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SPECIFIC FEATURES OF TEACHING HISTORY AS AN ACADEMIC SUBJECT

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Abstract

Teaching history plays a crucial role in shaping learners' worldview, critical thinking, and national identity. Unlike many other academic disciplines, history focuses on past events, social processes, and human experiences, requiring specific pedagogical approaches. This article analyzes the distinctive features of teaching history, including its educational, developmental, and value-oriented functions. Special attention is given to historical thinking, source-based learning, interdisciplinarity, and the use of modern teaching methods. The study highlights the importance of history education in fostering civic responsibility and analytical skills among students.

Keywords: History education, teaching methods, historical thinking, interdisciplinarity, critical analysis.

Introduction

History as a school subject occupies a special place in the education system. It not only provides knowledge about past events but also helps students understand social development, cultural heritage, and cause-and-effect relationships in human society. Teaching history requires unique methods and approaches due to the abstract nature of historical time and the complexity of historical processes. Therefore, identifying the specific features of teaching history is essential for improving the effectiveness of history education.

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One of the most important features of teaching history is its strong educational and moral dimension. History lessons contribute to the formation of students' national identity, patriotism, and respect for universal human values. Through the study of historical events and personalities, learners develop moral judgments, ethical awareness, and a sense of social responsibility.

Unlike exact sciences, history does not provide absolute answers; instead, it encourages students to evaluate different viewpoints and interpretations. This aspect makes history a value-oriented subject that shapes students' attitudes toward society and humanity. Another distinctive feature of history teaching is the development of historical thinking. Students are taught to analyze historical facts, compare events, identify causes and consequences, and understand continuity and change over time. Historical thinking involves skills such as chronological awareness, critical evaluation of sources, and interpretation of evidence.

The use of primary and secondary sources plays a significant role in history education. Working with historical documents, maps, images, and artifacts helps students develop analytical skills and learn how historical knowledge is constructed.

Teaching history is closely connected with other academic disciplines such as geography, literature, sociology, political science, and economics. These interdisciplinary links enrich history lessons and help students gain a holistic understanding of historical processes. For example, geographical knowledge supports the understanding of historical events, while literature reflects the cultural and social life of specific historical periods. Interdisciplinary teaching enhances students' interest and allows them to apply knowledge from different subjects in an integrated manner.

Modern history education emphasizes interactive and student-centered teaching methods. Discussions, debates, project-based learning, role-playing, and case studies are widely used to increase students' engagement. The application of

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digital technologies, such as multimedia presentations, virtual museums, and online archives, also contributes to more effective history teaching. These methods help transform history lessons from passive memorization into active learning processes, encouraging students to think independently and creatively.

Table-1. Sample Methods and Tools Used in Teaching History

Method / Tool	Description	Educational Purpose
Source-Based Learning	Working with primary and secondary historical sources such as archival documents, letters, photographs, and maps	Develop critical analysis skills, differentiate between fact and interpretation, understand reliability of sources
Chronological Tables & Timelines	Visual representation of historical events and processes in chronological order	Understand continuity and change, cause-and-effect relationships, and develop a sense of historical time
Discussion and Debate	Classroom debates on historical topics	Encourage critical thinking, communication skills, and respect for diverse viewpoints
Project-Based Learning	Individual or group projects like presentations, essays, posters, or digital content	Enhance research, collaboration, creativity, and connect history with real-life contexts
Digital Technologies	Multimedia presentations, virtual museums, online archives, and educational platforms	Make learning interactive, provide access to authentic sources, support independent study

Thus, Table 1 contains examples of the main methods and tools used in history teaching. It presents approaches such as working with historical sources, the use of chronological tables and timelines, discussions, project-based learning, and digital technologies. These methods are aimed at developing students' historical thinking, analytical and critical skills, and increasing their interest in the study of historical processes. The appendix illustrates the practical implementation of the theoretical principles discussed in the main part of the article.

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Table-2. Sample Lesson Plan for History Class

Topic: The Industrial Revolution Grade: 10th Grade Duration: 45 minutes			
Stage	Activity	Teaching Method	Expected Outcome
Introduction	Brief discussion of students' prior knowledge of the Industrial Revolution	Questioning, brainstorming	Activate prior knowledge, set learning goals
Main Activity	Analysis of primary sources: factory images, workers' letters	Source-based learning	Develop analytical skills, understand social impact
Group Work	Students create a timeline of major events	Collaborative learning, timelines	Understand chronological sequence and cause-effect
Debate	Discuss pros and cons of industrialization	Discussion and debate	Develop critical thinking and argumentation skills
Conclusion	Summary and reflection	Teacher-led discussion	Consolidate knowledge, link past and present

Thus, Table 2 includes a sample lesson plan for history, demonstrating the structure and stages of a modern lesson. The plan reflects the lesson objectives, organizational forms of learning activities, teaching methods used, and expected outcomes. This appendix demonstrates how the theoretical principles of history teaching can be implemented in practice and emphasizes the role of active and interactive methods in enhancing students' acquisition of historical knowledge.

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Table-3. Assessment Criteria for History Lessons

Skill Competence	Excellent (A)	Good (B)	Satisfactory (C)	Needs Improvement (D)
Knowledge of Facts	Accurately recalls and explains key historical facts	Recalls most facts with minor errors	Recalls basic facts	Limited recall of facts
Critical Thinking	Analyzes events and sources independently, identifies cause-effect	Analyzes events with some guidance	Limited analysis, mostly descriptive	Rarely analyzes or interprets
Use of Sources	Evaluates multiple sources critically, integrates evidence	Uses sources adequately	Uses sources but with errors or limited understanding	Minimal or incorrect use of sources
Communication & Presentation	Expresses ideas clearly, confidently, and logically	Expresses ideas clearly but with minor gaps	Expresses ideas with limited clarity	Difficulty expressing ideas
Engagement & Participation	Actively participates, collaborates with peers	Participates regularly	Limited participation	Rarely participates

Thus, Table 3 presents a system of criteria for assessing student achievement in history lessons. It defines key indicators of knowledge, skills, and competencies, including the level of historical knowledge, critical thinking, source-based skills, and communication skills. These criteria ensure an objective and transparent assessment of student learning and promote independence and responsibility in the study of history.

In conclusion, teaching history has several distinctive features that differentiate it from other school subjects. Its educational and value-oriented nature, focus on

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historical thinking, interdisciplinary connections, and reliance on modern teaching methods make history a powerful tool for developing well-rounded individuals. Effective history teaching not only provides knowledge of the past but also prepares students to understand the present and shape the future.

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