

## STRATEGIES FOR ORGANIZING PRACTICAL LESSONS IN TEACHING GRADE 11 VIETNAMESE HISTORY AT VINSCHOOL HIGH SCHOOL, HANOI

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**Abstract.** This article proposes several measures to organize practical lessons, a new type of lesson introduced in the 2022 History General Education Program. The study is based on feedback from 28 teachers and observations of 240 grade 11 students at Vinschool High School, Hanoi, who participated in these practical history lessons. The results indicate that effective organization of practical lessons requires an emphasis on group discussions, role-playing, and field trips, enabling students to gain a deeper understanding of historical events, while fostering critical thinking and teamwork skills. Additionally, special attention should be paid to lesson planning, integrating information technology, and creating a positive learning environment. The proposed measures for organizing practical lessons at Vinschool Hanoi High School not only enhance the quality of history teaching but also contribute to the comprehensive development of student's abilities.

**Keywords:** practical lesson organization, high school, Vietnamese history topics.

### 1. Introduction

Vietnam's 2018 General Education Program [1] and the revised High School History Program outlined in Circular 13 in 2022 [2] introduce practical lessons as a new lesson type.

According to the Vietnamese Dictionary [3] "practical activity" refers to applying theory to practice. In this context, students engage in activities where they apply their acquired knowledge, skills, and methods to real-world tasks, showcasing their capacities and personal qualities. The 2018 general education program identifies practical activity as one of three primary learning activities (practice, problem discovery, and training). In history, practice refers to applying learned knowledge to acquire new insights and complete socially meaningful tasks, such as contributing to local history research, building traditional houses, disseminating historical knowledge, or maintaining martyrs' cemeteries [4].

The integration of study and practice is a key focus of numerous educators, including M.B. Korokova and Studennikin [5], as well as Vietnamese researchers such as Nguyen Thi Coi, Trinh Dinh Tung, Lai Duc Thu, and others [6-10]. These studies emphasize the importance of practical activities in history education. In the 2018 General Education Program, practical lessons account for 20% of the curriculum. Several articles have addressed organizing experiential activities in history to meet the goals of the 2018 program [12-14], yet most focus on lesson planning rather than detailing specific types of historical practice exercises.

Unlike the 2006 Program, where practical activities were extracurricular, the 2022 General Education Program considers practical lessons an integral component of classroom instruction.

These lessons aim to consolidate and deepen students' understanding, promote the development of subject-specific skills, and increase engagement in history. They can be organized during class time or as experiential activities, such as history competitions, games, or clubs like *the "I Love History" Club...* Based on the characteristics of historical knowledge, two main types of practical lessons can be distinguished: 1) *Lessons that consolidate and clarify knowledge*, structured around cognitive exercises, event sequencing, and mind mapping to help students solidify their understanding. The limitation of this approach is its failure to engage deeply with core content. 2) *Lessons that delve into the core content of historical topics*, fostering deeper knowledge and understanding. Both lesson types enhance teachers' pedagogical skills, encourage creativity, and constantly improve teaching methods. These practical lessons bridge the gap between history and real life, making learning more meaningful and motivating for students. At Vinschool High School in Hanoi, part of the Vinschool Education System, practical lessons play a vital role in nurturing proactive learning habits, enhancing students' love for history, and preparing them for success in both academic and personal endeavors.

## **2. Content**

### **2.1. Research method**

This study employed quantitative methods, collecting data from 28 teachers and 240 grade 11 students in the Vinschool system during the 2023-2024 school year. The focus was on teaching practical lessons on Vietnamese History topics for grade 11. The research questions were: 1) *What measures can be applied to organize practical history lessons to develop students' abilities comprehensively?* 2) *What are students' responses to these measures for organizing practical history lessons at Vinschool High School?*

### **2.2. Analysis of survey results**

The survey results show that teachers clearly understand practical lessons, the different types of practical lessons being implemented, and how to effectively organize them. History teachers in the Vinschool system are enthusiastic, responsible, and professionally competent. They apply various methods and techniques in teaching, fostering a proactive, engaged, and enjoyable learning environment for students. Under the 2022 History Program, and with the support of the school's modern facilities, the History teachers at Vinschool High School have aligned with the Curriculum Mapping project and specific requirements of Vinschool. The expected outcome for students is that they will possess knowledge, learning skills, critical thinking, and leadership abilities, along with strong personal qualities, equipping them to be global citizens while retaining a strong sense of Vietnamese cultural identity and national pride.

Feedback from the 240 students regarding their practical lessons shows strong enthusiasm and engagement with historical practical activities. Students actively participate in experiential and extracurricular activities (once per semester), learning projects, specialized exercises, and in-class practical content related to new knowledge or specific practical lessons for each topic. Students are highly proactive and confident in expressing their opinions, particularly in developing critical thinking and effectively using information technology through lessons applying BYOD (Bring Your Own Device). The survey revealed high levels of interest in both History as a subject and practical lessons, demonstrating that Vinschool students are actively developing historical skills and drawing lessons from the past for the present and future.

However, the survey also revealed challenges for teachers in choosing practical lessons and organizing practical activities. Teachers have not fully incorporated group activities to encourage cooperative learning and maximize students' abilities. The results highlight the need for more

active participation in practical activities, especially in history lessons. Based on these findings, we propose several measures for organizing practical history lessons.

### **2.3. Discussion and Proposal of Measures for Organizing Practical Lessons in Teaching Vietnamese History to Grade 11 Students at Vinschools High School**

The Vietnamese History section in the 11th-grade History Program covers three main topics: 4) *The wars to defend the Fatherland and liberate the nation in Vietnamese history (before the August Revolution in 1945)*. 5) *Significant reforms in Vietnamese history (before 1858)*. 6) *The history of protecting Vietnam's sovereignty, rights, and legitimate interests in the East Sea*. At Vinschool Hanoi High School, the History program has been revised based on the national standard curriculum. The revised program allocates 20 periods for new content and five periods for practice, which is one more practice period than the national standard.

#### **2.3.1. Organizing practical lessons during in-class hours**

*\* Organize practical lessons in the form of historical games*

Learning games, which combine fun with teaching elements, are an effective method for deepening, enriching, and bringing history lessons to life. Organizing historical games follows these steps: 1) *Task assignment* (determining goals and planning), 2) *Preparation* (gathering information), 3) *Game participation* (explaining rules, playing, and declaring winners), and 4) *Reflection and evaluation* (discussing key takeaways, assessing the game's significance, and recognizing outstanding students).

For topic 6, two practical lessons are organized through a gameshow titled "*Fatherland Seen from the Sea*", the warm-up activity involves listening to the song "*Fatherland Calls My Name*" and identifying key historical topics. The gameshow consists of three stages: *Stage 1. Sovereignty Marks*: Students answer ten questions about Vietnam's establishment of sovereignty over the Hoang Sa and Truong Sa archipelagos. *Stage 2. Sea and Islands at the Edge of the Waves*: Using electronic devices, students participate in a quiz about Vietnam's efforts to protect its sovereignty. *Stage 3. Vietnam at the International Negotiation Table*: Students present and debate topics related to Vietnam's sovereignty and peaceful resolution of disputes in the East Sea.

After the gameshow, students reflect on their experiences, the knowledge, and skills applied, and suggest additional practical activities for future topics. This format effectively consolidates students' knowledge and develops critical thinking, problem-solving, and independent learning skills, while fostering patriotism and responsibility.

*\* Organize practical lessons using the debate/argumentation method (debate)*

Debate is a powerful method for encouraging student engagement, critical thinking, and the exploration of multiple perspectives. In history lessons, debates can focus on characters or events, allowing students to present, defend, and challenge different viewpoints. For example, in topic 5, students could debate the contributions of figures like Ho Quy Ly, Le Thanh Tong, and Minh Mang. The process involves *Step 1. Transfer of Debate Practice Tasks*: Students evaluate the contributions or limitations of historical figures and participate in a debate based on two prompts. *Step 2. Conduct the debate task*: Students organize their arguments and evidence. *Step 3. Participate in debate practice*: Groups support or oppose their assigned viewpoints. *Step 4. Feedback, Evaluation, and Summary Post-Debate Practice*: Students reflect on the debate, summarize key points, and apply lessons for future debates.

Organizing practical lessons using the debate method stimulates students to think actively to find arguments, reasons, and evidence for their points of view while practicing the skill of listening to different opinions from many sides. From there, develop the ability to look at an issue from many aspects, and have a sense of respect and calmness towards opposing opinions.

### **2.3.2. Organize practical lessons outside the classroom**

*\* Organize practical lessons to guide students in designing learning products*

Guiding students in designing learning products during practical lessons can involve both handmade products, such as models and comics, and technology-based products, such as posters, graphic novels, videos, historical cartoons, and infographics. Students can utilize various tools and software, combining text and images to develop products that foster digital citizenship skills. These lessons help students consolidate their knowledge, develop observation, thinking, and creativity skills, and actively engage with the subject. They also allow students to create their own products, either individually or in groups, fostering passion and interest in the subject, enhancing student capacity, and achieving the educational goal of “learning by doing”. The process of organizing a practical lesson on designing learning products for Topic 4, is as follows: *Step 1. Assign the task of designing learning products:* The lesson focuses on the Lam Son uprising and the Tay Son movement, with students assigned to the following groups: Group 1: Handicraft models; Group 2: Historical comics; Group 3: Graphic design; Group 4: Historical cartoons. Teachers provide rubrics for evaluating the products. *Step 2. Execute the task of designing learning products:* Students work in groups, develop ideas, assign tasks among members, and regularly report progress. *Step 3. Reporting on the Designed Practical Products:* Each group presents its product at different corners of the classroom, with members taking turns to report, while the other students listen, ask questions, and offer feedback. *Step 4. Comments, Evaluation, and Summary After Practicing Learning Product Design:* Based on rubrics, teachers provide feedback, summarize the lesson, and draw conclusions from the students’ designed products.

Guiding students in designing learning products not only improves teachers' teaching capacity but also maximizes learners' abilities and qualities.

*\* Organize practical lessons in the form of scientific research clubs*

Creating scientific research clubs for history allows students who share a common interest in exploring historical events, figures, and issues to engage in research. This method is an effective way to develop historical knowledge, critical thinking, and the ability to apply knowledge and skills to real-world problems, enhancing students' historical practice skills. Organizing history practice lessons through scientific research clubs helps promote dynamism, creativity, independent thinking, and self-learning. However, this form of lesson organization is more suitable for students who have the interest and motivation to engage deeply in history. Topics should be chosen flexibly to stimulate curiosity and investigative thinking.

For instance, after finishing Topic 6, the research process might proceed as follows:

*Step 1. Transferring the Research Task:* The objective is to study how Vietnam established sovereignty over the Hoang Sa and Truong Sa archipelagos. Students are assigned research methods and guided through the process of gathering theoretical and practical evidence.

***Table 1. Implementation plan for the scientific research project: 'The Process of Vietnam Establishing Sovereignty and Management Over the Hoang Sa and Truong Sa Archipelagos***

<b>Research stage</b>	<b>Percentage point</b>	<b>Products to be submitted</b>
<i>Research orientation</i>	10%	+ Research questions for the topic + Justification for choosing the research question + Adjusting the scope of the research question
<i>Information Collection</i>	20%	+ List of potential sources + Evaluate sources + Record the relevance of the source to the research question

<i>Synthesize ideas to develop research paper</i>	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ List of sources</li> <li>+ Outline of research question, including synthesis of content from sources</li> <li>+ Note the relevance of sources to research question</li> </ul>
<i>Complete the first research paper</i>	30%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Outline for research question (edited)</li> <li>+ First complete paper</li> </ul>
<i>Complete the second research paper</i>	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Editing and proofreading checklist for the article</li> <li>+ Second completed article after being evaluated according to the requirements of the editing and proofreading checklist</li> </ul>

*Step 2. Conducting Research:* following the five stages outlined in the table below.

**Table 2. Contents of the completed scientific research project titled 'The Process of Vietnam Establishing Sovereignty and Management over the Hoang Sa and Truong Sa Archipelagos**

<b>Research stage</b>	<b>Products to be submitted</b>	<b>Student Activities</b>
<i>Research orientation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Research questions for the topic</li> <li>+ Justification for choosing the research question</li> <li>+ Adjusting the scope of the research question</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Discuss and develop research questions: <i>Before 1884, how did Vietnam establish sovereignty and continuous state management of the Hoang Sa and Truong Sa archipelagos?</i></li> <li>+ Student group representatives report on the research questions their group proposed (Clearly state the reasons for choosing the question). =&gt; After receiving comments and feedback from teachers. Students can adjust the scope of the research question. <i>For example: Shortened the time scope under the reigns of King Gia Long and King Minh Mang.</i></li> <li>+ Discuss and provide answers to research questions, and propose research hypotheses.</li> <li>+ Determine and complete the name of the research topic.</li> <li>+ Assign tasks: time, tasks, assigned people, means, expected results...</li> </ul>
<i>Information Collection</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ List of potential sources</li> <li>+ Evaluate sources</li> <li>+ Record the relevance of the source to the research question</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Collect relevant information (documents, pictures, videos from sources):                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Complete map of Dai Nam nhat thong (1838)</i></li> <li>2. <i>Nguyen Dynasty's royal records</i></li> <li>3. <i>Nguyen Dynasty's king's order</i></li> <li>4. <i>Dai Nam thuc luc of the National History Institute of Nguyen Dynasty</i></li> <li>5. <i>Internet documents...</i></li> </ol> </li> <li>+ Evaluate the sources: <i>The Complete Map of Dai Nam nhat thong (1838) is a reliable original document, assigned by King Minh Mang to the Imperial Guard to be in charge of mapping.</i></li> </ul>

		<p>+ Record the relevance of the source to the research question as follows:</p> <p><i>The Complete map of Dai Nam nhat thong (1838) clearly shows Vietnam's sovereignty over the sea and islands under the reign of King Minh Mang, showing the two archipelagos of Hoang Sa and Truong Sa as a collection of about 30 islands, in which the island cluster is concentrated on the top, in the middle there are 2 words "Hoang Sa" and the scattered island cluster in the middle has 4 words "Van Ly Truong Sa".</i></p> <p>+ Complete and send to drive.</p>
<p><i>Synthesize ideas to develop research paper</i></p>	<p>+ List of sources</p> <p>+ Outline of research question, including synthesis of content from sources</p> <p>+ Note the relevance of sources to research question</p>	<p>+ List of sources: From the evaluated reference sources, students list the list of reliable information.</p> <p>+ Outline for the research question synthesizing the content from the sources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Overview of the Nguyen Dynasty under the reign of King Gia Long and King Minh Mang.</i></li> <li>2. <i>Why did King Gia Long and King Minh Mang attach importance to the activities of sovereignty and continuous state management of the Hoang Sa and Truong Sa archipelagos?</i></li> <li>3. <i>Policies and measures of King Gia Long and King Minh Mang regarding the activities of affirming, establishing, implementing and protecting sovereignty over the Hoang Sa and Truong Sa archipelagos.</i></li> <li>4. <i>Significance of activities of affirming, establishing, implementing and protecting sovereignty over the Hoang Sa and Truong Sa archipelagos under the reign of King Gia Long and King Minh Mang.</i></li> </ol> <p>+ Note the relevance of the source to the research question:</p> <p><i>Content 3. The policies and measures of King Gia Long and King Minh Mang regarding the activities of affirming, establishing, implementing and protecting sovereignty over the Hoang Sa and Truong Sa archipelagos can be exploited from the documents of the Nguyen Dynasty's orders and minutes.</i></p> <p>+ Complete and send to drive.</p>
<p><i>Complete the first research paper</i></p>	<p>+ Outline (edited)</p> <p>+ Lesson 1</p>	<p>+ In the 4 outlines of the research question completed from stage 3, students receive feedback from teachers and edit (if any).</p> <p>+ Complete the first article.</p> <p>+ Complete and send to drive.</p>
<p><i>Complete the second research paper</i></p>	<p>+ Editing and Proofreading Checklist</p> <p>+ Second Complete Article</p>	<p>+ Editing and proofreading checklist for the article: Receive feedback, list teacher feedback from the first completed article, assign editing for the article.</p> <p>+ Second completed article after being evaluated according to the requirements of the editing and proofreading checklist: Review the edited content.</p> <p>+ Complete and send to drive.</p>

*Step 3. Presenting Research:* Other students listen, ask questions, and provide evaluations.

*Step 4: Comments, Evaluations, and Summaries:* Teachers and peers provide feedback, and lessons learned are discussed.

This approach not only introduces students to the field of scientific research but also provides opportunities for in-depth historical study. It helps students develop the necessary skills for future career orientations and fosters a sense of appreciation for the achievements in protecting national sovereignty.

*\* Organize practical lessons through project-based learning methods*

Project-based learning is an active method in which students, under teacher guidance, acquire knowledge by combining theory with practice. Students typically work in groups to complete a project and present their findings within a set time frame. This method aligns with the objectives of practical lessons, as students analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information to solve problems posed by the project, consolidating their knowledge while developing critical thinking, research, and collaborative skills.

For example, in the practical lesson for Topic 4, the project might be titled “*Forever Echoing the Heroic Feats of the Nation*” and organized over two sessions using a blended learning approach. The Learning Management System (LMS) is used to manage tasks and facilitate coordination among students. The project is organized as follows:

*Lesson 1. Assigning tasks and implementing projects*

*Step 1. Project Implementation Tasks:* The project topic helps students understand the nation’s tradition of fighting foreign invaders and draws lessons about the responsibilities of the younger generation in building and defending the country. The teacher provides guiding questions, a timeline for the project, suggestions for products (e.g., PowerPoint, posters, magazines, videos, 3D models, infographics), and assigns roles within each group. A rubric is also shared for evaluating the products. This form of practical lesson strengthens students' capacity to connect knowledge with real-world issues and encourages self-learning and problem-solving while helping students develop essential skills for future academic and professional success.

*Step 2. Divide the participants into 5 groups:* They collect, investigate, and process information, and collaborate within their groups to reach a consensus. This process is displayed on the LMS using the “Group Set - People” feature, which shows the names of group members and group leaders. Groups are assigned the following topics: *Group 1: The Victorious Resistance Wars in National History. Group 2: The Unsuccessful Resistance Wars in National History. Group 3: The Significant Uprisings During the Period of Northern Domination. Group 4: Lam Son Uprising. Group 5: The Tay Son Movement.* Groups must complete their project products and submit them to the Assignments section on LMS at least two days in advance so that teachers can monitor progress and product quality.

*Lesson 2: Project report and project summary*

*Step 3. Report and Discuss the Project:* Each group presents their product within a 5-minute. Other groups listen, comment, provide feedback, and ask critical questions. Groups conduct self-evaluations and peer evaluations using individual, group, and group leader evaluation forms, with signatures to ensure objectivity and fairness.

*Step 4. Comments and Project Summary:* Teachers provide feedback and scores based on the rubric. They also summarize the project and offer suggestions to students to improve in future practice projects. At the end of the session, teachers pose reflective questions, such as: 1. *How long did it take to complete the practice product?* 2. *What sources did your group consult?* 3. *How did you develop digital citizenship skills?* 4. *What are you most proud of regarding your*

group's practice product? 5. If given the chance to redo the project, what improvements would you make?

Organizing the practical project “*Forever Resounding Heroic Feats of the Nation*” in combination with the LMS platform is highly meaningful for students. It consolidates knowledge, particularly allowing groups to deeply explore significant resistance wars and uprisings in national history. Students also develop essential skills, such as self-study, research (including how to independently discover knowledge and collect and analyze documents), and the application of learned knowledge to solve practical problems. The project fosters creative problem-solving, leverages the advantages of information technology, and encourages habits of self-study and proactive task completion. Students can reflect on lessons from history, connect them to present-day realities and future challenges, and contemplate their responsibilities as global citizens in safeguarding the nation.

### **3. Conclusion**

Organizing practical lessons for teaching Vietnamese history to grade 11 students at Vinschool Hanoi High School is crucial in enhancing students' awareness of Vietnamese history, developing their critical thinking skills, and fostering practical connections. This approach also aims to instill patriotism, national pride, and a sense of responsibility toward protecting the Fatherland. Based on the experience of teaching practical lessons on Vietnamese history topics at Vinschool Hanoi High School during the 2023-2024 school year, it is evident that the effectiveness of these lessons hinges on several factors. Teachers must possess in-depth knowledge of the historical materials, employ a variety of practical lessons, adapt teaching and assessment methods as needed, and be creative in designing engaging group activities that foster an interactive learning environment. To capture students' interest and stimulate their thinking, teachers should continuously innovate by integrating information technology and being dedicated to understanding and supporting students in their comprehensive development, both academically and in life skills. It is hoped that these proposed measures will enhance the effectiveness of teaching practical lessons in future school years.

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