

## LESSON PLAN IDEAS

### Literature – Recording the past

<b>Competition Category</b>	Literature
<b>Competition age group</b>	This particular idea is aimed at primary level, however, the competition task can be adapted to secondary and SEN
<b>Competition task</b>	Students are required to use their writing skills to describe what Birmingham means to them

#### Introduction – The key to our future

Literature is a term used to describe written or spoken material. Broadly speaking, *literature* is used to describe anything from creative writing to more technical or scientific works, but the term is most commonly used to refer to works of the creative imagination, including works of poetry, drama, fiction and non-fiction. Literature represents a language or a people: culture and tradition.

History is the study of human behaviour through time. When used as the name of a field of study, *history* refers to the study and interpretation of the record of humans, families and societies as preserved primarily through written sources. History is thus usually distinguished from prehistory by the widespread adoption of writing in the area under study. Knowledge of history is often said to encompass both knowledge of past events and historical thinking skills. Historical records have been maintained for a variety of reasons, including administrative (such as censuses, tax records, commercial records), political (glorification or criticism of leaders and notable figures), religious, artistic, sporting (notably the Olympics), genealogical, personal (letters) and entertainment.

The key to the future is understanding the past and what we can learn from it. This module is designed to create awareness of the past of the city in which students live. The aim is for students to become aware of their local community and to come into direct contact with the city in which they live. They will become more aware of the city's history and its possible future.

#### Module Resources

- A questionnaire for students to complete
- Preparation of question prompts for the class discussions
- A collection of historical Birmingham images or books which show the past and present of Birmingham streets and locations
- Access to directories either via the web or at the library/archives

#### Understanding Goals

- What is the history of Birmingham?
- What local events relate to the area in which you live or attend school?
- Why do streets and locations change?
- What methods of recording history are there?
- What venues record the details of our past?
- How does our past differ to our present?

### Performance of Understanding, Rationale and Time Line

The goal is to teach students the importance of literature and how it can be used to record events, illustrating how things have changed over time. History unfolds our past and holds the key to our future and writing in particular is an important medium of recording the past. The module comprises a number of activities which can be spread out as required.

#### Class Discussion points

What is history all about? Who writes our history? Who records historical facts and figures? Where is the story of our history stored? What types of records are kept? What documents do you keep at home and why?

Why is history so important? How does our history impact our future? What can we learn about our past through history? What do you know of your own family's past? What do you know about your school and the area in which you live 50 years ago? How about 150 years ago?

What causes change? What key events have affected Birmingham? Have past events improved the city in which we live? What things do you think we need to change in the future? How can our past help us to understand our future?

Topic:	<b>What was it like to live here in the past?</b>
Action:	The teacher to lead a discussion on what it was like to live in the past in Birmingham. Session to include discussions about what home life would have been like for children in the past (school, available hobbies, work, family, illness, food etc)
Preparation:	A reference handout on living within the selected period (i.e. Victorian) and what Birmingham was like in particular. A questionnaire for students to complete about living within the era. Separate preparation of question prompts for the class discussions.
Task:	Students to complete questionnaire and then brainstorm ideas as a group on what/how things are different to life today.

Topic:	<b>Streets Apart</b>
Action:	To choose a time frame and an area (or street) of Birmingham and find a photo or visual representation of how it looked in the past; then compare to how it looks now
Preparation:	Collection of historical Birmingham images or books which show the past and present of cities/streets. Access to directories either via the web or at the library/archives
Task:	Access to business trade directories to ascertain which businesses were located in the vicinity in the past and which ones are still present or in their place today – alternatively if a residential area is selected then the census would be a useful source. It would also be useful to consult inventories to see what possessions people had in the past and compare it to how it is different today

Topic:	<b>Voices from the past</b>
Action:	The teacher can ask students to select a past year and pretend that they are writing to a relative who lives in a remote Scottish village - and who does not get to hear much about their life in Birmingham. The student should pick a historical period/event/situation related to the year chosen and use the medium of the letter to write to their

	relation to tell them all about it. This activity links to “The here and now!” topic when the students will use the same location to describe a modern day celebration or event which could be fictitious.
Preparation:	Students will need to complete “The here and now!” and will require access to a range of photographs and images of how their selected location has changed throughout the selected time frames.
Task:	Students to write a letter to their relative as above to include three key elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Details of what they have been doing that day (describe the celebration/event/situation of their choice)</li> <li>• What their life is like in general at the time of writing (working, school, home life)</li> <li>• What life in Birmingham is like generally and what they enjoy and dislike about living there</li> </ul>

Topic:	<b>Class discussion and evaluation on what modern day Birmingham means to the students.</b>
Action:	Ask the class what images come to their minds when you talk about Birmingham in present times? What do they think about?
Preparation:	Prepare a list of possible people/places/tourist attractions for discussion points to kick-start the conversation
Task:	Brainstorm and record what Birmingham means to students

Topic:	<b>The here and now!</b>
Action:	The teacher will now ask students to pretend that they are again writing to their fictitious relative, however the year is now 2007. The scenario is as before, with the relative still living in the same remote Scottish village. The student should create or describe a recent event/situation and use the medium of the letter to write to their relative to tell them all about it. This activity links back to “Voices from the past” when the students completed the same activity but based on a different time period.
Preparation:	Students will need to complete “Voices from the past” and will require access to a range of photographs and images of how their selected location has changed throughout the selected time frames and what it is like today.
Task:	Students to write a letter to their relative as above to include three key elements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Details of what they have been doing that day (describe the celebration/event/situation of their choice)</li> <li>• What their life is like in general at the time of writing (school, home life, hobbies)</li> <li>• What life in Birmingham is like generally in present and what they enjoy and dislike about living there</li> </ul>
Additional	To link this module with other subjects the teacher could consider asking students to draw a picture of different street scenes and/or plot a map of the local area