PRIMARY HISTORY

Issue 69 / Spring 2015

The primary education journal of The Historical Association

Viking and Anglo-Saxon struggle for the kingdom of England

Using 'Development Matters' to plan learning for history in the Foundation stage

Assessment and Progression without levels: where do we go from here?

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The back cover image: Portchester Saxon settlement

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Key KS1 and 2 historical terms

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Juliet Gardiner – Life on the Home Front during the Second World War

Dr Lucy Worsley – How to build an anniversary: 2014, the year of the Georgians

Jamie Byrom – The 'Peepo Principle' and progression in history

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The Historical Association
The voice for history

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Cover image
Illustration of the constellation Argo; with text Image taken from Cicero's Aratus. Originally published in England, second quarter of 11th century.
Cotton Tiberius B. V, Part 1, f.40v

in this issue

REGULARS

ARTICLES

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Letters, articles and other contributions to the magazine are welcome. They should be typed, double spaced, on one side of the paper. Please keep references to a minimum. A direct style free from jargon is preferred. Photographs and children's work are welcome. The maximum article length is 1,500 words. Send to: The Editor, *Primary History* c/o The Historical Association, 59a Kennington Park Road, London SE11 4JH.

Publication of a contribution in *Primary History* does not necessarily imply the Historical Association's approval of the opinions expressed in it. The Primary Committee of the Association has particular responsibility for matters of interest to primary teachers and schools.

Suggestions and comments are very welcome and should be sent to: the Chairholder, Jerome Freeman, c/o The Historical Association.

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editorial

When was the last time there was no war anywhere on Earth?

Estimates are that there have been 230 years of peace during the last 3,500 years. Of war fatalities over the past 500 years, it is estimated that three-quarters occurred during the twentieth century – including roughly 16 million in World War I and 60 million in World War II. Few families across the world have escaped the impact of battles and wars. Our challenge as teachers is to ensure that our children know of the positive achievements of ancient and modern civilisations.

The articles on early Islamic civilisation and ancient Sumer provide rich stories about the achievements of humankind. So many ideas and technologies that we take for granted began with these non-European peoples. A timeline showing what happened there and then compared with what was happening here will surprise your children.

More familiar stories of life in the beginnings of England are told in the detail of the Viking and Anglo-Saxon struggle for the kingdom of England *pp.* 22-27 Sitting in your class could be descendants of Viking and Anglo-Saxon tribes. Take a moment to consider that we are alive because members of our families survived all the events of the past; this makes each of us as a survivor worthy of respect.

The big ideas of history and the tiny details are the hooks to pull our children towards questioning their own and others' pasts. How can we begin to develop the enquiring minds of our youngest children? Helen Crawford's guidance for subject leaders on page 7 provides support for planning in the Foundation Stage.

An inviting start to any history enquiry is a local story and the people involved. Your children can move to national and international events from this powerful beginning. The articles on World War I and remembrance through memorials and cemeteries give sensitive approaches to teaching about the courage and commitment to freedom of members of your community. Children will wrestle with the question *Why were families proud to see their men go to war?* This question can also be asked of the people who lived at Portchester. Portchester's history is that of a settlement which has passed through the hands of the Romans, Saxons, Normans and onwards. See the back cover.

George S R Stritch MD killed in action Flanders, 7 February 1916. Left wife and two children living in Dublin. My grandfather.

And we want to enable our children to progress in their understanding of people and the past. The opportunities given by assessment without levels are clearly described in *pp*. 8-13. You will want to think about the amount of time given to history learning and teaching and the pattern of focused history learning across each year group. This will give you the context for planning. It is hard to show progress if there are long gaps between each learning sequence. And wrapped around this is your school's vision for learning for life underpinned by your core values. How will your history programme contribute to progress in these?

By September we have to be clear how assessment will be managed and recorded in school. Making our own principles and practice for assessing learning and tracking progress are opportunities to focus on the needs and aspirations of your children. This year is for teachers to try things in school. Please share what you try with your local schools and with us. You can be supported to write your case-study or contribute your experience to an article in a future *Primary History.* Seize the day.

Hilary Pegum

HA Primary News

Greetings one and all. It has been a busy time in primary history and we have lots of exciting new professional development and resources to update you on.

First, we are now drawing our pilot phase of the HA Quality Mark to a close. Congratulations go to the following schools who have all been awarded an HA Quality Mark:

Knowsley Juniors, Oldham

Sketchley Hill, Leicestershire

Summercourt Academy, Cornwall

Priory School, Dorset

Hey with Zion School, Oldham

We would like to thank all schools who took part in the pilot process and take this opportunity to remind members that registration for the full roll-out is now open. You can find out more about the process and how to register by going to this link: www.history.org.uk/resources/primary_resource_8113_284.html

If you would like to find out what some of our pilot schools have had to say you can find out by clicking on any of our case study evaluations: www.history.org.uk/resources/primary_resources_284.html Several schools have already registered for the full-roll out of the award and we look forward to welcoming more over the coming weeks and months.

We have also been working hard on our online resources. Recently published are new schemes of work on the Maya and Islamic Civilisations and a handy guide to local history. Our schemes of work are free to HA members. If you would like to take a look at the latest additions, follow this link: www.history.org.uk/resources/primary_news_2122.html

We have regional forums coming up this spring. With 2015 being a year of anniversaries, our South West Forum homes in on this and in particular the 50th anniversary of the Bristol Bus Boycott. Our London event features a keynote speech on Magna Carta plus a chance for a private view of the new British Library exhibition *Magna Carta: Law, Liberty, Legacy,* while our Northern History Forum will hold an eye to the future and look at ringing in those changes. We are also hoping to launch a Cumbrian forum in the future. We look forward to welcoming as many of you as possible to our regional forums. We know how difficult it can be to access high-quality professional development at reasonable prices and within a reasonable distance. Please support your nearest forum; with your support, we can grow existing forums and spread to new locations.

You may also be interested to know that this spring/summer, we will also be partnering the Schools History Project and the British Museum on the *Inspiring Primary History* Conference. You can find full details by following this link: www.history.org.uk/resources/primary_news_2296.html
As if that wasn't enough fantastic professional development to whet your appetite, we have also teamed up with the Geographical Association to offer you two brand new professional development days looking at how careful choice of content can complement and extend learning in both history and geography. These two new courses will take place at three different venues across the country. To find out more and to book your place/s follow this link: www.history.org.uk/resources/primary_news_2353.html

Our annual conference takes place in Bristol this year on May 8/9 and we have a great line-up of primary workshops for you. We hope to see many of you there. You can find details of the full programme and a link to booking by following this link: www.history.org.uk/resources/events_news_2366.html

As the new curriculum beds in, we would like to hear more about your experiences and views of the new history curriculum. Later this year, we will be launching a new national survey to gather information about history in primary schools. Look out for further details coming soon. We would like to gather the views of as many primary schools as possible so as to gain a representative picture that can be used to exert influence and make a difference.

Last, a reminder that this year's Write Your Own Historical Fiction Competition is now in full swing. If your Year 5 or 6 pupils have a great historical fiction tale to tell, why not enter them for the competition? Full details can be found at: www.history.org.uk/resources/primary_resource_7976_245.html

The standard of entries never ceases to amaze us and we are really looking forward to reading what this year brings. Our shortlist will be made with the help of primary and secondary school volunteer reviewers.

Until next time…

Mel Jones
HA Education Officer

Using 'Development Matters' to plan learning for history in the Foundation stage

Helen Crawford

You won't find the term history in the Early Years curriculum framework at all. That being so, it can be difficult to know how best to support our Nursery and Reception colleagues when developing historical understanding within the Foundation Stage.

Early Learning Goals

The most typical starting point is the Early Learning Goal (ELG) for 'Understanding the World' which states that by the end of their Reception year:

> ...children talk about past and present events in their own lives and in the lives of family members… they know about similarities and differences between themselves and others and among families, communities and traditions.

In 2014, 80% of children nationally achieved this goal, which suggests that most pupils in most settings are well-placed to begin the more formal Key Stage 1 programmes of study for history.

But this fact tells us very little about effective provision in the classroom, nor, more importantly, about how children develop an understanding of key historical concepts and skills. To do this we need to probe further. We need to look beyond 'Understanding the World' and consider which other areas of learning contribute towards developing early historical understanding.

Development Matters

The Development Matters document was published in 2012 by Early Education, with support from the DfE. It is non-statutory guidance designed to give Early Years practitioners detailed information about how and when children develop key knowledge, skills and concepts.

It reinforces our understanding that to develop learning for history (as distinct from the learning of history) you need to look across and beyond the teaching of discrete subjects. The framework can thus be a useful starting point when monitoring provision in Nursery and Reception classes, and can also be used to frame discussions when meeting with Foundation Stage teachers. Most importantly, it reminds us that good Early Years practice is based upon an integrated, child-centred curriculum.

Figure 1 briefly outlines which of the areas of learning are important for developing historical enquiry, and gives some suggested learning and teaching approaches for the classroom.

Helen Crawford is Deputy Headteacher of St Joan of Arc School and an Associate Lecturer at Northampton University.

Growing plants helps to develop an understanding of change over time

Resources

Early Education (2012) *Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS),* London: Early Education.
www.early-education.org.uk/development-matters

Scott, W. (2005) 'When we were young: emerging historical awareness in the Early Years' in *Primary History,* spring 2005.

Figure 1: Using the Development Matters document to plan learning for history

Area of Learning	Summary of Development Matters statements for 'Observing what children are learning'	Classroom activities
Number	• Know that things exist, even when out of sight • Recognise some numerals of personal significance • Place numbers in order	• Introduce children to simple number tracks and lines to build sequencing skills • Make books about numbers that have meaning (e.g. birthdays)
Shape, Space & Measure	• Understand some talk about immediate past and future, (e.g. before, later, sooner) • Measure short periods of time in simple ways, order & sequence familiar events	• Share a daily visual timetable with the class, so that the children can identify and describe patterns in daily routines. • Use sand-timers so that children can observe the passing of time.
Understanding & Speaking	• Use everyday language related to time • Begin to talk about people and things that are not present • Retell a past event in the correct order • Use talk to organise, sequence and clarify thinking, ideas, feelings, events • Use language to recreate roles and experiences	• Create a class time-line using photographs of key events (e.g. first day at school, class visits, special assemblies etc.) Add to this over the course of the year. If possible, pass it on to the next teacher to continue.
Reading	• Show interest in illustrations and print in books; listen to stories with increasing attention and recall • Know that information can be retrieved from books and computers	• Ensure children have access to a range of non-fiction texts, as well as a wide range of fiction books which have historical settings (e.g. traditional tales)
Making relationships	• Explain own knowledge and understanding • Ask appropriate questions of others	• Use traditional 'show and tell' sessions to provide opportunities for pupils to talk about experiences that are special to them
People & Communities	• Learn that they have similarities and differences that connect them to, and distinguish them from, others • Remember and talk about significant events in their own experience	• Develop home-school learning journals so that each child has their own recorded narrative of the year. These can include parent/carer observations, photographs and pictures
The World	• Develop an understanding of growth, decay and changes over time • Look closely at similarities, differences, patterns and change	• Create opportunities to examine changes over time (e.g. growing plants, hatching eggs, looking at baby photos)

Assessment and Progression without levels:

where do we go from here?

Jerome Freeman

The new Primary History National Curriculum is finally upon us. The first thing you might notice is that the level descriptions have gone. These were first introduced in 1995 and became the mainstay for assessing pupil progression and attainment in Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 across schools in England. *So what on earth do we do now?* In fact the new curriculum does set out the outcomes we should expect from pupils in each key stage; we will come back to this a little later. To begin with, however, it is worth exploring what progression actually looks like in history. The absence of level descriptions, does not mean that there are any significant changes to the way pupils make progress in history .

How do pupils make progress in history?

Given that our understanding of pupil progress is well established you should have something to build on as you plan for the implementation of the new national curriculum. Figure 1, setting out the key features of progression in history within Key Stages 1 and 2, is a useful starting point for your curriculum planning. The question you should ask yourself is *Does the history curriculum in my school enable pupils to make sufficient progress across all of the features outlined below?*

What does it say in the new curriculum about progression? How is this helpful?

Despite the fact that the level descriptions have been removed, the new national curriculum has plenty to say about progression in history both within its overall aims and at the beginning of each key stage.

Take a careful look at the new national curriculum aims for history in Figure 2. Much of what you will see links closely to the key features of progression outlined in Figure 1. The first two aims relate to pupils' expanding knowledge and understanding though with a more explicit reference to developing a secure chronological narrative than in previous versions of the national curriculum. Aims 4 and 5 refer to the second order concepts such as change, causation and interpretations as well as to historical enquiry and evidence, all of which are key to pupils making progress in history – as they always have been. Some minor changes are evident here; for example, the second order of significance is now featured in Key Stages 1 and 2 for the first time.

The final aim about historical perspectives is an entirely new feature. It is designed to combat the fragmentary approach to teaching history that is prevalent in many schools. In your long-term planning you will need to provide opportunities for your pupils to make links and connections across different periods, societies, events and developments. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils will need to have developed a reliably secure framework of the past.

The paragraphs at the beginning of each key stage in the new national curriculum (see Figure 3 for Key Stages 1 and 2) are extremely useful as they set out what we should expect the majority of our pupils to achieve. When planning your history curriculum you should ask yourself whether it will enable your pupils to meet the expectations set out in these paragraphs. One thing you might notice if you compare these statements with the old level descriptions for levels 2 and 4 is that there has been a slight increase in the expectations at the end of each key stage. This will have some implications for your planning.

How do I plan for progression?

As suggested in the previous section, unless you plan for progression your pupils are unlikely to make

Figure 1: The key features of progression in primary history

Across Key Stages 1 and 2 progression in history is characterised by:

- an increasing knowledge and understanding of local, British and world history within an increasingly secure chronological framework
- asking and answering more complex questions about the past
- making links and connections within and between different areas of the content specified in the history curriculum
- an increasing understanding of second-order historical concepts such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance
- an understanding of specific historical abstract terms building towards terms such as 'empire', 'civilisation', 'monarchy', and 'democracy'
- an increasing proficiency in the effective use of historical enquiry and selection of sources as evidence
- an increasing awareness of the different ways in which the past is represented and interpreted
- using a greater depth and range of historical knowledge to provide more reasoned explanations
- becoming more independent in learning.

systematic progress towards the expectations that are set out so clearly in the new national curriculum. Some of your pupils will be capable of exceeding these expectations and you will want to give them every opportunity of doing so. The suggested benchmark statements in Figure 4 provide a useful starting point for any long-term or key stage planning. As well as providing a way to map out progression, they can promote a shared understanding and common language about progress and attainment in history. Ofsted has stated recently that where teachers use a common language to discuss and agree pupils' progress, this has a marked effect on the consistency of assessment practice within a school. These statements can be personalised to fit into the curriculum followed by your school e.g. by adding references to specific topics you have chosen to teach. Having said that, the crucial thing to remember is that these should not be used for day-to-day assessment, only to inform planning and help develop a common understanding of pupil progress over a key stage or part of a key stage.

How do I assess pupils' progress without resorting to levels?

While the removal of the level descriptions presents schools with a huge challenge it also offers an opportunity to review and improve current assessment procedures. It is interesting to note what Sir Michael Wilshaw has set out in terms of what Ofsted expects in relation to assessment and the 2014 national curriculum:

> Good schools have always tracked their pupils' progress and Ofsted will expect to see this continue. We will not endorse any particular approach. But we do expect every school to be able to show what their pupils know, understand and can do through continuous assessment …

This additional freedom is endorsed further by the DfE which argues that schools will now have much more scope to be able to develop their own approaches to formative assessment to support pupil attainment and progression.

The aim therefore should be to develop a system for assessment which engages pupils with their learning, promotes progression and leads to high achievement.

Given the DfE's new stance on formative assessment, why not take the opportunity to make this central to your day-to-day assessment of your pupils? Develop classroom activities that are designed to enable pupils to improve and express the knowledge, understanding and skills set out in Figures 3 and 4. Make sure

Figure 2: The aims in the new history national curriculum

The national curriculum for history aims to ensure that all pupils by the end of Key Stage 3:

- know and understand the history of these islands as a coherent, chronological narrative, from the earliest times to the present day: how people's lives have shaped this nation and how Britain has influenced and been influenced by the wider world
- know and understand significant aspects of the history of the wider world: the nature of ancient civilisations; the expansion and dissolution of empires; characteristic features of past non-European societies; achievements and follies of mankind
- gain and deploy a historically-grounded understanding of abstract terms such as 'empire', 'civilisation', 'parliament' and 'peasantry'
- understand historical concepts such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance, and use them to make connections, draw contrasts, analyse trends, frame historically-valid questions and create their own structured accounts, including written narratives and analyses
- understand the methods of historical enquiry, including how evidence is used rigorously to make historical claims, and discern how and why contrasting arguments and interpretations of the past have been constructed
- gain historical perspective by placing their growing knowledge into different contexts: understanding the connections between local, regional, national and international history; between cultural, economic, military, political, religious and social history; and between short- and long-term time-scales.

that feedback to and from your pupils focuses on the qualities of their work and what they can do to improve. Avoid comparisons with other pupils. Establish a dialogue with your pupils that is thoughtful and involves critical reflection about what is successful and how to improve. If you have not done so already, make use of peer- and self-assessment so that your pupils start to take control of their learning.

In addition to day-to-day assessment you may want to take stock of your pupils' progress at key points during the school year. This is sometimes known as periodic assessment and is a form of summative assessment made against national expectations in history. Rather than relying on tests or formal tasks to do this, the idea is that you use a wide range of evidence from all stages of a pupil's learning and only do it when you have sufficient evidence to make a worthwhile judgement. You could either use the benchmarks in Figure 4 or the expectations statements set out in Figure 3 for your assessment criteria as these are the closest thing we now have to national 'standards' in history.

The real advantage of periodic assessment is that it can be used both formatively and summatively. Involving pupils by making the assessment criteria clear and accessible, encouraging them to gather some of the evidence of their progress and using the judgements made to identify strengths and areas for improvement are all features of effective formative assessment. Additionally, the information you gain from making periodic assessments can be used to inform future curriculum planning. Periodic assessment tends to lead to more reliable judgements of pupil progress being made over time (e.g. over a term) which fulfils the school's need systematically to track and record pupil progress.

Figure 3: Expectations for pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2

Key Stage 1

Pupils should develop awareness of the past, using common words and phrases relating to the passing of time. They should know where the people and events they study fit within a chronological framework and identify similarities and differences between ways of life in different periods. They should use a wide vocabulary of everyday historical terms. They should ask and answer questions, choosing and using parts of stories and other sources to show that they know and understand key features of events. They should understand some of the ways in which we find out about the past and identify different ways in which it is represented.

In planning to ensure the progression described above through teaching about the people, events and changes outlined below, teachers are often introducing pupils to historical periods that they will study more fully at Key Stages 2 and 3.

Key Stage 2

Pupils should continue to develop a chronologically-secure knowledge and understanding of British, local and world history, establishing clear narratives within and across the periods they study. They should note connections, contrasts and trends over time and develop the appropriate use of historical terms. They should regularly address and sometimes devise historically valid questions about change, cause, similarity and difference, and significance. They should construct informed responses that involve thoughtful selection and organisation of relevant historical information. They should understand how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources.

In planning to ensure the progression described above through teaching the British, local and world history outlined below, teachers should combine overview and depth studies to help pupils understand both the long arc of development and the complexity of specific aspects of the content.

How do I make assessment work best for me?

Each school is different. While there is no a single model for assessment, here are some broad guidelines based on best practice to help you find your way in this new world without levels.

Make sure that your assessment procedures are manageable. Make sure too that you conform to your school's requirements so that history fits into the whole-school assessment strategy. Offer to help to develop this as it will give you more influence in the final outcome and make it more likely that the principles you want to introduce into the history curriculum are reflected in the whole-school policy.

The history co-ordinator should, where possible, involve all staff teaching history in the development of your assessment procedures. Everyone should be familiar with the assessment requirements of the new curriculum as set out in this article. Work together to plan some historical enquiries/topics that have opportunities for pupils to make progress in specific aspects of history. *(See online version of this article for an example of a long-term plan.)* Don't overload individual enquiries/topics by trying to assess everything in one go, but rather focus each enquiry/topic around a few key aspects of progression in history e.g. causation, change or interpretations. Make sure that over a key stage that there are plenty of opportunities to revisit the various elements of progression in history. Pupils need several opportunities in different contexts to make progress in these elements. This should start in your long-term planning where you should map out where you are going to teach and assess these elements. Think carefully about how you are going to ensure that pupils develop a holistic understanding of the subject within a key stage and across key stages as well as an in-depth knowledge and understanding of specific topics.

Use a variety of approaches to assessment.

- As well as day-to-day assessment which might involve observing pupils at work, questioning pupils and marking their work, develop some more substantive assessment tasks for use at the end of each enquiry. Use them to evaluate your pupils' progress across a whole enquiry.
- Work with other teachers to develop success or assessment criteria that can be shared with pupils based broadly on the expectations in Figures 3 or 4.

Figure 4: Suggested history benchmarks as an aid to long-term planning

By the age of 7 pupils should:

- have knowledge and understanding of people and events from the recent and more distant past, including from their own lives and communities, as well as from Britain and the wider world. They should be familiar with different stories about significant people and events from the past and where these fit within a chronological framework .
- be able to demonstrate their understanding of the past by identifying similarities and differences between ways of life in different periods, by using common words and phrases about the passing of time. They should be able to give some reasons why people in the past acted as they did, and identify some of the ways in which the past is represented.
- be able to choose and use parts of stories and other sources to ask and answer questions about the past. They should understand some of the ways in which we find out about the past.
- be able to communicate in different ways about aspects of life in past times and use a wide vocabulary of everyday historical terms.

By the age of 9 pupils should:

- have knowledge and understanding of some of the main people, events and periods from the history of their locality, Britain and the wider world and be able to place these into different periods of time. They should have knowledge and understanding about some of the different technological, scientific, cultural and aesthetic achievements along with some of the social, political, religious and economic developments from the past.
- be able to demonstrate their understanding of the past by describing some of the differences and similarities between the periods they have studied and by beginning to suggest causes and consequences of the main events and changes. They should be able to make some links and comparisons between periods of history. They should be able to identify some of the different ways in which the past is represented.
- be able to use a range of sources of information to find answers to questions about the past and begin to select relevant information to support their findings. They should understand how we find about the past by using different sources of information.

By the age of 11 pupils should:

- have knowledge and understanding of some of the significant people, events, and periods from the history of their locality, Britain and the wider world and be able to fit these into a secure chronological framework. They should have knowledge and understanding of different technological, scientific, cultural and aesthetic achievements along with social, political religious and economic developments from the past.
- be able to demonstrate their understanding of the past by describing some of the differences and similarities between the periods they have studied and by beginning to suggest causes and consequences of the main events and changes. They should be able to make some links and comparisons between periods of history. They should be able to identify some of the different ways in which the past is represented.
- be able to demonstrate their understanding of the past by describing characteristic features of periods and societies from the ancient to the more recent past, and by identifying contrasts, connections and trends within and across periods of history. They should be able to identify and describe some short- and long-term causes and consequences of the main historical events and changes studied. They should be able to identify and describe some different ways in which the past has been interpreted.
- be able to use different sources of information to help them investigate the past and use relevant information to support their findings. They should understand how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources.
- be able to describe past events, people and developments using dates and terms appropriately and select and organise information to communicate their understanding of the past in different ways.

Whatever you do, avoid creating a new set of levels and instead go for a best-fit approach to assessment.

- Agree on a clear and manageable recording system that is then used consistently across the school. Get your colleagues into the habit of using the information gathered to inform their planning and teaching of history.
- Build in opportunities for pupils to take part in the assessment process – develop an open culture where pupils feel confident about discussing their achievements and reflecting critically on their areas for development. Involve them in gathering evidence of their progress.
- Involve parents and guardians too – share your assessment criteria with them and explain to them what it means to get better at history in the new curriculum.
- Produce a school portfolio of work with specific examples of pupils' work in a range of contexts – formal and informal with some annotation which can be replaced over time with better examples if appropriate. Use this at in-school moderation meetings to build up a shared understanding of the school's developing standards in history.

What further support for assessment without levels is available from the Historical Association?

The Historical Association can offer support to schools with their primary history assessment in various ways.

1. Exemplar pupil work showing progression and commentary to be published on the HA website in due course
2. Schemes of work showing assessment criteria on the HA website
3. Guidance on the HA website including blogs and frequently-asked questions such as how to put together a portfolio
4. Regular articles in the HA's journal *Primary History*
5. Workshops and sessions at HA conferences and history forums
6. Support through the HA Quality Mark process to be launched in 2015.

Jerome Freeman is the chair of the Historical Association's National Primary Committee and the Institute of Education's Programme Director for the First World War Centenary Battlefield Tours Programme. Before joining the IoE he spent several years as the national adviser for history at the QCA and taught history in several English state schools.

Further Reading

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From Home to the Front:

World War I (1914-18) in the primary school classroom

Paul Bracey

Events which encapsulate family, community, national and global history provide rich opportunities for engaging children. Some of these draw on positive memories associated with past events: the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, how people responded to the first flight to the moon, the Millennium celebrations. Yet it is perhaps gruelling aspects of the past such as World War I which provide particularly rich opportunities to explore ways in which personal and local stories can be related to their wider context. What follows is based on the firm conviction that this conflict has a place in the primary classroom with a focus which is appropriate to the age of the children.

World War 1: Why did it happen? Where did it take place? Who was involved? What made it different?

Why did it happen?

World War I was a major conflict between the major powers of Europe. Germany and Austria-Hungary confronted France, Russia and Britain as well as their empires across much of the world. The assassination on 28 June 1914 of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian empire and his wife Sophie by a group of Serbian nationalists who wanted to break up part of the empire ultimately led to war between the two sides. Tensions over many different issues had been building up between the different countries since the 1870s which led to the two sides declaring war in the weeks which followed. The war was to have a fundamental effect on subsequent events in the twentieth century including World War II.

Where did it take place? Who was involved?

We tend to associate World War I with trenches along the Western Front between France, Belgium and Germany. A simple picture together with photographs can be found on the BBC website (www.bbc.co.uk/schools/0/ww1/25401265). It is associated with major battles such as Ypres (1915), Verdun (1916), the Somme (1916) and Passchendaele (1917), which saw massive casualties as the two sides tried to break through lines of trenches. This does not tell the whole story of what the war was like, however, nor who was involved and where it took place. The National Archives provide a series of maps which show how far-reaching the war was, both within and beyond Europe. (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pathways/firstworldwar/maps/europe1914.htm)

In Eastern Europe, massive distances were involved in battles between Russia and its enemies Germany and Austria-Hungary. By mid-1917 Italy and America had joined Britain and France after the German U-boats attacked commercial ships going to Britain and sank a passenger ship called the *Lusitania*. Britain, Germany, France and other nations brought their empires into the war, while other countries as far away as China and Brazil also took sides in the conflict. The British Empire contributed 2.5 million men to fight in the war, 1.5 million of whom came from India. It also received support from the Caribbean whose troops saw service in several theatres of the war including East Africa, France and the Middle East, together with the 'white' dominions of Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa. As most of Africa was under European control in 1914 it was quickly drawn into the war. Most of its troops fought in Africa, although some

Some events during World War I, 1914-1918

Germany and Austria-Hungary were fighting France and Britain to the west and Russia to the east: see map at www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pathways/firstworldwar/maps/europe1914.htm.
Both sides had supporters and imperial interests in other parts of the world. Fighting took place beyond Europe.

1914	1915	1916	1917	1918
28 June • Archduke Franz Ferdinand assassinated	**April** • Italy joined the war on the side of the Allies (Britain, France, Russia)	**February-August** • Battle of Verdun	**April** • USA declares war on Germany	**March** • Final German attack • New Bolshevik government of Russia signed peace treaty with Germany
August • Outbreak of war • Russians defeated by German forces at Tannenburg	**May** • Battle of Ypres 	**June-August** • Brusilov Offensive: Russia defeats Austria-Hungary	**July-November** • Battle of Passchendaele 	**November** • At 11:00hrs Paris time on 11 November an armistice was signed between the Allies and Germany signalling Germany's defeat and the end of the war
September • Battle of the Marne • Russian army defeated by German forces at Masurian Lakes		**July-November** • Battle of the Somme 	**December** • USA declares war on Austria-Hungary	

served as non-combatants behind the lines on the Western Front, reflecting racial attitudes of the time.

What made World War I different from previous wars?

Wars have always been brutal but World War I was unique in seeing a clash between the use of traditional and new weapons and the scale of the conflict was unprecedented. Technology was to be particularly important in World War I, both in transporting soldiers to the front and providing materials for the war. The tank, which was first used in 1916, was to prove a vitally important weapon towards the end of the conflict. The cost of the war was enormous in human lives alone with the death of a million soldiers from Britain and its Empire while Germany lost almost twice that number.

Historians have long argued about the causes, events and impact of the war but there is an increasing emphasis on the attitudes and experiences of people living at the time. A typical image of the fighting in World War I shows rows of trenches at the Western Front where the two sides faced each other across 'No Man's Land', an area strewn with barbed wire and mired by the mud-drenched fields of Flanders. While acknowledging that dreadful conditions prevailed in the sites of major battles and trenches, this does not tell the complete story. Soldiers' experiences of war were not confined to fighting in the trenches but included time away from the Western Front. A range of occupations were represented, including cooks, lorry drivers, and medics, while some fighting took place at sea and in the air. At home Land Girls and Lumber Jills, munitions' workers and others all contributed to the war. Nor did everyone agree to fight. Conscientious objectors refused to kill other human beings. Some helped in non–fighting roles such as medical officers while others refused to take any part in the war. Finally, there is a compelling case for looking at the broader impact of the war on men and women in different parts of Britain and other parts of the world.

How can World War I be made meaningful for primary aged children?

The National Curriculum for Key Stage 1 includes the requirement to study a local, national and global event or significant person beyond living memory. At Key Stage 2 children study an aspect or theme in British history since 1066 and a local study. The last of these will be the focus of this article, based on the premise that the immediacy and richness of resources available in the locality provide opportunities to engage children with authentic and tangible stories about the past, although this will be related to its broader spatial and chronological context. The Historical Association website Primary Homepage has a funding opportunity for World War I projects and a link which includes classroom resources to support this topic. A local starting point could be a memorial as suggested by Ruth Cavender's article about the use of war memorials as a local history source in *Primary History 67*.
www.history.org.uk/resources/primary_resource_7476.html

At Key Stage 1 Edith Cavell and Walter Tull provide examples of significant people associated with the war. A freely-available curriculum pack related to Walter Tull's life, appropriate to Key Stage 1 can be found on the Northamptonshire Black History Association website (Claire, 2007). The advantage of focusing on a person is that it is possible to relate to the person's whole life, not only their involvement in the war. This can give some

Figure 1: From Home to the front: Planning a series of lessons at KS2

Step 1: What was so special about World War I?

Finding out what the children know about the war and raising questions provides a useful starting-point. A natural development from this is to ask questions such as:

Where did it take place?

A map or maps such as those provided by the National Archives show the global context of the war. (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pathways/firstworldwar/maps/maps.htm)

When did it take place?

The war has just passed from living memory and a useful starting-point is to think about when people known to the children were born using a time-line. You could use sources and pictures showing life a hundred years ago for comparisons and contrasts with the present day in order to provide understanding that the war took place a long time ago. The BBC website (www.bbc.co.uk/schools/0/ww1/25401265) provides a useful starting point for this. Your local Record Office and Library and Museums Service hold collections of documents, pictures and artefacts that tell the local story.

What does a painting tell us about World War I?

Look at Nevinson's 'Harvest of Battle' using enquiry questions – 'What can I see?' 'What does it tell me?' 'What do I need to find out?'

Figure 1: Nevison, C.R. W. (1919) The Harvest of Battle. This painting shows the devastation caused at the Western Front during World War I. Available at: www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/greatwar/g3/cs2/g3cs2s7.htm

How different was World War I from other wars?

Compare this painting with pictures of battles at different times in the past, using textbooks or the web –to help relate it to its bigger picture e.g. Alexander the Great's defeat of the Egyptians (332 BC) , the Roman invasion of Britain (AD 55), Alfred and the Vikings at the Battle of Edington (AD 878), The Battle of Bosworth (AD 1485), The Battle of Waterloo (AD 1815), and The Charge of the Light Brigade (AD 1854) and more recently Dunkirk (AD 1940) and/or the Blitz (AD 1940-41). The children could put the pictures on a time-line and decide which was most/least like their picture of World War I.

Step 2: Stimulus activity: Walter's story

The story of Walter Tull provides a good starting-point for exploring the topic in depth because he had an eventful life, taking into account his achievements as a footballer before the war and the fact that he was the first black officer to lead white troops in the British army. The freely available curriculum pack related to his life which can be found on the Northamptonshire Black History website can be supported by a range of published resources, including DVDS, textbooks and computer software.

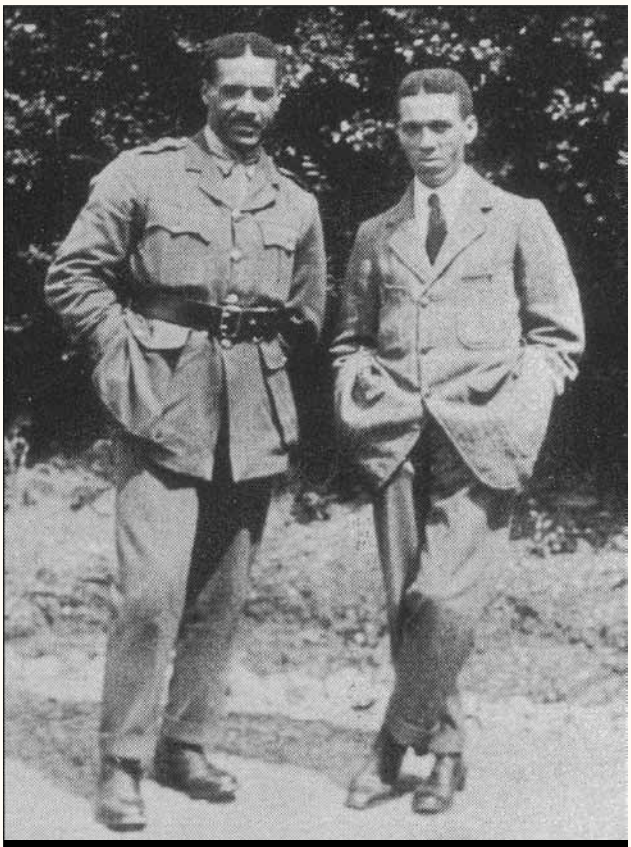

Figure 2: Walter Tull (left), the first black officer in World War I (Finlayson Family Archive).

There was more to each soldier than what happened to him in the war. Walter Tull's varied experiences provide opportunities to use sequencing cards to create an emotions graph showing that his life, even during the war, had its high and low points. You could spend some time looking at Tull's early life including his experiences in an orphanage and as a footballer before the war. He went on to become the first black officer in the war and suffered from being wounded before he was killed in action in 1918. His wartime experiences could focus on questions such as: 'What happened to Walter during World War I?' 'What was it like in the trenches?' 'What else did he do?' The NBHA resource pack contains photographs, newspaper cuttings and birth and death certificates which provide a model for investigating soldiers who went from the local community.

Step 3: Would soldiers from our locality recognise Walter's story?

Walter Tull was not a typical soldier; his ethnicity, rank and experiences set him apart and lead to the challenging enquiry question – 'Would people from our locality have recognised Walter's story?' The easiest starting point for exploring this is using a local memorial or church to identify the names of those who died during the war. It is to be hoped that this will evoke questions such as:

'What does the memorial tell us?' 'How similar to or different is it from Walter's memorial?' 'Do we recognise any names?' 'How can we find out about them?' 'How much do they tell us about the impact of the war in our locality?'

Several lines of enquiry emerge from this, the most direct being to find out about named soldiers using the War Graves Commission website. This is clearly not the whole story, however. The following news report www.rte.ie/news/player/2012/0321/3234751-family-treasures-at-wwi-roadshow/ serves as an encouragement for children to ask families, neighbours and people from the community about family links with the war.

Family stories told by children and grandchildren of people associated with the war will need to be substantiated by other sources. Posters, music sheets, local newspaper articles and pictures from local history textbooks give an insight into the experiences of people from the time they were recruited. Many local museums are currently focusing their resources on World War I. They provide a particularly valuable means for children to engage with artefacts associated with the conflict. Some insight into the range of experiences faced by soldiers at the Front can be found on the Imperial War Museum website, together with the reading recommended in the resource list. It would also be appropriate to compare the scale of the local cemetery with cemeteries in Flanders or where fighting was particularly fierce such as Tyne Cot, Verdun and Langemark.

Step 4: From home to the Western Front: is this the whole story?

The BBC website provides opportunities to look at different people associated with the war and different experiences which serve as a useful starting-point to answering this question. There is also an opportunity to explore local links within a broader national and world perspective. It is possible to gain insights into the background of local soldiers through the 1911 census and school logbooks. At the same time it is possible some children will have stories which relate to family members who were involved in war from different parts of the world. This can be supported by accounts and pictures of soldiers from the empire which can be found on the Imperial War Museum and Historical Association websites, for example. Some family histories may relate to Land Girls, Lumber Jills and women working in munitions factories. There is a need to appreciate the similarities and differences between the local experience and what was happening within its broader national and global context.

Finally, not everyone took part in the war and it is appropriate to explore the reasons for this possibly looking at a case study of someone who either refused to fight and either supported the war in a non-combatant role or did not take part at all. The role of women in the war was important as they took over men's jobs to help with the war. At the end of the topic you can go back to 'The Harvest of Battle' painting and decide how well it sums up the experiences of people from your locality.

insight into them as a real person rather than simply one who fought and maybe died in the conflict. Your community may have stories of local people linked to a range of sources. In order to make this meaningful it is important to build up your children's understanding of the differences between their lives and those of people who lived 100 years ago. You can use photographs of people, their homes and their work, together with artefacts related to subjects such as the school-room or washday. The BBC schools website contains references to Cavell and Tull and others together with images of life at the time – although images from your local library will enable you to relate your story more closely to places that the children know.

The experiences of either Edith Cavell or Walter Tull could be compared with significant people living at different times in the past. As a nurse Edith could be compared with either Florence Nightingale or Mary Seacole who served during the Crimean War during the mid nineteenth century. See 'Teaching Famous People at Key Stage One: Say No to Flo'. www.history.org.uk/resources/primary_resource_6848.html Walter Tull could be compared with Rosa Parks, the African-American civil rights activist. In each case it would be important to compare the broader historical context in which they lived. At Key Stage 2 an individual can still be used but as a stimulus for a broadly-based study of World War I.

At Key Stage 2 an individual soldier's history provides a basis for exploring the experiences of other people drawn from a diverse range of contexts. Alternatively, a fictional person such as a character from the Michael Morpurgo books *Private Peaceful* or *A Medal for Leroy* could provide a starting point for exploring the experiences of soldiers who went to war. This would provide children with opportunities to explore the distinctions between historical fiction and evidence. At this point it is useful to reflect on the effectiveness of teaching that is restricted to looking at individual people or events such as Remembrance Day: rather than appreciating how people felt and lived at the time these approaches risk limiting children to commemoration only.

Figure 1: From Home to the front: Planning a series of lessons at KS2 particularly focuses on how World War I could be taught as a local study at Key Stage 2. The broader political and military aspects of the war can be left for children to look at when they move on to Key Stage 3. The emphasis at Key Stage 2 has been placed on the experiences of people that children can be encouraged to identify with. This can form the basis of a class study that could include interviews with the families of soldiers who served in World War I and lead to the creation of either a display or documentary film.

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Resources

Bingham, J. and Nasen, R. (2005) *Start up History: Remembrance Day,* London: Evans.

Brocklehurst, R., Chisholme, H. and Brook, H. (2007) *The Usborne introduction to the First World War,* London: Usborne.

Daniel, J. (2010) *My First World War.* London: Franklin Watts.

Claire, H. (2007) *Walter Tull: sport, war and challenging adversity (Key Stage 1),* Northampton: Northamptonshire Black History Association. www.northants-black-history.org.uk.

Claire, H. (2007) *Walter Tull: sport, war and challenging adversity (Key Stages 2/3),*Northampton: Northamptonshire Black History Association. www.northants-black-history.org.uk

Manning, M. and Granstrom, B. (2013) *Charlie's War: remembering World War One*, London: Franklin Watts.

Morgan, Michael (2012) *Walter Tull Scrapbook,* London: Frances Lincoln.

Morpurgo, M. (2004) *Private Peaceful,* London: Oberon.

Morpurgo, M. (2012) *A Medal for Leroy,* London: Harper Collins.

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pathways/firstworldwar/maps/europe1914.htm) This contains a wealth of resources including the following which provides a focus for this article:

Nevison ,C.R.W. (1919) *The Harvest of Battle.* National Archives. www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/greatwar/g3/cs2/g3cs2s7.htm

Places to visit

Imperial War Museum London
(IWM London), Lambeth Road, London

Imperial War Musem North (IWM North)
The Quays, Trafford Wharf Road, Manchester

Local museum, library, record office, church and/or war memorial

Websites

BBC Schools
www.bbc.co.uk/schools/0/ww1/26294863
This provides a wide range of interactive and thematic approaches to studying the war which is useful across all key stages.

Europeana 1914-1918 – untold stories & official histories of WW1
www.europeana 1914-18-eu
This is a European project which has produced a massive range of resources

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission
www.cwgc.org/ – Provides an essential resource for linking your locality to the names and locations of those killed at the front.

The Long, Long Trail
www.1914-1918.net/links.htm
This provides comparable links to the above.

The National Army Museum
www.nam.ac.uk/ – contains a range of resources.

World War One Centenary
http://ww1centenary.oucs.ox.ac.uk/
This provides a massive range of resources including evidence related to the war poets, for example.

Six One News 'Family treasures at WWI' roadshow RTÉ www.rte.ie/news/player/2012/0321/3234751-family-treasures-at-wwi-roadshow/
An excellent basis for starting a local research project.

The Imperial War Museum
www.iwm.org.uk/history/first-world-war
This is especially useful for providing visual resources including photographs and posters. The Imperial War Museum is going to have a major focus on WWI and it will be worth checking its website.

No Glory in War
http://noglory.org/ – This website shows a diverse range of people who contributed to the war while challenging what it perceives as glorification of the war.

TES
www.tes.co.uk/teaching-resource/First-World-War-Poetry-Digital-Archive-3008873/ – This relates to war poetry which could be used as well as or an alternative to the painting as a focus.

HA Resources

This is a dedicated section of the HA website to the First World War and it's centenary suitable for teachers.
www.history.org.uk/resources/primary_page_2177.html

Muslim Tommies: from East to West for the motherland.
www.history.org.uk/resources/secondary_resource_4063,4365_11.html

World War I and the South Asian British Community.
www.history.org.uk/resources/secondary_resource_5702,5707_171.html

Teaching Romany Gypsy History within Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 – www.history.org.uk/resources/secondary_resource_4395,4396_59.html

What the co-ordinator might do:

WWI

World War I might be a significant event which is currently attracting almost unprecedented interest but the co-ordinator still needs to ensure that it has a logical and valid place in the curriculum. This article is focused on making it relevant through its inclusion as a local study or even as a theme (war) that takes study beyond 1066. Perhaps the co-ordinator might identify a few key ideas that all those teaching it might want to ensure are learnt. For example:

- This was an event that affected many parts of the world – it was far more than the Western Front and English troops fighting Germans;
- There is a wide range of sources the historian can use to piece together how the war affected people;
- It lasted far longer than people first imagined it would;
- Casualties were heavy. Most British towns and villages lost men – some very many – and many more were crippled;
- The locality was affected – not just the men fighting. Women and children were also affected;
- It was a close-run thing whose outcome was not very clear until near the end;
- Things were never the same again after this war.

IDEAS FOR ASSEMBLIES...

As part of our First World War centenary-themed assemblies, in the last issue of *Primary History* we focused on the importance of the local dimension. Here we have chosen to look at the role of the international community in the First World War. This approach reflects and celebrates our multi-cultural society and the contribution our pupils' families may have made not just to the war effort within Great Britain but also before migrating to this country. In response to this we will look at the Commonwealth and their involvement not only on the Western Front but also in high-profile campaigns including Gallipoli. You could also introduce the involvement of the USA.

The assemblies can form a stimulus to further learning within the history curriculum or to geography as a way of looking at the wider world and relationships between countries. Important aspects of this theme are: Why were men prepared to fight for a cause so far from home? and Why were families proud to see them go?

We have also included some key dates you may choose to cover beyond the theme. To support delivering your series of Centenary assemblies you will find the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's (CWGC) website 'Discover 14-18' very useful. A feature of the website is an illustrated time-line of key events.
www.cwgc.org/timeline.aspx

April

- 4 April1917
  The US Senate votes 90 to 6 to enter the First World War with the Allies
- The Battle of Arras begins as Canadian troops begin an assault on Vimy Ridge
- 25 April 1915 – Australian and New Zealand troops launch assault on Gallipoli in Turkey

May

- 7 May1915
  The German Submarine U-20 torpedoes the American passenger ship Lusitania, sinking her in 21 minutes with 1,978 people on board
- 13 May1912
  The Royal Flying Corps is established in England
- 31 May1916
  Naval Battle of Jutland

June

- 12 June 1918
  The first aeroplane bombing raid by an American Unit occurs in France
- 25 June 1915
  Naval battle of Dogger Bank

July

- 1 July 1916 – First day of the Battle of the Somme
- 26 July 1918 – Britain's top war ace Edward Mannock is shot down by ground fire on the Western Front

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‘It worked for me’: looking at one area in more depth

The contribution of the Commonwealth/ Empire to the war effort…

Figure 1 Helles memorial at Gallipoli

Start by showing the pupils an image of the Helles Memorial at Gallipoli in Turkey (see CWGC website). Many pupils will know Turkey as a holiday destination but it is important to show where this is on a map as this emphasises that the First World War was not just fought in France and Belgium. The memorial contains 21,000 names of soldiers and sailors who died in the war in this part of the world. As well as the names of many British soldiers and sailors there are also the names of 248 soldiers from Australia and 1,530 from India.

Now pose the question, Why would soldiers be prepared to fight a war at the other side of the world? and Why were families proud to see them go? Children will offer many ideas. Popular ideas may be for adventure or wealth, but a central idea to pursue is the commitment to Great Britain, ‘the old country’, and the belief that when help was needed the peoples of the Commonwealth would work together for a common goal. They will probably know the term ‘commonwealth’ as a consequence of the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow.

Ask for ideas about which countries are in the Commonwealth today? They may know Australia, Canada, New Zealand and some others. Show them a map of the extent of the Commonwealth in 1914 or the British Empire as it was known at the time to indicate just how powerful it was.
See www.ww1commonwealthcontribution.org/index.html

The outbreak of war was greeted just as enthusiastically in countries like Australia as it was in Great Britain and young men rushed to ‘do their duty’. You could discuss what it must have been like for the soldiers to travel so far from home and even how they made the journey. Many of them never returned and are buried close to where they died.

This could lead on to explaining how the centenary of the war is not just being remembered in the UK but across the world. ANZAC day falls on 25 April –explore what happens on that day in Commonwealth countries. The Australian War Memorial Website http://www.awm.gov.au/ will provide plenty of information and also contains images of Australian children marking the centenary.

Viking and Anglo-Saxon struggle for the kingdom of England

Tim Lomas

The Vikings will be familiar territory to many primary teachers. For many, therefore, this section of the history curriculum should cause fewer headaches than others. This does not mean, however, that it is all straightforward. This article contains a number of elements that teachers might welcome including a timeline of the main events and people; some of the key ideas it might be helpful for pupils to understand; a briefing of some of the main features; some teaching ideas and resources.

Origins – Who were the Vikings and how did they arrive in Britain?

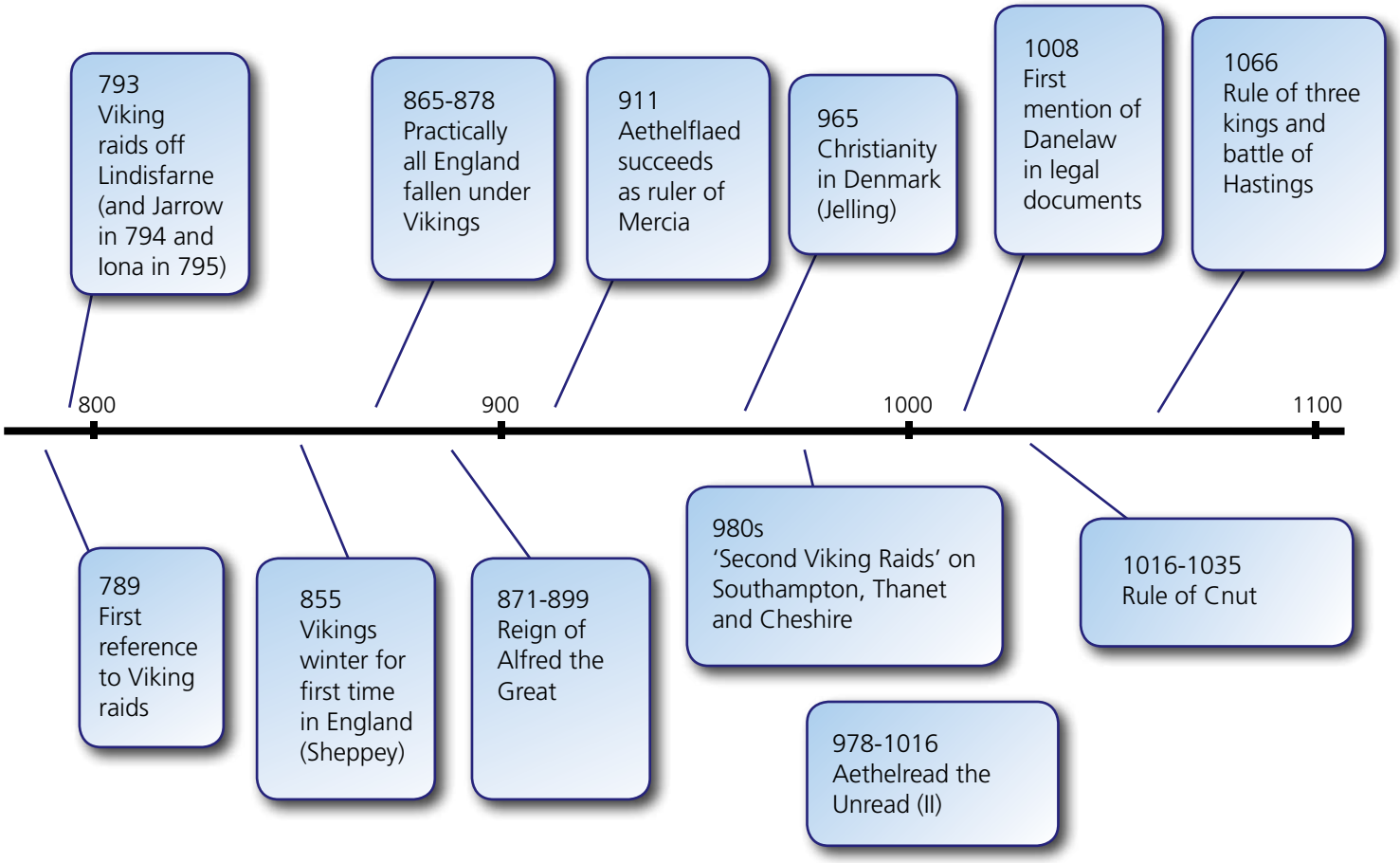
There is a tremendous amount we do not know about the Vikings. Many popular ideas are nineteenth-century inventions taken from the views of their opponents such as the Church or gained through trusting fictional sources such as sagas. Even the term 'Viking' is clouded in uncertainty. It is interesting to note that *The Anglo Saxon Chronicle* uses the term just four times before 1066.

What we can be certain of is that the Vikings operated on a large scale. Many who came to Britain were from Denmark and Norway but they were also Swedes, Russians, Icelanders and Greenlanders. They travelled over much of northern Europe, to Constantinople, North Africa, Russia and North America between 800 and 1050.

Clearly their arrival was associated with brutality. The principal source of information, *The Anglo Saxon Chronicle*, refers to 'sea-borne pagans' attacking the south coast in 789-792 but the best pickings were unprotected monasteries in the north. Lindisfarne was ransacked in 793, Jarrow in 794 and Iona in 795, 802 and 806. Shetland and Orkney were overrun and the Picts probably wiped out. Ireland and the Western Isles suffered too.

These early raids were relatively minor compared to the large raid on Kent in 835. From around the 850s raiding changed into invasion and conquest. This may have been because of pressure of population growth in the native lands, the attraction of mineral resources in Britain or an improved climate for invasion. There were two main invasion routes into Britain: one from Norway around Scotland to the Western Isles, Ireland, Wales and Cornwall and the other from Denmark to the east and south coasts. The year 851 saw the first

Viking time-line



major raids on the mainland with 350 ships sailing up the Thames. For the first time they stayed the winter. By 873 we know there was a Danish camp at Repton in Derbyshire just about as far from the sea as it was possible to get.

The raiders/invaders tended to double up as pirates, warriors, traders and colonists. Unquestionably the sea though was vitally important to them. Their ships were a crucial part of their success. Remains of ships such as those found at Gokstad and Oseberg reveal their technical advantages. Their agility allowed for all-year-round sailing and their shallow draughts allowed penetration far inland even if they were relatively slow and difficult to row. The traditional image is of Viking longships but they had a variety of boats adapted for different purposes including small rowing boats, trading boats and warships.

How much resistance did the Vikings encounter?

The most famous resistance came from Alfred the Great. The period 865-78 saw much of England falling to the Vikings. In 866, for example, they stormed York and killed two kings of Northumbria; in 869 they martyred King Edmund of East Anglia and in 871 nine battles were fought in Wessex. Although Alfred won at Ashdown, he still had to buy off the Vikings. By 878 all of England north of the present A5 road from London to Anglesey was in Viking hands.

A modern reenactment of a Viking battle

Model of the Gokstad viking ship

Reconstruction of a street in Viking York, at the Jorvik Viking Centre, York.

In a short time, however, Alfred had won at Edington and converted Guthrum the Danish leader, to Christianity and had him leave Wessex. As part of the peace terms, the Danish occupation of much of England (Danelaw) was recognised and a frontier in place. Guthrum was recognised as king of the independent Danelaw although the term 'Danelaw' did not appear in legal documents until 1008. There was no one kind of government across the Danelaw.

As the youngest of five sons, Alfred had not expected to become king but by 879 Mercia had submitted to his overlordship. His achievements as ruler were extensive. He was renowned for his law codes and he obliged all sons of nobles to read. Alfred wrote as well as read and did much to launch English as a language of learning recruiting scholars from across Europe. He reorganised fighting men and ordered the building of new longer ships for the navy. He also built a series of strongholds - 'burhs' - that were fortified towns, many developing great prosperity through time. On top of that, he was an inventor – supposedly inventing the candle clock.

Alfred's success was not solely down to him. He did not have to fight all the Vikings at once. Their 'Great Army' lacked organisation. Alfred's father Aethelwulf had organised Wessex for defence and Alfred was helped by a lack of family feuding and existing respect for the royal family. Wessex also benefited from wealth such as minerals from Cornwall.

Moreover, Alfred did not see the last of the Viking threat. In 892-93 they renewed their attacks on the midlands and south-east. Alfred's children including Edward and Aethelflaed had much to do. It was Alfred's grandson Athelstan who was the first to unite England under a single authority. He defeated an alliance of Scots-Norse-Northumbrians at Brunanburgh in 937; homage was paid by the Welsh and the Scots, and the Picts submitted. He also played a role on the European stage and scholars flocked to his court.

All was not well deep down. There were still divided loyalties and accession was rarely achieved without a power struggle. Some rulers, such as Eric Bloodaxe in Northumbria, even showed preferences for the Vikings at times. The Viking raids escalated in the later ninth century especially on the coast and in 991 they wiped out an English force at Maldon in Essex.

King Aethelred II (978-1016) (often referred to as Unraed – 'no counsel' - or erroneously as Unready) resorted to paying off the Vikings with a tax called the Danegeld. In 1002, however, he ordered a massacre of all Danes living in England (on St Brice's Day, 13 November). This prompted King Swein of Denmark (Forkbeard) to invade, causing enormous damage to the country.

It was Cnut, Swein's son who completed the job. Cnut (1016-35) was ruthless but when secure, he issued laws, founded monasteries and rewarded loyal supporters – a chronicler wrote that 'he changed from a wild man into a most Christian king'. Cnut was a powerful king with a vast northern empire covering England, Denmark and large parts of Norway and Sweden. Many Danes joined the British land-owning class and he divided the kingdom into four earldoms, Wessex, Mercia, East Anglia and Northumbria.

The throne was largely occupied by two kings until the Battle of Hastings – Cnut's son Hardicanute and Edward the Confessor. Edward was the son

Some worthwhile enquiries/tasks

1 Why did the Vikings bother to come to Britain?

Why is this a good question?
This provides an opportunity to introduce the Vikings, who they were and that raids on Britain were part of a wider movement. Some imaginative work could be done regarding their voyages and why their boats were so important. Factors in relation to their homeland *and* the advantages presented by Britain could be covered.

2 What impressions do you think the Vikings gave to those living in Britain?

Why is this a good question?
Pupils can imagine how different people in Britain felt, such as those in monasteries, on the coast and inland, and what they did. It can allow pupils to track the progress of the Vikings and how people might have tried to stop them. It also provides an opportunity to look at interpretations and representations of the Vikings such as film versus other sources.

3 How pleasant was Viking life?

Why is this a good question?
An open-ended task that allows pupils to consider evidence about the Vikings such as archaeological finds and to reconstruct what life was like. They could investigate houses, food, the role of women and perhaps the status of towns by examining Jorvik. Different social classes could be assessed such as what life was like for rich, poor and slaves. Pupils might imagine the day in the life of a Viking.

4 Does Alfred deserve to be called the 'Great'?

Why is this a good question? Pupils can consider what makes a person 'great' and measure Alfred's achievements. A biography of Alfred could be compiled. They might consider whether other people have achieved the same and ask, If not, why not? Why did he manage to achieve what he did and with what impact? They could assess the reliability of evidence and myths such as the burnt cakes. Pupils could have a class debate on how great he was.

5 'The Vikings were defeated after Alfred.' Do you agree?

Why is this a good question?
Pupils could test this statement against the evidence they are presented with. Change and development could be covered through the various ups and downs in Viking activity and why things were as they were. The role of Aethelflaed and Athelstan could be covered along with the later Danish incursions under Cnut. The class could discuss whether Aethelred should have paid Danegeld and what his options might have been. The story could be taken up to Edward the Confessor and the fact that the victor at Hastings was of Viking descent. Some pupils might want to argue that large parts of Britain were not heavily influenced by Vikings after Alfred.

6 Did the Vikings make any difference to this area?

Why is this a good question?
Especially useful if there was strong Viking influence locally such as in the Danelaw and where there is surviving evidence such as place-names or museum/reconstruction evidence. Some attempt could be made to reconstruct local life and to consider how important the locality was in Viking times.

7 Would you have preferred to live in Viking or Saxon societies?

Why is this a good question?
Pupils should have already considered the Saxons and their way of life. This requires pupils to recall their learning and make comparisons or contrasts about the ways of life of different groups and which was preferable and why. It gives an opportunity to introduce any new element about Saxon life not covered previously, such as crime and punishment.

8 'Just brutal savages who did no good'. Is this your opinion?

Why is this a good question?
A question to round off the study and allow pupils to assess what was most significant about Viking times, what there is to admire and what to assess negatively. Pupils could be asked to rate the Vikings' achievements on a scale and justify their decisions. Comparisons could be made with other societies they may have studied. It might allow them to consider the evidence – what we know about them and what else they might wish to know about them.

of Aethelred II; returning from Normandy as king in 1042. Although he ruled in peace he was increasingly dominated by Earl Godwine of Wessex. Edward's image as a saintly and unworldly monarch is rather exaggerated, although he was canonised in 1161.

The rest is well known. Edward died childless. Harold son of Godwine claimed and seized the throne, leading to the famous invasion by William of Normandy, himself a descendant of Vikings.

What kind of life did the Vikings lead?

Quality of life often depended on your place in the social order. At the bottom were *thralls* (slaves), including those captured, criminals, people in debt or born to it. Slavery became less common with the arrival of Christianity. Above these were *bondi* and *karls*, usually farmers. Upper classes included landsmen and *jarls*.

Women fared relatively well, often playing a role in the court, church and even battlefield. They could manage their own property and money after marriage and some were involved in commerce. There were several famous women such as Emma, the first wife of Aethelred and then Cnut.

They may have been brutal, but the Vikings' thuggish image has been challenged in recent years. In the Danelaw archaeologists have found silk from Byzantium and pottery from the Shetlands and Rhineland. Although they did not mint their own coins at first, with payment being by weight of silver and gold, they did use other coins and there was a mint in Viking York.

Vikings were largely rural people. York was very unusual – larger than any place in Denmark with about 10,000 people. Captured in 866 it held on as a Viking settlement. We know much about it through the Coppergate excavations of 1976-81 in York. Dublin was also founded by the Vikings and became an important port and slave market.

Viking houses tended to be rectangular, made of one room with a central hearth. The typical farmhouse was 15-20 metres long and built of stone and turf or timber with a thatched roof. Low benches went along the walls. There were separate outhouses for cattle. By the end of the tenth century in York there was evidence of many different crafts - textiles, jewellery, silversmiths, wood workers and goldsmiths.

Their diet included beef, mutton, pork, venison, fish, peas, carrots, beans, flat heavy bread, buttermilk, cheese, berries, walnuts and ale. Fish and meat were often salted. They seem to have had wooden bowls and plates, and knives and spoons of wood, horn or bone.

In terms of organisation and administration, there were many similarities with the Saxons. In a dispute, Saxons believed that it was up to the victim to seek justice. They had local 'hundred' courts, which as today involved plaintiff and defendant. Although better known, the trials by ordeal, water and iron were rarer. These were controlled by the Church. Because there were no or few jails, Saxon punishments usually involved fines, mutilation or death. If the value attached to victims (the *wergild*) could not be paid, the guilty party could be sold into slavery. Vikings organised meetings called *things* or *althings*. These heard cases and issued punishments. All freemen or women could speak at these meetings.

Christianity came slowly to the Vikings. Scandinavia was pagan worshipping gods such as Odin, Thor and Frey. The process of conversion in Britain may have been gradual sometimes with a half-way stage. For instance, York coins show both St Peter and Thor's hammer and the Gosforth Cross in Cumbria shows a mixture of scenes from the Bible and Danish sagas. By the eleventh century, however, the country was well organised on Christian lines with sixteen English dioceses by 1035.

What evidence do we have about the Vikings?

The Vikings wrote little themselves. Yet sources do exist.

- *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* began in Alfred's reign and was added to into Norman days. The *Domesday Book* can also provide details of their society on the eve of the Norman Conquest.
- Sagas were fictional accounts mostly about powerful characters largely in Viking Iceland, for example, Orkneyinga, Vinland and Sigurd. They were often written 200-300 years after the supposed event.
- Runes consisted of Viking carved lettering. Viking coins did appear later often with Christian symbols.
- Archaeology provides vital evidence producing a range of finds including combs, coins, lead weights and silver armbands. Some finds are quite extensive such as the Cuerdale Hoard, near Preston. This is the largest hoard of Viking silver found in western Europe, consisting of 8,600 coins and armbands, brooches, chains and buckles. Viking pagan burials are often helpful as people were buried with clothes and grave goods.
- The most common place names have the suffixes -by (homestead), -thorpe (new village) and -thwaite (meadow or piece of land).

Tim Lomas is a vice president of the Historical Association and former inspector and adviser.

What the co-ordinator might do:

Vikings

What are the key ideas we would want pupils to learn?

- The Vikings were part of some vast movement that was not just confined to the British Isles but stretched far and wide. Vikings in Britain were largely from Norway and Denmark
- The Vikings left relatively little evidence but they seem to have been a mixture of raiders, settlers and traders. They generally moved from being raiders to settlers and later became Christians
- They were excellent sailors
- Viking contact with the British Isles lasted for a long time from the late eighth century until after the Norman Conquest
- The Vikings were predominantly rural people
- They were often in conflict with Saxons, sometimes on the defensive and sometimes on the offensive
- Vikings were bloodthirsty but they were a well-organised people
- They controlled the Danelaw and sometimes much or all of the kingdom especially in the reign of Cnut

Places to visit

Jorvik Viking Centre, Coppergate, York YO1 9WT
A journey into the Viking Age beneath York.
Coppergate, York Tel: 01904 615505.

Danelaw Dark Age Village
Murton Park, York YO19 5UF Tel: 01904 489966.

Jarlshof Shetland: prehistoric and Norse settlement on Sumburgh Head
Shetland Isles, ZE3 9JN Tel: 01950 460112.

HA Resources

The Vikings – Primary E-CPD
www.history.org.uk/resources/primary_resource_4806_177.html

Resources

Rosamund McKitterick, The Vikings, Historical Association podcast.

Alison Gove-Humphries, Paul Bracey and Darius Jackson, 'Here come the Vikings! Making a saga out of a crisis' in *Primary History 50.Primary History 69* on place-names.

www.regia.org/history/vikings.htm

www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/vikings

www.vikingsonline.org.uk

www.battle1066.com/vikings2.shtml

Jon Nichol 'Place-names and the national curriculum for history', in *Primary History 68*.

Ancient Sumer

Dr Catherine Parker Heath

Introduction

For many teachers and children alike, Ancient Sumer will be completely new. Although Sumer has always been an option for teaching about Early Civilisations, the fame of Ancient Egypt, as well as being a tried-and-tested topic, has meant that Sumer has perhaps been overlooked. There is little danger of failing to capture children's imaginations, however. Ancient Sumer is as every bit as alluring and treasure-laden as Ancient Egypt, if not more so, and there are some great stories to get your teeth into. It also lays claim to a number of firsts such as the first cities and first writing, and to being inventors of the wheel, sailboats, mathematics and time, as well as being called the 'Cradle of Civilisation' (Figure.1). It is hoped that this article will persuade you to consider teaching Ancient Sumer and give welcome support and ideas if you do.

Pupils are expected to build understanding of the terms 'civilisation' and 'empire' during Key Stage 2. Ancient Sumer provides the perfect context for considering these terms as well as providing material for interpretation around the concepts of cause and consequence, continuity and change, similarity and difference and significance.

How do we know about Ancient Sumer?

We know about Ancient Sumer thanks to archaeological research and the texts written by the Sumerians themselves.

Figure 1: Map of the Fertile Crescent showing the region of Ancient Sumer.

Archaeology

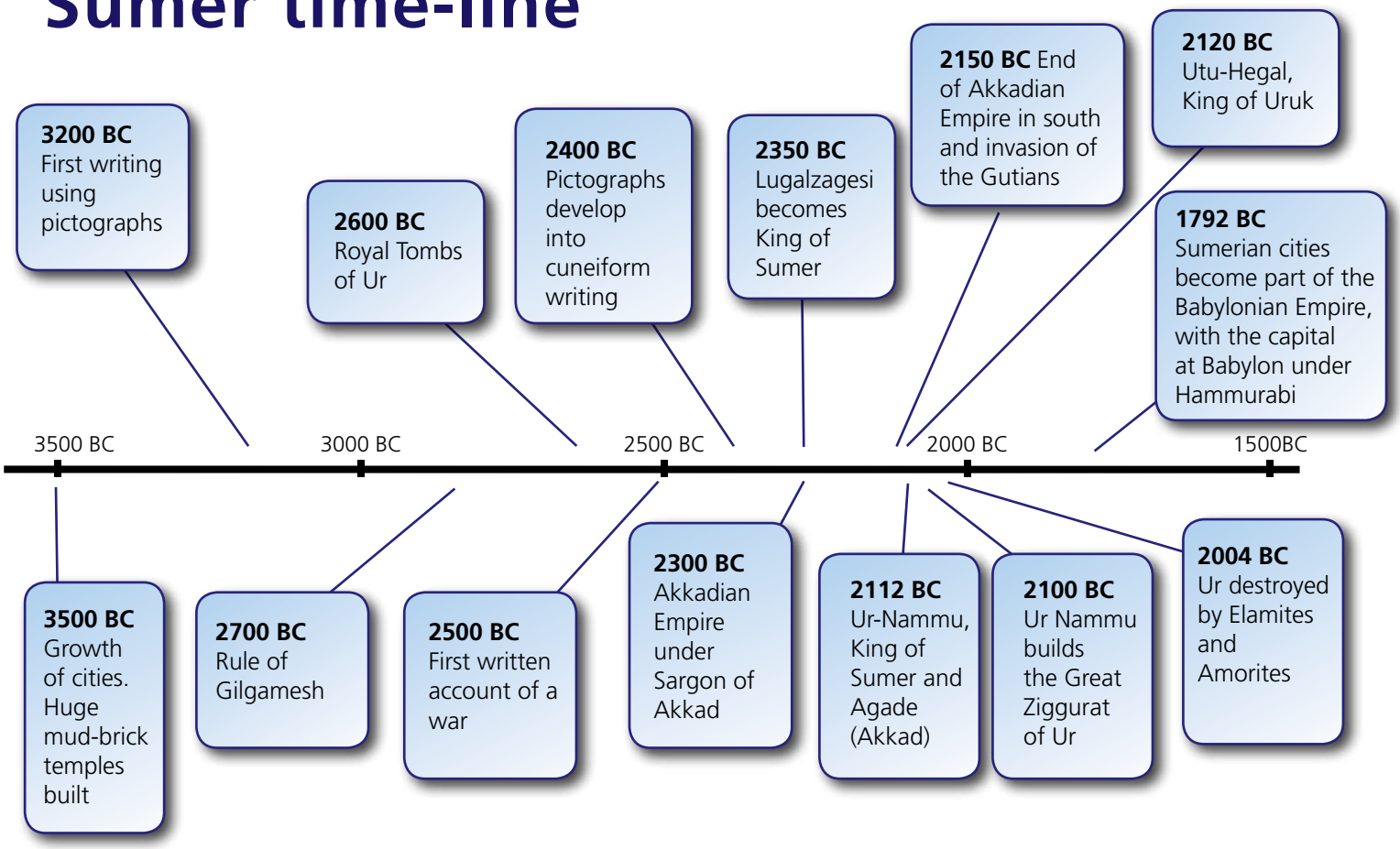
- Tel sites (mounds) of Ancient Sumerian cities, such as Eridu claimed by the Sumerians to be their oldest city (Figure 2), and Uruk another famous Sumerian city
- The Royal Tombs of Ur and the Great Ziggurat of Ur. Both of these sites were excavated by archaeologist Leonard Woolley in the 1920s and have revealed the vast wealth and some rather gruesome practices of the Sumerians
- Artefacts recovered from excavations include items such as pottery, stone vessels, furniture, seal-stones, clay tablets, stone plaques (stele), inscriptions, statues and statuettes of stone, copper and bronze, mosaics, games, golden lyres and other instruments, and jewellery of gold and semi-precious gems.

Figure 2: Tel site of Eridu, where successive layers date from c.5000BC to 2900BC as well as evidence from the Third Dynasty of Ur c.2112-2004BC.

Texts and documents:

- Thousands of clay tablets exist inscribed with pictograms and later cuneiform (wedge-shaped writing), recording administrative and bureaucratic details of the cities (Figure 3)

Sumer time-line



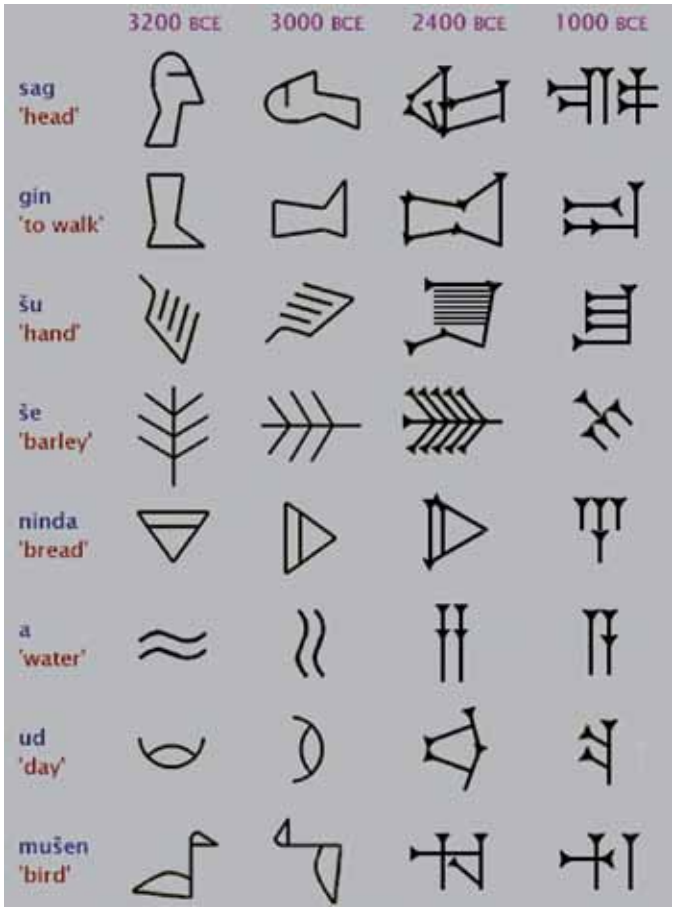
- Approximately 400 literary works written in cuneiform on clay tablets in the Sumerian and Akkadian languages, such as the Sumerian King List, a valuable source of evidence, the *Epic of Gilgamesh* about a legendary king of Uruk (a city of Sumer), the *Birth Story of Sargon* about the first 'Emperor' of Akkad of which Sumer was a part, as well as hymns, parables and letters, some of which also had clay envelopes! Many of these are contemporary although some of the stories were written down a few hundred years after the supposed events.

Why do we call Ancient Sumer the 'Cradle of Civilisation'?

We call Ancient Sumer the 'Cradle of Civilisation' as it was where a number of features we associate with 'civilised' society first emerged. These include cities, writing, agriculture and a sophisticated system of travel, trade, administration and bureaucracy.

The civilisation of Ancient Sumer developed between two great rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates and flourished from approximately 3500 BC to 2000 BC. The later Ancient Greeks called this area 'Mesopotamia', literally meaning 'between the rivers', and it roughly corresponds to modern-day Iraq. The area of Sumer was situated in the southern part of this region and formed part of what is known as the 'Fertile Crescent', where agriculture first began.

Figure 3: Chart showing the development of cuneiform from pictographs from c.3200 BC – 1000 BC.



Some archaeologists believe that it was the development of farming and agriculture that enabled all other developments associated with civilisation to take place. Could agriculture then be said to have caused civilisation? What was it about this time and place that led to the emergence of civilisation as we understand it? Although civilisation can be argued to be a good thing, what else was characteristic of Sumerian civilisation (such as warfare)? Were these things consequences of the development of civilisation?

How did Sumer become part of the first Empire?

In approximately 2300 BC Sumer became part of the first-ever empire created by Sargon of Akkad, a region just north of Sumer. It incorporated all the cities of Sumer and parts of modern-day Iran, Syria and Turkey and lasted for around 150 years. Sargon seems to have followed in the footsteps of a Sumerian king called Lugalzagesi who acquired control over all of the Sumerian cities which, up until this time, had been independent from each other. Was Sargon's empire then a consequence of what Lugalzagesi did?

The reasons behind Lugalzagesi's actions are also worth consideration. Before his rule, there were many rivalries and squabbles between the Sumerian cities. In fact it is during this period that we find the first ever record of a war. Inscribed on a stone plaque, known as the Vulture Stele, it describes a battle between the Sumerian cities of Umma and Lagash (Figure 4)

What are the characteristic features of Sumerian Civilisation?

Sumerian civilisation was characterised by a society organised into cities. These cities were largely independent from one another, and although they had to co-operate in order to control irrigation and maintain trade, there were also many rivalries, squabbles and battles. Each city was ruled by a king although it seems that only one city and king may have had supremacy at any one time.

Texts give snippets of information about how society was structured. The king at the top of the hierarchy was responsible for irrigation, building temples and walls for his city, appointing officials, going to war if necessary and for importing material the city needed, such as timber. Underneath the king were various officials, scribes, artists, craftsmen, labourers and slaves. It seems most inhabitants of a city would have to work for the temple of the city god in some way for example, as a cult-singer, musician, weaver, baker or farmer, who would use their products as offerings to the god. It seems women, especially those in the royal household, had many of the same rights as men. They could own property and take part in commercial activities.

Religion was a significant part of Sumerian civilisation from the beginning. Each city had its own patron deity, for example:

- Ur – Nanna, the Moon god, Lord of Wisdom, Lord of Destiny
- Uruk – Inanna, Lady of the Sky, Queen of Heaven, goddess of love, fertility, and war
- Eridu - Enki, the high god of water, intellect, creation, medicine and wisdom, and the inventor of civilisation
- Eshnunna - Ninazu, god of the underworld and of healing
- Lagash – Ninurta, Lord of the Earth, god of rain, irrigation and fertility
- Larsa and Sippar – Utu, god of the sun, justice, application of law, judgement
- Nippur – Enlil, Lord of the Wind, god of air, wind and storms

The civilisation is also characterised by great architecture, and each god or goddess would have a great temple built in their honour. The epitome of this was the ziggurat, a massive terraced pyramid on which the temple would stand.

The civilisation was also a very wealthy one, illustrated by what must be one of the most exciting archaeological discoveries of all time, the Royal Tombs of Ur. Of particular interest is the 'Great Death Pit' where 74 bodies were discovered. Leonard Woolley interpreted these as the servants of the Royal Household, who were killed when the king died to serve him in death, as they had in life. (Figure 5)

Who ruled and when?

The Sumerian King List proves to be very useful for knowing who ruled and when, although the early kings are considered to be mythological. The following are a few of the key names from around 150 names that are on the list.

Alulim is believed to be the first ever king after 'kingship' descended from heaven. He ruled for 28,800 years and can safely be put in the realms of myth. Following Alulim, there are many kings with similarly lengthy reigns but, the first king known from both the list and independent archaeological evidence is Enmebaragesi, who built the first temple at Nippur.

It is around the same time (c.2700 BC) that Gilgamesh ruled at Uruk. For a long time, scholars thought he was simply a fictional character from the *Epic of Gilgamesh* but the fact that he is associated with Aga of Kish, the son of Enmebargaesi, who has been verified by archaeological evidence means that Gilgamesh may well have existed also. In addition, some archaeologists believe they have found his grave.

This period, known as the Early Dynastic Period, ends with the reign of Lugalzagesi who became king of all of Sumer. Luglzagesi's changes

in how the area was governed seem to have led the way to a successful take-over by Sargon and the creation of the first empire. Sargon's achievements, and those of his grandson, Naram-Sin are immortalised in later legends.

The last few generations of the Akkadian Empire saw power divided across the region between local rulers. This ultimately brought about its collapse, although later sources blamed this on the invasion of 'evil' barbarians from the mountains in the East - the Gutians. It was believed that they had been sent from the god Enlil, god of the city of Nippur, as punishment for the actions of Naram-Sin.

In the last century of the third millennium BC came the 'Sumerian Revival' begun by Utu-Hegal, King of Uruk. He may well have compiled the Sumerian King List to legitimise his reign. It was Ur-Nammu, perhaps a close relative, however, who established a new political entity replacing and building on Akkadian achievements. This period of time is known as the Third Dynasty of Ur (Ur III 2112-2004 BC) and it saw the flourishing of Sumerian literature and language. Sumerian was used to write such things as administrative texts, a new literary genre known as the 'royal hymn', and epics, including that of Gilgamesh. Ur-Nammu also rebuilt the main sanctuary at Ur using a new form of building - the ziggurat (Figure 6).

The revival was not to last much longer than a century. After marauding Amorites had disrupted already difficult to maintain trade routes, the Elamites destroyed Ur. A diminished Third Dynasty of Ur managed to hang on until Hammurabi, King of Babylon made Sumer part of his empire.

What did they achieve?

They achieved so much that it is impossible to go into detail here. One scholar (Kramer, 1981) has credited Ancient Sumerian with achieving 39 'firsts', many of which have been mentioned. These include:

civilisation – cities – writing – irrigation – the wheel – schools – astrology – sail-boats – war – proverbs – mathematics – measuring time

Ancient Sumerian Civilisation may be so far away in both time and place, but there are many ways in which it is still relevant and significant today. As such many of these achievements can be explored in terms of similarities and difference, and continuity and change.

Dr Catherine Parker Heath, Archaeologist and Educator, Enrichment Through Archaeology
www.archaeologyeducation.org

Figure 4: Vulture Stele found at the Ancient site of Girsu. Inscribed with text and pictures, it depicts a battle between the cities of Umma and Lagash.

Figure 5: A silver lyre, one of two found in the 'Great Death Pit' at the Royal Cemetery of Ur.

Figure 6: The Great Ziggurat of Ur built by the King Ur-Nammu in honour of the city's god Nanna. It was finished by his son King Shulgi.

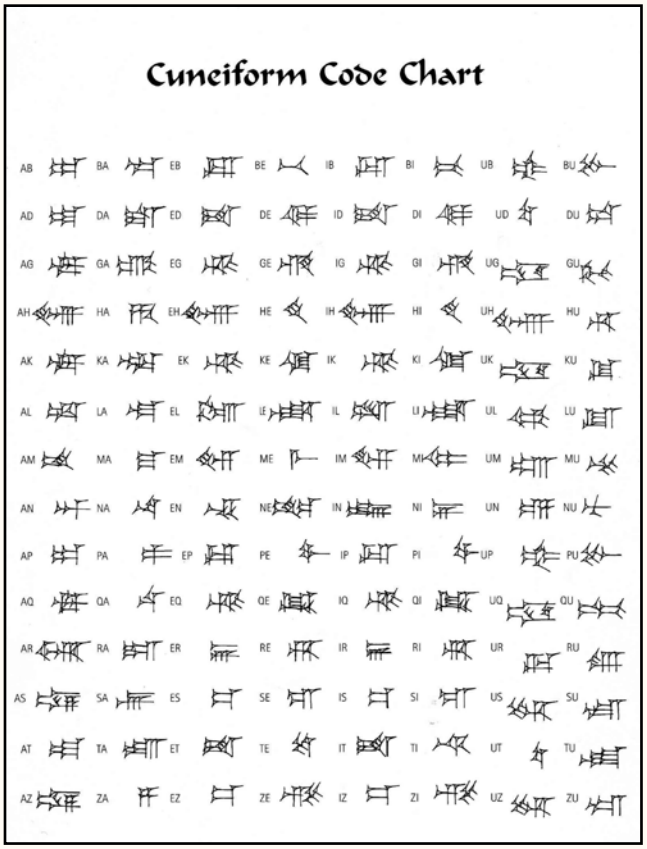
Activities for creating representations of aspects of the past:

1 Sumerian writing

Look at the development of cuneiform from pictograms. Pupils can create their own pictograms for words using items in the classroom for inspiration, and then simplify these into cuneiform (wedge-shapes). They can then make their own tablets with messages for each other to read. Roll out pieces of clay and make writing sticks out of twigs or lolly sticks by cutting the end into a triangular shape. Alternatively, children can write out real cuneiform using the cuneiform symbols chart (see resources and websites).

Writing was also used to write down proverbs. These are from c.2000BC. Ask your pupils what they think they mean? Are they useful?

1. Do not cut off the neck of that which has had its neck cut off.
2. He who acquires many things, he must keep close watch over them.
3. He who eats too much will not be able to sleep.
4. The fox, having urinated into the sea, said 'the whole of the sea is my urine'



2 City gods and goddesses

Find the names of the god/goddess for each city. Divide the children into groups. Each group represents an individual city. Each 'city' creates its own god or goddess, gives it a name, says what he or she is the god/goddess of and what their character is like. Draw, or create in clay, images of the god/goddess and, if time allows, build a temple/ziggurat out of cardboard boxes to house them. Groups present their work to the rest of the class and then together create a story involving all of the gods and goddesses, incorporating each other's ideas – it seems this is what the Sumerians did!

3 Digging Sumer

Create an archaeological dig in the classroom. Laminate images of various finds from excavations in Sumer (see British Museum images collection), then bury them in sand in trays and excavate carefully using brushes. Remove as much of the sand as possible leaving the images in place. Tie string around the sand-trays to make a grid of 10cm or 20cm squares and draw the position of the finds using graph paper. After planning, take the 'finds' out of the trays and complete an artefact recording form (try www.yac-uk.org). Create a number of cards with information about the objects to help the children fill in their recording forms. Make it more of a challenge by asking the children to match their find to its information card.

Key ideas

- What makes a city a city?
- Was Gilgamesh a real person?
- How and why did writing emerge?
- Why did civilisation and empires emerge?
- Is an empire a good thing?
- Are some sources of evidence more reliable than others?
- What makes one group different from another group (e.g. Sumerians, Akkadians, Gutians, Elamites)?

Resources

www.mesopotamia.co.uk

www.tes.co.uk/teaching-resource/Ancient-Sumer-6127863/

Proverbs from: /www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/2000sumer-proverbs.asp

http://penn.museum/program-resources/online-activities.html

www.britishmuseum.org/pdf/cuneiform.pdf

www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/cultures/mesopotamia_gallery.shtml

Donoughue, C. (2007) *The story of writing*, British Museum Press.

Wiltshire, K. (2005) *Pocket Timeline of Ancient Mesopotamia,* British Museum Press.

Collins, S. (2012) *The Wonders of Ancient Mesopotamia*, Melbourne: Museum Victoria.

Kramer, S. N. (1981). *History Begins at Sumer: thirty-nine firsts in man's recorded history*, 3rd edn, Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Reade, J. (2006) *Mesopotamia*, London: British Museum Press.

The Epic of Gilgamesh, English version by N.K. Sandars (2006), London: Penguin.

Notes for subject leaders

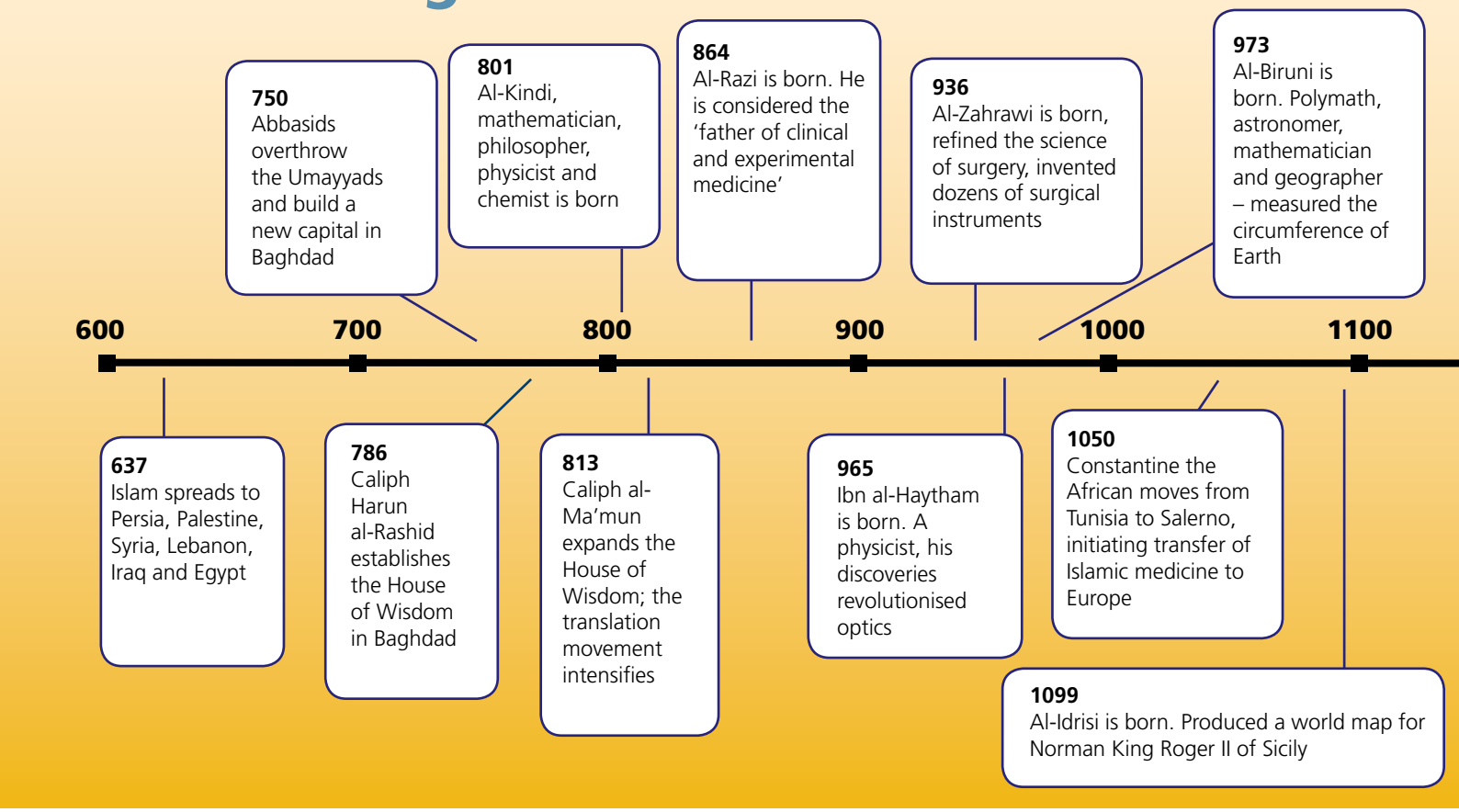
To start with, subject leaders may encounter some challenges convincing teachers that Ancient Sumer makes a straightforward theme for Key Stage 2 children; having said that, the scepticism can soon turn to pleasure when the opportunities are realised. As with most themes and periods, the subject leader can bring some logic to a complex and long period of history by arranging learning around a few useful enquiries that hold the attention of the pupils. Sumer is also ideal for allowing good cross-curricular links, e.g. with literacy, numeracy, design and technology and religious education.

Worthwhile enquiries could include:

- Why was Sumer able to emerge as a wealthy, advanced early civilisation? (putting emphasis on its irrigation and farming practices)
- Why do we have to thank the Sumerians for the skill of writing? (the development of cuneiform)
- How unusual were Sumerian religious beliefs? (their notion of the universe as a flat disk surrounded by a dome, their pantheon of gods and their beliefs in the afterlife can be compared with other religions)
- How surprised are you that the Sumerians were so advanced at that time? (an opportunity to look at a range of achievements such as the wheel, boats, tools, clothes, number systems, pottery, metal work, weapons, codification of laws, city life etc.)
- How much remains to tell us about Sumerians? (tangible remains such as ziggurats but also the huge numbers of tablets recording many aspects of life as well as numerous artefacts such as pottery)
- How did it all come to an end? (including the ruination of the land by salt).

Places to visit

The British Museum, which has the finds from the Royal Tombs at Ur on display as well as finds from Tel al'Ubaid, and Uruk amongst others.



Early Islamic civilisation

Ayshah Ismail

Introduction

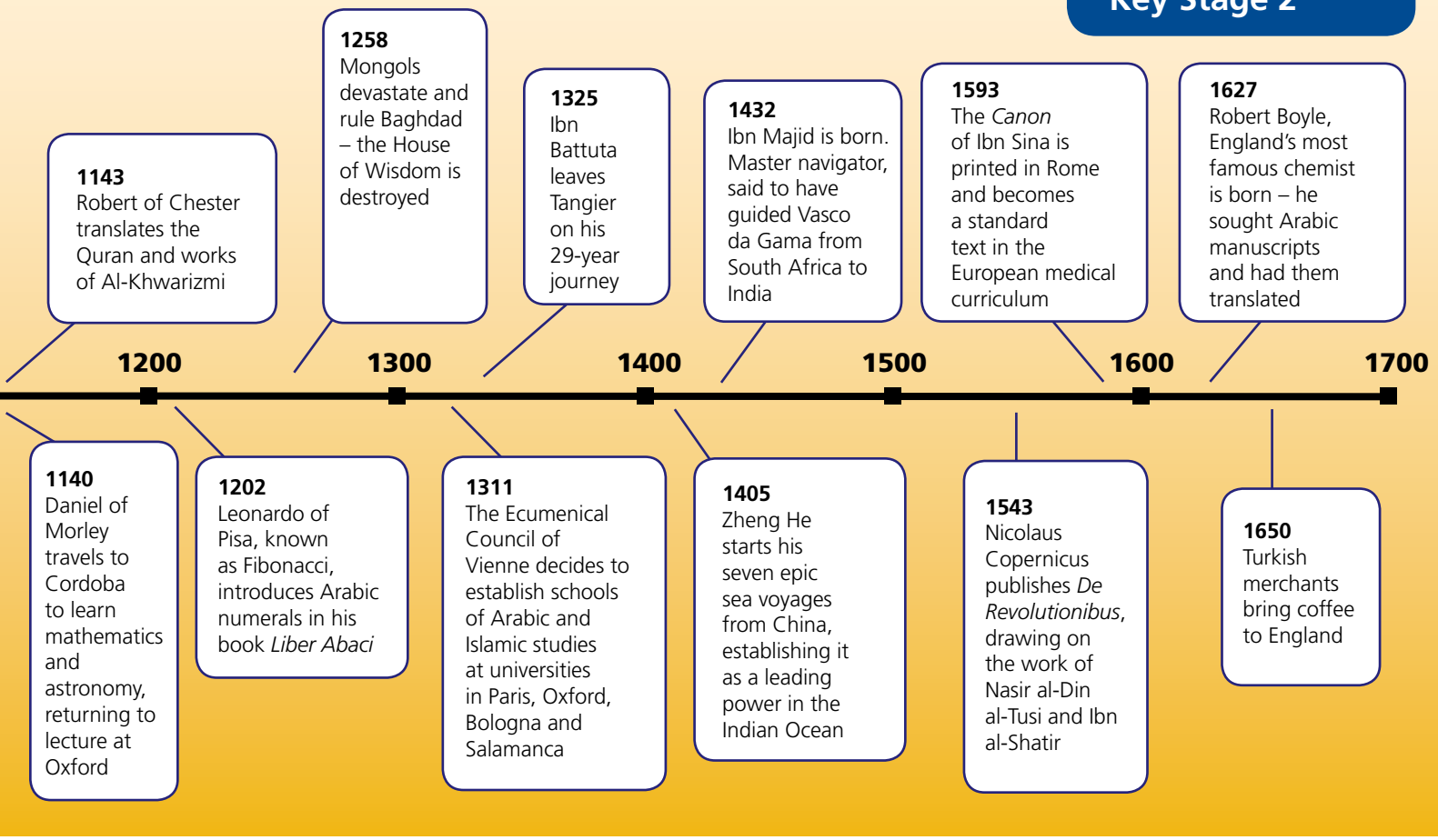
The Primary National Curriculum pinpoints Early Islamic Civilisation as Baghdad *c.* AD 900 – yet it was so much more. For approximately a thousand years after AD 700 there was an extraordinary amount of activity that radiated out from Baghdad and along a glittering crescent through North Africa and into Spain, resulting in a vast civilisation that stretched from Spain to China. Here men and women of different faiths and cultures built on knowledge from ancient civilisations, making breakthroughs that have left their mark on our world today.

Baghdad was a city where great advances in mathematics and science were made and where an inspiring atmosphere of learning was cultivated. Baghdad's position on the Silk Road connected traders from all over the known world and it was here that the great works of scholars and philosophers such as Aristotle and Plato were translated and their ideas openly discussed and expanded upon. Ultimately, Baghdad became the historical successor to the scientific advances of the Greeks and Romans and laid a shining path for the Renaissance to follow.

Teaching Early Islamic Civilisation

The inclusion of Early Islamic Civilisation in the 2014 National Curriculum for History in England may present primary teachers with the challenge of having to teach an unfamiliar subject. Fortunately for most teachers, with a little background reading, this is a unit that can set the stage for a fascinating journey into a world that is often seen as far away, mysterious and provides teachers with an ideal opportunity to counteract negative images of certain parts of the world.

History lessons are, in essence, teachers telling stories that generate questions from their pupils; and it is this tool that teachers can use to explore the rich tapestry that makes up early Islamic civilisation. Stories are very powerful in engaging pupils' imaginations and bringing to life some of the individuals that would have lived in this time. It is also helpful for pupils to be able to compare the lives of those living in Baghdad and similar cities with other parts of the world. What was happening in London at the same time? How similar to or different were the residents of London from other cities around the world?



An artist's impression of the House of Wisdom © 1001 Inventions

This is a period of study with the potential to be used in a number of curriculum subjects. When touching upon the scientific contributions made by scholars from early Islamic civilisation, a study of some of the experiments and innovations would be useful for pupils to physically bring to life their ideas. This would be an ideal segue into science lessons. Constructing arches and using colourful geometry and tessellations are activities that can be linked to art lessons. Looking at the roots of algebra will provide inroads to mathematics lessons. Through the work of *Curriculum Enrichment for the Future* with schools in Manchester, London, Birmingham, Lincolnshire and York, we have found both teachers and pupils responding very positively to such material.

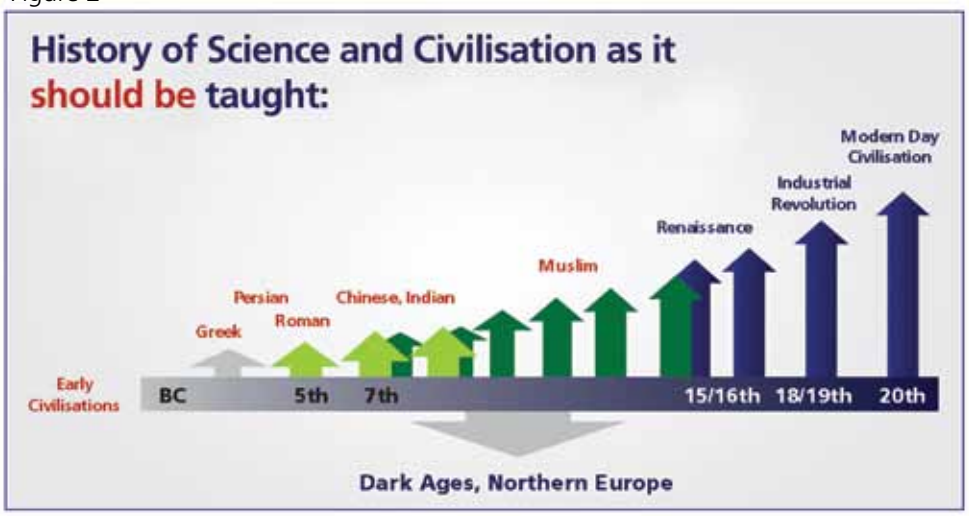
One key factor to share with pupils is the importance placed by scholars from this era on preserving historical knowledge. This was a civilisation that thrived not on self-glorification but on using whatever knowledge

it could, to make a better, more fulfilled society, both for them to live in and for the wider world. Much like preserving artefacts and objects from the past, this importance placed on knowledge, in part allows us to view how a society thought, lived and existed.

There are plenty of short films and videos dedicated to the contributions made by early Islamic civilisation. In order to take that extra step and see some of the original artefacts and texts associated with this period, there are few collections within UK museums. Dedicated exhibitions, such as the '1001 Inventions' exhibition, currently touring outside the UK, have attracted enormous crowds; complementary workshops for teachers were fully subscribed; the interactive nature of such exhibitions allows pupils to engage fully with thinkers and scholars from the past and make connections with their ideas.

Figure 1

Figure 2



1000 Years Amnesia: a missing millennium

It is noticeable that, in any contemporary article or commentary on science, mathematics or technology, more than 1,000 years between Greco-Roman times and the modern era are commonly overlooked, giving the sense that during this period nothing worthy of mention happened. In Europe, this period is usually referred to as the Dark Ages, in which it is believed that the great era of the Greek ideas and innovation came to an end and no progress was made until the Renaissance.

In the east, however, the spread of Islam coincided with enormous contributions to civilisation, perhaps due to the heavy emphasis that Islam places on knowledge. There is amnesia in the minds of people of approximately 1,000 years of Muslim, Chinese and Indian civilisations during the period AD 700-1700. This was an era of great scientific advances in the Middle East and China and it took until around AD 1500 for Europe to catch up. Figure 2 shows the more accurate view, including continuous development, discovery, invention and innovation, much of which came out of non-western cultures and was transferred to Europe during the Renaissance.

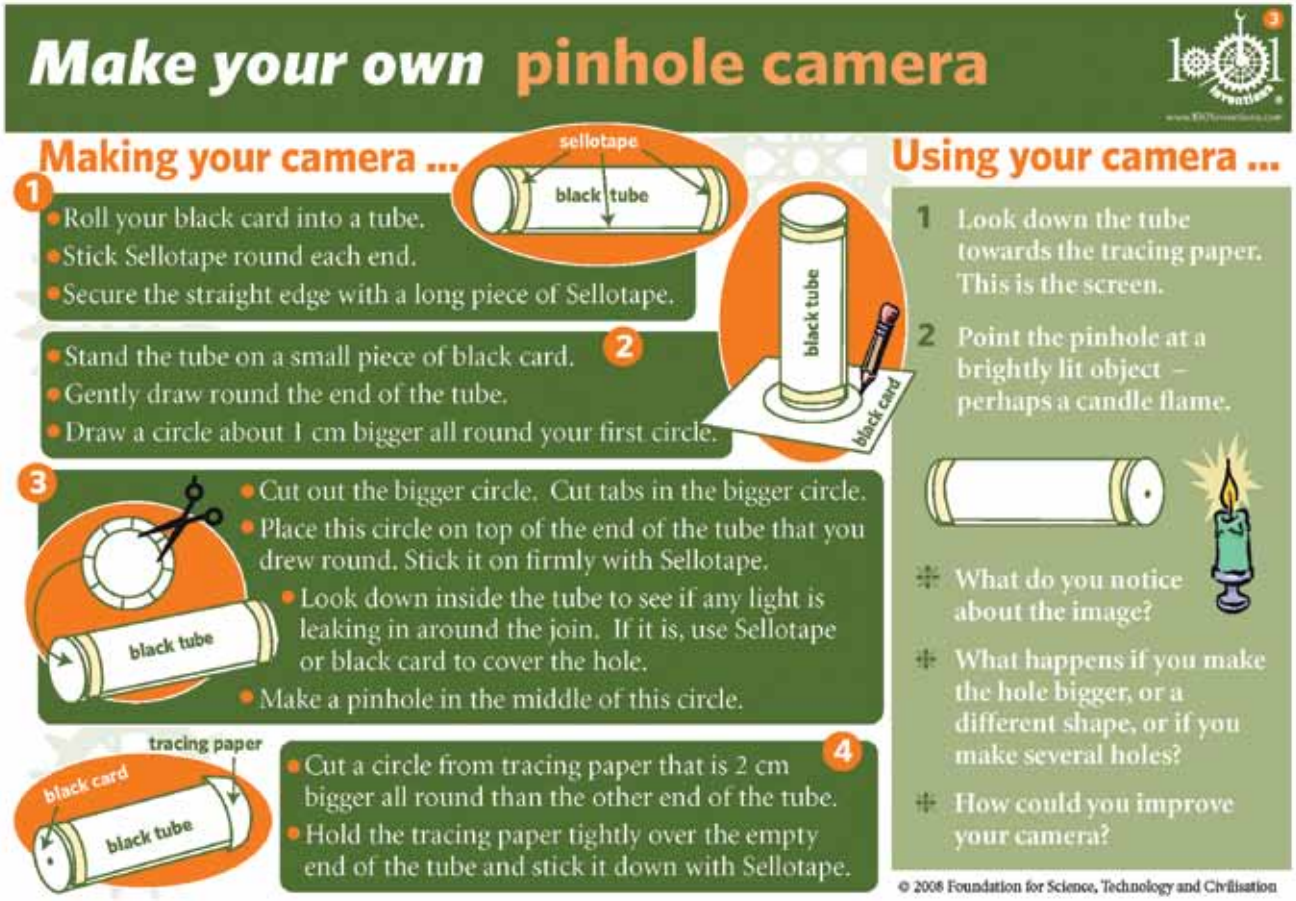
During this period, Baghdad played a pivotal role in the dissemination and spread of knowledge in the arts and in the sciences and in the development of a huge portfolio of ideas. The hub where of much of this progress took place was in and via *Bayt al-Hikmah,* the renowned House of Wisdom.

Founded by Caliph Harun al-Rashid (reigned AD 786–809) and culminated under his son al-Ma'mun (reigned AD 813–833), the House of Wisdom was an institution where translators, scientists, scribes, authors and others used to meet for translation, reading, writing, scribing, discourse, dialogue and discussion. Many manuscripts and books on scientific subjects, philosophical concepts and ideas in different languages were translated there. The languages spoken in the House of Wisdom were Arabic (as the lingua franca), Farsi, Hebrew, Aramaic, Syriac, Greek and Latin; also occasionally Sanskrit, which was used to translate the old Indian manuscripts in astronomy and mathematics.

It would not be an exaggeration to imagine camel caravans loaded with books and manuscripts criss-crossing the Islamic world on their way to reach the wonderful libraries and House of Wisdom in Baghdad. By the middle of the ninth century, the House of Wisdom was the largest repository of books in the world

Suggested Lesson Activities

1. Seeing in the Dark – Camera Obscura



The camera is not a modern invention! It was invented around a thousand years ago by Muslim scientist Abu Ali al-Hasan Ibn al-Haitham. Ibn al-Haitham did a great deal of revolutionary and influential work on optics through meticulous experimentation and evidence collection, creative explaining and thorough recording. He was almost certainly the first to prove that light travels in straight lines, and that we see things when light reflects off an object and enters the eye. Ibn al-Haitham's '*Book of Optics*' had a profound impact on the work of Roger Bacon (thirteenth century) and Leonardo da Vinci (fifteenth century).

In this activity, students re-create some of Ibn al-Haitham's experiments through constructing pinhole cameras. They reinforce their knowledge of light by examining some of Ibn al-Haitham's work and comparing digital to pinhole cameras. *(Similarity and difference, continuity and change)*

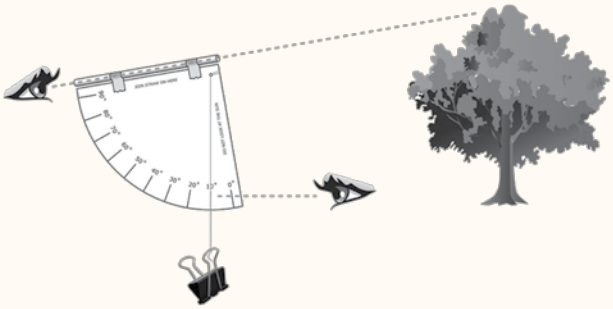
Each group needs:

- an A4 sheet of black card
- a piece of black card about 12 cm × 12 cm
- a piece of tracing paper about 12 cm × 12 cm
- scissors
- sellotape
- a drawing pin
- access to a lighted candle

The cameras work best in a dark room, looking towards a candle. Warn students not to look directly at the sun.

2. Making a simple Astrolabe

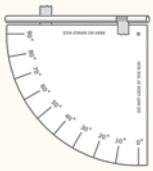
Early Muslims had good reason to search the stars; their teachings told them to pray five times a day facing Makkah in Saudi Arabia at particular times. They needed careful observations and accurate calculations to pray at the right time and face the right direction. *(Reasons and results)*



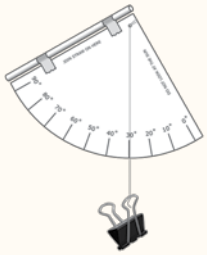
Astrolabes were used to find and predict positions of the sun, moon, planets and stars. Astrolabes are also useful for telling the time or working out where you are. Greeks made the first astrolabes and scientists in the Islamic world improved them hugely.

A. Stick a copy of the astrolabe drawing onto a piece of card, and cut it out.

B. Use sticky tape to stick a straw along the edge of the astrolabe, as shown below. Be careful not to stick the straw onto the front of the astrolabe. Cut the straw to the same length as the side of the astrolabe.

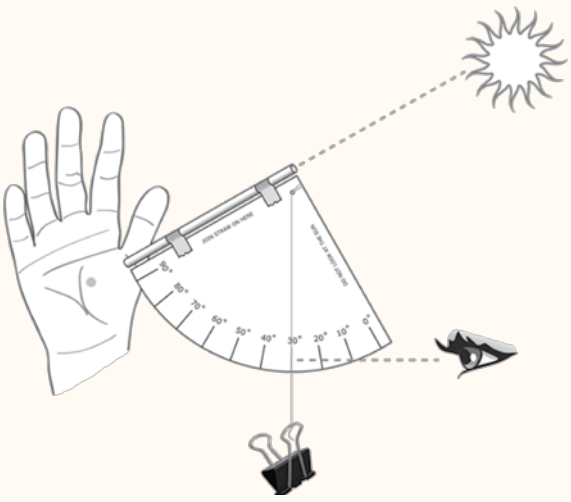


C. Use a pin to make a hole in your astrolabe, as shown. Thread a piece of string through the hole, and tie a knot. Attach a weight to the end of the string. Your astrolabe is ready to use!



Measure the altitude of a tree or building. Look at the top of the tree or building through the straw. Ask your partner to see where the string crosses the scale on your astrolabe. This number is the altitude of the tree or building, in degrees. Now measure the altitude of a tree or building of a different height.

If it is a sunny day, measure the altitude of the sun. Do not look directly at the sun. Point the astrolabe straw at the sun. Put one hand under the other end of the straw. Move the straw until you can see a circle of light on your hand. The straw is now pointing directly at the sun. Ask your partner to see where the string crosses the scale on your astrolabe. This number is the altitude of the sun, in degrees.
If possible, measure the altitude of the sun again a week later, at the same time of day. Repeat for the next few weeks. Is there a pattern in your results? Does the altitude increase or decrease?



Suggested Lesson Activities

3. Watch the film 'Muslim Heritage in our Homes'

Ask your pupils to work in groups to do a quick survey to see how many of these objects are part of daily life for you or someone in your family. (For each person, mark each box with a tick for 'Yes' or a cross for 'No').

Object or activity that was probably brought to Europe from Muslim lands:	Person A	Person B	Person C	Person D
Coffee				
Perfume/Deodorant				
Teeth cleaning				
Sun tan cream				
Hand cream				
Nasal spray				
Musical scales				
Three course meals				
Drinking glasses				
Glazed food plates				
Clocks				
Carpets				
Roses				
Spectacles				
Fountain pens				

Summarise your group's findings by ticking one of these boxes:

Muslim ideas and achievements have affected our daily lives ...

Very much ☐ Quite a lot ☐ A little ☐ Not at all ☐

The House of Wisdom came to a sad end in the thirteenth century, when Baghdad was invaded and ransacked by the Mongols. Following the Siege of Baghdad, along with all other libraries, the House of Wisdom was destroyed by the army of Hulagu, where books from Baghdad's libraries were thrown into the Tigris River in such quantities that it is said 'the river ran black with ink'.

What is our inheritance?

Despite this setback, we have still inherited a vast legacy of knowledge from this era. Scholars and thinkers developed ideas that were the forerunners of devices, technology and know-how that we use and rely on even today. Some of these brilliant individuals include the following:

- Al-Khwarizmi: Mathematician and astronomer, born around 783 in modern-day Uzbekistan. He was affiliated with the House of Wisdom, and his star tables and works on arithmetic, algebra, the astrolabe and the Hindu-Arabic numerals profoundly influenced the west.
- Al-Ma'mun: Abbasid caliph from 813 to 833. He took a direct interest in science and philosophy and actively promoted scholars at the House of Wisdom and elsewhere.
- Fatima Al-Fihri: Inherited a considerable amount of money from her father which she used to build a mosque for her community. Established in the year 859, the Qarawiyin Mosque had the oldest and possibly the first university in the world. Students travelled there from all over the world to study Islamic studies, astronomy, languages and sciences. Arabic numbers became known and used in Europe through this university.
- Ibn Sina (Avicenna): Eleventh-century polymath and leading Muslim philosopher and medical scholar. His influence on western culture lasted for centuries, in various fields, from philosophy to medicine.
- Ibn Rushd (Averroes): The famous Andalusian philosopher flourished in Cordoba and Marrakech in the twelfth century. He exerted an enormous influence on Christian and Jewish thought, primarily as a commentator on Aristotle, and also as an original author in philosophy, logic, astronomy and medicine.
- Al-Idrisi (Dreses): North African geographer and scientific director of King Roger II of Sicily's World Map project, completed in 1154.
- Adelard of Bath: Pioneering explorer of Islamic learning, who brought the wonders of geometry, astronomy and other fields to the medieval west.

As can be seen from the names mentioned above, early Islamic civilisation was a hotbed of debate, discussion and development that included scholars of all faiths and all walks of life. Their ultimate aim was a better, more useful and enriched society; men, women, scholars from all faiths worked together to realise this.

How do we bring the topic to life in the classroom?

Bringing the golden age of Islamic civilisation to life in the classroom can prove to be an exciting opportunity for teachers, rather than an overwhelming challenge. On the Historical Association resources website there is a full scheme of work available, that walks teachers through this unit with a range of enquiry-based questions and related activities. The enrichment that this material brings applies to all aspects of life and leads directly to ways of communicating and working together that help all children to share the vitally important work of building a better future for all. As education systems seek to reconfigure themselves for a world that grows ever more complex and uncertain, we must find ways of helping all of our young people to work together to build a better global society for themselves and their descendants.

Why should you choose to teach Early Islamic Civilisation?

- Islam has, in its 1,400 year history, had an immense influence around the globe
- For a period Baghdad was the intellectual capital of the world
- The House of Wisdom collected together all the writings of Greeks, Romans and Arabs, and scholars from all around the world built on their work
- Taught well, this study could help promote the idea of a well-integrated civilisation
- If you want to provide a positive vision of Muslims and the Arab World in your community then this is a great option to choose.

Cross-curricular links

- Religious Education: the role of religion in furthering the advances made in this age
- Mathematics: several key mathematical terms originated and developed in this era
- Science: there is lots to explore in terms of knowledge of the human body, physics and chemistry
- Architecture: the design of the city of Baghdad (the most populous in the world at the time)
- Geography: the role of trade (Baghdad was a major trading city between Europe and the east)
- Design and art (all extraordinarily vibrant)

Ayshah Ismail is Chief Executive Officer at Curriculum Enrichment for the Future, a charity dedicated to helping young people discover their shared dynamic heritages in this global and interdependent age.

Resources

More information and links to websites you may find useful

Curriculum Enrichment for the Future
www.CE4tF.org

1001 Inventions www.1001inventions.com

Muslim Heritage www.muslimheritage.com

1001 Inventions and the Library of Secrets
www.youtube.com/watch?v=JZDe9DCx7Wk

The greatest scientific advances from the Muslim World www.theguardian.com/science/2010/feb/01/islamic-science

Muslim Heritage in our Homes
www.youtube.com/watch?v=lEx-bLgG8Ds

BBC Science and Islam (3 part documentary)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=FLay7RD3kEw
www.youtube.com/watch?v=oUGBp_mKrkI
www.youtube.com/watch?v=jwbBjixLIbI

How Islamic inventors changed the world
www.independent.co.uk/news/science/how-islamic-inventors-changed-the-world-469452.html

CE4tF Teaching Tools
www.ce4tf.org/services/teachingtools/

Al-Hassani, Salim T.S. (2012) *1001 Inventions: the enduring legacy of Muslim civilization,* National Geographic.

Places to visit

Visit a local mosque to understand about Islam and the centrality it takes in Muslims' lives.

British Museum, the Islamic Gallery
The main point would be to understand Baghdad's place in the world at the time.

Oriental Museum, Durham
Great for understanding the Middle East region and its links.

The Museum of the History of Science in Oxford houses an unrivalled collection of early scientific instruments.

Key ideas

- Islam practice and influence on society
- Great individuals and their ideas
- Compare locations of major world cities in the ninth Century
- Organisation of society, structure of cities
- Diplomacy, meeting of 'east/west'

HA Resources

The Rise of an Islamic Civilisation
An HA Podcasted History of the Rise of an Islamic Civilisation featuring Dr Caroline Goodson of Birkbeck, University of London.
www.history.org.uk/resources/primary_resource_3375_224.html

The Umayyad and Abbasid Caliphates
In this set of podcasts Emeritus Professor Gerald Hawting of SOAS, University of London provides an introduction to the Umayyad (661-750) and Abbasid (750-1258) Caliphates.
www.history.org.uk/resources/primary_resource_7376_224.html

Scheme of Work: Early Islam, including Baghdad
Early Islamic civilisation, including Baghdad c. AD 900
www.history.org.uk/resources/primary_resource_8155_224.html

Primary History 65: Including the Muslim Contribution in the National Curriculum for History - Dr Matthew L.N. Wilkinson

Primary History 67: 'Teaching about Significant Individuals at Key Stage 1: Ibn Battuta'
- Penelope Harnett

What the co-ordinator might do:

Early Islamic civilisation

A key role of the subject leader is to ensure that a strong emphasis is given to achievement, learning and tolerance rather than the negative image so easily associated with Bagdhad and Islamic culture today. This area of learning can be conveyed largely as a good news story. The planning and teaching might like to ensure that there are a number of key ideas that can be embedded. They could include:

- as with other important civilisations, the water and fertile land were key to success;
- Caliph Al-Mansur set up his capital there which flourished for over 500 years (comparisons can be made with other places covered by the curriculum). It was often called the Golden Age of Islam;
- Its tolerance and centre of learning drew in so many different groups such as scientists, doctors, thinkers, poets, engineers, mathematicians, artists and potters, sailors and merchants. Many scholars from around the world were attracted to the House of Wisdom;
- It was a huge circular city– possibly the first in the world to have a million people and included beautiful palaces, mosques, gardens, libraries, parks, squares, wide thoroughfares and many houses outside the city walls;
- We can thank them for many important achievements that influenced future lives including the Arabic system of numbers (1, 2, 3 etc), the idea of modern free hospitals, surgery including cataract operations, preserving and copying on paper many ancient writings that would otherwise have been lost such as *The Tale of the 1001 Nights*;
- The civilisation came to an end with the Mongol invasion in 1258 but it had been in decline long before that.

Ensuring that pupils understand these key points should provide an interesting and positive approach.

Quality Mark for History

The Historical Association
The voice for history

Become a History Quality Mark School

'Our experience of the History Quality Mark process was very positive. We have thought further about our practice and benefited from the conversations we have had about history education between ourselves and with the assessor.'

The History Quality Mark is a unique award that provides a framework for schools to assess and measure the excellence of the history provision offered to young people.

If your school offers or strives to offer excellent history provision to your students and you would like the recognition for the work of your teachers, department and school then the HA History Quality Mark might be right for you.

What is the Quality Mark?

The Quality Mark provides a framework for success in which to develop an outstanding provision of history for a school. There is a regulated programme for a school working to achieve the Quality Mark to follow, with a clear assessment procedure delivered by independent Historical Association appointed assessors.

What does my school get?

All successful schools will be awarded with an embossed certificate for display in school, a Quality Mark pack, and a Quality Mark logo for use on letters, websites or advertising. Successful schools will be featured in HA journals, publications and on the website. The QM Award is an excellent way of attracting positive publicity and schools will be provided with a short guide for dealing with publicity arising from the Award. Schools achieving the QM will be invited to receive their Award at the HA's Summer Awards Evening.

Here is what a school had to say:

'We really appreciated the rigour of the Quality Mark assessment and I think with new lighter-touch Ofsted inspections and the breakdown of regional subject networks, the Quality Mark is going to fill a really useful professional development hole!

To find out more about the Quality Mark go to:
www.history.org.uk/go/qualitymark2
and or email: **qualitymark@history.og.uk**

Launching March 2015

Stories in the Stones:

using cemeteries as a local history resource

Bev Forrest

Why visit a cemetery as part of the history curriculum?

Local studies now feature prominently in the primary history curriculum for both key stages. This development challenges teachers to find easily-accessible, inexpensive and relevant resources on their doorstep. A rich resource which has traditionally been overlooked is the local churchyard or cemetery. Teachers' reluctance to take pupils on site may stem from a belief that it is not an appropriate place for children to visit. I have found, however, that this is one place where children can be introduced to discussions about death within a meaningful context. Some people feel that mourners should not come in contact with children at the cemetery. This should not be a problem as long as careful preparation is made to ensure that children work within the 'closed' areas of the cemetery and that a clear code of conduct for pupils has been drawn up in advance.

Traditionally local authorities have been reluctant to support school visits worrying about potential hazards and possible litigation. Now, however, they are increasingly aware of the long-term benefits of introducing children to the sites at a young age, which encourages respect for these places and a resulting decrease in anti-social behaviour. A carefully-planned visit to a cemetery is far safer than most other off-site visits given that there are fewer traffic hazards. Furthermore this type of visit exposes children to a healthy element of risk and begins to develop a sense of responsibility among them. The main obstacle, however, still seems to be teachers unlocking the potential of these areas for learning and being unclear where to find the necessary advice and resources. Many cemeteries now have active Friends groups that are eager to make links with local schools and while they may lack expertise on working with children they are an invaluable source of information. They may be able to give you access to burial records and should be able to direct you to those areas of the cemetery which are rich in the kind of evidence you are seeking. They may be able to provide you with guide-books, trails and maps of the cemetery. Often they have in their possession archives of old photographs and relevant newspaper articles including obituaries. Members of the group are skilled in researching family histories and can help you with obtaining and interpreting such sources of evidence as census returns and trade directories thus providing rich background to people's lives.

Which aspects of the curriculum can be studied through your visit?

While the focus here is on how cemeteries support learning in history they also provide many opportunities for cross-curricular learning which should not be overlooked. Ideas on this are included in the web version of this article. In the previous National Curriculum for history some schools visited cemeteries to enrich their studies of the Victorians. While the Victorians have now disappeared from the Key Stage 2 programme of study as a topic there are still many ways in which this period can be studied primarily through a local history study. Most local cemeteries are rich in evidence if you plan to study your locality in Victorian times. Possible lines of enquiry could

Figure 1: Pupils from Ireland Wood collecting information on life expectancy at Lawnswood Cemetery Leeds.

be looking at family life and what was important to people at that time in this area and similarities and differences with life today. Looking at symbolism on memorials is a rich source in supporting this study. An Anchor and Chain, for example, symbolises firm faith in salvation. A study of forenames with connections to biblical characters, shared values or celebrated individuals is another possible source of evidence.

The world of work is another possible topic. Many memorials proudly display the occupation of the deceased, some of whom had occupations that are unfamiliar today. Children can also be introduced to the many links their locality had with other parts of the world through migration. In our local cemeteries there is a great deal of evidence of migration from Germany related to the woollen industry and also to the New World in search of a better life. These stories lead on to pupils researching not just why but also how these journeys were made. Another area which would be enriched by a cemetery visit is the impact of the First World War on the local community as a local history theme or studied within significant events at Key Stage 1. If schools decide to look at turning points post-1066 at Key Stage 2 a possible focus may be on the world wars or the industrial revolution and a visit to the cemetery would be relevant. If schools opt for post-1066 studies over time these could also be supported by a cemetery study. Possible themes may be children's lives, the family, world of work, even leisure, as cemeteries were a favourite destination for a Sunday stroll or even sharing a picnic with deceased relatives!

A key historical skill supported by studying memorials is the development of chronological understanding looking at sequence and also historical vocabulary related to time through identifying lifespans. A study of cemeteries is a great starting point for introducing pupils to the use of a whole range of evidence and, as part of this, consideration of the processes of interpretation and evaluation.

You should now feel motivated and confident to take a fresh look at your locality and use the local burial places to support your teaching. Please let us know how your work develops in this area as we would love to publish related case studies on the HA website. The case study on page 46 is the work undertaken by Tom Connelly at Ireland Wood Primary School in Lawnswood Cemetery, Leeds. The online version of this article includes guidance and a list of resources.

Bev Forrest is an Associate Principal Lecturer at Leeds Trinity University and a member of the HA Primary Committee and the editorial board of Primary History

Stories in the Stones: additional material

Here are some key principles for a successful visit:

- Choose a site close to your school. This will help to foster a sense of community and also provide the potential for making a number of short visits and of rescheduling with little inconvenience.
- Engage with a local partner. Possibly your cemetery will have a Friends group; if not the church or a local history society may help.
- Draw up a clear code of conduct for work on site. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission site has some good advice on this. www.cwgc.org/respect/
- When planning the visit be aware of any pupils with recent bereavements within their family. A letter sent home before the visit for all pupils is essential. Be aware of children of different beliefs where burial is not the normal practice.
- Be very clear about exactly what you want the pupils to learn from the visit. This will avoid fact-grubbing with children completing tally charts and rubbings of memorials with no overall purpose.
- A key question to drive your enquiry would give it purpose e.g. What does our cemetery tell us about whether life in Victorian times in our locality was harder than life today?
- Always have an end-product /grand finale in mind following on from your study – perhaps the class could produce a trail leaflet for the cemetery or lead a guided walk for a local group of elderly residents.

Some ideas for cross-curricular learning opportunities in cemeteries

Science: Habitats, mini-beasts, erosion/weathering, rocks, food chains…

Geography: mapping- both drawing and interpreting, patterns of migration…

Religious Education: how different religions remember the dead, symbolism…

Maths: Measuring, calculation, shape, symmetry, estimation…

Literacy: Stimulus to creative writing, poetry, biographies, persuasive writing…

Art: sketching, photography…

PSHCE: conservation, values, communication, working in groups, problem solving…

ICT: data-handling, word-processing…

A specific topic, for example 'angels', could lead to creative writing, art work, photography or dance/drama.

Case study:

Ireland Wood Primary School at Lawnswood Cemetery, Leeds

Ireland Wood is a primary school close to Lawnswood Cemetery in Leeds. As a keen family historian fascinated by what cemeteries can tell us about people in the past history co-ordinator Tom Connelly was eager to use the cemetery to support his Year 5 class learning about the Victorians and their lives particularly in the locality. Tom was also very aware of the cross-curricular potential of a study focusing on a cemetery. Lawnswood Cemetery was opened on the outskirts of Leeds in 1875 to deal with the vast overcrowding experienced in burial grounds closer to the city centre. The original Victorian cemetery covers over 10 acres and contains many spectacular memorials including that to Sam Wilson which is particularly rich in symbolism. It has an active Friends group who were keen to support Tom in preparing for the visit and in any follow-up work.

While at the cemetery the pupils were challenged to become experts about particular graves. They made notes, drawings and took photographs. Once back at school they continued their studies utilising other sources of evidence including census returns. To communicate their findings they made a photo-story of their visit and invited their families and members of the community to look at it via the school website. Tom felt the learning outcomes were well worth the time he invested in preparing the topic. He reported: 'Children developed their understanding that history is about real people. They could relate to the people they learnt about and this made the history come to life for them. Many wanted to find out more and started asking parents/grandparents about their own family histories. It was so successful that, although the Victorians are no longer on the National Curriculum, we will still be including a visit to the cemetery as the "wow moment" of our Local History Study.' Tom is keen to emphasise the importance of preparing the children for the visit. 'Lots of my pupils didn't understand what a cemetery actually is. Some were rather shocked when they realised they would be walking only a few feet from people's bodies under the ground.' Ireland Wood is a fully inclusive school and Tom was delighted that all children including some with mobility difficulties were able to go to the site.

Using the back cover image

Portchester Saxon settlement

Polly Tucknott

One way to use this image would be to focus on continuity and change. Portchester's history is that of a settlement which has passed through the hands of the Romans, Saxons, Normans and onwards. As a result, the appearance and purpose of the settlement has changed over time. One way to introduce pupils to the 'big picture history' concepts of continuity and change over time is to examine the changing nature of a specific place. This can then lead to comparisons across time periods and cultures that develop deeper understanding of the concepts. Portchester Castle is an ideal site and can be researched on the English Heritage page:

www.english-heritage.org.uk/daysout/properties/portchester-castle/history-and-research-portico/history/

You could use the back page image as a warm-up activity. Start by locating the image in time, even very crudely; such as after the Romans and before the arrival of the Normans. Discuss with pupils what could be added or taken away from the picture by travelling back in time or travelling forwards, e.g. an Iron Age village, a World War II aeroplane, a school group on a trip. Ask questions such as, 'Which buildings do you think were the newest?' 'Why?' 'Is there anything in the picture that you think wouldn't last a long time?' 'Why?' 'Which parts of the buildings would last the longest?' 'In what different ways might they be useful to different people?' Each idea can be written on to sticky notes and pupils discuss how to arrange them chronologically, with your guidance and prompts to their prior learning. This leads on to more detailed comparison of the Saxon image with earlier and later stages of Portchester's development (see above website) and arranging them chronologically. The reconstruction drawing of the Roman fort supports comparative thinking. Small groups can examine different periods and report back explaining to the class how the castle site changed and why. Pupils can identify which aspects of life changed or stayed the same, e.g. 'Is the castle always used as a home?' 'Is it always used for defence? '

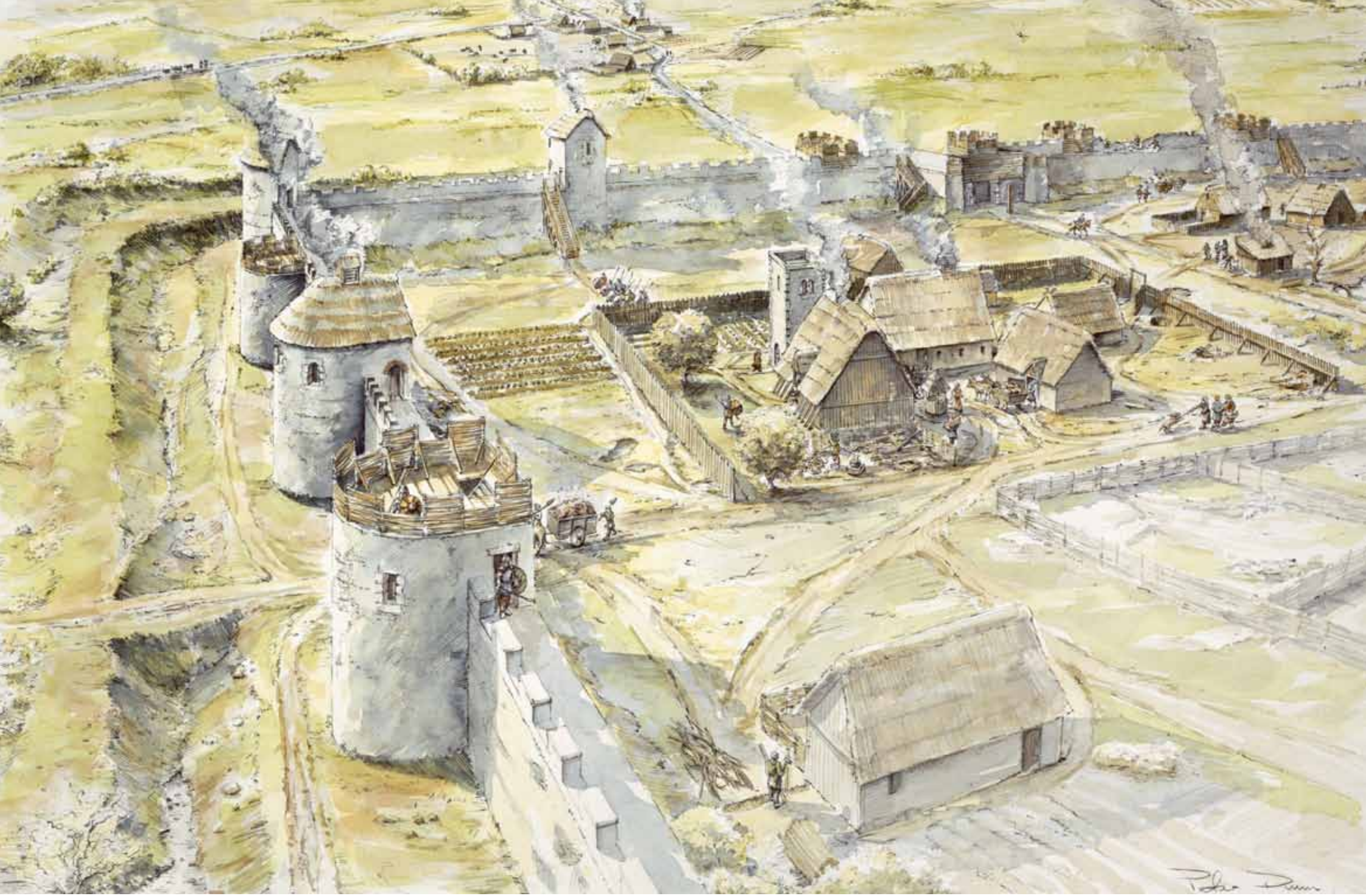
Perhaps your school is near a site which has been used by different people for different purposes over time.

A reconstruction drawing of the Roman fort at Portchester under construction, probably between AD 285 and 290.
© English Heritage (drawing by Liam Wales)

There are also some good apps available which merge present-day street images with historical views (e.g. Museum of London's 'StreetMuseum').

Resources

The back cover image [reference J900008] is from English Heritage's Heritage Explorer website www.heritageexplorer.co.uk where teachers will find a searchable database of over 10,000 images, with captions and links to the history curriculum, that can be used free of charge in the classroom, along with teaching resources including ready-made whiteboard lessons.



J900008 Portchester saxon settlement © English Heritage. See the article on page 47 for more information on where to find a copy of this and more images or visit www.heritageexplorer.org.uk

ENGLISH HERITAGE EDUCATION