

1. Why Study History?

The word history comes from the Greek word **historia**, meaning inquiry, and knowledge acquired by investigation. It is the study of human past since evidence of civilisation began.



History is everything, and is all around us! What happened to you yesterday, when you were born, your grandparents' house, the first Australian Prime Minister, Captain Cook sailing around the East coast of Australia, the building of the Great Wall of China, the Roman Colosseum, the Greeks inventing **Democracy**, the Great Pyramids of Egypt, the Aboriginal **Dreamtime**, are ALL a part of history. But History isn't just a list of things that have happened in the past. History also helps to explain why things happened and, understanding History, helps you to understand the world we live in today.

Studying History gives you **valuable** skills that you can use every day. By studying History you will be able to explain how people, events and forces from the **past** have shaped our world. It will help you to understand the different **perspectives** people have: the struggles people such as **migrants**, women and Aboriginal people have had, and continue to go through.



History will help you understand your place in the world, and how you can better **appreciate** what it is to be a **citizen** of Australia. It will also help you to become a better thinker, to look at the world **critically**, and to solve problems.

But History is so much more than that. It's also about exciting stories and adventures, and **gross** things that we can only try to understand today. It's about knowing why Egyptians scraped brains out of dead people, and why doctors put blood sucking leeches on people to try to cure them, and about why the Vikings believed the first man and first woman came from the sweat of a giant's armpits!



History is valuable and important, but it is also a great deal of fun.

We can divide history into time periods called **ages** or **eras**. The main periods we study are: Ancient History from around 3500BC to 500AD, the Middle Ages from the end of the Roman **Empire** to around 1400AD, the Renaissance after that until around 1800AD, and the **Modern World** leading up to today.

Activities



Comprehension Questions

Before you start, define the terms in **bold**.



1. What is history?
2. Give some examples of what history can be about.
3. What skills can the study of history give you?
4. How do historians divide the time periods of history?
5. When was
 - a. Ancient History?
 - b. The Middle Ages?
 - c. The Renaissance?

Thinking Questions

1. Why do you think we should study history?
2. Write a paragraph describing something that has happened within your lifetime that might be considered historically important 100 years from now.



2. Glossary of important terms.



AD “Anno Domini” is a Latin phrase meaning “in the year of our Lord” it is used for our dating system starting from the proposed birth of Jesus. (Also known as CE – the Common Era.)

age is a period of time named for a common feature of that time e.g. Iron Age

anachronism an item, custom or event that is placed in the wrong period of time

archaeologist a person who studies ancient cultures by digging up objects from under the ground or under the sea

artefact an object made by humans such as pottery, clothing, tools, and weapons

bias a one-sided, prejudiced, or unbalanced point of view

BC means “Before Christ”, the time before Jesus’ birth. (Also known as BCE – Before the Common Era.)

century 100 years

chronological order events arranged in the order that they happened

civilisation a group of people who have a distinct culture or society

conservation preserving something or restoring it to its original state

document anything that is written, usually on paper

evidence something that provides information about the past

generation a body of people born in approximately the same ten-year time span

heritage all things that we have inherited from previous generations, including events, traditions, monuments or natural environments

perspective a particular point of view

prehistoric belonging to the time before people created written records (more than 5000 years ago)

primary source a source of evidence from the time being studied, e.g. diaries, eyewitness accounts

reliable trustworthy and of good quality

secondary source a source of evidence created after the period being investigated

sequence the order of time in which events occur

sources written and non-written items that help us understand past events and people

timeline a way to show events in their chronological order and how they relate to each other



Activities



Comprehension Questions

Answer each using full sentences.



1. Describe the difference between AD and BC.
2. Which of the glossary words describes a job?
3. When was prehistoric time?
4. Which 6 words describe a period of time?
5. Which 6 words describe the evidence an historian might use?
6. Which 4 words would an historian use to put things in the right time and order?
7. Which 3 words are about how much you can trust evidence?

Thinking Questions

1. For each of the following words, describe why you think they are important to historians.
 - a. Artefact
 - b. Conservation
 - c. Heritage
 - d. Evidence

