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**Promoting Critical Thinking Skills through History Research in the Classroom: An Innovation in Character Education**

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**Abstrak**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi pelaksanaan kelas penelitian sejarah di SMA Negeri 9 Yogyakarta yang memanfaatkan pengembangan keterampilan berpikir kritis untuk membangun karakter siswa. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan studi kasus di SMA Negeri 9 Yogyakarta. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan analisis dokumen. Pengambilan sampel dilakukan secara purposive sampling dengan melibatkan subjek seperti guru sejarah dan sebagian siswa kelas X; kemudian dianalisis menggunakan teknik triangulasi data model interaktif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pelaksanaan kelas penelitian sejarah secara sistematis dimaksudkan untuk memberikan pemahaman yang lebih mendalam kepada siswa secara praktis. Selain memperkenalkan identitas daerah, penggunaan sejarah lokal Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta sebagai sumber belajar juga dapat mempercepat transfer pengetahuan. Yang menarik, guru sejarah di SMA Negeri 9 Yogyakarta mencoba memperbarui metode penelitian Kuntowijoyo dengan menghadirkan sumber digital untuk merekonstruksi peristiwa sejarah. Selain memenuhi enam indikator keterampilan berpikir kritis, pelaksanaan kelas penelitian sejarah juga menginternalisasi pendidikan karakter. Penelitian ini menyiratkan bahwa pengembangan keterampilan berpikir kritis dalam pembelajaran sejarah berdampak positif terhadap pembentukan karakter siswa. Hasil penelitian ini dapat bermanfaat sebagai referensi alternatif mengenai model pembelajaran sejarah yang relevan untuk mengembangkan aspek kognitif dan afektif secara seimbang

**Kata kunci:** Keterampilan Berpikir Kritis, Pembelajaran Sejarah, Penelitian Sejarah, Pendidikan Karakter

**Abstract**

This study aims to explore the implementation of a history research class at SMA Negeri 9 Yogyakarta that utilizes the development of critical thinking skills to build student character. This research uses a qualitative method with a case study at SMA Negeri 9 Yogyakarta. Data collection techniques were conducted through interviews, observations, and document analysis. Sampling was done by purposive sampling involving subjects such as history teachers and some grade X students; then analyzed using the interactive model data triangulation technique. The results showed that the systematic implementation of history research classes was intended to provide students with a deeper understanding in a practical way. In addition to introducing regional identity, the use of local history of Yogyakarta Special Region as a learning resource can also accelerate knowledge transfer. Interestingly, history teachers at SMA Negeri 9 Yogyakarta try to update Kuntowijoyo's research method by presenting digital sources to reconstruct historical events. In addition to fulfilling the six indicators of critical thinking skills, the implementation of history research classes also internalizes character education. This research implies that the development of critical thinking skills in history learning has a positive impact on student character building. The results of this study can be useful as an alternative reference regarding the history learning model.

**Keywords:** Critical Thinking Skill, History Learning, History Research, Character Education

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## Introduction

The world of Education is the gateway to creating a society that meets the demands of the times. One example is that Education today has entered the era of Society 5.0, which is oriented toward creating a society that can solve various social challenges and problems by wisely utilizing the various innovations born from the 4.0 Revolution era (Fatus Syarofah et al., 2023). Critical thinking skills are one of the 21st-century competencies that students must possess (Hermansyah & Muslim, 2020; Mohamed Nor & Sihes, 2021; Mudzakkir et al., 2024; Sarifah & Nurita, 2023). From Dewey's perspective, the term critical thinking is often associated with concrete forms of reflective thinking, such as actively and continuously considering something and examining knowledge deemed true based on supporting reasons and conclusions that have a tendency (Heard et al., 2020). Through critical thinking skills, students have the opportunity to organize, adjust, change, or deconstruct their thoughts so that they can have broader and wiser insights as material for consideration in making certain decisions (Ariadila et al., 2023). Relevant to this concept, history is one of the subjects that has the potential to shape students' critical thinking skills.

History has the power to enable students to think from multiple perspectives in understanding complex past events (Godsell, 2022). One of the moments in the historical research stage—Phase E historical material—is where the selection of historical evidence must consider the motives or biases behind the creation of the source and compare it with other sources. Through a culture of verification, students not only understand the past but also contextualize it with present-day life (Wilson et al., 2023). However, history is generally taught in a conventional and monotonous manner (Shania Ramdhani, 2024; Wilis & Kumalasari, 2025). Various contributing factors include an overly broad history curriculum without sufficient class time (López-Fernández et al., 2023) and limitations in teachers' pedagogical knowledge and technological literacy (Fadli et al., 2022; Mahardika, 2023). The latent challenges commonly encountered in history Education can stifle its potential to foster critical thinking skills. Therefore, implementing research-based learning can enable active student engagement, including exploring and verifying historical sources, analyzing and interpreting findings, and creating historical writings—making it one of the alternatives worth considering (Gentallan

& Pandan, 2024; Khawaja, 2024).

The reconstruction of character quality must also accompany efforts to enhance students' critical thinking skills in history Education (Hindun et al., 2020). This aligns with the learning outcomes of history Education in the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes the enhancement of critical thinking without neglecting character values (Armiyati & Djono, 2023; Kemdikbudristek, 2022). In addition to improving critical thinking skills, historical research provides students with experiences that encourage them to be more discerning in believing and disseminating information (Fauziyah et al., 2022; Supriyanto et al., 2022). Implementing learning activities that engage students can minimize the emergence of lazy character traits, being easily provoked into expressing opinions and disregarding existing issues (Al Asadullah & Nurhalin, 2021). Looking further ahead, various forms of academic misconduct, such as plagiarism, among students can be avoided because history teachers provide a deep understanding of the importance of respecting others' work through proper citation (Risparyanto, 2020; Wahyuni, 2019).

Aware of the urgency of this issue, history teachers at SMA Negeri 9 Yogyakarta

proactively designed history research materials with student activity as a key indicator in assessment. Interestingly, history teachers utilized local historical events in Yogyakarta as the main topic and provided students with the opportunity to access and analyze digital sources as an adaptation to the times. The decision to integrate local events—as contextual learning sources and digital sophistication—is an important strategy that enables more meaningful and interactive teaching-learning interactions in the classroom (Fikri et al., 2023). helping to understand the historical context and enliven the learning experience (Sukardi et al., 2025). Based on these positive implications, the Project Based Learning (PjBL) model promoted by history teachers at SMA Negeri 9 Yogyakarta meets the prerequisites for developing critical thinking skills and character education simultaneously. When compared to previous studies, which focused solely on improving critical thinking skills (Basri et al., 2024; Yang, 2025) or character Education (Bahroni et al., 2025; Nurzafimala et al., 2024), the learning innovation introduced by the history teacher at SMA Negeri 9 Yogyakarta represents a novelty in this study.

This study explores in depth how the implementation of research classes can impact critical thinking skills and the internalization of character Education. By examining the practices of history research classes and the outcomes of learning, this research aims to provide valuable insights into the broader discourse on the relationship between critical thinking skills and character Education through history Education.

## **Method**

### **Research Design**

The selection of SMA Negeri 9 Yogyakarta as the research location was based on the results of preliminary research—both interviews with students and history teachers—which found that history learning had been integrated with digital sources. Various history research projects—such as group paper assignments—must include valid and relevant digital sources. In the context of enhancing cognitive abilities, knowledge in selecting digital sources is essential because the characteristics of digital historical sources are easily accessible but also easily manipulated. History teachers' instructions require students to be able to explore, analyze, and evaluate digital sources based on various considerations—such as the motives and

biases of the sources or their validity and credibility. Additionally, an assessment process that prioritizes active student involvement increasingly enables the development of digital ethics awareness, such as being responsible in utilizing digital sources and minimizing acts of plagiarism. To produce in-depth findings, this study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design focused on history Education at State Senior High School 9 Yogyakarta. Qualitative methods allow researchers to gain a deep and specific understanding of a particular event (Ardyan et al., 2023; Yin, 2016). Based on this paradigm, the qualitative method was chosen for its suitability in exploring in depth how the learning model in history research classes that integrate critical thinking skills can promote the character traits needed by students in today's digital age. This approach will enable an in-depth examination of obstacles and challenges, ultimately answering what character traits are reconstructed from history research classes (Irhamna & Astuti, 2021; Muhilal et al., 2021). This approach is highly suitable for identifying patterns of close interconnection between critical thinking skills (cognitive aspect) and character Education (affective aspect) through history.

## Data Collection

Data collection in this study involves a comprehensive method that combines interviews, observation visits and document analysis to gather rich contextual insights into the practice of history learning at Senior High School 9 Yogyakarta (Moleong, 2013). Interviews will be conducted using the *purposive sampling* technique, namely two history teachers as the main informants and 7 X grade students representing each class. Because the research is focused on historical research material, only observations and interviews with X-grade students were conducted. The criteria for students selected as informants were that they had intermediate ability and interest in history so that they were able to provide objective data about their experiences and impressions of participating in learning. Classroom observations were conducted during three meetings in seven different classes so that the researcher could obtain objective information regarding the implementation of learning while also enabling observation of the apparent character. Document analysis was carried out by involving examination of teaching modules, student worksheets, activity assessment lists, and a thorough review of relevant literature, especially academic

articles, to enrich the analysis and provide a broader context for the findings.

The research instrument is in the form of interview guidelines that the researcher has compiled. Interview guidelines aimed at teachers can provide information on the following matters: (1) strategies in contextualizing historical research methods with things that students have understood, (2) history teachers' strategies for identifying changes in students' character, and (3) changes in character felt by teachers after history research classes. Meanwhile, interview guidelines for students were also compiled to minimize research subjectivity, as follows: (1) prior knowledge about how to obtain information from digital sources and (2) students' prior knowledge about the authenticity of objects sold on the market; (3) students' prior knowledge about a particular historical event; (4) how students can sort information after history research class and how to appreciate someone's work in a particular writing.

## Data Validation

The data validity stage allows researchers to test the credibility of data using triangulation techniques. In this study, there are two data triangulation models, namely

source and technique. Source triangulation is used to test the validity of data collected from various respondents, for example, whether history research classes can really improve students' critical thinking skills and character building. To find out the truth, it is necessary to check the data, both the information obtained from history teachers and the representatives of grade X students who are the respondents. Meanwhile, technical triangulation is more oriented to checking data obtained from three collection methods, including observation, interviews, and document analysis, for example, whether improving critical thinking skills in history research classes can contribute to shaping students' character. In this context, the validity test of the information obtained from document analysis in the form of history teacher teaching modules, observation visits by observing the teaching and learning process, and interview sources contribute vitally to producing findings that can guarantee their legitimacy, validity, truth, and credibility.

### **Data Analysis**

Based on an interactive model, data analysis is conducted starting from detailed data collection so that richer and more

comprehensive findings can be obtained regarding the topic being studied. The data collected through observation visits, interviews, and document analysis is then condensed based on selection, focusing, simplification, abstraction, and transformation, which allows for the reduction of less relevant data so that the research can obtain more meaningful results. After condensation, the data that has been presented concisely and in detail, both in descriptive and tabular form, can be summarized. The final part of the data analysis stage is verification to review or correct existing field notes. One of the findings in this study was that the absence of reference assessment indicators in student research had implications for students' difficulty in classifying valid and invalid sources. This caused students to tend to believe any information they found on the internet. This analysis can be determined by analyzing the patterns of previously validated information.

### **Result and Discussion**

Most stages of historical research are examined based on Kuntowijoyo's understanding, which includes five stages (Kuntowijoyo, 2013). *First*, choosing a research topic based on emotional and

intellectual affinity. As stated by Kuntowijoyo, students who have been formed into group GS-1 will generally choose research topics commonly known as national history, for example, the Proclamation of Indonesian Independence on August 17, 1945, along with the surrounding events, the mobilization of Romusha labor and its impact; the Battle of Surabaya on November 10, 1945, and so on; while the local history of Yogyakarta is hardly even considered. In this momentum, the history teacher of Senior High School 9 Yogyakarta began to introduce local historical events that still have a national impact and are considered relatively easy to find research sources, for example, the establishment of a Muhammadiyah school by Ahmad Dahlan in 1912; the construction of Selokan Mataram during the Japanese Occupation; the transfer of the capital from Jakarta to Yogyakarta; and the Gejayan Tragedy of 1998. Based on the results of an interview with an GS-2 history teacher, the selection of contextual topics is expected to bring out the emotional and intellectual closeness of students. In addition to fostering an understanding of history, a contextual approach can also enable critical thinking skills.

*Second*, historical sources (heuristics) and source criticism (verification) should be collected in the form of physical or digital sources. In the initial stages, history teachers provide training so that students can identify the right physical and digital sources.

**Table 1.** Introduction to Physical and Digital Historical Sources

Meeting	Learning Materials	Activity
First	Historical Research Methods: External and Internal Criticism	The history teacher presents ancient objects commonly found at flea markets, such as ancient coins, ancient banknotes and ancient newspapers, to be identified by learners based on external and internal criticism.
Second	Historical Research Methods: Identifying Digital Sources	The history teacher presents various digital sources that are commonly accessed by learners on various websites, such as journal articles or excerpts from thesis research, as well as some misleading sources from

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Wikipedia and  
personal blogs.

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Based on the results of the observation, most students still find it difficult to assess the validity and credibility of physical or digital sources. In addition to the abundance of information promoted by Wikipedia or personal blogs, which appear comprehensive, and the ease of access to ChatGPT—based on students' admissions—the absence of teacher assessment indicators in other subjects regarding reference sources is one of the contributing factors that weaken their ability to analyze sources. Additionally, some subjects that still use conventional models also contribute to why students rely on information from teachers and workbooks. Based on the interviews, it is evident that a contextual learning model that truly presents historical physical or digital sources can facilitate students' understanding in the context of identification. In the next meeting, students were given the freedom to choose local historical events in Yogyakarta by considering the existence and accessibility of historical sources, both physical and digital. Before students considered certain events and explored historical sources, the history teacher first conveyed the importance of

reference credibility as one of the assessment indicators.

Furthermore, students were given ample opportunity to use digital information, such as scientific journals, articles, YouTube videos, or other sources whose credibility could be verified. Based on classroom observations, the history teacher consistently monitored the discussion and provided guidance when students asked questions about unclear points. However, there are still various mistakes in the implementation—the use of Wikipedia sources, personal blogs, or YouTube videos without cited sources. Additionally, some sentences presented by students in their historical research reports also show relatively high levels of plagiarism—around 40-50%—which also serves as evaluation material for future research.

Third, interpretation or analysis. In the third meeting, the history teacher instructed the students to interpret historical sources that were considered valid and credible. Based on interviews with the history teacher, only one group was able to analyze and reconstruct a local historical event in Yogyakarta. This was done to avoid similarities in perspective and to enrich the student's knowledge. In line with the previous statement, where most groups were still stuck choosing digital sources from



Wikipedia, personal blogs, and so on—especially information from the LKS textbook, which was considered absolute truth and used for comparison—this determined the limitations of the student's analysis. Although the history teacher provided continuous monitoring of the students' analysis process, the collective perception instilled in previous learning activities became the biggest obstacle.

Finally, historiography or historical writing, where students' research findings will be compiled into a paper. Each group will be responsible for presenting their findings. This activity serves as an opportunity for students to present the process of compiling their research findings, starting from the reasons for selecting the topic, the sources used and their relevance to the research topic, and the analysis and review of verified sources up to the historiography stage. Additionally, students within the same group also present their contributions to the compilation of research findings. Based on the student assessment sheet, there are four assessment indicators: the quality of analysis, the accuracy of source selection, the systematic writing of the report, creativity in interpreting historical sources, and mastery of the material when presenting in class. Despite

various challenges encountered, the implementation of history-related learning provided students with the opportunity to discuss topics from selection to the writing stage actively.

### **Integration of Critical Thinking Skills in History Research Class**

Based on the results of the literature analysis, the ability of Indonesia's younger generation to counteract *hoax* news tends to be low (Wijaya & Yusuf, 2021), while acts of plagiarism tend to be high (Shadiqi, 2019). More contextually, based on the results of interviews with history teachers, they also stated the low critical thinking skills of students at Senior High School 9 Yogyakarta, especially regarding how to identify valid learning sources on the internet, sorting relevant historical research sources and assuming that a historical event only occurred due to a single factor (*monocausal*).

Thus, history teachers at Senior High School 9 Yogyakarta develop critical thinking skills, which the author then identifies based on six indicators in Facione's framework (Facione, 2023) as follows:

**Table 2.** Indicators of Critical Thinking Skills and Their Implementation in History Research Classes

Indicator's	Description
Analysis (Historical Chronology)	Learners are stimulated and encouraged to have complex thinking abilities. History teachers provide an understanding that previously known historical events do not only occur due to one factor but many things and perspectives. In the context of history learning at Senior High School 9 Yogyakarta, history teachers have explored students' understanding of the G30S/PKI events through questions: Who was the mastermind of G30S/PKI? In your opinion, what was the motive for the kidnapping of the 7 Army Generals?
Inference (Historical	Learners in group GS-1 have been assigned local

Source  
Collection)

Yogyakarta history research topics, including the 1998 Gejayan Tragedy, the first elections in Indonesia in 1955, the role of Sultan Hamengkubuwana IX in the Second Dutch Military Aggression and the transfer of the capital to Yogyakarta. To reconstruct a study, history teachers provide valid journal articles or digital sources, as well as decoys in the form of personal blog sources and Wikipedia. In this context, students in group GS-1 are given the opportunity to choose sources that are considered valid and relevant to the chosen topic. However, teachers also provide opportunities for students to search for digital sources or other supports in order to strengthen their findings.

Interpretation (Historical Perspective)	In a group, learners discuss which information is used to strengthen their research.
Explanation (Reconstructing	Learners in group GS-1 reconstruct historical events in a study based on what has

the Historical Story)	been discovered and understood from the relevant information and compiled using their language. At this moment, the history teacher also guides learners in expressing their opinions and arguments.	Historical Events)	on the learning at the meeting by relating it to the phenomenon of the rise of hoax news among the younger generation. Based on the results of the researcher's observations, GS-1 teachers use a contextual approach by showing TikTok video clip GS-1 to learners; then, they are instructed to interpret the message from the video. According to GS-1 understanding, the contextual approach allows learners to correlate the urgency of historical research methods in improving digital literacy. Meanwhile, GS-2 used electronic sources by showing one of the versions of the Eleventh of March Warrant that could be downloaded on a <i>digital platform</i> and then asked learners to assess the authenticity of the document. From GS-2 perspective, this method allows students to apply the source verification stage as a
Evaluation (Historical Literacy)	Based on the activity of compiling research results in class, students are given additional understanding by the teacher that a historical event does not occur due to a single cause but rather many things; meanwhile, the discourse built on digital sources has a certain importance that must be considered. Based on the results of the interview, history teachers still find many students in grades X-1 to X-7 who still use sources from Wikipedia or blogs. This becomes material for evaluation so that teachers can provide an in-depth understanding of the use of digital sources in the next material.		
Self-Regulation (Interpreting	Learners are directed to be able to interpret and reflect		

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method of improving critical thinking skills.

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Table 2 shows that history teachers at Senior High School 9 Yogyakarta have successfully applied six critical thinking skill indicators in history research classes.

### **Implementation of Character Education in History Research Classes by Integrating Critical Thinking Skills**

Critical thinking skills not only affect improving cognitive aspects but also affect the character development of students (Fauziyah et al., 2020). To facilitate the discussion on how history teachers at Senior High School 9 Yogyakarta can implement character education in history research classes by integrating critical thinking skills, the author uses three stages as proposed by Thomas Lickona (Lickona, 1991), as follows:

#### **1. Moral Knowledge**

Moral knowledge is the basis for teachers to provide understanding to students to bring out a wise and critical attitude in using digital sources. This is in line with Lickona's understanding, where cognitive elements allow students to cultivate character in their minds so that how teachers transfer knowledge can be an intellectual intelligence for students

(Susanti, 2022). In the moral knowledge stage, teachers have a vital role in correlating the knowledge that students already have to be integrated into the historical research method material. Through this learning model, history teachers can not only improve critical thinking skills but also use these skills to reconstruct the development of other characters needed in today's digital era.

The results of the interviews and observations show that history teachers of GS-1 and GS-2 use a contextual approach to stimulate students' critical thinking skills and character development. Although at the beginning of the lesson, the teacher still uses the lecture method, the implementation of the lesson involves more class discussions with the teacher presenting a variety of teaching materials and/or topics that the students are already familiar with. As a result, the classroom atmosphere appears to be active, where each student can express their understanding in class discussions.

**Table 3.** Learning Activities in History, Research Materials Table Materials

Activity	Description
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External	and	History teachers present
Internal		various ancient sources
Criticism		obtained from flea markets, such as ancient money, both paper and metal and ancient newspapers, while students must be able to verify the source of these objects. The two categories of source verification are external criticism, which includes whether the source has been altered, whether the source is authentic, what type of paper was used, and the style of writing of the source, as well as internal criticism, which includes the motivation of the source's creator, whether the source can be trusted, and so on.
Sorting	Digital	The history teacher divides the students into several grouGS-1 that will research various topics. To reconstruct historical events, the GS-1 and GS-2 teachers present various valid and credible digital sources as well as some deceptive sources obtained from Wikipedia and

	personal blogs. The history teacher can review the variety of sources taken by the students to observe how far they can map the validity of sources.
Reconstruction of Historical Research	Learners in group GS-1 are asked to reconstruct historical research. In this learning activity, learners can not only apply critical thinking skills in choosing digital sources but also develop tolerance in responding to various perspectives, collaborate well and prioritize democracy.

Table 3 shows that the history teacher at Senior High School 9 Yogyakarta has succeeded in contextualizing the knowledge students generally possess about historical research methods. At the beginning of the learning activity, GS-1 admitted that students generally still find it difficult to verify sources of objects, and most of them still choose Wikipedia or personal blogs as research references. This has encouraged history teachers to present physical and digital

sources in the classroom for direct verification.

**2. Moral Feeling**

As mentioned earlier, the history teacher at Senior High School 9 Yogyakarta gives students the opportunity to retell historical events using historical sources that have been collected, either provided by the teacher or by searching for digital sources independently. When collecting digital sources, the history teacher emphasizes paying attention to the information sources used and calls for reading the information thoroughly. This learning process will enable students to be critical readers of information on digital platforms.

**Table 4.** Character Shaping in History Research Classes

Historical Research Stages	Character
Topic selection stage	In conducting historical research, learners are formed into group GS-1. For this reason, the chosen topic must first be discussed

with the group. This process will help learners understand the importance of tolerance and deliberation.

Source Collection Stage (Heuristics) and Source Criticism (Verification)	Sources allowed to be used in historical research are journal articles, scientific research results and digital news that can be accounted for. In this case, students need to be wise and critical in determining the credibility of digital sources.
Interpretation Stage	Learners feel the need to listen to their group mates' perspectives in reconstructing historical research. So, each learner gets the

	<p>opportunity to develop creativity in imagining historical events based on the information that has been collected. By reconstructing historical stories independently, learners do not easily justify the narrative built in a particular source. The teacher builds this character by taking an approach to provide an understanding that information is compiled by a person or institution that has certain interests.</p>	<p>that are being reconstructed; they can also respect the writing of others by avoiding plagiarism.</p>
History writing stage (historiography)	<p>Learners can interpret the exemplary character in the historical events</p>	<p>History teachers at Senior High School 9 Yogyakarta have provided opportunities for students to position themselves as writers of history who have their own interests and knowledge limitations. Based on Table 4, such learning methods can reconstruct learners' characters that are relevant to the demands of the digital age, such as developing the character of tolerance and prioritizing deliberation in reaching consensus with peers, critical in sorting out valid and credible information; fostering creativity in imagining historical events and not easily justifying information available on digital platforms; appreciating the exemplary historical figures being researched while also being able to respect the results of one's writing by avoiding plagiarism. By involving students to actively participate in learning, the characteristics needed to</p>

be part of *good digital citizenship* are not just a theory but can actually be integrated through learning history in research methods material.

### 3. Moral Action

Moral formation should not only be achieved through words but also actions that are carried out in stages. *First, the history teacher of Senior High School 9 Yogyakarta has the expertise to contextualize historical learning materials related to research methods by stimulating students' critical thinking through a series of triggering questions, such as Do you think the incident of the massacre of seven Army Generals is appropriately called G30S/PKI? Do you think the ancient sources you found at the flea market are authentic? Or how can you identify that the newspaper was produced during the New Order era? Do you think there is a State's Archives collection that holds original SUPERSEMAR documents?*

Based on classroom observations, students actively and enthusiastically answered questions from the teacher based on their knowledge. This led to moral action in the second stage, namely desire. In the context of this

study, the desire stage actually arises because it gets a stimulus from the teacher. This can be shown through an active classroom atmosphere, where students defend each other's arguments. It is not uncommon for differences of opinion to occur between students, giving rise to the desire to explore information that can strengthen their arguments in depth. In an active classroom atmosphere, history teachers position themselves as facilitators and guide students always to use valid and credible sources.

*Third, the habituation stage emerges from the previous two stages. Unlike the components of teacher expertise and learner desire that can be directly observed, the habit stage can only be reviewed based on the daily life practices of students, whether they have reflected critical character, tolerance, not judging or justifying, democracy and so on. So, the observation process is not enough to be done in class or one meeting. Therefore, the history teacher of Senior High School 9 Yogyakarta uses indicators of the assessment of historical research results to observe the extent to which critical thinking skills*



in historical research classes can shape students' character.

**Table 5.** Forms of Teacher Assessment of Learners in History Research Classes

Assessment	Description
Peer-to-peer assessment	History teachers provide opportunities for learners to assess their group mates' active involvement. The assessment indicators include cooperation, the ability to respect opinions and activeness in discussion.
Classroom Observation	The history teacher observes the group discussion to ascertain whether it is running smoothly, whether the whole team is working well together, and how learners are contributing to it.
Learner Worksheet on historical research activity	The history teacher assigns a research project on the local history of Yogyakarta to be reconstructed based on sources deemed relevant by the learners and communicated using their language. In this LKPD, the teacher assesses four indicators: the quality of analysis, selection of sources, report systematics, creativity and mastery of material when presenting historical research findings. Interestingly, the

history teacher who introduced an understanding of plagiarism encouraged some learners to make a good reference list.

Written Test	The history teacher raises several questions related to historical research methods, such as how to conduct external and internal criticism in historical research, what sources or references can be used as references for historical research, how students determine the truth of the information in digital sources and so on, both in daily tests, midterm exams and even end-of-semester exams.
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Based on Table 5, it can be seen that the history teacher of Senior High School 9 Yogyakarta has attempted to observe the character that grows in students after the delivery of historical research method material. Through this observation, GS-1 admitted that the historical research material that raises critical thinking skills has been able to reconstruct the character that should exist in the digital generation. Meanwhile, GS-2 reinforced this by stating that the teaching of historical research methods made students realize that historical events do not only occur

due to one cause but many things. Moreover, GS-2 also said that students are accustomed to making reference lists not only in learning history but also in other subjects as a form of respect for the work of others.

### **Conclusion**

In general, this research has revealed how history research classes that integrate critical thinking skills indicators can shape students' characters, such as the ability not to be easily provoked and justify information disseminated on the internet; respect for other people's work by avoiding plagiarism; as well as habituation to always cross-check data in order to obtain valid and accountable research results. In addition, various characteristics such as tolerance, prioritizing deliberation and not imposing their will in discussions, and exemplary historical figures are also visible. In this study, the historical material on historical research methods has covered the six indicators proposed by Fascione so that they can be used as an indication of the emergence of critical thinking skills, while the three stages of character development proposed by Thomas Lickona are used to review how history teachers can integrate critical thinking skills in historical research classes in order to bring about character

improvement. By using a contextualized approach, the historical material can be easily understood and stimulate students' activeness.

However, although the research was conducted in seven different classes, the focus of the research on only one educational institution is a limitation that cannot fully represent the relationship between developing critical thinking skills and improving the character of the younger generation, especially in history learning. Future research is expected to explore varied research strategies or methods by integrating indicators of critical thinking skills as a means of character education in different research locations. In the long run, this research is expected to broaden the insight that there is a development of cognitive and affective aspects in a learning process that does not run separately but has the potential to develop in a balanced manner. Critical thinking skills enable the formation of wise character in applying technology, two elements needed by the younger generation in today's digital era.

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