

## Ha Long Bay in Local Education Materials of Quang Ninh Province at the Lower Secondary Level from the Perspective of Heritage Education

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**ABSTRACT:** This article examines the representation of Ha Long Bay in the Local Education materials of Quang Ninh Province at the lower secondary level from the perspective of heritage education. Based on an analysis of the content of the Grade 6, 7, 8, and 9 materials, the article shows that Ha Long Bay is developed along a relatively clear progression. In Grade 6, the heritage is approached through its landscape value, geographical location, legends, and local culture. In Grade 7, Ha Long Bay is expanded into a cultural-historical space associated with archaeological sites, Ha Long culture, and the life of coastal communities. In Grade 8, the heritage is considered in relation to its biological, geological, and geomorphological values, as well as conservation requirements. By Grade 9, Ha Long Bay is situated in relation to tourism, environmental protection, climate change, and sustainable development. The research findings indicate that the Local Education materials of Quang Ninh Province have initially integrated knowledge, attitudes, and action in heritage education, guiding students from the recognition of heritage values toward the formation of a sense of responsibility for conservation. On that basis, the article proposes several orientations for educating students about Ha Long Bay heritage in schools, following a pathway from awareness to action, combining project-based learning with an interdisciplinary approach, and strengthening coordination among schools, cultural institutions, and local communities.

**KEYWORDS:** Ha Long Bay; Local Education; heritage education; Quang Ninh; lower secondary education; sustainable development.

### INTRODUCTION

In recent years, heritage education has received increasing attention in general education, particularly in the context of the 2018 General Education Curriculum, which emphasizes the development of learners' qualities and competencies and the strengthening of connections between school knowledge and real-life practice. In Vietnam, the orientation toward bringing heritage into schools is reflected in Guideline No. 73/HD-BGDĐT-BVHTTDL issued by the Ministry of Education and Training and the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism. This document states that "the use of cultural heritage in teaching in general schools and continuing education centers aims to form and enhance awareness of respecting, preserving, and promoting the values of cultural heritage; and to foster learners' initiative, activeness, and creativity in renewing methods of learning and self-development" [2]. Thus, heritage in schools should be viewed as a learning resource capable of connecting historical, cultural, and natural knowledge with the cultivation of love for one's homeland, community awareness, and conservation responsibility.

At the international level, heritage education is regarded as a meaningful approach to connecting schools with cultural and social life. The Council of Europe emphasizes that heritage should become part of either the formal curriculum or extracurricular activities and that heritage education should provide appropriate skills based on a "multidisciplinary and cross-sectoral" approach [3]. From the perspective of history education, Van Boxtel, Grever, and Klein [14] consider heritage a resource for developing and assessing students' historical thinking. International studies show that heritage education should not be understood as a separate subject, but rather as an educational orientation capable of connecting historical, cultural, environmental, and community identity-related knowledge. These perspectives provide a basis for examining Ha Long Bay in the local education materials of Quang Ninh Province as an interdisciplinary educational content area associated with heritage awareness, environmental responsibility, and sustainable development.

In Vietnam, heritage education has been approached from various perspectives. Vương Thị Phương Hạnh argues that "education through heritage has a broad meaning, including education in traditions, history, culture, scenic landscapes, love for the homeland and country, and the people of Vietnam." Accordingly, general schools "are responsible both for educating and raising students' awareness of heritage and for using heritage in teaching" [4]. Dương Quỳnh Phương and Đỗ Văn Hào point out a notable limitation in current heritage education practice: "Teachers often educate students mainly about the meaning, role, and value of heritage," while "the education of awareness and responsibility for heritage conservation has not yet been effective" [6]. From an

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interdisciplinary perspective, Bùi Hà Trang views heritage as “a cultural-social process that is continuously constructed and redefined,” while emphasizing that “the interdisciplinary approach in heritage education is no longer an idealistic option, but an urgent requirement at both theoretical and practical levels” [13]. These studies provide an important theoretical basis for considering heritage in schools as an educational object associated with knowledge, identity, experience, and social responsibility.

However, existing studies have mainly focused on concepts, roles, general measures, or organizational models of heritage education in general education. The investigation of how a specific heritage is organized in local education materials across multiple grade levels has not yet received adequate attention. In particular, the case of Ha Long Bay in the Local Education materials of Quang Ninh Province at the lower secondary level has not been analyzed as a continuous heritage education trajectory, moving from landscape recognition and cultural-historical understanding to conservation awareness and environmental responsibility. This is the research gap that the present article seeks to address.

Quang Ninh is a locality with a rich system of heritage, among which Ha Long Bay holds a particularly important position. According to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, Ha Long Bay was recognized as a World Heritage Site in 1994 and 2000. In 2023, the scope of the heritage property was expanded into the complex known as “Ha Long Bay - Cat Ba Archipelago.” With this status, Ha Long Bay has become one of the representative contents included in the Local Education materials of Quang Ninh Province at the lower secondary level. In the system of materials from Grade 6 to Grade 9, the image of Ha Long Bay is developed through multiple layers of meaning: from landscape and legend to culture and history, biological, geological, and geomorphological values, and then further extended to conservation, sustainable tourism development, and environmental responsibility.

Proceeding from the research gap outlined above, this article selects the topic “Ha Long Bay in the Local Education Materials of Quang Ninh Province at the Lower Secondary Level from the Perspective of Heritage Education.” The article focuses on analyzing how the image of Ha Long Bay is represented in the Grade 6, 7, 8, and 9 Local Education materials, thereby clarifying the shift in educational orientation from landscape recognition and cultural-historical exploration to heritage conservation awareness and environmental responsibility. Based on this analysis, the article proposes several orientations for heritage education about Ha Long Bay in schools, with an emphasis on experiential learning, interdisciplinary integration, community engagement, and sustainable development.

In terms of methodology, the article employs document content analysis in combination with a heritage education approach. The main corpus consists of the Local Education materials of Quang Ninh Province at the lower secondary level, from Grade 6 to Grade 9. The analyzed contents include themes, lesson objectives, systems of knowledge about Ha Long Bay, learning activities, application requirements, and orientations related to the conservation and promotion of heritage values.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Theoretical and Practical Foundations

#### 1.1. The Concepts of Heritage and Heritage Education

Heritage is a concept with broad connotations, encompassing material and spiritual values formed in the course of history or created by nature, preserved and transmitted by communities, and continuously interpreted in contemporary life. According to the Vietnamese Dictionary, “Heritage is the spiritual or material property left by history or created by nature” [5, p. 327]. In Vietnam, the Law on Cultural Heritage states that “Vietnamese cultural heritage is a precious asset of the community of Vietnamese ethnic groups and a part of the cultural heritage of humankind, playing a significant role in the cause of national construction and defense of the Vietnamese people” [7, p. 1]. On that basis, heritage may be understood as including cultural heritage, natural heritage, and mixed heritage. Cultural heritage, in particular, is divided into tangible cultural heritage and intangible cultural heritage. Within the scope of this article, Ha Long Bay is approached primarily as a natural heritage of outstanding value, recognized by UNESCO as a World Natural Heritage Site in 1994 and 2000. In 2023, the scope of the heritage property was expanded into the complex known as “Ha Long Bay - Cat Ba Archipelago.”

Heritage education is an important approach in contemporary general education. Vương Thị Phương Hạnh argues that “education through heritage has a broad meaning,” including education in traditions, history, culture, scenic landscapes, love for the homeland and country, and the people of Vietnam. Accordingly, general schools “are responsible both for educating and raising students’ awareness of heritage and for using heritage in teaching” [4]. Several international studies also emphasize that heritage education is associated with connecting individuals to their living environment, constructing identity, acquiring knowledge, valuing, conserving, and disseminating cultural heritage. On that basis, in this article, heritage education is understood as a purposeful educational process through which students identify, explore, interpret, appreciate, and develop responsibility for conserving and promoting heritage values in contemporary life.

#### 1.2. Heritage Education in General Schools

In general schools, heritage education plays an important role in developing students’ qualities, competencies, and community awareness. Through heritage, students broaden their understanding of local history, culture, nature, and life through various forms, including texts, images, artifacts, place names, stories, experiences, and practical activities. This approach is

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consistent with the orientation of the 2018 General Education Curriculum, which emphasizes the development of learners' competencies and the connection of school knowledge with real-life practice. In the case of Ha Long Bay, learning about landscapes, legends, traces of ancient residents, geological values, biodiversity, and environmental issues helps students perceive heritage as part of local memory, identity, and future.

In addition to providing knowledge, heritage education contributes to fostering love for the homeland, an appreciative attitude, and responsibility for conserving and promoting heritage values. Vương Thị Phương Hạnh emphasizes that the use of heritage in teaching should be appropriate to local conditions, students' characteristics, and lesson objectives [4]. Therefore, in a locality with such a representative heritage as Quang Ninh, the use of Ha Long Bay in Local Education materials offers many advantages, as this heritage is closely connected to students' lives and has the capacity to integrate multiple fields of knowledge. For heritage education to be effective, teaching materials and instructional processes should create opportunities for students to observe, explore, discuss, propose solutions, and practice heritage protection, thereby shifting heritage education from awareness to action.

### **1.3. The Interdisciplinary Approach in Heritage Education**

Heritage education is interdisciplinary in nature because heritage is a complex phenomenon that contains multiple layers of natural, historical, cultural, social, and environmental values. Bùi Hà Trang argues that heritage education should be understood in relation to schools, cultural institutions, communities, and relevant stakeholders, while viewing heritage as “a cultural-social process that is continuously constructed and redefined.” The author also emphasizes that “the interdisciplinary approach in heritage education is no longer an idealistic option, but an urgent requirement at both theoretical and practical levels” [13]. This perspective shows that heritage in education should not be treated merely as illustrative material; rather, it should be organized as a learning space that enables students to identify, interpret, engage in dialogue about, and participate in protecting heritage values.

For Ha Long Bay, the interdisciplinary approach is appropriate because this heritage brings together multiple values: landscape, geology, geomorphology, biology, history, culture, tourism, and the environment. In the Local Education materials of Quang Ninh Province, Ha Long Bay can be connected with Literature through activities such as retelling legends, writing expository texts, and creating introductory narratives; with History through the study of traces of ancient residents and Ha Long culture; with Geography and Natural Sciences through the identification of landscapes, ecosystems, geology, and geomorphology; and with Civic Education and Experiential Activities through discussions on environmental protection responsibility, appropriate behavior when visiting heritage sites, and the development of conservation projects. Thus, heritage education about Ha Long Bay should not be confined to a single subject, but should be implemented as an interdisciplinary theme that links knowledge with skills, attitudes, and students' social responsibility.

## **2. THE IMAGE OF HA LONG BAY IN THE LOCAL EDUCATION MATERIALS FOR LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN QUANG NINH PROVINCE**

### ***2.1. Ha Long Bay as a Symbol of Landscape and Culture in the Grade 6 Materials***

In the Grade 6 local education materials of Quang Ninh Province, Ha Long Bay is placed under Theme 1: Traditional Culture and History, through the lesson “Ha Long Bay and Its Cultural and Landscape Values.” The objectives of the lesson focus on helping students introduce the location, scope, and natural values of Ha Long Bay; learn about the historical formation of Ha Long culture; and retell several legends associated with the bay. This organization shows that the materials choose an appropriate starting point for students at the beginning of lower secondary education: approaching heritage through landscape, maps, legends, and a sense of pride in their homeland.

At the Grade 6 level, Ha Long Bay is first positioned as a representative scenic site of Quang Ninh. Information about its geographical location, area, system of limestone islands, caves, and scenic beauty helps students visualize the heritage within a specific spatial setting. In addition, the inclusion of the legend of the Mother Dragon and her children allows Ha Long Bay to be received as a cultural space with symbolic depth. Nature in the lesson does not appear merely as a physical landscape, but is associated with folk imagination, communal memory, and the awareness of protecting the homeland.

The system of learning tasks at the end of the lesson further expands the educational significance of heritage. Students are asked to summarize the values of Ha Long Bay through a mind map, retell the legend, share their thoughts on the meaning of the bay for Quang Ninh, and propose actions to preserve its landscape and environment. Thus, the Grade 6 materials establish the initial stage of heritage education: moving from the recognition of landscape to the expression of attitudes and the formation of awareness regarding heritage protection.

### ***2.2. Ha Long Bay as a Cultural and Historical Space in the Grade 7 Materials***

In the Grade 7 materials, Ha Long Bay continues to be presented under Theme 1: Traditional Culture and History, through the lesson “Ha Long Bay and Its Cultural and Historical Values.” Compared with Grade 6, the approach in Grade 7 shows a clear

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shift: from appreciating landscape to exploring cultural and historical depth. The lesson objectives guide students to present archaeological sites associated with Ha Long culture and to introduce several cultural features of the land and people of Ha Long.

The lesson content emphasizes traces of ancient habitation and sites belonging to the Soi Nhu, Cai Beo, and Ha Long cultures. Through these contents, Ha Long Bay is recognized as a long-standing settlement space where humans adapted to the island-and-sea environment, created tools for labor, accumulated survival experience, and developed a distinct cultural life. The inclusion of archaeological data in the lesson enables students to approach heritage through material evidence, rather than receiving it only through aesthetic emotion or legend.

Notably, the Grade 7 materials also raise the issue of conservation by referring to the fact that several archaeological sites have been narrowed, degraded, or have disappeared due to the impact of both objective and subjective factors. This helps students understand that cultural and historical heritage is not an immutable entity, but may be damaged in the absence of awareness and protective action. Tasks such as preparing information sheets and introducing archaeological sites, national treasures, or historical artifacts place students in the role of learners and interpreters of heritage. From this perspective, Ha Long Bay in the Grade 7 materials is constructed as a “cultural archive” of the local community.

### ***2.3. Ha Long Bay as a Natural Heritage of Scientific Value in the Grade 8 Materials***

In the Grade 8 materials, Ha Long Bay is approached through the lesson “Ha Long Bay and Its Biological, Geological, and Geomorphological Values.” This marks an important development in the trajectory of heritage education, as the materials shift their focus from cultural and historical values to scientific awareness of natural heritage. The lesson objectives require students to introduce the biological, geological, and geomorphological values of Ha Long Bay and to present solutions for conserving, preserving, and promoting these values.

From a biological perspective, the materials introduce Ha Long Bay in relation to Bai Tu Long Bay and the Cat Ba Archipelago, forming a highly biodiverse island-and-sea complex. Contents concerning ecosystems, rare genetic resources, endemic species, and distinctive habitats help students understand Ha Long Bay as an ecosystem with a complex structure. From geological and geomorphological perspectives, the materials present Ha Long Bay as the result of a long process of formation, associated with limestone karst, caves, ancient marine notches, faults, and geological transformations. As a result, the heritage is approached through the capacity for scientific explanation, rather than solely through the perception of scenic beauty.

The conservation section in the Grade 8 materials demonstrates the relationship between heritage and development. Ha Long Bay is viewed as a driving force for tourism development in Quang Ninh, while at the same time being subject to pressures from tourism waste, illegal fishing, economic projects, and land reclamation activities. This way of framing the issue carries clear educational significance: students are guided to understand that the exploitation of heritage values must go hand in hand with conservation. The practical activity in which students role-play as tour guides introducing Ha Long Bay also helps transform acquired knowledge into the capacity for heritage communication and a sense of responsibility toward the community.

### ***2.4. Ha Long Bay in Relation to Tourism, the Environment, and Sustainable Development in the Grade 9 Materials***

In the Grade 9 materials, Ha Long Bay does not appear as an independent lesson, but is situated within contents related to tourism, the environment, climate change, and sustainable development. This represents a necessary expansion at the final stage of lower secondary education, when students are able to perceive heritage in relation to practical issues facing the locality.

In the lesson on the tourism sector of Quang Ninh Province, Ha Long Bay is introduced as a central tourism resource, associated with its system of limestone islands and caves, its title as a World Natural Heritage site, and Quang Ninh’s position on the international tourism map. At the same time, the materials also identify challenges such as environmental pollution at tourist sites and destinations, risks in tourism activities, and the need to shift the development model from “brown” to “green.” Through this approach, students are introduced to Ha Long Bay in terms of the relationship between economic development and the responsibility to protect heritage.

In the environmental theme, Ha Long Bay is placed within more specific issues: biodiversity conservation, zoning for protection, control of exploitation activities, waste collection, wastewater treatment, monitoring of pollution sources, and the application of technology in environmental management. These contents show that heritage protection is not merely a moral appeal, but also a process of governance involving policies, technology, and community participation. In particular, the requirement for students to propose ideas, develop projects, or design small-scale plans to address local environmental issues brings heritage education to the level of action. Students are oriented to become active subjects who participate in protecting their living environment and promoting heritage values.

In summary, across the local education materials of Quang Ninh Province from Grade 6 to Grade 9, the image of Ha Long Bay is developed through a relatively clear trajectory. In Grade 6, the heritage is approached through landscape, legend, and pride in the homeland. In Grade 7, Ha Long Bay is expanded into a cultural and historical space associated with archaeology, ancient inhabitants, and communal memory. In Grade 8, the heritage is viewed through scientific values related to biology, geology,

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geomorphology, and conservation requirements. By Grade 9, Ha Long Bay is placed in relation to sustainable tourism, environmental protection, management technology, and community action.

This developmental trajectory shows that the materials have constructed Ha Long Bay as a multi-layered object of heritage education. Students are guided from the recognition of landscape to an understanding of cultural and historical values, and from scientific knowledge to environmental responsibility. This approach is consistent with the current requirements of local education: helping students understand their homeland through knowledge, become attached to it through emotion, and participate in protecting it through concrete actions.

### **3. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE HERITAGE EDUCATION TRAJECTORY OF HA LONG BAY IN LOCAL EDUCATION MATERIALS FOR LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

#### ***3.1. The Developmental Trajectory from Heritage Awareness to Responsible Action***

Through a survey of the local education materials of Quang Ninh Province from Grade 6 to Grade 9, it can be observed that the image of Ha Long Bay is developed through a relatively clear progression, consistent with the cognitive characteristics of lower secondary school students. In Grade 6, Ha Long Bay is approached through visual and familiar elements such as geographical location, scenic beauty, legends, and pride in the homeland. By Grade 7, the heritage is expanded in terms of cultural and historical depth, associated with archaeological sites, Ha Long culture, ancient inhabitants, and the life of coastal communities. In Grade 8, the materials place Ha Long Bay within the frame of natural sciences through its biological, geological, and geomorphological values. In Grade 9, the heritage is further situated in relation to tourism, environmental protection, climate change, and sustainable development.

This trajectory shows that the materials organize heritage education in a gradual movement from recognition to explanation, and from appreciation to responsibility. Ha Long Bay is introduced not merely as a famous scenic site, but is also constructed as a multi-layered educational object: a natural landscape, a cultural and historical space, a heritage site of scientific value, and a local development resource that needs to be protected. Such an approach helps students gradually form a more comprehensive understanding of heritage, rather than receiving Ha Long Bay simply as a familiar tourism symbol.

Notably, the materials do not stop at the transmission of knowledge, but initially combine three fundamental dimensions of heritage education: knowledge, attitude, and action. Knowledge is reflected in the system of contents concerning landscape, legends, archaeology, coastal inhabitants, biodiversity, geology, tourism, and the environment. Attitude is developed through requirements that encourage students to share their thoughts, retell legends, introduce heritage, express pride, and show respect for their homeland. Action is represented through tasks that ask students to propose measures to protect the landscape, present conservation solutions, role-play as tour guides, and develop small-scale projects or plans on local environmental issues. As a result, the heritage education trajectory of Ha Long Bay has the capacity to move from awareness education to responsibility education, in line with the orientation of developing learners' qualities and competencies.

#### ***3.2. Interdisciplinarity and Issues in the Organization of Heritage Education***

One prominent characteristic of the heritage education trajectory of Ha Long Bay in the materials is its interdisciplinary nature. This originates from the very structure of Ha Long Bay's values: the heritage possesses scenic, geological, geomorphological, and biological values, while also being connected with settlement history, maritime culture, tourism, the environment, and sustainable development. Therefore, approaching Ha Long Bay from the perspective of a single subject would make it difficult to fully cover the meaning of the heritage. The local education materials of Quang Ninh Province create conditions for students to approach heritage through multiple channels of knowledge: Geography and Natural Sciences help explain landscape, ecosystems, geology, and geomorphology; History helps identify traces of ancient inhabitants and Ha Long culture; Literature and communication activities help students tell stories, write explanatory texts, and introduce the heritage; Civic Education and Experiential Activities orient students toward responsibility for environmental protection, appropriate behavior when visiting heritage sites, and participation in community projects.

However, the heritage education trajectory of Ha Long Bay in the materials still raises several issues that need further adjustment in teaching practice. First, although the content on Ha Long Bay appears throughout Grades 6 to 9, the connections between the grades are not yet clearly guided at the systemic level. Each grade has its own focus, but teachers need to actively help students recognize the continuity among different layers of value: landscape, culture and history, natural sciences, tourism, and the environment. In addition, application-oriented activities such as designing posters, role-playing as tour guides, proposing solutions, or developing small projects have high educational potential, but they need to be specified through procedures, assessment criteria, sources of materials, and connections with local realities.

Another issue is that the voice of the local community in heritage education needs to be made clearer. Ha Long Bay does not belong only to management agencies or the tourism sector; it is also closely connected with coastal residents, fishermen, tour guides, tourism enterprises, students, and local families. Incorporating more community stories, indigenous knowledge, interviews with residents, or real-life situations related to tourism and the environment would help students understand heritage as a living

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issue in contemporary life. From there, heritage education can move beyond the approach of mere introduction and praise, toward the development of students' capacity for problem analysis, dialogue, and responsible action.

Overall, the local education materials of Quang Ninh Province have established an important foundation for heritage education on Ha Long Bay at the lower secondary level. The content trajectory from Grade 6 to Grade 9 enables students to understand their homeland through knowledge, become attached to it through emotion, and participate in protecting it through concrete actions. To enhance effectiveness, teaching practice should strengthen systematicity, expand experiential learning, specify application-oriented activities, and build closer connections with the local community.

### **4. ORIENTATIONS AND SOLUTIONS FOR HERITAGE EDUCATION ON HA LONG BAY IN SCHOOLS**

#### **4.1. Current Situation**

Based on the analysis of the local education materials of Quang Ninh Province for lower secondary schools, it can be seen that Ha Long Bay is developed as a multi-layered content of heritage education. In order for this educational trajectory to be effective in practice, teaching activities need to be organized in a way that develops students' awareness, emotions, skills, and social responsibility, rather than merely transmitting information about a famous scenic site of the locality.

However, in actual teaching practice in schools, the implementation of heritage education on Ha Long Bay may still encounter several difficulties. First, the time allocated to Local Education is often limited, while the content on Ha Long Bay covers many layers of value, including landscape, culture, history, biology, geology, tourism, and the environment. Therefore, without an appropriate teaching plan, lessons may easily become inclined toward the presentation of information from the materials, without creating sufficient opportunities for students to observe, discuss, practice, and apply what they have learned. In addition, not all schools have the conditions to organize field trips, learning activities at museums or heritage sites, or invite experts, tour guides, and heritage management officers to participate in the teaching process. This means that learning about heritage sometimes still takes place mainly inside the classroom, through texts and images.

Another difficulty is that although application-oriented activities have appeared in the materials, they need to be further specified when implemented in teaching practice. Tasks such as designing posters, role-playing as tour guides, proposing solutions for environmental protection, or developing small projects will only be effective when there are clear implementation procedures, assessment criteria, sources of materials, and division of tasks. Without these elements, such activities may remain at the level of formal products, without helping students gain a deeper understanding of heritage conservation. Moreover, the connection among grades in the heritage education trajectory of Ha Long Bay is not yet sufficiently clear at the level of teaching organization. Students may study individual lessons in each grade without recognizing the developmental progression from landscape, culture and history to natural sciences, tourism, and the environment.

#### **4.2. Foundations and Principles for Proposing Solutions**

The proposal of solutions is grounded in three dimensions. In terms of theoretical foundation, heritage education needs to aim at the combination of knowledge, attitude, and action, helping students understand heritage values, develop emotional attachment, and cultivate responsibility for conservation. In terms of curriculum foundation, the 2018 General Education Curriculum emphasizes the development of learners' qualities and competencies and strengthens the connection between school knowledge and local realities. In terms of practical foundation, Ha Long Bay is a heritage site of outstanding value in Quang Ninh, while also facing issues related to tourism, the environment, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable development.

Based on the current situation and the foundations above, the proposal of solutions for heritage education on Ha Long Bay needs to ensure several principles. First, the solutions must closely follow the objectives of local education and the cognitive characteristics of lower secondary school students. Second, educational content must ensure systematicity and demonstrate continuity among grade levels and layers of heritage value. Third, teaching activities must be connected with local realities and create opportunities for students to observe, experience, discuss, and practice responsibility. Fourth, heritage education needs to be implemented in an interdisciplinary direction, connecting knowledge from the natural sciences, social sciences, culture, environment, and civic education. Fifth, the solutions must be feasible, suitable to school conditions, and capable of mobilizing the participation of cultural institutions, heritage management agencies, and the local community.

#### **4.3. Some Solutions for Heritage Education on Ha Long Bay in Schools**

##### **4.3.1. Organizing Heritage Education According to a Trajectory from Awareness to Action**

Heritage education on Ha Long Bay should be designed according to a clear pedagogical trajectory consisting of four steps: identifying heritage, understanding heritage values, forming an attitude of appreciation, and practicing heritage protection. At the initial stage, students need to identify Ha Long Bay through its geographical location, landscape, system of limestone islands, caves, legends, and representative symbols. This provides the foundation for students to acquire initial knowledge and develop interest in local heritage.

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Next, students need to be guided to explore more deeply the layers of value of Ha Long Bay, from Ha Long culture, traces of ancient inhabitants, and island-and-sea knowledge to biological, geological, and geomorphological values, as well as the role of the heritage in tourism development. On the basis of such understanding, heritage education should orient students toward an attitude of appreciation and a sense of responsibility. The attitude of heritage protection becomes meaningful only when students clearly understand the risks currently facing the heritage, such as tourism waste, marine pollution, uncontrolled exploitation, and the impacts of climate change.

The final step of the trajectory is to transform awareness and attitude into concrete action. Students may participate in age-appropriate activities such as developing communication messages, writing commitments to environmental protection, designing a code of conduct for visiting Ha Long Bay, proposing solutions to reduce plastic waste, or implementing small-scale plans for environmental protection within the school. This is an important direction that allows heritage education to move beyond “knowing about heritage” toward “acting for heritage.”

### 4.3.2. *Combining Project-Based Learning with an Interdisciplinary Approach*

Project-based learning is an appropriate solution for heritage education on Ha Long Bay at the lower secondary level, because it creates conditions for students to independently explore issues, collect information, develop products, and present results. For a heritage site with a multi-layered value structure such as Ha Long Bay, project-based learning should be organized in an interdisciplinary manner, mobilizing knowledge from Literature, History, Geography, Natural Sciences, Civic Education, Experiential Activities, Fine Arts, and Information Technology.

Some possible projects include: “Heritage Map of Ha Long Bay,” “Student Tour Guides Introducing Ha Long Bay,” “Legendary Stories around the Limestone Islands,” “Ha Long Bay from a Geological Perspective,” “Plastic Waste and the Bay Environment,” “Green Tourism in Ha Long Bay,” and “Students’ Code of Conduct When Visiting Heritage Sites.” These projects help students apply knowledge from different subjects to address a specific issue. For example, with the topic “Green Tourism in Ha Long Bay,” students may use Natural Science knowledge to study environmental pollution, Geography knowledge to identify impacted spaces, Literature knowledge to construct communication messages, and Civic Education knowledge to determine individual and community responsibilities.

For project-based learning to be effective, each project should have a central problem, implementation process, expected product, and clear assessment criteria. Products may take the form of videos, infographics, brochures, presentations, digital maps, posters, or communication campaigns within the school. This organization helps students shift from receiving ready-made knowledge to practicing research, interpretation, and heritage communication, thereby developing integrative competence, systemic thinking, and the capacity for action.

### 4.3.3. *Strengthening Coordination among Schools, Cultural Institutions, and the Local Community*

Heritage education on Ha Long Bay will become more effective if it is organized on the basis of coordination among schools, cultural institutions, and the local community. In this process, schools play the role of designing pedagogical activities; teachers guide the learning process; and students become the subjects who explore, interpret, and disseminate heritage values. In addition, the Ha Long Bay Management Board, Quang Ninh Museum, tour guides, local residents, parents, and responsible tourism enterprises can all become important educational resources.

Such coordination helps expand the space of heritage education beyond the classroom. The Ha Long Bay Management Board can provide information on conservation, the environment, and heritage management; Quang Ninh Museum can support students in accessing artifacts, documents, and historical-cultural stories; tour guides can help students practice heritage interpretation skills; and local residents can share experiences of living, working, and interacting with the island-and-sea environment. As a result, students are able to approach heritage as a living entity in community life, rather than merely as content in learning materials.

From this perspective, heritage education should be organized as a process of co-constructing knowledge. Students have opportunities to listen, ask questions, engage in dialogue, verify information, and develop learning products based on practical materials. This provides a foundation for forming in students a love for their homeland, the capacity to interpret heritage, and the responsibility to participate in protecting Ha Long Bay in the context of sustainable development.

## CONCLUSION

The study of the image of Ha Long Bay in the local education materials of Quang Ninh Province for lower secondary schools from the perspective of heritage education shows that this is a content area with a relatively clear developmental structure. Across four grade levels, Ha Long Bay is presented through multiple layers of value: natural landscape, legend, culture and history, archaeology, the life of coastal inhabitants, biology, geology, geomorphology, tourism, the environment, and sustainable development. This organization helps students approach Ha Long Bay as a multi-layered heritage, connected with local, national, and universal values.

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The content trajectory from Grade 6 to Grade 9 reflects a shift that is appropriate to the cognitive characteristics of lower secondary school students. In Grade 6, the materials lay the foundation for heritage awareness through landscape, geographical location, legends, and pride in the homeland. In Grade 7, Ha Long Bay is expanded into a cultural and historical space associated with traces of ancient inhabitants, Ha Long culture, and the life of island-and-sea communities. In Grade 8, the materials emphasize the scientific value of the heritage through biology, geology, geomorphology, and conservation requirements. By Grade 9, Ha Long Bay is situated in the context of tourism, environmental protection, climate change, management technology, and community responsibility. Thus, the materials guide students from recognition to understanding, from pride to responsibility, and from knowledge reception to action for heritage.

From the perspective of heritage education, a notable feature of the materials is the combination of knowledge, attitude, and action. Students are provided with information about the values of Ha Long Bay, encouraged to develop emotional attachment to their homeland, and required to propose actions, introduce heritage, develop learning products, and participate in solving environmental issues on a small scale. This shows that the local education materials of Quang Ninh Province have created a foundation for students to become active subjects in conserving and promoting heritage values.

For the heritage education trajectory of Ha Long Bay to become more effective in practice, teaching should be organized in three main directions. First, heritage education should be implemented according to a trajectory from identification and exploration to attitude formation and the practice of heritage protection. Second, project-based learning should be combined with an interdisciplinary approach, enabling students to apply knowledge from Literature, History, Geography, Natural Sciences, Civic Education, and Experiential Activities to address issues related to Ha Long Bay. Third, schools should strengthen coordination with cultural institutions, heritage management agencies, museums, local communities, and responsible tourism units. This provides the basis for heritage education on Ha Long Bay to become practical, contributing to the cultivation of love for the homeland, the capacity for heritage interpretation, and responsibility for sustainable development among students.

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