Transcript of Dr Kay Carroll – historical inquiry process in primary

The historical inquiry process in primary might look something like this. I guess it starts with the question, so it's quite a different approach rather than the teacher perhaps presenting the knowledge, it's starting with a question. Perhaps it's a physical artefact or a source and it's getting students to look at that particular aspect and say 'Well, what do we know about this? What can we observe? What deductions can we make?' And it could be something like a photograph. Who do we see in the picture? What's in the foreground? What's in the background? What might they be doing? What does this tell us? What might we notice about the clothing that they're wearing? What about the expressions on the face? So, actually drilling down using questioning and a lot of the inquiry questions – the who, the what, the when, the how and the why guide the process through. You might look at the sources in depth and then relate them to a larger story. So, for example you might look in Stage 3 at migration and you might look at a picture book such as Anh Do's, 'Littlest Refugee' which brings to life the migrant experience to unpack it and give them context and a particular narrative. And then you might look at some further sources, they might be primary or secondary. To start to unpack it you might build in some research which is very important allowing the students to gather their resources think about a particular question about why do we have migrants coming in this particular time? What were the struggles for freedom that they might have experienced? And putting those sources together in a very rich way where they might create a new text or a source booklet or something using ICT, perhaps a little movie. And then coming back and reflecting and thinking about what do these sources tell us? And have we actually been able to answer the question? And is there more that we can do? So, the historical inquiry process begins with the questioning, finding out information, doing further research, selecting, sifting, sorting, working out exactly what's of importance and relevance. Thinking about the bias or the limitations and then thinking about how we might create that to actually tell a story or tell a particular situation and why this happened and then reflecting and sharing that.

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