

Implementation Strategies for Integrating Children's History into History Teaching in Junior High Schools

Dan Wei

The High School Affiliated to Shaanxi Normal University, Xi'an 710000, Shaanxi, China

DOI: 10.32629/jher.v5i6.3421

Abstract: In the field of junior high school history teaching, the teaching of children's history has gradually become an important topic that has attracted much attention. It not only enriches the content and perspective of history teaching but also helps to realize the interface between history and reality. In order to better integrate children's history into history teaching in junior high schools, the author combines practical teaching cases to analyze the implementation strategies of this issue from such aspects as focusing on collecting information, appropriately supplementing relevant content, and emphasizing research on the learning situation, to promote the cultivation of the core literacy of history discipline at the junior high school level and implement the fundamental task of the discipline of cultivating morality and nurturing human beings.

Keywords: children's history; history teaching in junior high schools; core literacy

1. Introduction

Three major discoveries have been discussed in the historical community, namely the discovery of man, the discovery of women, and the discovery of children. Children in history are important cognitive objects for junior high school students, and understanding their lives will shorten the distance between students and history and arouse their interest and enthusiasm for history learning. However, currently the teaching of children's history is almost absent. What are the problems and challenges facing the integration of children's history into history teaching in junior high schools? And how should it be solved? This paper has made some explorations and attempts from the perspective of combining theory and practice.

2. Challenges faced by children's history teaching

2.1 Relative lack of teaching resources

Compared with adult history, the teaching resources of children's history are relatively scarce. First of all, the proportion of children's history in junior high school history textbooks is relatively small and scattered, and what students learn from the textbooks is often the history of the monarchs and big figures. In addition, children used to live in a predominantly oral world and rarely left written materials, such as children's biographies, which can accurately reflect the lives of children at that time but are difficult to find in history. Besides, some historical materials compiled by adults are also difficult to depict children's lives and reveal their true voices.[1] Therefore, it is difficult for teachers to obtain rich and varied materials to support teaching activities in the process of lesson preparation.

2.2 Insufficient attention to classroom teaching

First, historical research is accustomed to taking "big figure" as the object of study. However, in recent years, it has been emphasized that the history of ordinary people should be emphasized, and that we should learn about big history from the small people, but children's history is still easily ignored, and children's voices have been drowned out for a long time. Secondly, history teachers in junior high schools do not have enough professional knowledge and research depth in the field of children's history and generally lack systematic training in teaching methods and strategies, making it difficult for them to skillfully integrate children's history into their teaching practice, thus limiting the richness and vividness of their teaching content.

3. Implementation strategies for integrating children's history into teaching

3.1 Teachers should pay attention to collecting materials related to children's history.

Xiong Bingzhen said, "Every nursery rhyme or childish poem, and every toy or game buried deep under the dust is a grain of sand that can reflect another world, and an eternal dewdrop through which one can see through the universe for a moment." [2]He used literary and romantic language to explain to us that the most easily overlooked materials, such as

ancient nursery rhymes, fairy tales, toys and games, can actually restore children's diverse experiences in ancient times. Therefore, history teachers in junior high schools should actively expand the channels of teaching resources and build a distinctive children's history teaching resource database, to provide strong support for the development of teaching activities.

For example, in the teaching of "Westernization Movement", the author actively collected relevant information about young children studying in the United States, learning that these young children were assigned to more than 40 American families and quickly adapted to life in the United States. They crossed the language barrier with amazing speed, and the academic excellence they achieved amazed the Americans. According to statistics, by 1880, over 50 young children in the U.S. were enrolled in local universities, mainly Yale University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Columbia University, and Harvard University. However, such a study abroad program was suddenly terminated ahead of schedule in the Qing Dynasty, and all the young children who studied in the U.S. were recruited back to China. After returning to China, those who were once considered too Westernized to lose faith in the imperial court, after being influenced by Western culture and civilization, became the pioneers of China's mining, railway, and telegraph industries, including railway engineer Zhan Tianyou, the earliest president of Tsinghua University, and Tang Shaoyi, the first premier of the Republic of China, who have made indelible contributions to social progress in various fields.

The stories of young children in the U.S. in the late Qing Dynasty are a typical representative of children's history, since those children are similar in age to junior high school students, and the ups and downs of their destinies can greatly arouse the interest of students. At the same time, students are guided to compare studying abroad before and after a century, to deeply understand the personal fate of these young children studying abroad during the late Qing period, which is closely intertwined with the rise and fall of the country, and to cultivate the students' sound personality in the subtle cultivation.

3.2 Lessons should be appropriately supplemented with content of children's history

The charm of history lies in the details, and the telling of them is the most touching, shocking and engraved in people's hearts. Therefore, taking the vivid details of children's history as the starting point and introducing them appropriately in the classroom can vividly show the children's life in history, make the distant and passing history reappear in front of the eyes, and bring students a more three-dimensional, full-bodied and comprehensive historical picture, so that the teaching process is full of vigour and vitality.

Take the teaching of "The Development of Education and Cultural Undertakings", in which the author added the children's life in the late Qing Dynasty and the early Republic of China. When discussing the development of movies, the stills of the movie "The Wanderings of Sanmao" are displayed and the relevant stories of Sanmao are told, leading students to understand the real situation of underprivileged children in Shanghai in the 1920s and 1930s. The introduction of three films for children by Lianhua Company in 1935 is then displayed[3], and students are guided to think about and analyze the historical value of films in this period.

Movie Title	Main Content
The Cherub	How to shape the sound personality of children under the social environment and feudal forces
A Lamb Astray	In the cruel reality of the environment, the struggle and fight of street children pose a serious social problem
Juvenile China	When the whole nation strives for survival, how can children train and use their strength to contribute to the new China

After a joint discussion between teachers and students, it can be seen that these three children's films are a true portrayal of children's lives in the course of Shanghai's urban development at that time, reflecting the struggle of children at the bottom to try to change their lives, and also reflecting the desire of Shanghai city for modern successors during the social transition period, that is, the image of children full of ideals, courageous in struggle, hardworking and persevering.

Movies come from life and will eventually be integrated into life. In the twenties and thirties, children's films in Shanghai were characterized by deep reflection on society and sincere concern for children. In such a civilian world of children's films, traditional heroes, great men and chivalrous men did not appear. Instead, these films were obsessed with ordinary life and the world, singing for the efforts of children in the middle and lower classes of society, showing their life force in the face of all kinds of trials and tribulations in life. Introducing these children's films into the history teaching of junior high schools has not only broadened the channels for students to learn about history, but also provided valuable spiritual food for the children under the podium, inspiring them to work hard for their ideals without fear of setbacks.

3.3 Teaching should pay attention to the study of junior students' learning conditions

Since junior high school students are still counted as children by age according to the international definition, teachers should respect the unique spiritual world and spiritual needs of students in the classroom, and provide spiritual products

that meet the characteristics of children's age to meet children's physical and mental development. Think more about what students are curious about most and what kind of history lessons are their favourite. Therefore, to integrate children's history into junior high school history teaching is to fully grasp students' interests, which can enable students to establish emotional connections with children in history in the classroom, and then warmly care for reality.

Take the teaching of "The First Industrial Revolution", in which the author introduced child labour during the Industrial Revolution, which left a deep impression on students. First of all, amid the influence of the Industrial Revolution, the labour situation of a large number of child labourers was displayed, and students were instructed to think about why child labour was used in large quantities at that time in Britain. Through the materials, it was concluded that low wages for child labourers could not even maintain the minimum standard of living, and they were more obedient, which also made factory owners think they were easy to control. Secondly, the working conditions of child labourers were introduced from the aspects of labour intensity, labour remuneration, and the working environment.[4] Through picture display, historical data presentation, and storytelling, child labourers are depicted in various tortures and tough living conditions in labor. It was not until the middle of the 19th century that the problem of child labour was basically solved due to various political, economic and sociological factors.

The detailed descriptions of pictures and texts touched the hearts of the listening students and aroused great sympathy for child labourers, which has established an emotional connection between history and reality. This concern for children in history will also continue to be carried over into daily life, teaching students to be kind to their peers, to always harbour a sense of goodwill and gratitude, and face the world with a warm and pure heart.

4. The value and significance of integrating children's history into teaching

The instruction of children's history has a unique and important value for cultivating of students' historical literacy. Firstly, the greatest significance of integrating children's history into junior high school history teaching is to let children in reality understand children in history, integrate history classes into students' inner world and narrow the distance between history and reality, which in turn cultivates students' genuine humanistic care for the real society.[5]

At the same time, the teaching of children's history can further fulfil the purpose of history teaching to shape students' sound personalities. Many children in history can be role models for students, and their noble personality traits will deeply influence the teenagers in their formative years, and play an important role in cultivating and shaping the sound personality of junior high school students.

In addition, the long-term subtle expansion of children's history can make students understand that history is not only the history of elites and great people, but also the history of ordinary people, the grassroots and small potatoes, which effectively promotes the cultivation of students' diversified thinking and makes history lessons warmer and more affectionate.

References

- [1] Xiong Bingzhen. Recalling Childhood: The History of Chinese Children [M]. Rye Field Publishing Co., Ltd., 2000.
- [2] Chen Zhenzhen. A Review and Prospect of Studies on the History of Western Children: Ariès and His Critics [J]. *New Historiography*, 2004 (Issue 1): 167-190.
- [3] Liu Yuan. Advertisements for Children's Products in Shanghai Journal from 1927 to 1937 and the Construction of Children's Daily Life in Shanghai [J]. *Studies in Preschool Education*, 2013 (01): 11-16.
- [4] Yin Mingming, Liu Changfei. Child Labour during the British Industrial Revolution [J]. *Journal of Shandong Normal University (Social Sciences Edition)*, 2000 (03): 45-47.
- [5] Feng Yixia. The History of Children and the Reform of Junior High School History Teaching [J]. *Reference of Middle School History Teaching*, 2016 (6): 6-10.