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IMPORTANCE OF HISTORY EDUCATION IN THE PRESENT DAY

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ABSTRACT

To study history is to study change: historians are experts in examining and interpreting human identities and transformations of societies and civilizations over time. They use a range of methods and analytical tools to answer questions about the past and to reconstruct the diversity of past human experience: how profoundly people have differed in their ideas, institutions, and the ways they have struggled while inhabiting a shared world. Historians use a wide range of sources to weave individual lives and collective actions into narratives that bring critical perspectives on both our past and our present. Studying history helps us understand and grapple with complex questions and dilemmas by examining how the past has shaped (and continues to shape) global, national, and local relationships between societies and people. Because history gives us the tools to analyse and explain problems in the past, it positions us to see patterns that might otherwise be invisible in the present – thus providing a crucial perspective for understanding (and solving!) current and future problems.

Introduction

History of education helps one to draw comparisons of the origins and development of several different ideas, practices and theories of education in different societies. In that way it can help one to formulate better ideas, patterns and principles and provide a larger perspective. History encompasses more than dates, names, and places. It describes how cultures remember events, how those events are presented to the next generation, and how the present engages with the past. In recent years, there's been a decline in the study of history. Why is this something we should care about? Here are ten reasons why history is important:

1. History builds a better understanding of the world

How does the world work? How causes societies to thrive or fail? We can answer these questions by studying history. Because it encompasses so many areas – like medical history, art history, economic history, etc – history can give us the fullest picture of how things unfold. Perhaps most importantly, history also provides us with a better understanding of how we got to where we are now.

2. History helps us understand humanity

Humans are complicated. It can be very challenging to figure out why people do the things they do. When we look at humanity with a broader lens, it can bring more clarity. In many ways, people are products of their environments, which includes the eras they were born in. Studying history can shed light on human behavior throughout time and help explain what's consistent and what seems to be more dependent on context.

3. History can teach us to be better citizens

Many people, including teachers, consider history an important part of being a good citizen. Students learn about how different policies affect their rights as citizens and how those rights came to be. For example, the history of voting reveals the many groups involved in ensuring voter equality, including the many Black and Indigenous people in places like the United States, Australia, and Canada. When students learn how hard people in the past worked for their rights, they're more likely to understand how important they are.

4. History can help the world make better decisions

“Those who don't learn from history are doomed to repeat it” is arguably the most famous quote about history. It's credited to philosopher George Santayana and has been repeated by other famous



people in various forms. This quote endures because it rings so true. Though many things change through time, some things don't. Countries that don't provide basic human rights always experience conflict. When humans hurt the planet, humans end up hurt. These are truths we can confirm by understanding history. If we commit to changing based on what we know, we can make better decisions.

5. Studying history can improve critical thinking

Learning about history doesn't inherently lead to better critical thinking, but it's a great vehicle for improving this skill. Every student of history should dig deeper than just memorizing names and dates. They should ask themselves "why." You're also exercising critical thinking when you ask about who records history and how that might affect its presentation. Is there another perspective?

6. Studying history opens up job opportunities

A degree in history opens up more career options than you might think. History majors find jobs in governments, NGOs, businesses, media organizations, and more. Several high-profile CEOs have backgrounds in history. This shows the value of history and that the skills that go into studying – such as critical thinking – apply to many fields. While knowing certain events and their corresponding dates might not end up being that important to your life, the "soft skills" you picked up in the process are valuable.

7. Understanding history can protect people from conspiracy theories

Major upheavals in society can be terrifying. They can also be hard to track through one lifetime, so history provides a map for the types of scenarios that lead to big change. Things like increased poverty, war, and distrust in the government have led to more crime and political radicalization. Understanding history and what drives change helps protect people from conspiracy theories, which tend to spread faster during stressful, chaotic times. When unchecked, belief in conspiracy theories can have tragic consequences and lead to real world violence.

8. History shapes cultural (and national) identity

History is important to identity. Nations have holidays recognizing big historical events and figures. The stories people tell shape their view of their cultural or national identity, informing how they behave in the present. Leaders understand how important history is and will reference it whenever they believe it will inspire people.

9. History can be manipulated to fit an agenda

Because history has such a major impact on a nation's identity, it's frequently manipulated and controlled. There are many things that certain groups would prefer not to remember. We can see this happening in places like the United States, where teaching about slavery and race has been controversial for decades. History textbooks contain multiple errors, omissions, or interpretations that downplay slavery. Recently, many states are passing laws that ban critical race theory in schools, but the definition isn't clear and could lead to teachers being penalized for simply teaching about race. History is at the center of this culture war.

10. History can facilitate empathy

Like critical thinking, history on its own doesn't necessarily lead to more empathy, but it provides a great canvas. The nonprofit Facing History and Ourselves believes that learning history can play a key role in addressing bigotry and hate. Students can practice "historical empathy," which teaches them to contextualize the actions of people in the past. Using primary sources – which show how events were represented and discussed when they were happening – is a good way to help students understand the past in a more empathetic way.

Conclusion

Students of history are not only teachers but also archivists, curators, history writers, genealogists, political scientists, historians and artists. History as a subject permeates every area of knowledge, and



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having a solid background in this métier makes people more aware of the world they live in, fosters compassion and builds a firm grasp of the problems we face as human beings. Regardless of their career path, graduates with an advanced degree in history are essential pillars of any forward-thinking society.

Of course, one of a history education's main goals is to better understand our world. "Where do we come from?" and "how did we get here" are questions humans have been asking for millennia. Quoting the University of the people blog, "If we want to truly understand why something happened ... you need to look for factors that took place earlier. Only through the study of history can people really see and grasp the reasons behind these changes, and only through history can we understand what elements of an institution or a society continue regardless of continual change.

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