

SYLLABUS LINKS

The Stage 4 curriculum provides a study of the nature of history and historical sources, both archaeological and written. Students investigate ancient history from the time of the earliest human communities to the end of the ancient period (approximately 60 000 BC–c. AD 650). It was a period defined by the development of cultural practices and organised societies, including Australia, Egypt, Greece, Rome, India and China.

KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- How do we know about the ancient past?
- Why and where did the earliest societies develop?
- What emerged as the defining characteristics of ancient societies?
- What have been the legacies of ancient societies?

INTRODUCING THE CHAPTER

Depth study 1 'Investigating the Ancient Past'

As part of Depth Study 1 teachers are required to study 'Investigating the Ancient Past'.

Chapter content

Unit 1, 'History and archaeology' explores the concepts of history and archaeology and explains the terms historian and artefact. Unit 2, 'Time and timelines' examines the measurement of time and chronology. Unit 3, 'Pieces of the puzzle: investigating sources' outlines the use of historical evidence in finding out about the past, defines primary and secondary sources and fact and opinion and discusses the use of technology in historical investigations. Unit 5, 'Ancient Australia' investigates the way of life of Aboriginal people in ancient times through archaeological evidence. Unit 6, 'Ancient Australia: sources' explores the ways in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have recorded, remembered and communicated their past. Unit 7, 'Importance of conserving the remains of the past' discusses why it is important to preserve historical sites and artefacts and where this is being done. Unit 8, 'Methods of preserving and conserving archaeological remains' discusses how historical evidence of the past is conserved. Unit 9, 'UNESCO World Heritage site' examines the role of UNESCO



in preserving heritage and looks at the World Heritage site: Persepolis. Unit 10, 'Investigating the ancient past' provides investigation tasks and a glossary.

Using sources and evidence

Unit 4, 'Historical mysteries—bog bodies and the Carnac stones' examines preserved bodies as a source of historical information.

KEY TERMS

historian—person who examines events and lives of people in past times

history—the study of our past

Loulan Beauty—4000-year-old preserved body found in China

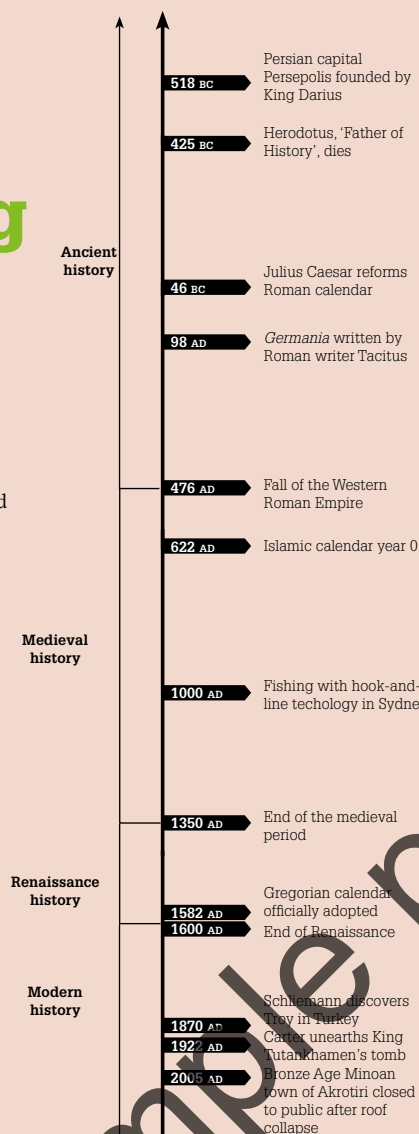
CHAPTER 2

Investigating the ancient past

History is the study of our past. Historians examine events and the lives of people from times gone by so that we can better understand ourselves and the world around us. History is always changing as exciting new discoveries and new technologies allow historians to learn more about ancient mysteries and peoples from the past.

Source 2.0.1 Loulan Beauty, a 4000-year-old body found in 1980 preserved in the salty sands of the Taklamakan Desert in western China. Her plaited fair hair, tattoos and woollen clothing show she was Western European. But what was she doing in China?

Source 2.0.2 A timeline of key events and people in the ancient past



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TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

Historical skills: Analysis and use of sources

Picture study

MI: visual-spatial, verbal-linguistic

Students refer to Source 2.0.1 and write three questions they would like to ask about it. For example:

- 1 How did the person die?
- 2 What is the importance of their clothing?
- 3 Why was the person in China?

Once students have written the questions, they form a pair with another student to try to hypothesise answers to all questions.

Answers

Student answers will vary.

IN A NUTSHELL

History is the study of past events, people, places and ideas using evidence from the past. Historical evidence dates back to the prehistory period, tens of thousands of years ago. The earliest written records are 5500 years old. Archaeologists work with historians to learn about the past. Historians are similar to detectives who discover and use bits of evidence to create a picture of what happened in the past. They use both primary and secondary sources, but must take note of bias when they interpret sources. Historians use timelines as a tool to chronologically organise and summarise key historical events.

PREPARATION FOR TEACHING

Suggestions for introducing Investigating the ancient past

- Conduct a 'Think, Pair, Share' activity with students to generate thinking about history. Pose the question, 'What is history?' Students complete this task individually, then with a partner and finally discuss as a class.
- Students discuss what life was like for their parents when they were thirteen years old. Students interview their parents and ask questions such as the price of essential items (such as milk, bread, newspaper), cost of housing in the area they lived, popular movies and TV shows of the time, music parents listened to. Students use information gained to write a summary profile of the year their parents were thirteen years old.
- Students conduct a school-wide survey of their peers' and teachers' understanding of history by asking questions such as 'What is history, why study history and is it relevant?' Students could then collate the information to form a theory about the importance of the study of history in school.

RESOURCES

Digital resources

Web Destinations

Information about relevant websites is available on eBook. In addition, students may search for websites using search terms specific to the topic that they are researching.

Pre-test

Students complete the Review Quiz available on eBook to gather pre-existing knowledge on 'Investigating the ancient past'.

PEARSON history NSW 7 A.B.

Chapter 2: Investigating the ancient past

SYLLABUS LINKS

Outcomes ►►

A student:

- describes the nature of history and archaeology and explains their contribution to an understanding of the past
- uses a range of historical terms and concepts when communicating an understanding of the past
- selects and uses appropriate oral, written, visual and digital forms of communication about the past

Content ►►

How historians and archaeologists investigate history, including excavation and archival research

Students:

- outline the main features of history and archaeology
- outline the role of historians and archaeologists
- describe and explain the different approaches to historical investigation taken by archaeologists and historians

Historical skills ►►

Comprehension: chronology, terms and concepts

- read and understand historical texts
- use historical terms and concepts

Analysis and use of sources

- identify the origin and purpose of primary and secondary sources

Explanation and communication

- develop historical texts, particularly explanations and historical arguments that use evidence from a range of sources
- select and use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, written and digital) to communicate effectively about the past

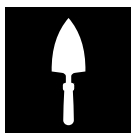
KEY CONCEPTS

- Defining history and archaeology for students
- Where and how remains of the past are found

KEY TERMS

archaeology—the study of history by investigating artefacts and other physical evidence left behind from the past

artefact—something produced by humans, such as a tool or a work of art



UNIT 2.1

History and archaeology

What is history?

History is the story of people's lives from past times. This story is pieced together by historians with the help of many other people. This includes specialists trained in archaeological skills such as dating pottery, identifying bones and reconstructing artworks.

Historians and artefacts

A historian is someone who studies and writes about the past. Historians ask questions about the past to build a picture of societies, individuals and events. They do this by using the remains of the past such as artefacts and writings.

Artefacts are items that have been made by people. Some examples are jewellery, stone tools, pottery jugs, statues, paintings and buildings.

'Father of History'

Herodotus (c. 484–425 bc) was a Greek historian famous for writing *The Histories*, an account of the Persian Wars fought in the fifth century bc. He gathered information from eyewitnesses but also included myths, superstitions and activities of gods in his work. Source 2.1.1 explains his reason for writing.

... to preserve the memory of the past by putting on record the astonishing achievements both of our own and of other peoples; and more particularly, to show how they came into conflict.

Source 2.1.1 Extract from Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book I, translated by A. de Sélincourt, Penguin Books, London, 1972, p. 40



Source 2.1.2 Archaeologists excavating at the World Heritage-listed caves of Sierra de Atapuerca in Spain

What is archaeology?

Archaeology focuses on the physical evidence left behind from the past; for example, cities, coins, graves and roads. These physical remains are clues to the lives and beliefs of past civilisations.

An archaeologist excavates or digs in the ground to find **evidence** of past civilisations. Artefacts are usually found underground due to the effects of natural disasters, war, rebuilding over previous remains or changing geography. Close examination of Source 2.1.2 will reveal the grid system that archaeologists use to guide them during an **excavation**. Each uncovered artefact's location is carefully recorded using this system.

historian—person who examines events and lives of people in past times

history—the study of our past

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

Historical skills: explanation and communication

Questions of the past

MI: visual-spatial, verbal-linguistic

Students imagine they are a historian investigating a building or location of significance to them in their local area (for example, their own house, their school,

a local building) and write five questions they would like to ask to find out about the history of the location.

Answers

Student answers will vary. Some sample questions are provided below.

- *How long has this building been here?*
- *What was the original purpose of this building?*
- *How has use of this building changed over time?*
- *What artefacts have been left behind to tell us further information about this building?*

Where to look?

There are many ways that remains of the ancient past can be found. Natural disasters such as landslides or human activities can reveal artefacts. Archaeologists can also be guided by:

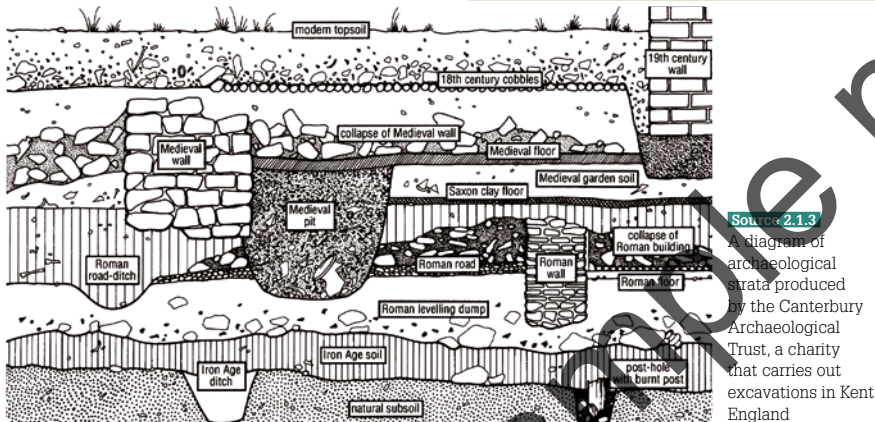
- stories—tales of the lost city of Atlantis helped archaeologist Spyridon Marinatos find the Minoan town of Akrotiri on the Greek island of Santorini in 1967
- accidental discovery of artefacts—the construction of a canal in 1592 revealed marble slabs resulting in the discovery of the ancient city of Herculaneum in Italy
- mounds of earth, called tells, which often cover ancient cities
- places where the land caves in or where crops grow differently to surrounding crops.

Technology

Archaeologists use technology to help them find places to dig. Infra-red satellite imaging, radar, underwater sonar, metal detectors and aerial photography can provide clues about where ancient peoples lived.

Layers in the earth

When archaeologists dig into the earth, the ground is made up of many layers. These layers are called 'strata' (see Source 2.1.3). The deepest layers are the oldest and the layers closest to the surface are the youngest.



Stratigraphy allows archaeologists to put the remains of the past into **chronological order** and gather information about the past.

ACTIVITIES

Remembering and understanding

- 1 Create a concept map to brainstorm at least four ideas showing what history means to you.
- 2 What does Herodotus state that historians do?
- 3 Look at Source 2.1.2. Describe the types of tasks an archaeologist does as part of their job.

Applying and analysing

- 4 Look at Source 2.1.3.
 - a Which strata is the oldest? Explain why.
 - b Identify possible difficulties for archaeologists in using strata.
 - c Interpret the diagram to determine how this site may have been used over time.
- 5 Sketch a dig diagram similar to Source 2.1.3 of your bedroom. Consider how many layers you will need to identify and what sort of artefacts of your life might be found at each layer. Label each strata clearly. You may like to use a presentation program such as Prezi to allow animated movement through strata levels.

Remembering and understanding

- 1 Student answers will vary. An example is shown at the bottom of the page.
- 2 Herodotus stated that historians make sure people remember the great things individuals and civilisations did and the wars they had by writing about the past.
- 3 Student answers will vary but may include digging in the earth; working as part of a team; working within defined grids; using tools such as buckets, trowels and brushes, or surveying equipment; putting artefacts they find in small plastic bags for further analysis; considering their personal safety.

Applying and analysing

- 4
 - a The deepest strata is the oldest, the natural subsoil below the Iron Age period.
 - b The layers of the earth can be disrupted by:
 - natural events such as earthquakes
 - deliberately dug into during construction or mining
 - animals digging burrows
 - the actions of past archaeologists.
 - c Iron Age people lived there and build wooden structures; after a fire the Romans placed fill to level the site and then built houses and a road. Later medieval people built over the collapsed Roman buildings/road, constructing houses, a wall and a rubbish dump. During the C.18th the site was again levelled and a cobblestone road was built. In the C.19th a wall was constructed with the footings dug down into the medieval level. In modern times there is just topsoil on the site.
- 5 Student answers will vary but should show clear levels of change over time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES CONTINUED

Extension activity

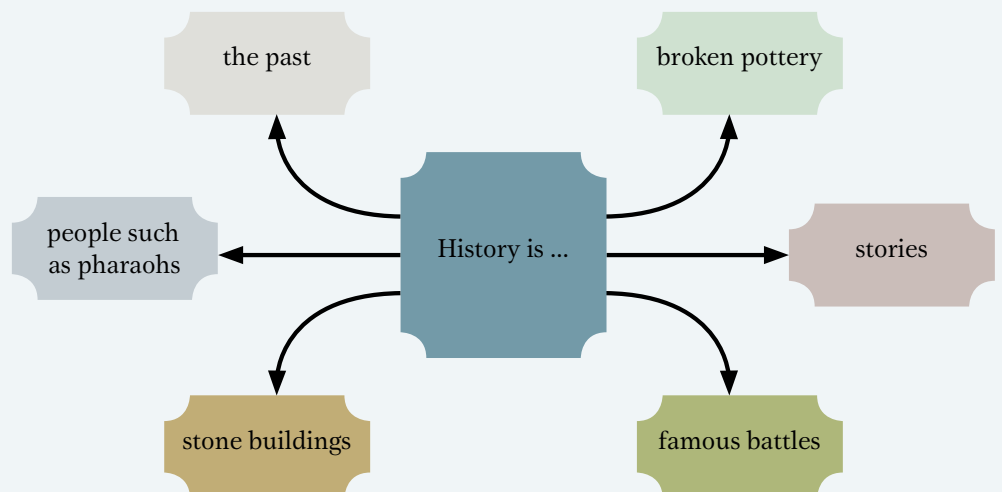
Collage

MI: visual-spatial, verbal-linguistic, interpersonal

Students work in pairs to create a collage about history. Students use words and images from newspapers, magazines, students' own illustrations, the internet and any other resources to create the collage.

Answers

Student answers will vary depending on what they consider 'history' to be.



SYLLABUS LINKS

Outcomes ►►

A student:

- identifies the meaning, purpose and context of historical sources
- uses evidence from sources to support historical narratives and explanations
- uses a range of historical terms and concepts when communicating an understanding of the past
- selects and uses appropriate oral, written, visual and digital forms of communication about the past

Content ►►

How historians and archaeologists investigate history, including excavation and archival research

Students:

- define the terms and concepts relating to historical time, including BC/AD, BCE/CE
- describe and explain the different approaches to historical investigation taken by archaeologists and historians

The range of sources that can be used in an historical investigation, including archaeological and written sources

Students:

- list a range of sources used by archaeologists and historians in historical investigations

Historical skills ►►

Comprehension: chronology, terms and concepts

- read and understand historical texts
- sequence historical events and periods
- use historical terms and concepts

Analysis and use of sources

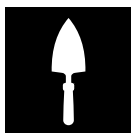
- identify the origin and purpose of primary and secondary sources
- locate, select and use information from a range of sources as evidence
- draw conclusions about the usefulness of sources

Research

- ask a range of questions about the past to inform an historical inquiry
- identify and locate a range of relevant sources, using ICT and other methods
- use a range of communication forms and technologies

Explanation and communication

- develop historical texts, particularly explanations and historical arguments that use evidence from a range of sources



UNIT 2.2

Time and timelines

Time is all around us

We measure time in standardised units—hours, days, months, years and so on. This allows us to understand each other when we talk about the past, our lives or planning the future. Source 2.2.1 shows how the ancient Greeks attempted to measure time.



Source 2.2.1 A Greek water clock from the fifth century BC

Calendars

Peoples of different civilisations developed their own methods of measuring and naming time. Sunrise and sunset, changing seasons, movement of stars or the reigns of kings have been used by various cultures in history to mark the passage of time.

- Ancient Persians began their new year with the spring equinox in March, when the day is as long as the night. Three thousand years later, modern-day Iran is still celebrating this date with a spring festival.
- Ancient Egyptians timed their new year to coincide with the annual flooding of the Nile, and later with the rising of the star Sirius. Their year was divided into three seasons, each made up of three months with a ten-day week.
- The Islamic calendar is based on the cycles of the moon. The first year of the Islamic calendar is 622 AD, when the prophet Muhammad travelled from Mecca to Medina.
- Before 1873, Japan named years after the reigning emperor, so the year 1868 AD was Meiji 1 on the traditional calendar.

Gregorian calendar

In Australia, we use the Gregorian calendar to measure time. The Gregorian calendar is a modified version of the Julian or Roman calendar developed by Julius Caesar. This calendar is part of the Christian tradition and so divides years into two categories: BC (before Christ) and AD (*anno Domini*, Latin for 'in the year of our Lord'). Years are counted forwards and backwards from the year of Jesus Christ's birth, Year 1.

A more recent system that replaces BC and AD is now also in use: BCE (before the Common Era) and CE (Common Era). These two terms were chosen because they are more inclusive of non-Christians.

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- select and use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, written and digital) to communicate effectively about the past

KEY CONCEPTS

- How different civilisations measure time
- How timelines help historians
- Relative and absolute dating

KEY TERMS

AD—'*anno Domini*' which means 'in the year of our Lord'

BC—events that took place before the birth of Christ

BCE—before the Common Era, a term used instead of BC to disassociate from the Christian calendar

CE—Common Era, a term used instead of AD to disassociate it from the Christian calendar

Gregorian calendar—a system of measuring time used in many countries including Australia, in which a year has 12 months, or 365 days (and 366 days in a leap year which occurs every four years)



Source 2.2.2 An Aztec stone with the months inscribed. Some historians believe it is a calendar. The Aztecs had a 365-day year with a 260-day ritual cycle that formed a 52-year 'century'; at its conclusion the gods could destroy the world, if they wished. National Museum of Anthropology, Mexico

Another term that has been suggested is BP (before present); however, this can be confusing as the present is always changing, making it difficult to determine a precise date. Today, the Christian method of measuring time is still the most widely used system in most countries around the world for practical reasons.

DID YOU KNOW?

New Year's Day used to be held on 25 March in England. The beginning of the legal year reflected the republican Roman system when a consul (similar to a prime minister) was sworn in. This tradition continued during the Middle Ages when 25 March became a date when contracts to rent farmland expired and a feast was held to honour the Virgin Mary.

Chronology

Arranging dates in order of their time is called 'chronology'. Putting events in order helps historians evaluate a source during a historical investigation. Chronology helps determine:

- the context of a source and its author
- the importance of an event, belief or person
- if things have stayed the same or changed.

Historians divide the past into prehistory and history. Prehistory is the period before 3500 bc, the time before written records. History is the period after 3500 bc. History is then further divided into ancient, medieval and modern history. Most historians consider the end of ancient history to be the fall of the Western Roman Empire in 476 AD and medieval history ending with the 'rebirth' of a spirit of inquiry in Italy, called the 'Renaissance', during the 1300s AD.

KEY TERMS CONTINUED

prehistoric—period of early human history before written records, before 3500 BC

timeline—way of visually representing events in order of time

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

Historical skills: Comprehension/ analysis and use of sources

Aztec Stone

MI: visual-spatial, verbal-linguistic

Students refer to Source 2.2.2 and answer the following questions.

- 1 What does this source tell us about the Aztecs?
- 2 How you think the calendar worked?
- 3 What can historians learn from this artefact?

Answers

- 1 The Aztecs wanted to measure time.
- 2 Student answers will vary. A sample answer is provided below.
The stone could have used the sun or the phases of the moon to measure the change of months.
- 3 Historians can learn that the ancient Aztecs had a 365 day year and 52 years in a century and that they had developed enough understanding of time to be able to measure years via a calendar.

Historical skills: Comprehension/ research

Measuring time

MI: visual-spatial, verbal-linguistic

Students work in pairs to research another early method of measuring time. For example, early clocks such as sundials or methods of measuring time at sea (knots). Students present the information as an illustrated fact sheet for display in the classroom.

Answers

Student answers will vary.

Historical skills: Analysis and use of sources

Timelines

MI: visual-spatial, verbal-linguistic, interpersonal

Students refer to Source 2.2.3 as a guide to create an annotated timeline of their life. Discuss the timelines as a class and examine the similarities and differences between students.

Answers

Student answers will vary but may include key points such as the date they were born, key milestones such as walking, talking and starting school and any additional information such as their first memory or first holiday.