



Replacing learning objectives with questions

The following learning objectives are taken from a common Y1/2 History unit on the Great Fire of London. Whilst the objectives (in bold) are well structured and sequenced they are not necessarily user friendly to a Year 1 or 2 pupil. If pupils are to self-evaluate against the learning objectives it will take some deduction and could be very challenging for lower attainers to understand.

The change to questions looks simple, but makes the learning much more accessible to pupils. The sequence from one lesson question to the next also makes better sense to a young pupil. Further, it allows for insertion of subsidiary questions, as illustrated. Most of these questions will be planned in advance, but some may well arise from pupils during lessons and can be built in responsively. Each question requires specific knowledge to be answered, so teaching has to be focused and relevant. The question then becomes the plenary discussion so that knowledge can be shared. To generate the textual knowledge the pupils need, feed the questions into Chat GPT AI and ask for the answers at an appropriate reading age.

To know when and how the fire started

When was the Great Fire of London and how did it start?

Also –

Which areas of London were burnt in the Fire?

Which buildings were not burnt and are still in London today?

To know why the fire spread so quickly and how it was eventually extinguished

What made the Fire spread so quickly? How was it put out?

Also -

How did people escape from the Fire?

Where did they go to be safe?

To know the main important people involved in the fire

Which people were important during the fire?

Also -

What does Samuel Pepys' diary tell us about the Fire?

Why is it an important document?

To know the impact that the fire has had on modern London

What difference did the Fire make to London?

Also –

How did buildings and streets change in London after the Fire?

Could the Fire of London happen again today?

If we want pupils to use and apply all this knowledge at the end of the unit we might ask them a broader question. This might be a class discussion, or a written activity.

Can we write our own diary of the Fire of London?