

A Study on the Connection between Junior High School and Senior High School in Cultivating Historical Understanding Ability

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Abstract: Historical understanding is an important historical subject ability in middle school, and teachers should consider cultivating students' historical understanding ability as an important teaching task. The cultivation of historical understanding ability needs to be gradual, which makes it necessary for us to examine the cultivation of historical understanding ability from the perspective of the connection between junior high school and senior high school. To effectively cultivate students' ability to understand history, attention should be paid to coherence when formulating teaching objectives for cultivating historical understanding ability; Pay attention to coherence when using historical materials as a medium to cultivate historical understanding abilities; Pay attention to coherence when building a spatiotemporal environment to cultivate historical understanding abilities.

Key words: Ability to understand history; Connection between junior high school and senior high school; Ability development

Historical understanding is a frequently discussed and new topic in the field of history and historical education. On the one hand, historical understanding is an essential central link for historians to study history. As some scholars have pointed out, to make history meaningful and valuable, historians must go beyond empirical evidence and move towards interpretation. The bridge between empirical evidence and interpretation is 'understanding'. The process of teaching and learning history in middle school is actually the process of students understanding history. For this reason, we need to cultivate students' historical understanding ability in the practice of middle school history teaching.

1 A Further Understanding of the Connotation and Importance of Historical Understanding

The connotation of "understanding" simply refers to understanding or understanding, and the process of understanding also involves a series of psychological activities. The connotation of "understanding" in historical understanding can be seen as the psychological activities of students in the process of learning history, referring to a series of thinking processes of students as the subject when encountering object history (such as textbooks, historical materials, test questions, etc.).

In order to better analyze the connotation of historical understanding, we can analyze it from the following three perspectives. Firstly, historical understanding involves the understanding and transfer of knowledge. Understanding is a crucial link for middle school history learning, and without understanding, history learning cannot achieve the expected goals. There are two key goals in the teaching of history in middle school. The first is to promote students' retention of the knowledge they have learned, and the second is to promote students' transfer of the knowledge they have learned. The former refers to students remembering what they have learned, while the latter refers to understanding and applying the knowledge they have learned. The biggest misconception in the study of liberal arts courses, especially

in the field of history, is the belief that once remembered, one can learn well. This statement clearly overlooks the importance of understanding in the study of history in secondary schools. For example, students can easily recite "The An Shi Rebellion was the turning point of the Tang Dynasty from prosperity to decline", but some students cannot understand why the An Shi Rebellion led to the Tang Dynasty from prosperity to decline. This example reflects a common phenomenon that 'knowing history is not equivalent to understanding history'. So it can be said that the key to learning history lies in transfer, and the important factor that affects transfer is understanding. Secondly, the cultivation of historical understanding is a two-way activity between teachers and students. Unlike the cultivation of other understanding abilities, students' historical understanding ability is developed through interaction between teachers and students. In the cultivation of historical understanding, teachers play a leading role. There are many historical terms and concepts in junior high school history teaching, such as "recuperation", "eunuch dictatorship", "feudal separatism", etc. For junior high school students, it is necessary to understand them more accurately under the guidance of teachers. While teachers play a leading role, students themselves should also play a leading role. Understanding cannot be easily achieved, it must be accompanied by learners' active participation. Only when students actively participate in learning, engage in thinking and reasoning can they truly understand the content they are learning. Thirdly, historical understanding has distinct disciplinary characteristics. Compared with other understanding abilities, historical understanding has its unique connotation, such as historical materialism, historical data reading, contextual understanding and evidence awareness. The medium for understanding history is various historical materials, which can be cultural relics, first-hand literature, or the works of historians. Historical understanding is a bridge that connects the past, present, and future. Although the object of understanding is the past, the goal of understanding is not only to understand the past, but also to gain insight into the present and predict the future. Using history as a mirror and learning

from history" is a unique and distinctive function of historical understanding.

On the basis of analyzing the connotation of historical understanding, we need to further analyze its importance in middle school history education and teaching. Specifically, the importance of historical understanding is manifested in the following aspects: firstly, historical understanding is an important way of thinking for middle school students, and it is a disciplinary ability that middle school students should possess when learning history. The so-called thinking refers to the ideological activity of inferring other things from observed things and using the former as the basis or foundation for belief in the latter. The thinking activity runs through the entire history teaching activity, and the most important thing in the thinking activity is understanding. Students must have a deep understanding in order to explore the meaning of things, and the goal of understanding is to pursue the meaning of things. Mastering and understanding this important way of thinking can greatly promote students' learning of history. At the same time, historical understanding is also a necessary historical subject ability for students. History subject ability refers to the ability to promote students' mastery of basic knowledge, skills, and methods in the study of history, while also promoting students' ability to solve historical and practical problems. Among the numerous abilities in the field of history, the ability to understand history is relatively important. As mentioned earlier, understanding is a bridge between history and reality, and by understanding history, one can better face reality and the future. Understanding is the foundation of all students' historical learning activities, and the ability to understand history can best showcase the characteristics of the history discipline. Only by deeply understanding what is learned can students effectively acquire knowledge, skills, and values. Secondly, historical understanding is an organic supplement to the core competencies of the history discipline, and at the same time, the core competencies of the history discipline have injected new connotations into historical understanding. The five core competencies of the history discipline are closely related to historical understanding abilities. Historical materialism is an important theoretical basis for guiding students to understand history. The concept of time and space is an important way of guiding students to understand history. Only by standing within the time and space at that time can we accurately understand history. There are two relationships between historical evidence and historical understanding. On the one hand, "historical data" is an important object of historical understanding, and on the other hand, "evidence" is an important attitude when conducting historical understanding. Historical understanding and interpretation are an interactive relationship in teaching practice, and correct understanding is conducive to forming correct interpretations. The national sentiment of the family is the ultimate destination of historical understanding. By understanding history and reality, cultivating correct values and forming a positive sense of national sentiment. It can be seen that the cultivation of students' core literacy in the field of history cannot be separated from the cultivation of their ability to understand history. In the 2017 edition of the "History Curriculum Standards for Ordinary High Schools", it is pointed out that "students form the core literacy of the history subject through the study of history courses, achieving comprehensive development, personalized development, and sustainable development." It can be seen that "forming the core literacy of the history subject" is the most important curriculum

goal of the history subject in middle schools. Since the ability to understand history is closely related to the five core competencies of the history discipline, the cultivation of the ability to understand history should also become an important curriculum and teaching goal for middle school history subjects. Thirdly, the acquisition of historical understanding ability directly affects the effectiveness of classroom teaching. The effectiveness of understanding based classroom teaching is much higher than that of indoctrination based classroom teaching. In indoctrinated classroom teaching, students may know a large amount of historical knowledge, but knowing history does not mean that students understand history. If students want to further apply knowledge for thinking, they must understand and possess the ability to understand history. In history classroom teaching, teachers should guide students to understand and pay attention to the acquisition of students' historical understanding abilities. Only by emphasizing the cultivation of historical understanding ability can students avoid various misunderstandings during learning.

2 The cultivation of historical understanding ability requires attention to the connection between junior high school and senior high school

The importance of understanding cannot be overstated. "Our practice has proven that we cannot immediately understand what we feel, only what we understand can we feel it more deeply." It is precisely because of the importance of understanding and its position in middle school history teaching that we should consider the cultivation of historical understanding ability as one of the most important tasks in middle school history subject teaching. The cultivation of historical understanding ability needs to be gradual, which makes it necessary for us to examine the cultivation of historical understanding ability from the perspective of the connection between junior high school and senior high school. There are four main reasons why the cultivation of historical understanding ability should focus on the connection between junior high school and senior high school.

Firstly, given the unique characteristics of historical understanding ability, its cultivation needs to focus on the connection between junior high school and senior high school. As mentioned earlier, understanding is an important way of thinking, and historical understanding is a key historical subject ability in the middle school stage. The importance of historical understanding ability determines that its cultivation process cannot be achieved overnight. Teachers need to pay attention to the cultivation of students' historical understanding ability throughout the middle school stage. The understanding of history affects the effectiveness of history teaching and learning, and its cultivation needs to run through the entire teaching process of junior high school. As long as history teaching is ongoing, it will inevitably be accompanied by students' historical understanding process. There are significant differences in the nature, content, and difficulty of the history curriculum between junior and high school students. The abstract level of historical content that students need to learn in high school is much higher than that in junior high school, so students need to have a higher level of historical understanding ability to support their learning. Secondly, the relevant descriptions in the curriculum standards require us to pay attention to the

connection between junior high school and senior high school when cultivating students' historical understanding ability. The junior high school history curriculum standard points out that "through the teaching of history courses in the compulsory education stage, students can master the basic knowledge of Chinese and foreign history, preliminarily master the basic methods and skills of learning history", and at the same time, students should be able to "gradually improve their understanding of history. By studying in high school, students can further master historical knowledge and skills on the basis of compulsory education, broaden their historical perspective, strengthen historical thinking, and establish correct historical concepts. By comparing the relevant discussions in the history curriculum standards of junior and high schools, it can be seen that the cultivation of historical understanding ability, as an important subject ability, needs to be carried out throughout the entire middle school stage. In junior high school, students need to have a preliminary understanding of history, while in high school, they need to improve on the foundation of junior high school and become more proficient in using historical understanding skills to learn history and solve historical and practical problems. Thirdly, throughout the entire junior high school teaching stage, students' knowledge is constantly expanding, and rich knowledge can effectively promote the development of students' historical understanding ability. Knowledge is the foundation of understanding, and understanding without knowledge is rootless. Simply put, the cultivation of historical understanding ability requires a large amount of historical knowledge as support, and the reserve of knowledge is constantly expanding from junior high school to high school. Therefore, the cultivation of historical understanding ability needs to closely pay attention to the connection between junior high school and high school. Fourthly, the psychological and physiological changes that occur in middle and high school students also require teachers to pay attention to the connection between middle and high school when cultivating students' historical understanding abilities. During the transition from junior high school to high school, there are significant differences in students' psychological, cognitive, and personality development, which can affect their acquisition of subject abilities such as historical understanding. Taking cognitive development as an example, junior high school students tend to have a cognitive bias towards sensibility, while senior high school students tend to have a cognitive bias towards rationality. The change from sensibility to rationality is a manifestation of the transformation of students' thinking patterns. And the way of thinking is precisely the most crucial factor affecting understanding, and the improvement of students' thinking ability and cognitive level from middle school to high school can promote the development of historical understanding ability. At the same time, teachers should also pay attention to the differences in the psychological development of middle and high school students when selecting methods and strategies for cultivating historical understanding abilities.

3 The Linking Path of Developing Historical Understanding Ability in Junior High School

1. When formulating teaching objectives to cultivate the ability to understand history, attention should be paid to cohesion.

Integrating the core competencies of the subject into teaching

objectives is a consensus among many frontline teachers. As mentioned earlier, there is a close correlation between historical understanding and the core competencies of the history discipline. Therefore, the cultivation of historical understanding ability should also be regarded as an important teaching goal in daily teaching, just like the cultivation of core competencies of the same discipline. The formulation of teaching objectives is related to the effectiveness of teaching. In teaching, teaching objectives guide the direction of teaching and dominate the entire teaching process. A reasonable teaching objective can achieve ideal results in teaching. Only with clear goals can students' ability to understand history be more targeted. There are four basic characteristics of teaching goal statement: "Firstly, the subject of achieving the goal is the student; secondly, there should be behavioral verbs that can detect the student's state; thirdly, there should be restrictive conditions for achieving the goal; fourthly, the degree of achieving the goal should be expressed." For example, in the middle school history lesson "Politics of the Northern Song Dynasty", we can formulate the following teaching objectives: "Students should read the written materials in textbooks under the guidance of teachers, and list two or more measures to strengthen centralization in the Northern Song Dynasty." Among them, "students" are the subject of action, "list" is the verb of action, "reading the written materials in textbooks under the guidance of teachers" is a restrictive condition, and "two or more measures to strengthen centralization in the Northern Song Dynasty" is the degree of achievement. Adopting such a statement form can effectively guide teaching and also facilitate teacher evaluation. In daily teaching, we can formulate teaching objectives from the three dimensions of knowledge, ability, and emotional values, and the cultivation of historical understanding ability belongs to the goal of the ability dimension. When formulating teaching objectives to cultivate the ability to understand history, we should pay more attention to the selection of action verbs. According to the existing research results of history pedagogy and goal taxonomy, we can subdivide historical understanding from the dimension of cognitive process, and further divide it into description, enumeration, induction, comparison and construction, which can just act as the action verbs in teaching goals effectively. Here is an example for discussion. "Induction" refers to students summarizing one or more common or individual points after mastering and understanding multiple related factual knowledge. The thinking style of "from special to general, and then from general to special" is an important component of students' historical understanding ability. At this time, students not only need to understand general phenomena, but also need to understand special phenomena. For example, in the ninth lesson "Bourgeois revolution and the establishment of capitalist system" of the unified high school history textbook "Outline of Chinese and Foreign History (II)", students need to learn about the relevant contents of Bourgeois revolution such as the British Glorious Revolution, the American War of Independence and the French Revolution. On the basis of mastering and understanding these revolutionary historical facts, students need to summarize the individuality and commonness between modern western Bourgeois revolution. Through the above analysis, we can draw up such a goal to guide students to develop the ability to understand history: "Summarize the similarities and differences of modern Bourgeois revolution by combing the relevant historical facts of the British, American and French Bourgeois revolution." Such a teaching goal directly refers to the development

of students'ability to understand history.In summary,when formulating teaching objectives to cultivate students'historical understanding ability,teachers should pay attention to the selection of action verbs.Only by selecting appropriate and targeted action verbs can students'historical understanding ability be promoted.Of course,in addition to describing,enumerating,summarizing,comparing,and constructing abilities,there are also many verbs that point to the cultivation of historical understanding abilities,which need to be continuously discovered and summarized by teachers in teaching practice.

The nature and objectives of the curriculum in the history subject of junior and senior high schools are different,and students'physical and mental development levels are also different. Moreover,since history teaching in junior and senior high schools is a whole,when formulating teaching objectives to cultivate historical understanding abilities,attention should be paid to the connection between junior and senior high schools,and the differences,coherence,and continuity of the objectives should be noted.If the choice of action verbs can make teaching objectives more targeted,then the formulation of restrictive conditions can highlight the connection between junior high school and senior high school.According to different levels of development,we can divide historical understanding ability into four levels,namely:being able to understand under the guidance of teachers,being able to understand independently,being able to actively understand in continuity and change,and being able to apply relevant theories of history to understand history and reality.Here,we will still give an example for analysis.Confucianism,represented by Confucius and Mencius,is a common focus and difficulty in history teaching in middle and high schools.Teachers should guide students to accurately understand the influence of Confucianism.In the first stage of junior high school,students are exposed to Confucianism for the first time.At this time,teachers can set the following teaching objectives:"Students can guide them to read the relevant content of textbooks and summarize the influence of Confucianism during the Spring and Autumn Warring States period."Students can accurately summarize the influence of Confucianism during the Spring and Autumn Warring States period,based on their understanding of the basic overview of Confucianism and the historical background of the Spring and Autumn Warring States period.Completing such teaching objectives is actually training students'historical understanding ability.In high school,students will learn Confucianism again,and their historical understanding ability and knowledge reserve will increase.Teaching objectives will also need to change according to these changes,At this point,teachers can formulate teaching objectives such as:"Students can place Confucianism in the time and space of ancient Chinese history,and summarize the influence of Confucianism on the development of ancient Chinese society through continuity and change."Compared to the objectives of middle school,this goal in high school has increased difficulty and higher requirements for students'historical understanding ability.So in such a connection,it can effectively promote the improvement of students'historical understanding ability.Therefore,in order to more effectively and coherently cultivate students'historical understanding ability,teachers need to pay attention to the connection between junior high school and senior high school in the cultivation of historical understanding ability.In terms of formulating teaching objectives,teachers can highlight the connection by paying attention to the formulation

of"restrictive conditions",in order to promote the improvement of students'historical understanding ability.

2.When using historical materials as a medium to cultivate the ability to understand history,attention should be paid to connection

Historical materials are an important carrier and object for middle school students to learn history,and cultivating students'ability to understand history requires providing them with more detailed historical materials.After the new curriculum reform,the historical materials teaching method has become the most commonly used teaching method in middle school history classrooms,and it is also the teaching method that best reflects the characteristics of the history subject.With the promulgation of the latest high school curriculum standards,the proposal of"historical evidence demonstration"as the core literacy of the history discipline has sparked widespread discussion in the history education community,and historical teaching has reached a new level.The so-called teaching of historical materials refers to the emphasis on the selection,analysis,judgment,and application of historical materials.Under the guidance of teachers,students explore historical issues through their own thinking and exploration,acquire and master certain historical research methods,and form a certain view of history and values."The teaching of historical materials to a certain extent reflects the learning theory of constructivism,which believes that the acquisition of knowledge cannot rely on the teaching of others,Instead,one should self construct in a certain context,so that knowledge acquisition can be meaningful and long-lasting.In this way,in the teaching of historical materials,historical materials provide students with a learning environment.Students first understand the historical materials,then construct knowledge,and ultimately achieve the goal of solving problems.Obviously,the process of constructing students in history learning is the process of understanding.History itself contains two levels.The first level(History I)is the knowledge or recognition of historical facts or materials,and the second level(History II)is the understanding or interpretation of the first level(History I).In middle school history teaching,students need to first master the first level and then master the second level,that is,first master the basic historical facts and materials,and then understand and construct these historical facts and materials,The process of mastering the second level actually involves historical understanding.History courses should be based on historical materials,but they must be built on students'understanding and interpretation of historical materials.So historical material teaching is one of the important ways to cultivate students'historical understanding ability.It is necessary to provide students with a large amount of materials for study in teaching to promote their improvement in historical understanding ability.In the process of cultivating students'historical understanding ability through historical material teaching,it is also necessary to pay attention to the connection between junior and senior high schools.Faced with the same historical facts and materials,junior and senior high school students'understanding may differ.This phenomenon is related to students'understanding ability,historical literacy,and physical and mental development.

For example,when discussing the topic of"Qin Shi Huang Unifying the Six Kingdoms",middle school teachers can guide students to read materials from textbooks,as well as monographs and papers by contemporary historians.In the 9th lesson of"Qin Unifies China"in the first volume of the seventh grade junior high school history textbook,the teacher guided students to read the

sub item "Qin Destroys the Six Kingdoms" in order to understand the process of Qin unifying China. The understanding and reading abilities of middle school students are relatively weak, and it is not advisable to provide overly difficult classical Chinese or advanced papers. Teaching materials should be more intuitive. In high school, teachers can provide a certain amount of classical Chinese or first-hand historical materials for students to understand and use. If materials such as "On the Six Kingdoms", "On the Passing of Qin", and "The Annals of Qin Shi Huang" can be provided to students, they can be guided to read these contents to accurately understand the merits and demerits of the Qin Dynasty and Qin Shi Huang himself. Historical materials are an important carrier for improving students' ability to understand history. During the early and high school stages, students should be provided with a large amount of historical materials that are within their acceptable range. The difficulty level of materials provided in the middle school stage should not be too high, while the difficulty, depth, and breadth of materials provided in the high school stage should be improved compared to those in the middle school stage. These practices not only use historical materials as an important medium for cultivating historical understanding, but also pay attention to the issue of connecting junior high school and senior high school in the process of cultivating historical understanding ability.

3. When building a spatiotemporal environment to cultivate the ability to understand history, attention should be paid to connection

To understand history, one must stand in the time and space of the time, and cannot understand it from the perspective of the present and present. Understanding history in time and space is a consensus in the history teaching community of high schools in many countries. The concept of "chronological understanding" has been proposed in history teaching in high schools in the UK, which refers to the understanding of history based on a grasp of the sequence of events. In teaching practice, American teachers emphasize the importance of contextualization in teaching. This kind of thinking is seen as a beacon for learning history in the history teaching community of American high schools. Temporal thinking is the core of historical reasoning. Without strong temporal thinking, students cannot study the relationships between these events or explain historical causal relationships. Similarly, China has also proposed the concept of time and space as the core literacy of the history discipline in the latest high school history curriculum standards. "Any historical event occurs under specific and specific time and space conditions, and only within a specific time and space

framework can there be an accurate understanding of historical events." It can be seen that understanding history in a specific time and space is a consensus in the history teaching community of high schools in various countries. In order to effectively promote the improvement of students' historical understanding ability and promote their reasonable understanding of history, teachers can enhance students' historical understanding ability by cultivating their spatiotemporal concept literacy. The concept of time and space, like historical understanding, must be developed gradually. Teacher Feng Yi from Chengdu University has divided the level of spatiotemporal literacy (see Table 1 for details), and presenting this simplified table has important reference value for us to gradually cultivate students' spatiotemporal literacy. The cultivation of the concept of time and space is conducive to promoting students' understanding of history and also improving their ability to understand history. In daily teaching, teachers should train students to connect their learned history as a whole and establish connections between various parts. Only after establishing connections at various stages can students place their learning within the context of connections for understanding.

Constructing a spatiotemporal environment that is suitable for understanding is an important measure to promote students' ability to understand history. Similarly, when constructing a spatiotemporal environment, attention should also be paid to the connection between junior high school and senior high school. In junior high school, students should be able to master and understand vocabulary and concepts related to time, such as royal chronology, chronology, and AD chronology. These vocabulary and concepts related to time are the foundation for students to understand. At the same time, in the middle school stage, teachers should also guide students to initially form a sense of time and guide them to understand history in time and space. In high school, students should be able to proactively place history in a specific time and space for understanding, and be able to clearly recognize that without time and space, accurate understanding of history cannot be achieved. Through long-term training in spatiotemporal concepts in middle and high schools, students' ability to understand history will be improved accordingly. When constructing a spatiotemporal environment to cultivate students' historical understanding ability, attention should be paid to the issue of connection. This not only gradually cultivates students' spatiotemporal concept literacy, but also helps to cultivate students' historical understanding ability.

Table 1 Summary of Historical Time Concept Level Division

Level	ask	Applicable scope
One	Able to say and express the time when important historical things appeared (or existed)	
Two	Able to design, produce, and use historical time frames such as chronographs, chronologies of historical events, and historical stages	Junior high school stage
Three	Ability to place historical events under certain time conditions and analyze them in relation to spatial conditions	
Four	Ability to think in chronological, reverse chronological, and synchronic ways in history	High School Stage
Five	Being able to analyze the laws of historical development and changes based on time flow, and predict the development trends of certain real things	

Historical understanding is a key disciplinary ability and an important learning mindset, and the level of mastery of students' historical understanding ability can affect the effectiveness

of historical learning. The cultivation of historical understanding ability must pay attention to the connection between junior high school and senior high school, only in this way can we achieve twice

the result with half the effort.

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