

Joe Regenbogen

# Questioning History

*16 Essential Questions That Will Deepen Your Understanding of the Past*

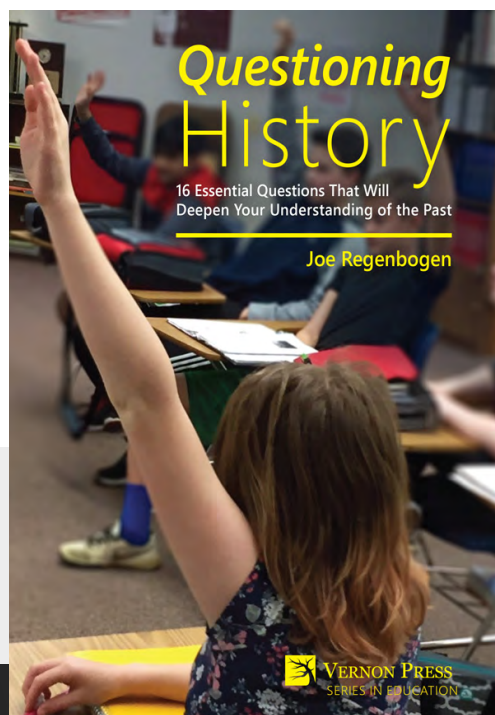
SERIES IN EDUCATION

## Summary

Since the days of the Ancient Greeks, history has been perceived as the academic study of the past. Unfortunately, it has generally been taught as a litany of rigid, boring facts intended to be accepted rather than questioned. This has been reinforced for decades by weighty textbooks that overwhelm the reader with mind-numbing details presented in a chronological sequence. The end result is that students see little relevance of what they learn in history class to the real world, and many simply struggle to stay awake. Compared to other subjects taught at the secondary level, history is frequently judged to be the most boring. This is largely because it is viewed as an intellectually lifeless subject that presents few opportunities for active engagement.

Questioning History is a book built around 16 essential questions designed to challenge this common assumption. Each question is broad, open-ended and subject to vigorous debate. By examining the historical background behind each question and by analyzing the ways in which the question can be answered, the reader will come away with a deeper understanding of the past and a new appreciation for history as a cognitively dynamic subject. In addition, by using each chapter as a platform for engaging discussions and Socratic seminars, the reader will be able to refine the decision-making skills necessary for effective citizenship in a democratic society. Depending on the classroom or the

setting in which it is being used, Questioning History can either take the place of the more traditional textbook or at least be used as a supplement to make it come more alive. The best way to learn and to appreciate a subject is through active engagement. Questioning History provides a shot of adrenalin to the study of history.



## About the author

**Joe Regenbogen** holds a Masters Degree in Education from the University of New Orleans. He began his teaching career in 1979 in an inner city high school in New Orleans, Louisiana but spent most of the following three decades working in the Parkway Schools district of St. Louis. In his long teaching career, he taught a full spectrum of courses, ranging from American and World History to electives like Crime and Law and the American West. Classes were taught at the regular, honors and AP levels. He served as department chair, sponsored and coached such activities as the chess team, student council and the mock trial team. He has also served as adjunct instructor at the University of New Orleans and Maryville University where he taught social studies methods and education respectively. Following his retirement in 2012, he now teaches American history at his district's Mosaic Academy, a special program designed to meet the needs of exceptionally gifted students.

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