complete the card sort and create a key.</p>	<p>Card 1 – Teacher models independently "I'm going to put this card here because..." Card 2 – Teacher and class Teacher asks pupils where they would place the card and probes their reasoning. "Would everyone agree?"</p> <p>Stretch question: What do you think mattered most to ordinary people in the Middle Ages? Explain your reasoning.</p> <p>Teacher circulates strategically rather than just checking completion.</p>	<p>ACE questioning probes pupils' reasoning and whether they recognise that experiences varied: <i>Why here? Could it go elsewhere? Which factor mattered most?</i></p> <p>Teacher uses responses to identify whether pupils understand that different factors could affect people's experiences differently.</p>

How will I transition to the next phase?

You've organised the evidence. Now we need to turn evidence into a historical explanation

Part 4 Key Learning

Who is doing what?	What adaptations are needed?	How do I check understanding?
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Teacher introduces an exemplar paragraph and explicitly models what makes it effective. Pupils use the exemplar and card sort to construct their own paragraph.	Exemplar remains visible. Sentence starters provided where required. Peer feedback using WWW/EBI.	Teacher circulates and prioritises pupils requiring support, checking that pupils explain the significance of evidence rather than simply describe it.
Teacher reads the exemplar with pupils and asks: What makes this an effective historical paragraph?		

How will I transition to the next phase?

We've answered what life could be like. But we've been talking about the Middle Ages as though it was one period of time. It wasn't. The Middle Ages lasted around 500 years. So what happened to people's lives over that time?

Part 5 Key Learning

Who is doing what?	What adaptations are needed?	How do I check understanding?
<p>Teacher models the first period (1000–1100), demonstrating how to move from evidence → judgement → rating → annotation.</p> <p>Teacher emphasises that there is no single 'correct' rating; pupils must justify their judgement with evidence.</p> <p>Pupils work in pairs to analyse the remaining periods, agree a rating and annotate their graph.</p>	<p>Chunked workload, pair discussion before plotting, modelled example, Sentence stems for annotations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Life was relatively good because...</i> <i>Life was difficult because...</i> <i>This suggests that...</i> <i>Overall, I have rated this period... because...</i> 	<p>Teacher circulates and checks ratings are supported by reasoning.</p> <p>ACE questioning: Accept: What rating have you given this period? Challenge: What evidence supports that rating? Extend: Why might another historian give this period a different rating?</p> <p>Whole-class question: What does the shape of your graph tell us about life during the Middle Ages?</p> <p>Draw out that experiences differed and fluctuated over time.</p>

How will I transition to the next phase?

Return to the enquiry: "Are people right to be so negative about life in the Middle Ages?"

Part 6 Key Learning

Who is doing what?	What adaptations are needed?	How do I check understanding?
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Teacher introduces the judgement line. Pupils position a post-it note and justify their judgement using evidence from the lesson.	Minimum expectation <i>I think people are/are not right to be negative about life in the Middle Ages because...</i> Stretch <i>The extent to which people are right to be negative depends on...</i>	Teacher selects at least three pupils to explain their position. Accept: What is your judgement? Challenge: What evidence from the lesson supports it? Extend: Does your evidence apply to the whole Middle Ages? Why/why not?
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How will the pupils leave the classroom?	
Who is doing what?	What adaptations are needed?
Pupils pack away and remain seated. Teacher dismisses pupils one table at a time.	

Reflections

What feedback did you receive / reflections do you have on this lesson?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did the modelling make the process of constructing a historical paragraph clearer? Did pupils understand <i>why</i> the exemplar was effective, rather than simply copying its structure? Did ACE questioning move pupils from description towards explanation and evaluation? Did pupils understand the distinction between change and progress? Did the graph help pupils visualise fluctuation over time? Was the lesson sufficiently ambitious without introducing too much cognitive load?
What impact did your adaptations have on pupils? How do you know this?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which pupils benefited from sentence starters? Did chunking the graph task enable pupils to work more independently? Did the exemplar reduce pupils' difficulty in constructing their own paragraph? Did pupils requiring additional support subsequently need less teacher intervention? Did the extension tasks deepen thinking rather than simply provide more work?
What discussion points / questions will you take to your next mentor meeting?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How can I ensure that my modelling makes the thinking process explicit rather than simply showing pupils a finished product? How can I progressively remove scaffolding so that pupils become more independent? How effectively am I using questioning to diagnose pupils' thinking rather than simply checking whether they know the answer? How can I develop pupils' understanding that historical change is not synonymous with progress?