



# History

KS3 Year 7

Module One:  
Introductory Module

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**Lesson  
One**

# What is History?

**Aims**

In this lesson we are going to learn:

- what History is
- what chronology means and why it is important

**Context**


This lesson introduces you to the study of History; this will help you with the rest of the course.



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## What?

Welcome to your Oxford Open Learning Key Stage Three history course! We're going to begin by looking at what history is, and what we're going to be looking at during the course.

<b>Activity 1</b>	Brainstorm for one minute: What is history? Write down some words and ideas, and if you have time try to put your thoughts into a sentence.
	

There is no right or wrong answer to this activity, but a basic answer might be:

*History is the study of the past and the events in it.*

Some people also like to say that history is *his story* – the story of people (men and women!) This definition is appealing because it shows how interesting history is. We're going to be looking at the lives of men and women hundreds of years ago (and more recently); what they did, where they worked, how they lived, even what they ate. Write down a definition of history in your notebook.

## Who?

You have probably had some history lessons previously – who have you studied in the past? You might have studied:



Queen Victoria?

William the Conqueror?





Hitler?



Winston Churchill?

**Activity 2**

Think about two historical figures that you have studied or heard about. Why do you think you have heard of them? Give two reasons why they are important.



If you chose Queen Victoria then you might say that she was important because she was Queen of England, and because she ruled over the British Empire. She was also the longest serving English monarch.

In history we will study important figures like Queen Victoria, William the Conqueror, Hitler and Churchill because their actions had a huge impact on lots of people's lives. We will also look at how 'ordinary' people lived whilst they were being ruled by these people. How were women treated during Victoria's reign? How did poor people live after the Norman conquest? Sometimes it is harder to find out about the 'ordinary' people in history, and as historians we use many different sources to investigate what was happening.

## When?

It is important for us to remember that 'history' is not a time in itself – it covers thousands and thousands of years. These events did not all happen at the same time, and the four rulers we discussed earlier were not all alive at the same time. A very important aspect of history is working out how everything fits together and having a sense of when things happened. We look at the *chronology* of events.

*Chronology is the arrangement of events in the order in which they occurred.*

### Activity 3

On plain paper or on the computer, produce a timeline for your life. Start in the year you were born, and try to think of something that has happened or you have done every year since. You could include, for example: birth of a brother or sister, a great holiday, moving to a new house.

You might like to decorate your timeline and pin it up somewhere you will see it whilst you are working on your history lessons. It is *your* story! Imagine if a historian found your timeline in 100 years. What would it tell them?

Now that you have your timeline you can see how important chronology is – how can we make sense of things if they are not in the correct order? Imagine, for example, if it said you were born in 2005, but you said your first word in 1995 and went on holiday to Florida in 1997! It doesn't work! In the same way, when we're looking at the past we have to make sure we put people and events in the right time (both on paper, and in our minds), and get a real sense of when things happened.

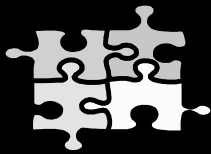
**Investigate!**

Look at this list of people from the past. They all had a huge impact on other people's lives, but they are not listed chronologically here. Can you rearrange them so they are listed chronologically, starting with the person who was born first? You can ask your family for help, or use the internet. Write them in the correct order in your notebook, adding their dates (or approximate dates), and, if you can, a sentence or two about each one.

- William the Conqueror
- Queen Victoria
- Jesus of Nazareth
- Ronald Reagan
- Richard III
- Adolf Hitler

It is important to understand the chronology of events. Write down a definition of chronology in your notebook.

To help us understand the past, history is divided up into different periods, eras and times. The most common breakdown is AD and BC, which takes the birth of Jesus as the dividing point. AD is 'Anno Domini' – after Christ, and BC is 'before Christ'. If the year is 2007, then it is two thousand and seven years after the birth of Jesus. Today, some people also use the secular terms ACE ('after the common era') and BCE ('before the common era') to mean the same thing.

**Something to think about**

History is people in the past: what they did, why and when. It is about finding out about people in the past and how it fits together.

What is the history of your house? How old is it? If you can, think about who might have lived there in the past and what their lives might have been like.



**Lesson  
Two**

# Why is History important?

**Aims**

In this lesson we are going to learn about:

- why History is important
- how we use sources to help us learn about the past

**Context**

In this lesson, like the previous one, we will consider the importance of studying History. You will build on this lesson's work on sources throughout the course.



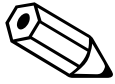
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## Why is it important to learn History?

### Activity 1

Brainstorm for one minute: Why is it important to learn History? Write down some words and ideas, and, if you have time, try to put your thoughts into a sentence.



In the last lesson we looked at what History was. Now we will think about why it is important and what impact it has on our lives today. History explains the past, and in doing so it helps us to understand the present and the future.

In History we are invited to be inquisitive and find out what was going on and what people's lives were like in the past. We need to be analytical and keep asking questions. If we cannot speak to those directly involved in the event, then we should ask questions of the **sources** which we use to obtain information.

### Looking at sources

Look at the photograph below. It is called 'Behind the Scenes'. What is it of? It is not immediately obvious; you will have to look closely at the photo to try to find clues.



If you could talk to someone in the photo, what would you ask them?

When you are looking at photos or pictures as evidence you should consider the following things:

- **The people** – who are they? What relationship are they to one another? What is the event?
- **The buildings** – do they give any clues? Is it old or new?
- **The background** – Are there other people in the background? What are they doing?
- **The event** – what is going on? When? Do clothes give any clue to whether it is winter or summer? Is it an old picture, or a recent event?
- **The caption, or title** (if given) – what does it mean? What does it imply? Is a date given? Does that help?

### Activity 2

Look at the photo on page 2 and try to answer as many of the points as you can, and then write down a few points about what you think is going on. You probably won't be able to guess the exact event but it is useful to practise analysing sources!



## Sources

A source is a book or text or a picture which provides us with information about the event. **A primary source** is, for example, a photograph which shows exactly what happened. **A secondary source** is another historian's account of the event. Both are useful. Imagine that you are finding out about the day the ship the *Titanic* sailed from Southampton in 1912. A photograph might show you what the event looked like from one angle and show you a few people on board waving goodbye. It can't lie, but it can only show you a small perspective. The historian's report might have looked at that

photograph, another photograph and newspaper's reports and gathered all these together to present the story. So as historians we need to use lots of different sources in order to work out what really happened for ourselves.

### Activity 3

Now look back at the photograph. Imagine that the caption has been changed from 'Behind the Scenes' to 'S's Graduation 2006'. Does this help you understand more about what is going on? How does it change things? You probably guessed that it was a special event of some kind. The building in the background is impressive and people are smartly dressed, and, a key sign that it is an important event, cameras are everywhere! Have another look back at the photo now that you know what the event is and try to look for clues that confirm this. NB: the person graduating is not in the photo!



One important thing to remember when working with sources is that all sources have a bias. This means that they have a natural leaning or preference, which you need to identify. For example, the statement about the *Titanic* might have been written by a historian whose grandfather had lost his life on the ship. He might have written particularly emotionally about the *Titanic* as a result. This does not mean that his statement is not useful, it just means that with every source we use we need to work out how useful the source is, and we need to remember the limitations of every source.

### Investigate!



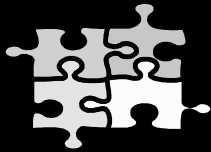
Ask your friends or family about an event at which you were all present, perhaps a wedding or a birthday party. What is their most memorable moment of the event? Someone might remember Aunty Avril dancing with the groom, whilst someone else might remember the fantastic food, or the simple fact that it rained all day. If you can, think of a particular incident which *you* remember and ask for their recollections of that. How do the views compare?

As you will probably have concluded whilst talking to your family, people remember different things and have different opinions about what is important and what is not. This is what we must bear in mind when we look at sources. As historians we rely on sources to inform us about events which occurred whilst we were not present, so they are extremely important.

We must remember, however, that all sources are biased in some way and we need to always examine a wide range of sources and to consider the pros and cons of each source when making our judgement. That's part of the fun!

Sources are photographs, newspaper articles, paintings, stories, official records or anything that can give us information about a person or an event. We learn from sources by interpreting and asking.

### Something to think about



If a historian one hundred years from now were trying to find out about your life, what three things do you think that he or she would find most helpful?

### Case Study: Lady Constance Lytton

Look at the three sources below. They are all about the same person: Lady Constance Lytton. Look at the sources and then tackle Activity 4. If you like, you can carry out additional research into Lady Constance Lytton – she led a very interesting life.

**Source 1: Photo**

Lady Constance Lytton  
(copyright Knebworth House)

**Source 2: Biography**

“The girl who would grow up to be a suffragette came from a long and illustrious patrician family. Her father was a statesman, her grandfather a noted author and politician and her great-grandmother was the early 19th century feminist Anna Wheeler. Her family was surrounded by many of the great artistic, political and literary names of the day. Indeed, one of her sisters would go on to marry the architect Edwin Lutyens, while another married Gerald Balfour, the future Prime Minister.”

From [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk)

**Source 3: Letter to 'The Times'**

“We appeal to the Government to yield, not to the violence of our protest, but to the reasonableness of our demand, and to grant the vote to the duly qualified women of the country. We shall then serve our full sentence quietly and obediently and without complaint. Our protest is against the action of the Government in opposing woman suffrage, and against that alone.”

Letter to *The Times* signed by Kitty Marion, Constance Lytton and Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence (10th October, 1909)

**Activity 4**

Write a short paragraph about Lady Constance Lytton's life. You might like to include details about the following points:

- her family background
- her era (work out when she lived by looking at the photos and the date of the letter)
- her campaign and life's work – what was she arguing for?



