

#### OVERALL AIMS / EDUCATION LINKS:

1. To develop independent thought and confidence in ideas
2. To understand the significance of certain historical events
3. To understand how ideas, concepts, and connections develop over time
4. To learn how to approach history critically
5. To apply lessons of history to present day issues

These discussion points and activities follow the chapters of the book. They can be used alongside a reading in the classroom or at home. The material links to various parts of a broad curriculum. The segments can be used in sequence or as stand-alone projects.

Note: It is advised to read each chapter of the book before completing the accompanying activity. Teachers, parents and carers might like to read through each activity before students to ensure everyone is comfortable with the discussion points and activities.

Suitable for  
ages 9+



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# 1. WHAT IS HISTORY FOR?

Introduction: Pages 12-21

*“History is the story of everything that has happened up to now.”*



## WHAT IS HISTORY FOR?

### ACTIVITY (P12)

Ask the children the following:

What are the key events in your life so far? Write a personal history including these moments. You may wish to put them in a timeline, bullet points, or a chronological narrative.

## PERSPECTIVE

### ACTIVITY (P14)

Can you take your own ‘crazy’ perspective photo? You may wish to show a large monument in your hands, or a faraway person tiny on your palm.



## INSPIRATION

### ACTIVITY (P16)

If you could add a new wonder of the world, what would it be and why? Can you create a model of it using recycling materials?

## HOW THINGS GET BETTER

### ACTIVITY (P18)

Think about something in your life that has seen ‘progress’ over the last year. It might be a personal relationship, or an academic skill, such as maths. Date when it was a problem, and then write how it has improved over the year. Now write a prediction for its progress going forwards. What actions can you put in place to make sure it progresses?

## HOW MUCH WE DON'T KNOW

### ACTIVITY (P20)

Create a list of predictions for the future. These could be innovations that haven't happened yet, such as ideas to solve global warming. Or they could be journeys, such as a human trip to Mars. Make sure to include the year or decade you think it will happen.



## 2. PREHISTORY

Pages 22-65

These lessons help to define what makes us human, who we are, and how we began. They are a process of self-discovery, and can be completed alongside ice-breaker games in a new class.

### HOW DID THE UNIVERSE BEGIN? (P24)

On a clear evening, spend some time stargazing. What shapes and patterns can you see in the sky? Can you draw them? Let your mind wander. Using a black background, create an artwork that expresses your thoughts. Does looking at the stars make you feel small? Excited? Lots of people have been inspired to write music about space.

**ACTIVITY:** Make a music playlist of songs or music about space.

### HOW DID THE EARTH GET MADE? (P26)

**ACTIVITY:** Draw a cartoon strip exploring some of the ideas of how things got made using the text in this chapter.

### HOW DOES EVOLUTION WORK? (P27)

Research how animals have adapted to survive extreme temperatures, such as desert or frozen tundra? What adaptations have they made?

**ACTIVITY:** Design your own creature adapted to a particular habitat.



### YOUR (ENOURMOUS) FAMILY TREE (P30)

**ACTIVITY:** Research and draw up your own family tree. What can you tell by looking at the details such as places of birth, professions, number of children, lifespan? Even with a little detail, you can discover quite a lot about your social history. Which family member lives furthest away? Research the country they live in. What are the differences from where and how you live? Can you contact the family member and ask them questions?

### HOW DID WE GET TO BE HUMAN? (P36)

*'You survive not because you've got big muscles or sharp teeth but because you can cooperate.'*

How many people in your community help to raise you? This might be family members, teachers, religious leaders, healthworkers.

**ACTIVITY:** Draw a mindmap to show all the important and influential people in your life.

*'If you look at another person you can see if they are slightly worried or feeling happy or if they look friendly or sad.'*

Think about which body language or facial expression means which emotion? Freeze frame/or silently role play your emotions. How many can people 'read' by looking at your actions only

**ACTIVITY:** Create a new emoji. What emotion is it portraying?

*'Self-awareness pushed human beings to explore the world and understand each other.'*

**ACTIVITY:** Create a mind-map of self-awareness. What are your likes and dislikes? What are your worries? What makes you happy? What are your strengths and weaknesses? You can illustrate it with doodles and drawings.



## 2. PREHISTORY

Pages 22-65

### THE FIRST TOOLS (P40)

**ACTIVITY:** Take the most basic tool you can find. This might be a hammer or a tin-opener. Draw a picture of it, and annotate it. What size is it? What shape? What material is it made from? How much does it weigh? What is it used for? Is it sharp or blunt? How could you improve it? Now take the most advanced tool you can find in your house? Is it your phone? Do the same as for above.

### HOW DID WE START SPEAKING (P42)

*'Words helped our ancestors discover why things happen.'*

Usually we learn words through reading new material or having new conversations. We work out the meaning from the context in which the words are used. But we can also now learn new words from the dictionary.

**ACTIVITY:** Discover ten new words in a dictionary and use each in a sentence.

**ACTIVITY:** Use your amazing language skills to tell a story, write instructions, or to write a letter.

**ACTIVITY:** Learn how to count to ten in a new language. Or how to have a basic conversation.

### OUR MISSING COUSINS (P45)

**DISCUSS:** What does it mean to be human? Hold a philosophical debate with your class or friends. See if one question leads to another. Take cues from the text, such as self-awareness, the ability to learn. Expand on these ideas and see where it leads.

### FROM HUNTER-GATHERERS TO FARMERS (P56)

**DISCUSS:** What are the good and bad things about being a farmer or a hunter-gatherer? Which would you prefer to be?

**ACTIVITY:** Write a day in the life of a farmer. What jobs do you need to do?



### HOW HUMANS SPREAD ACROSS THE WORLD (P48)

People who travel rather than stay in one place are called nomads. Are there any nomadic peoples today?

**ACTIVITY:** Research and find one such people. Imagine you are travelling with them. What would it be like to move about constantly? Write a diary entry, remembering to explore your feelings and thoughts as well as where you are going.

**ACTIVITY:** You might now live in one place, but it is not unusual for your grandparents or great-grandparents to have been brought up somewhere else.

Find an older family member or close family friend and find out their stories of where they grew up. How is it different from your experience? You may wish to record audio or video of their stories, or draw a picture that explores what they describe.

### HOW RELIGION STARTED (P52)

Religion *'helped build a feeling of belonging together and of sharing important ideas'*.

**ACTIVITY:** Research Stonehenge. Create a poster to show your findings. How was it built? Which tools did they use? What was the sun celebration like? How is Stonehenge used today?

**ACTIVITY:** Write a poem or song about the sun. Many people have done this before. You may wish to read *Sonnet 33* by William Shakespeare or *The Sun Rising* by John Donne for inspiration. You may wish to listen to *Sun is Shining* by Bob Marley or *Here Comes the Sun* by The Beatles.

**DISCUSS:** Do you belong to a religion? Which aspect of it gives you a feeling of belonging? What do you like about your religion?

### HOW MONEY WAS INVENTED (P59)

**DISCUSS:** What do we use instead of paper money? If the money we use becomes worthless tomorrow, what would we use? Think about how we value things today? Is there a difference between something's value and how much it costs? What makes someone successful?

From this chapter on prehistory, you should have a really good idea of who you are, where you come from, and what you are like as a person.



# 3. ANCIENT HISTORY

Pages 66-83

## WHAT THE BUDDHA THOUGHT (P68)

**DISCUSS:** Can you think of a single problem with the world today? Is there anything you can do about it? Think about small actions that could precipitate change? What are your limitations? Is it helpful to do something small but also to know that the 'problem' is not worth worrying about unless you can exert control over it? Is it possible to galvanise other people to help you in your actions?

**ACTIVITY:** Have a go at meditating, how does it make you feel?



## WHY DO CIVILISATIONS SOMETIMES GO BACKWARDS (P79)

*Big Ideas from History* explores what we can learn from the failure of the Roman empire.

**DISCUSS:** Do you have a problem that you are avoiding dealing with? Who might you share this problem with? Brainstorm people who might be able to help you, so that the problem gets solved and doesn't get bigger.

**ACTIVITY:** The Roman Empire failed, but it also gave us many ideas that we have learned from. Research one thing we have learned from the Romans. This might be roads, or underfloor heating. Make a leaflet about something from the Roman empire that has persisted.

## WHY THE ANCIENT GREEKS HAD LOTS OF GODS (P71)

**ACTIVITY:** Research one Greek god. Create a poster about them. Look at images of that god throughout history – how do they differ? Now create your own 'Greek' god. What powers does it have? Which attributes? Is it god of a particular something, such as the sea or the home?

## WHAT CHRISTIAN THOUGHT CAN TEACH US (P75)

**DISCUSS:** What does forgiveness mean to you? Think of a situation in which you've been forgiven for something you've done wrong (we've all done something wrong at some point), or a situation in which you have forgiven someone else.

**ACTIVITY:** Write the situation into a short story. How emotional is your story?

## Roman Roads



## 4. THE MIDDLE AGES

Pages 84-103

### THE ISLAMIC GOLDEN AGE (P86)

**DISCUSS:** What are the different religions of your friends? How many people do you know of a different faith?

*'The key thing, in a Golden Age, is balance.'* (Page 87)

**DISCUSS:** What is important to you? What are your values?

**ACTIVITY:** Create a mission statement for your family encompassing your family values.

*'They recognised that the Ancient Greeks were brilliant at maths and talking about ideas.'* (Page 88)

**RESEARCH:** What were the ideas of the Ancient Greeks? Pick one and describe in a couple of paragraphs how it has had a lasting effect and impacted our modern world. Eg. Democracy, geometry, theatre.

**RESEARCH:** Find out about one of the Islamic Golden Age amazing buildings. Create a poster about it. Remember to include details about its purpose, the materials it was made with, and how it has survived.

**DISCUSS:** At the end of this section, the author asks you to have a go about creating your own Golden Age. Perhaps start with balance in your own life. Think about how you balance work and play, food and exercise, using and conserving energy? Now you can extrapolate this to society as a whole.

### HOW SHORT AND HARD LIFE WAS (AND HOW PAINFUL AS WELL) (P89)

**ACTIVITY:** Make a gratitude list, listing the everyday things for which you are grateful.

**ACTIVITY:** If a time traveller came from the Middle Ages to your house, what would you show them first. Write an introduction to the modern world for your visitor. What would you include?



### WHAT WERE MONASTERIES FOR? (P94)

*'If you were inventing a monastery where you could live with your friends, what would it be like?'* (Page 99)

**ACTIVITY:** Create your own monastery. What is the ethos? What are the rules? Draw up a tourist guide suggesting why it might be a good place to visit.

**DISCUSS:** Can you think of any societies or institutions today that act in a similar way to these monasteries of The Middle Ages. E.g., Kibbutz? Is this way of life appealing?

### WHAT OLD MAPS TELL YOU (P100)

**ACTIVITY:** Make a map of your local area. Don't try to be accurate on scale. You may wish to make those things larger that are more important to you, such as your home, your school, favourite places.

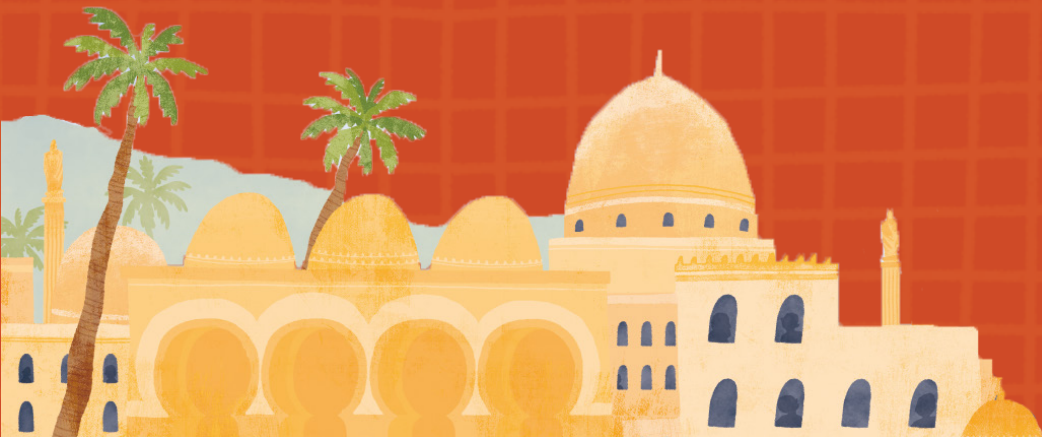
**ACTIVITY:** Which other maps could you make? Be inventive. Take a world map and create a new map from it – you might want to create an animal map, with pictures on the countries they are from, or famous people or monuments, football grounds or population sizes.

**ACTIVITY:** Draw a map of your ideal island. Is there a beach? A theme park? A forest?

**ACTIVITY:** Draw a map of yourself. Perhaps you have a good drawing hand, or a footballer's foot. Label the different areas.



Part Three: Ancient History, and Part Four: The Middle Ages, have taught us further big ideas about ourselves, but also about how we interact with other people. This is one of the key things that makes us human.



# 5. THE BEGINNINGS OF THE MODERN WORLD

Pages 106-168

Tolerance

## RENAISSANCE THINKING (P106)

*'Renaissance thinking says: If you like something from the past you can make a new version of it for yourself.'* (Page 106)

**ACTIVITY:** Can you make a new version of a building from the past. Perhaps you wish to sketch it on paper, or make a model using cardboard, recycling materials or matchsticks. What part of the building will show the past that you like, and which bits are your new inventions? Maybe you want to use your current home as a base, but incorporate past great ideas into it?

**RESEARCH:** Find out about other great Renaissance figures, other than Leonardo da Vinci. Who inspires you and why?

**ACTIVITY:** Some people think the Mona Lisa by da Vinci is a very important painting from this time. Have a go at using it as a basis for a 'Renaissance'. How could you represent the Mona Lisa in a new modern way? Maybe you could create her portrait in a computer programme, or out of Lego, or from a collage of modern photographs.

Listening

## WHY THE AZTECS WERE DEFEATED (P113)

**RESEARCH:** Find out more about Tenochtitlan.

**ACTIVITY:** Imagine you are Cortes, write a diary entry or a letter home about your discovery.

*'The most popular game was a sport called Ullamaliztli.'* (Page 116)

**ACTIVITY:** Can you invent your own new sport. JK Rowling invented Quidditch when writing Harry Potter. What would your new sport be called? What is the aim? What are the rules?

*'Winning isn't to do with being a good person and losing doesn't mean you are bad. And some people, when they win, make it look as if that means they are a great person - even if they've just won a card game, which actually depends just on luck.'* (Page 121)

**ACTIVITY:** Find examples of people who make themselves look like a great person, just by winning something? What does it mean to be a good winner? And a good loser? Write down five attributes for each. Are you a good winner and a good loser?

## THE NATIVE AMERICANS (P122)

**ACTIVITY:** Find a Native American story and rewrite it in your own words.

*'Can you imagine what it was like to be a Native American in the 1600s?'* (Page 129)

One of the best things we have as humans is our imagination, and we can use it to help us understand people who are different from us. What exercises can you do to make you more empathic? (Empathy means to understand what it's like to be someone else).

Listening is a good example.

Understanding

## A BREIF HISTORY OF PANDEMIC DISEASES (P130)

**RESEARCH:** Investigate life expectancy across the globe. What is it, how does it differ in different countries, in your own country? Why do you think this is?

Hygiene is very important in medicine and health. You may have needed to demonstrate washing your hands properly during the Covid Pandemic.

**ACTIVITY:** Draw a poster to show how to do this properly, and explain why it is important.

The big idea in this chapter is 'counter-intuition.' Divide your page into two columns, one labelled intuitive, and one counter-intuitive. See if you can fill the columns with ideas. Start with the ones given in the text to help you.

## WHY DID MILLIONS OF AFRICANS END UP IN THE AMERICAS (P137)

**ACTIVITY:** Write a timeline of the slave trade. Use the dates in the text to start. 1737, 1807, 1833, 1865. Research and add more important events. You can go all the way up to the civil rights movement and Black Lives Matter.

**RESEARCH:** Find out about the removal of the Edward Colston statue in Bristol, UK. What did this have to do with the slave trade?

**ACTIVITY:** Hold a for and against debate on the removal of the statue. What does the removal teach us about the time in which Colston lived, but also our own time. What will future generations think about us removing the statue?



# 5. THE BEGINNINGS OF THE MODERN WORLD

Pages 106-168



## WHEN WAS PRINTING INVENTED (P141)

**RESEARCH:** Look up Bi Sheng and Johannes Gutenberg. Can you draw a profile of each? What similarities and differences do they have?

*'There's no barrier to angry, ill-informed people letting the whole world know what they think.'* (Page 145)

**DISCUSS:** Debate whether everyone should have the right to publish what they think, or whether there should be controls or censorship? Think about the texts you read/see every day. Are there any rules on the text?

*'The best books make an offer of friendship.'* (Page 145)

Make a list of your favourite books or book characters. Are they similar to anyone else in your class or family? Why are they so special to you?

## HOW WE INVENTED SCIENCE (P146)

*'Science is wonderful but it's awkward because sometimes it tells us things we really don't want to hear.'* (Page 151)

**DISCUSS:** Is it always better to know the truth? What do you think? Is science important to you? Name a scientific discovery that you feel is uncomfortable but important. Why is this?

## WHY WE INVENTED FORKS AND CHOPSTICKS (P152)

**ACTIVITY:** Write an instruction manual on manners for an alien visiting Earth from outer space. What would you include? Think about general manners as well as table manners, such as not interrupting someone.

**DISCUSS:** Why do we care about manners? Why do you have school rules? Are there some that make more sense to you than others? Can you think of the reasons behind all the rules?

**ACTIVITY:** Look again at the photographs on page 152. Do you have old family photographs? Look at the way people stand and dress. How is it different from today? Now create a freeze frame of how you think a photograph of a family will look in another hundred years. What has changed from today?

## THE BEGINNINGS OF RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE (P163)

*'For many thousands of years, everyone was very religious.'* (Page 163)

**DISCUSS:** Why do you think this was the case? Are there religious wars happening today, rather than wars over land or resources. Do you think there will always be religious wars?

*'Locke's idea was that you shouldn't go to war about things you can't be completely sure of.'* (Page 167)

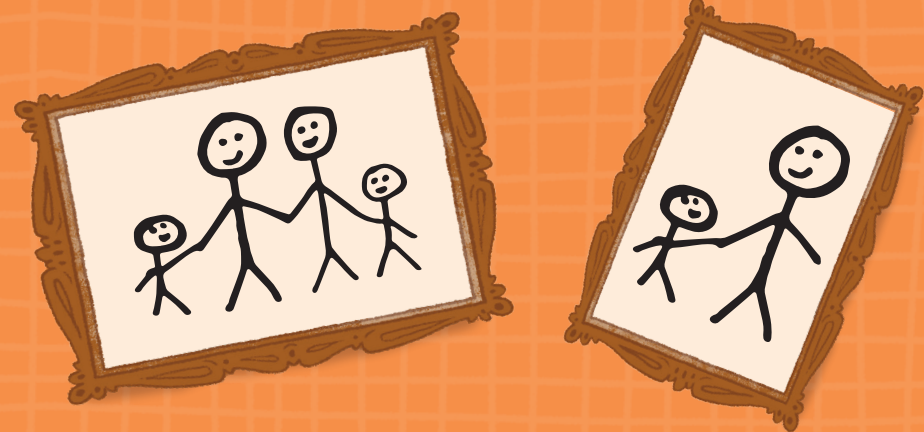
**DISCUSS:** What do you think of Locke's idea? Do you think there is anything worth fighting over?

**ACTIVITY:** Create a factfile about John Locke. Why do you think he was so influential? Can you think of anyone today who might be as influential?

*'Locke said that we should make a distinction between what is private and what is public.'* (Page 168)

**ACTIVITY:** Create a large Venn diagram with rules and laws. One circle is public and one private - which rules or laws belong in both circles?

**DISCUSS:** Are you tolerant? Are there things that bother you privately, that you think you can be more tolerant of? What about in public life?



Part Five: The Beginnings of the Modern World shows us ideas about how we find out about the world around us, and how to live with each other, even if our ideas and geography make us seem quite far apart.

# 6. INDUSTRIALISATION

Pages 172-214

## THE DISCOVERY OF FOSSIL FUELS (P172)

**ACTIVITY:** Make a poster about the danger of fossil fuels. Investigate which countries still use the most.

*'If the right ideas are presented in ways that inspire and fascinate us we can accomplish great things.'* (Page 177)

**ACTIVITY:** Write a letter to your MP or energy company using persuasive language to show that switching to renewable energy is a good idea. Perhaps you can think of a way to present your ideas really well so that you are inspirational.

## FAMINE (P178)

**ACTIVITY:** What do you typically eat? Keep a food diary for a week.

**ACTIVITY:** Write a recipe for your favourite meal. Where does your food come from? How much is farmed? How much manufactured? **Activity:** Do you grow any of your own food? If possible, ask an adult at home or at school if you can grow your own plant food – tomatoes are easiest.

**RESEARCH:** Find out about a food eaten in a different time period, which we no longer eat. Why is this? What was it? Do we eat a greater variety of foods than they did in that time period? Why is this?

## THE CONQUEST OF THE NIGHT (P184)

**DISCUSS:** What is light pollution?

**RESEARCH:** Find a global map of night lights. Where are they most concentrated?

**DISCUSS:** Look at the painting on page 188. Imagine you are the woman in the picture. What are you sewing? Where are you? Try to answer the questions before you look at the date and title of the painting.

**ACTIVITY:** Why not make your own 'lovely lamp'? Here is a guide to making your own lava lamp at home. Ask an adult for help.

<https://www.sciencefun.org/kidszone/experiments/lava-lamp/>

## THE BIRTH OF TRAVEL AND SPEED (P189)

**ACTIVITY:** Create a list of transport options with their pros and cons. Think about speed, comfort, environmental impact. Now think about which is your favourite way to travel. Compare your list with a friend. Have they included modes of transport you haven't?

'If we are really honest, does travel often leave us feeling disappointed?' (Page 192)

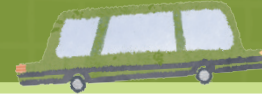
**DISCUSS:** What do you think? Hold a debate on whether travel for adventure is a good or bad thing? Have you been anywhere adventurous? Use your experience in the debate.

**ACTIVITY:** Now see if you can discover treasures locally, without travelling too far. Draw a map of your area. What treasures can you find within a radius of 1 mile of your home? 5 miles? 10 miles? Do you live near anything that other tourists will come to visit? Is there something near you that isn't a tourist attraction, but you think should be?

## THE STORY OF CITIES (P193)

**RESEARCH:** What are the top ten most visited cities in the world? Now research the top ten most populated cities. Is there overlap? Why do you think this is?

**ACTIVITY:** If you could design your own city, what would it be like? Write a few descriptive paragraphs about your city. Remember to give it a name! Is your city designed for the people who live there, or the people who visit? Can it be both? Think about the four ideas on page 197. Do any problems arise if you make your city too attractive to people?



# 6. INDUSTRIALISATION

Pages 172-214

## THE BIRTH OF CENTRAL HEATING (P199)

**ACTIVITY:** Make a leaflet about baths through history, perhaps starting with Roman baths, through to Edwardian times, and then modern baths. Would you visit public baths, or do you prefer your privacy? Do you own a bath? If you do, go and have a bath, or if not maybe try and find a public bath or pool. Do you have particular thoughts while having your dip? Let your mind go. Is it relaxing?



## HOW EDUCATION CHANGED (P207)

*'What is education for?' (Page 208)*

**ACTIVITY:** Write an essay answering the question. Are there things you wish your school taught you that they don't? Is education just about school?

**RESEARCH:** Now think about what your ideal school would be like. Read about the Agora school in the Netherlands. Would you like this kind of education?

<https://hundred.org/en/innovations/agora/>



## THE RISE OF SHOPPING (P201)

**ACTIVITY:** Create a flowchart to track a product from beginning to end. Your product might be a pencil or a teddy bear or a t-shirt. What materials are needed and where are they sourced? How is the product made and where and by whom? How does it end up in the shop, and then in your hand? Think about the places and people involved in this process.

**DISCUSS:** Why might it be better to repair something rather than buy a new version? Have you ever repaired something you own instead of throwing it away. Try and learn to repair something. It may be as simple as sewing a button or a patch, or more complicated, such as fixing a chair. Ask an adult for help.

**RESEARCH:** Investigate what 'fairtrade' means. Could you shop more ethically? Discover what the most popular grocery items are in the country you live in? Do you buy any of these products?

## WHY LOTS OF PEOPLE STOPPED BEING RELIGIOUS (P211)

**DISCUSS:** Are you religious? Do you know someone religious? What do you think religion can give you, for example, community, celebrations and festivities. Why might it be helpful to have faith?

**RESEARCH:** Find a religion creation story. Write it out and illustrate it. Does it teach you anything different or new about our world? Is it similar to other religions or familiar to you?

## THE BIRTH OF ART GALLERIES (P214)

**ACTIVITY:** Look at the questions surrounding the painting on page 216. Can you answer the questions about this painting? What about another painting in the book - find one that appeals and again answer the questions. Compare your answers.

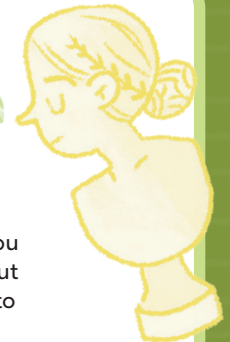
**DISCUSS:** What else can you learn from the painting? What details can you see? Who painted it, when and why? What is the artist trying to depict about that time in history? Why do you think the author of this book has decided to include famous paintings?

**ACTIVITY:** What is art for? Write several paragraphs outlining your views.

*'Sometimes history is showing you missed opportunities.'* (Page 217)

**ACTIVITY:** Write a story entitled 'Missed Opportunities'. What was the opportunity? Why was it missed? And was there a positive or negative outcome?

How does this touch my soul?



Cotton Field

?

?



Part Six: Industrialisation has been all about how our society has progressed - from inventions to how they have changed the way people live. This is part of what history is all about.

## 7. THE MODERN WORLD

Pages 220-288

### HOW EVERYONE GOT THE VOTE (P220)

**RESEARCH:** Discover more about women's suffrage, the 1840s factory strikes or the American Constitution. Create a PowerPoint presentation. What do these events tell you about politics and fairness?

**ACTIVITY:** Encourage your school to hold an election for a student council, if they don't already have one. Think about the rules of your election. Is it a democracy? Can anyone vote? Do some people's votes count more – staff, upper years? Is it difficult to organise? How do you stop people voting more than once, or influencing another's votes?

**RESEARCH:** Now investigate different systems of government around the world. Which countries have democracies? Are there different types of democracies? Which is your favourite and why? Is it flawed? Can you think of a better system of ruling?

**DISCUSS:** Where else do we find examples of the incompatibility of goods?

### WHY IT MATTERS WHAT WE COUNT (P229)

**DISCUSS:** After reading page 230, think about what statistic you would like to know. Is it the amount of chocolate sold in the UK?

**ACTIVITY:** Draw up a statistical analysis of your house. You may wish to use a type of chart to do this, perhaps a pie chart or bar chart. What are you measuring? E.g., How much food is eaten, how many items of clothing are owned?

Look at the information you have gathered. What does it really tell you?

**DISCUSS:** If you could measure anything in the world, what would it be?

### THE RISE OF NEWS (P232)

**ACTIVITY:** Write a message in semaphore. How long does it take?

**ACTIVITY:** Create your own newsletter or newspaper. This could be for your family, your street, neighbourhood or local community. Do you have both serious and crazy stories? What will make people read it? Think about what makes a school lesson engaging. How can you engage your readership?

**RESEARCH:** Find the craziest story in today's national newspaper. Share it with your class or friends. Find a good 'happy' news story. Have a look at The Happy Newspaper: <https://thehappynewspaper.com/>

**ACTIVITY:** Write a guide for your friends who have news pessimism.

**ACTIVITY:** Sort the television programmes you watch into three categories: exciting, helpful and exciting and helpful.

### THE INCREASING POWER OF ADVERTISING (P239)

**ACTIVITY:** Write an honest advert for a product you have. Now write another advert for the same product, this time selling it as hard as you can. Compare the two.

**ACTIVITY:** Create an advert for a best friend, in whichever media you prefer, audio, visual or paper. What makes a friend appealing?

**DISCUSS:** Are there already rules for advertisers? Should there be further rules for advertising? Should rules apply to influencers on social media too?

**DISCUSS:** Think about something you have been influenced to buy because of an advert. How did the advert appeal to you? Was the outcome from the purchase the same as suggested by the advert?







# 7. THE MODERN WORLD

Pages 220-288

## THE INVENTION OF CHILDHOOD (P246)

**DISCUSS:** Think about your own childhood. Are there things you are not allowed to do but you would like to? Can you see what the risks are and why you're not allowed?

**ACTIVITY:** Do you think you have enough 'playtime'? Take the time now to go and play (video games, Lego, role play etc). Now assess how that time made you feel. Do you think you learned anything through your play?

## WHAT WAS COMMUNISM? (P251)

**ACTIVITY:** Watch the BBC video on communism.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/history-ks3-communism/zkpnscw>

*'Do you think everyone should have the same? Does what happened in Russia show this is impossible? Or just that they didn't do it in the right way?'* (Page 256)

**DISCUSS:** Try to answer these questions.

## WHAT IS CAPITALISM (P257)

**ACTIVITY:** Watch the BBC video on capitalism.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/history-ks3-capitalism/zhmx6v4>

**ACTIVITY:** Draw a comparison table between communism and capitalism. Are there any similarities?

**ACTIVITY:** Have a go at creating your own capitalist enterprise. Maybe you will create and sell cakes or keyrings in your playground, or set up a lemonade stall at your house? How original is your idea? How much money can you make? Remember to ask for an adult's help and permission.

## ANIMALS (P261)

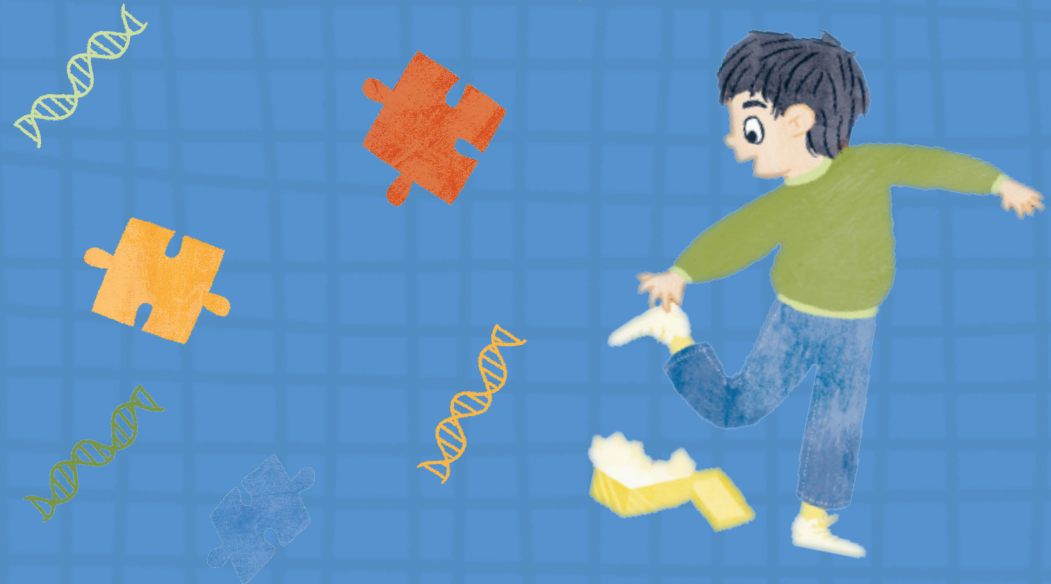
*'One of the really nice things history can do is show us how ideas have changed over time.'* (Page 261).

**DISCUSS:** Our attitude to animals has changed – can you think of any other attitude that has changed over time?

**ACTIVITY:** Take a snapshot 30 seconds in time, and write down all your thoughts and feelings as quickly as you can. Now look at them carefully. How many of them are 'human' and how many 'animal-like'?

## THE DISCOVER OF DNA (P267)

**ACTIVITY:** Fold a piece of paper in two, and title one side, nature, and the other, nurture. Now draw yourself in the middle across the fold – and then label which bits of you fall into which side of the paper. Perhaps you feel you have inherited your nose, but your piano-playing fingers are all 'nurture'. Is there anything that overlaps?



# 7. THE MODERN WORLD

Pages 220-288

## HOW WE INVENTED COMPUTERS (P271)

**ACTIVITY:** Find things in your home that are operated by a computer. Make a list. Which room in your home has the most 'computer-operated' items?

**ACTIVITY:** Write step-by-step instructions for making a sandwich, as if you are instructing a computer.

Watch the 'exact instructions challenge' video.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ct-IOOUqmyY>

How do your instructions compare?

**DISCUSS:** If you could program a computer to do anything, what would you have it do? Tidy your room?



## INDEPENDENCE IN AFRICA (P282)

**RESEARCH:** Find a map of the continent of Africa. Look at the border lines between countries. How would you describe them?

**DISCUSS:** Think about ideas for ways of living. What are the good ideas we have in our society? Are there other ideas you have for making our society better?

**ACTIVITY:** Write a manifesto of your good ideas. Can you get everyone in your class to agree with your manifesto?



## THE PROBLEM OF RICH COUNTRIES (P277)

**ACTIVITY:** Do you have any 'First World Problems'? Can you turn them into 'gratitude statements'?

**ACTIVITY:** Write a small plaque to hang on a wall, which explores what you are most grateful for.

**DISCUSS:** Which job would you like to have when you're older? Does the job exist? Is it something your society needs or someone would pay you to do? How would you make yourself desirable for that job?

**ACTIVITY:** What is your personal style? Create a collage/mood board/graffiti board showing your style.

I wish my main course would hurry up!

I'm so grateful that someone else is cooking me a meal!

## EXOTIC HISTORY (P288)

*'Have you ever felt there was a time or place in history that you'd like to live in?' (Page 289)*

**ACTIVITY:** Write about which period of history and why you'd like to live in it. Look at pages 292-293 for inspiration. Write a diary entry as if you are living then. What is your day like?

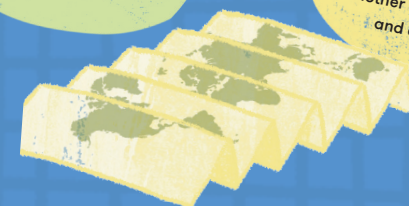
The author suggests that what you like about that period in history might be what's missing from your life today. What can you do in the here and now to give you that something that's missing?

**ACTIVITY:** Explore this in a final paragraph in your writing.

'You don't really understand about 1968; the hippies were the privileged children of the well-to-do; the real questions were about technology and workers' rights and they didn't even think about those issues.'

'Pirates were actually criminals and they often got sick because they didn't eat vegetables.'

'It's all very well being a hunter-gatherer but what if you got toothache? There were no dentists. What if another tribe comes along and attacks you?'



## 8. THE FUTURE

Pages 298-308

### SHOULD WE PANIC? (P298)

Sometimes the best problem-solving comes when humans learn to think critically about something.

**RESEARCH:** What is critical thinking? How is it used to solve a problem or deal with a tricky situation?

**DISCUSS:** Which activities can you develop to practise critical-thinking skills?

Act out a problem

Develop patience

Ask open-ended questions

Keep questioning

### WHAT WE STILL DON'T KNOW (P302)

**ACTIVITY:** You might think that there are lots of things you don't know yet. What are some questions you'd like answered? Make a list. Now make a list of questions that no one knows the answer to yet. Do any of your friends have good guesses?

### HOW WE CAN ALL LIVE BETTER TOGETHER (P308)

*'A beautiful idea of what history is all about is that it's the story of the growth and development of humanity.'* (Page 310)

**ACTIVITY:** What have you learned from this book? Draw a line graph with an upward rising curve to show the progress of humanity. Now place onto it events or inventions that you feel have particularly contributed to human development. Maybe this is the printing press, or mass media. Maybe it is John Locke's ideas. Which things will go on your graph?

What music did you like when you were younger?

Have you ever done something naughty?

What hobbies did you have as a child?

### WHAT MIGHT MACHINES DO IN THE FUTURE? (P303)

**ACTIVITY:** Create or transcribe a dialogue. Now look at the feelings that might be lying 'underneath' the speech. Add emojis to the dialogue to show which emotions are being felt by each person.

**DISCUSS:** Do you think emojis in messages make them easier to understand how the other person is feeling?

*'When you look at an old person they seem totally different from you.'* (Page 306)

**ACTIVITY:** Hold an interview with an older person you know. This might be a grandparent or great-grandparent. Try to find out what sort of person they used to be.

**ACTIVITY:** Write five motivational or inspirational sentences on post its and stick them where you will see them every day. Do they make a positive difference?

*"What sorts of machines would you like to see one day?"* (Page 307)

**ACTIVITY:** Can you design a futuristic machine? Create a PowerPoint showing your design and what it does.

You got this!

Dream Big!

Smile!

Be kind

Part Seven: The Modern World and Part Eight: The Future both explore how far we have come as humans, how we can investigate the past to give us clues to the present and future. The world might be complicated, but we can continue human progress by making things better, and understanding each other.

**END**

**ACTIVITY:** Think about where the book began. Pick four topics from history that:

- 1) give perspective
- 2) inspire
- 3) show you how things have got better
- 4) helped you in some way.

Throughout history, as Big Ideas from History explores, sometimes changes come from individuals, such as Buddha in What the Buddha Thought (Page 68) and Benedict in What Were Monasteries For? (Page 94).

**DISCUSS:** What could your influence on the world be? Can you change history? Do you have good ideas that could affect how humans live?

**BIG IDEAS FROM HISTORY BY THE SCHOOL OF LIFE**

Big Ideas from History is an immense story of what has happened through time that speaks personally and constructively to a growing mind. This book is a big history of the world, from the beginnings of the universe to now, which places the reader at its centre.

It encourages children to think about how and why they experience the world as they do and offers a helpful perspective by placing their thoughts and feelings in the context of our history and evolution. The book also looks to the future and asks the reader to imagine a world they would like to live in.

*'An entertaining and insightful history exploring what our children can learn from the past'*

**DAN JONES - BESTSELLING AUTHOR AND HISTORIAN**

*If you enjoyed this, you could read Big Ideas for Curious Minds by The School of Life.*