

Year 7 history: Rationale

In Year 7 History, students begin their journey as young historians by exploring a carefully sequenced curriculum that builds both knowledge and essential historical skills. We focus on topics from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance periods.

We start with a unit on *What is History?* This introduces students to the discipline itself. Pupils learn how historians use sources of evidence to investigate the past and are introduced to key second-order concepts such as chronology, progress and regress and essay writing. This foundation helps them to question sources, form arguments, and understand that history is not just about facts, but about how we interpret them.

Students then move on to study *Anglo-Saxon England*, where they explore how power was organised before 1066. This unit develops their understanding of power by examining how England was governed and how secure (or fragile) the power of the king was.

The *Norman Conquest* topic allows students to investigate a major turning point in English history. They analyse cause and consequence by studying why William won the Battle of Hastings and how England changed under Norman rule. Pupils also examine sources such as the Domesday Book to deepen their skills in using historical evidence.

In the unit on *The Medieval Church*, students consider the extent of the Church's influence on everyday life. This encourages them to think critically about the power of Medieval institutions, while also developing their ability to assess how far this shaped people's lives and the power of the king.

The study of power of the Barons and the *Magna Carta* introduces students to the idea that power can be contested and limited. Here, pupils focus on cause, consequence, and significance, evaluating why the barons rebelled and how far this event changed the balance of power in England.

Finally, in *The Tudor Reformation*, students examine how and why religion changed in the 16th century. This unit reinforces understanding of change and continuity and cause and consequence, as students explore the actions of Tudor monarchs and the impact on people across the country.

Across all topics, students develop key historical skills: analysing sources, evaluating interpretations, constructing arguments, and using evidence to support their ideas. This approach ensures that students not only gain a strong understanding of Britain's past but also learn to think critically and independently—skills that are valuable far beyond the history classroom.

Topic:	Enquiry questions:	Historical Concepts:	Historical Skills:
<i>What is history</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are historical sources? 2. What is chronology? 3. How might historians track progress? 4. How do you structure an essay in history? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chronology • Change and continuity • Source inference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain why
<i>How powerful was Anglo-Saxon England?</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What happened to England when the Romans left? 2. How did the Anglo-Saxons structure society? 3. Did the earls help or hinder the power of the king? 4. Explain why Earls helped kings to keep power. 5. Why did the Vikings choose to settle in England? 6. Revision lesson: Why was Anglo-Saxon England so powerful? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change and continuity • Significance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describing features • Explain why
<i>How did England change under the Normans?</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why was there a succession crisis in 1066? 2. What distracted Harold in September 1066? 3. Why did William win the Battle of Hastings? 4. Why were castles important to William? 5. What is the significance of Norwich castle? 6. How did William reshape Anglo-Saxon society? 7. How did William deal with rebels and rebellions? 8. Why did William need the Domesday Book? 9. Revision: How did England change under the Normans? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cause and consequence • Significance • Change and continuity • Historical interpretations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Source inference • Describing features • Explain why • Forming and supporting judgements
<i>What power did the Church have in the Middle Ages?</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How did the Church control Medieval society? 2. How did the Church offer comfort to ordinary people? 3. How could the Church affect the power of Medieval kings? 4. Who was to blame for the murder of Thomas Becket? 5. Why did the Church create an army? 6. Revision: What power did the Church have in the Middle Ages? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significance • Cause and consequence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Source inference
<i>How did the Barons limit the power of kings in the 13th century?</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Was King John effective, useless or unlucky? 2. How did the English people view King John? 3. How did the Magna Carta affect the power of the King? 4. Could queens exercise much power in the Middle Ages? 5. How do we support and challenge historical interpretations 6. Did the reign of Henry II mark a change in how monarchs ruled? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical interpretations • Cause and consequence • Change and continuity • Significance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Source inference • Analysing sources • Analysing historical interpretations • Forming judgements • Describing features

Topic:	Enquiry questions:	Historical Concepts:	Historical Skills:
<i>How did the Tudors change religion?</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why were people becoming critical of the Catholic Church? 2. Why did Henry VIII break with the Pope in Rome? 3. What was the impact of the dissolution of the monasteries? 4. How did Edward VI make England a Protestant country? 5. Does Queen Mary deserve a bloody reputation? 6. Did Elizabeth succeed in creating a middle way for religion? 7. Why was Mary queen of Scotland a threat to Elizabeth? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cause and consequence • Change and continuity • Significance and impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain one way • Analysing historical interpretations • Source inference • Explain why essay writing

Assessments over the course:

1. Autumn term: How powerful was Anglo-Saxon England?

- Chronology
- Core knowledge
- 'Explain why' paragraph writing skills

2. Spring term: How did England change under the Normans?

- Key words
- Core knowledge
- Source skills
- 'Explain why' extended writing skills

3. Summer term: What power did the Church have in the Middle Ages?

- Core knowledge
- Source skills
- 'Explain why' extended writing skills

Year 8 history: Rationale

In Year 8 History, students build on the foundations established in Year 7 by exploring more complex and global themes. The curriculum has been carefully designed to deepen students' understanding of the modern world while continuing to develop their analytical and critical thinking skills as historians. We begin with a study of the impact of Britain on its colonies, using Australia as a case study. This unit encourages students to examine the consequences of empire from different perspectives, including those of Indigenous peoples and British settlers. Pupils develop their understanding of consequence, similarity and difference, and historical significance, while also learning to evaluate contrasting interpretations of the past.

Students then investigate why Germany was defeated in the First World War. This topic helps pupils to explore complex chains of causation through an assessment of the causes of WW1. They will then weigh up the importance of different factors including technology, the role of empire and alliances, and military tactics. Through this, they strengthen their grasp of cause and consequence, as well as their ability to construct well-supported historical arguments using evidence.

The study of key turning points in the Second World War allows students to identify and evaluate moments that had a decisive impact on the outcome of the conflict. This unit develops their understanding of significance and change and continuity, as well as their ability to assess why certain events can be seen as more important than others. Finally, students examine how the treatment of Jewish people escalated under Nazi rule. This unit is taught with sensitivity and care, helping students understand how discrimination developed into persecution and, ultimately, genocide. At times, pupils will engage with primary sources to understand how and why these events occurred. It also serves as a vital tool to study human behaviour, while highlighting the importance of protecting human rights, democratic values, and fostering civic responsibility. Across all topics, students continue to develop key historical skills: analysing and evaluating sources, understanding different interpretations, making reasoned judgements, and communicating their ideas clearly. The Year 8 curriculum not only broadens students' knowledge of international history, but also helps them to think critically about power, conflict, and human experiences in the past.

Topic:	Enquiry questions:	Concepts:	Skills:
1: What impact did Britain have on people living in their colonies?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Why would an empire benefit Britain? What was the way of life for the Aboriginals before colonisation? What impact did colonisation have on the Aboriginals? What do the Frontier wars show us about the process of colonisation? Who are the Stolen Generations? What are the lasting effects of British colonisation for Australia? What impact did Britain have on people living in their colonies? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cause and consequence Change and continuity Significance Chronology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain why Source inference Source usefulness Forming and supporting judgements
2: Why was Germany defeated in 1918?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> What were the long-term causes of World War One? What was the spark that led to war? What led to the formation of the Western Front? Explain why Europe went to war in 1914. How effective was the new technology of the war? Was life in a trench more about enduring than combat? What impact did British empire troops have on the Western Front? How did battleships and blockades sink Germany's chances of winning WW1? What were the consequences of the Gallipoli campaign? How did technology transform the battle of the Somme? Did Germany lose the war on the battlefield or at home? How did the Treaty of Versailles affect Germany? Revision lesson: Autum assessment -Why was Germany defeated in WWI? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cause and consequence Significance Historical interpretations Chronology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain why Source inference Forming and supporting judgements Analysing historical interpretations
3: What were the significant turning points in the Second World War?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Why did the world go to war again in 1939? Why did Chamberlain appease Hitler? What happened at Dunkirk? Was the evacuation of Dunkirk a success for Britain? Why did the RAF win the Battle of Britain? How did the Home Front help the war effort? Did British people really have Blitz Spirit? What did Operation Barbarossa reveal about Soviet power? Why are sources useful for historical investigations? Why was America attacked at Pearl Harbour in 1941? Was D-Day the most important day of WWII? What do sources tell us about D-day? Why did Germany surrender the war in Europe in 1945? Was dropping the atomic bomb a justified way to end the war? Revision lesson: Spring assessment - What were the significant turning points? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cause and consequence Chronology Significance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forming and supporting judgements Source usefulness Explain why Source inference

Topic:	Enquiry questions:	Concepts:	Skills:
4. How did the treatment of Jewish people escalate under the Nazis?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is antisemitism? 2. What is a narrative account? 3. What was life like for German Jews before 1933? 4. How did Hitler turn people against Jewish people? 5. How did Hitler use laws to isolate the Jewish people? 6. How did Germans respond to Kristallnacht? 7. How were Jewish people forced to live in Ghettos? 8. Why would ordinary people agree to murder Jewish people? 9. What was the Final Solution? 10. What was the experience of Steven Frank? 11. Revision lesson: Summer assessment – how did the treatment of Jewish people escalate under the Nazis? 12. Were Jewish survivors truly free after liberation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cause and consequence • Chronology • Significance • Historical interpretations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing narrative accounts • Source Inference • Forming and supporting judgements • Analysing historical interpretations

Assessments over the course:

1. Autumn term: Why was Germany defeated in WW1?

- Chronology
- Core knowledge
- Identifying and describing key features
- Using historical interpretations
- ‘Explain why’ essay writing skills

2. Spring term: What were the significant turning points of WW2 ?

- Core knowledge
- Identifying and describing key features
- Source skills
- ‘Source usefulness’ extended writing

3. Summer term: How did the treatment of Jews escalate under the Nazis?

- Core knowledge
- Identifying and describing key features
- Source skills
- Writing a narrative account

Summary of/rationale behind Year 9 History

How different was quality of life in the USA and USSR before 1945?

In our first unit at the beginning of Year 9 we aim to introduce students to the ideological extremes of capitalism and communism. Students examine how two different "blueprints" for society—**Capitalism/Democracy** vs. **Communism/Authoritarianism**—attempted to solve the problems post war Europe.

The USA: Focuses on individual liberty, consumerism, and the "American Dream," but also the harsh realities of the Great Depression and racial inequality.

The USSR: Focuses on the attempt to create a classless society through rapid industrialisation and collectivisation, but at the cost of personal freedom and immense human suffering under Stalin.

This first unit also aims to set the scene for studying the Cold War at GCSE. You can't understand the second half of the 20th century (the Cold War) without understanding the first. By studying 1900–1945, students see the **roots of the rivalry**. They learn that the tension between the two superpowers wasn't just about nuclear weapons; it was a fundamental disagreement over how a human being should live, work, and be governed.

How far did Civil Rights progress for Black Americans between 1945-1975?

Teaching Year 9 students about the Civil Rights Movement between 1945 and 1975 is a cornerstone of the history curriculum because it marks the transition from legalised segregation to the legislative foundations of modern equality.

The primary rationale is to show students that history isn't just made by "great men" (presidents or generals), but by ordinary people. Students learn that passing a law doesn't immediately change a culture. It helps them understand why racial tensions persisted even after legal "victory" was achieved.

This time period is also an excellent case study for highlighting why we study History as it helps students connect 1950s Jim Crow laws to modern discussions like the Black Lives Matter movement, showing that history is a continuous thread rather than a closed book.

How and why was the USA involved in the Vietnam War?

The rationale for teaching Year 9s about the Vietnam War is to show them what happens when a "Superpower" gets stuck in a conflict it can't easily win. It moves the conversation from the high-level politics of the Cold War down into the mud, jungle, and protest lines.

This unit introduces students to the Cold War in preparation for GCSE and also ties in with our previous unit of Civil Rights as it gives students a chance to see that policies at home and abroad interplay with each other and impacts how a country (in this case the USA) deals with crises. Studying the Vietnam War also gives students a chance to see how the media influences politics and policies around warfare in a way which had not happened in any previous war but continues to do so in conflicts today. Additionally, this unit encourages students to consider the morality and justification of a global superpower involving itself in the affairs of a much smaller country and whether this is morally justifiable.

Topic	Enquiry question	Concepts	Skills
How different was quality of life in the USA and USSR before 1945?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the differences between capitalism and communism? 2. How far did life in Russia improve under Lenin? 3. Did the revolution improve the lives of Russians? 4. How did Stalin modernise the USSR? 5. Was life better or worse for ordinary Soviet people under Stalin's rule? 6. Why were the 1920's roaring in the USA? 7. Did all Americans benefit from the boom? 8. Why was the 29th of October a disastrous day? 9. How different was quality of life before 1945? 10. Revision lesson: Quality of life in the USA was far better than in the USSR before 1945.' How far do you agree? 	<p>Cause and consequence Change and continuity Significance Comparison</p>	<p>Forming and supporting judgements Explain why Source inference</p>
How far did Civil Rights progress for Black Americans between 1945-1975?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Was America 'separate but equal' in the 1950s? 2. How did a courtroom decision transform the lives of American children? 3. How significant were events at Little Rock? 4. How did ordinary people create extraordinary change during the Montgomery bus boycott? 5. How effective were opposition groups in blocking Civil Rights? 6. What did the death of Emmett Till reveal about American attitudes? 7. Why did the Civil Rights Movement make progress in the years 1960-62? 8. Did Kennedy push for, and advance Civil Rights? 9. Did it take ongoing violence to make America change or a determined President Johnson? 10. Revision lesson : How far did Civil Rights progress for Black Americans between 1945-1975? 11. Did extreme methods help or hinder Civil Rights? 12. How far did MLK impact the Civil Rights Movement? 13. How far had Civil Rights progressed by 1975? 	<p>Change and continuity Significance Source inference Historical interpretations Chronology</p>	<p>Forming and supporting judgements Analysing historical interpretations Evaluating historical interpretations Analysing historical interpretations Source inference</p>

Topic	Enquiry question	Concepts	Skills
How and why was the USA involved in the Vietnam War?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why did superpower relations deteriorate after World War Two? 2. Why did France lose control of Vietnam after WWII? 3. What was the impact of the Geneva Accords? 4. Did Kennedy's policies make things worse in Vietnam? 5. Why did America's involvement in Vietnam increase after 1963? 6. What tactics were used by the USA and Vietcong during the war? 7. Why was the Tet Offensive a turning point in the war? 8. What impact did events at My Lai have on the Vietnam War? 9. Why did American's oppose the Vietnam War? 10. How successful was the Paris Peace Agreement? 11. Assessment: How and why was the USA involved in the Vietnam War? 	Cause and consequence Historical interpretations Significance Chronology	Source inference Evaluating historical interpretations Assessing source utility Explain why

Assessments over the course:

1. Autumn term: How different was quality of life between USA and USSR before 1945?

- Core knowledge
- Source skills
- Describing features
- Extended writing: Forming and supporting judgements

2. Spring term: How far did Civil Rights progress for Black Americans between 1945-1975?

- Core knowledge
- Source skills
- Extended writing: analysing historical interpretations

GCSE history: Rationale

Our *medicine through time* course allows students to track long term patterns of development over 1,000 years. This unit explores how and why medical knowledge and public health evolved from the Middle Ages to the present day. Students will analyse progression and regression , understand change and continuity and evaluate factors of change. The historic environment course (Treatment of British soldiers between 1914-1918), allows students to understand that traditional medical knowledge was insufficient for the scale and type of injuries encountered in WWI.

Anglo-Saxon and Norman England has been selected to give students a deep understanding of a formative period in British history, focusing on the years c.1000–1088. This unit allows students to explore how England was governed before 1066 and how power, society, and culture changed following the Norman Conquest. Through this topic, students investigate key events such as the succession crisis of 1066, the Norman invasion, and the consolidation of Norman rule. In doing so, they develop their understanding of important second-order concepts including cause and consequence (why William won the throne), change and continuity (how Norman rule transformed England), and historical significance (the lasting impact of the Conquest).

The *Superpower Relations and the Cold War topic* has been chosen to help students understand the origins of modern global politics and the tensions that shaped the second half of the twentieth century. Focusing on the period 1941–1991, this unit explores the evolving relationship between the USA and the Soviet Union, from wartime alliance to ideological conflict. Through studying key events such as the breakdown of the Grand Alliance, the Berlin crises, the Cuban Missile Crisis, and the eventual end of the Cold War, students develop their understanding of key second-order concepts including cause and consequence and historical significance. They learn to analyse how and why tensions escalated, and how close the world came to nuclear conflict.

Finally, *Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918–39* has been selected to help students understand how political, economic, and social instability can lead to significant changes in leadership and society. This unit explores Germany's transition from the challenges of the Weimar Republic to the rise and consolidation of Nazi rule. Students investigate key issues such as the impact of the First World War, the weaknesses and strengths of the Weimar government, and the factors that enabled Hitler and the Nazis to gain and maintain power. The topic also encourages students to engage critically with historical evidence and interpretations, including propaganda, speeches, and contemporary accounts. They learn to analyse sources, evaluate differing viewpoints, and construct well-supported arguments.

Course	Units	Concepts	Skills
<p>Paper 1: Thematic study and historic environment</p> <p>Section A: Historic environment. The British sector of the Western Front, 1914-18: injuries, treatments and the trenches</p> <p>Section B: Thematic study. Medicine through time 1250-present day</p>	<p>Unit 1: Medicine in medieval England c1250-1500</p> <p>Unit 2: Medicine in Renaissance England c1500-c1700</p> <p>Unit 3: Medicine in 18th and 19th century Britain c1700-1900</p> <p>Unit 4: Medicine in Modern Britain c1900 – present day</p> <p>Unit 5: The British sector of the Western Front, 1914-1918: injuries, treatments and the trenches.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change and continuity • Significance • Chronology • Progress/regress • Factors • Similarity/difference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying and describing key features • Explain why • Source usefulness • Forming and supporting judgements • Making comparisons • Follow up on sources • Evaluating factors of change
<p>Paper 2: Period study and British depth study</p> <p>British depth study: Anglo-Saxon and Norman England, c1060-1088</p> <p>Period study: Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941-1991</p>	<p><i>British depth:</i></p> <p>Unit 1: Anglo-Saxon England and the Norman Conquest 1060 – 66</p> <p>Unit 2: William I in power: securing the kingdom 1066 - 87</p> <p>Unit 3: Norman England 1066 - 88</p> <p><i>Period study:</i></p> <p>Unit 1: The origins of the Cold War, 1941-1958</p> <p>Unit 2: Cold War Crises, 1958-70</p> <p>Unit 3: The end of the Cold War, 1970-91</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cause and consequence • Significance • Chronology • Change and continuity • Similarity/difference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain why • Source inference • Forming and supporting judgements • Identifying and describing key features • Evaluating sources • Explain one consequence • Explain the importance • Writing a narrative account • Source inference

Course	Enquiry question	Concepts	Skills
Modern Depth Study: Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-39	Unit 1: The origins of the Republic, 1918-1919 Unit 2: Hitler's rise to power 1919-1933 Unit 3: Establishing a dictatorship and securing control, 1933-39 Unit 4: Life in Nazi Germany 1933-1939	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cause and consequence • Chronology • Significance • Historical interpretations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Source Inference • Forming and supporting judgements • Analysing historical interpretations • Evaluating historical interpretations • Explain why • Examine reasons why interpretations differ

Assessments over the course:

1. Autumn term:

- YR 11 Mini-Mock (Superpower relations) at end of Cold war topic
- YR 10 Mini mock (Part B of Paper 1) at the end of medicine topic
- YR 11 full Paper 2 mock at Christmas exams
- 1 YR full Paper 3 mock at Christmas exams

2. Spring term:

- YR 10 mini mock (Part A of paper 1) at the end of the British Sector topic
- YR 10 full Paper 1 mock at Easter exams
- 1 YR full Paper 1 mock at Easter exams
- YR 11 Paper 3 mock (in lessons)

3. Summer term:

- Mini mock (Anglo-Norman England) for YR 10 at end of Anglo-Norman England topic

Reports deadlines

Ks4 groups	Autumn	Spring	Summer
YR 11	25 th September 2026	22 nd January 2027	12 th March 2027
YR 10	13 th November 2026	22 nd January 2027	30 th April 2027
1YR	16 th October 2026	22 nd January 2027	12 th (YR 11) OR 19 March (YR 10) 2027

Ks3 groups	Autumn	Spring	Summer
YR 7	4 th December 2026	26 th February 2027	7 th May 2027
YR 8	4 th December 2026	<i>No report</i>	7 th May 2027
YR 9	13 th November 2026	22 nd January 2027	30 th April 2027