

Rationale

History is a disciplined process of inquiry into the past that develops students' curiosity and imagination. Awareness of history is an essential characteristic of any society, and historical knowledge is fundamental to understanding ourselves and others. History promotes the understanding of societies, events, movements and developments that have shaped humanity from earliest times. It helps students appreciate how the world and its people have changed, as well as the significant continuities that exist to the present day. History, as a discipline, has its own methods and procedures which make it different from other ways of understanding human experience. The study of history is based on evidence derived from remains of the past. It is interpretative by nature, promotes debate and encourages thinking about human values, including present and future challenges. The process of historical inquiry develops transferable skills such as the ability to ask relevant questions; critically analyse and interpret sources; consider context; respect and explain different perspectives; develop and substantiate interpretations, and communicate effectively.

The 7–10 curriculum generally takes a world history approach within which the history of Australia is taught. It does this to equip students for the world (local, regional and global) in which they live. An understanding of world history enhances students' appreciation of Australian history. It enables them to develop an understanding of the past and present experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, their identities and the continuing value of their cultures. It also helps students to appreciate Australia's distinctive path of social, economic and political development, its position in the Asia and Pacific regions, and its global interrelationships. This knowledge and understanding is essential for informed and active participation in Australia's diverse society and in creating rewarding personal and collective futures.

Year 8 Achievement Standard

By the end of Year 8, students recognise and explain patterns of change and continuity over time. They explain the causes and effects of events and developments. They identify the motives and actions of people at the time. Students explain the significance of individuals and groups and how they were influenced by the beliefs and values of their society. They describe different interpretations of the past.

Students sequence events and developments within a chronological framework with reference to periods of time. When researching, students develop questions to frame a historical inquiry. They analyse, select and organise information from primary and secondary sources and use it as evidence to answer inquiry questions. Students identify and explain different points of view in sources. When interpreting sources, they identify their origin and purpose, and distinguish between fact and opinion. Students develop texts, particularly descriptions and explanations, incorporating analysis. In developing these texts, and organising and presenting their findings, they use historical terms and concepts, evidence identified in sources, and acknowledge their sources of information.

Aims

The Australian Curriculum: History aims to ensure that students develop:

- interest in, and enjoyment of, historical study for lifelong learning and work, including their capacity and willingness to be informed and active citizens
- knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the past and the forces that shape societies, including Australian society
- understanding and use of historical concepts such as evidence, continuity and change, cause and effect, significance, perspectives, empathy and contestability
- capacity to undertake historical inquiry, including skills in the analysis and use of sources, and in explanation and communication.

Key Ideas

Through their learning in each subject or sub-strand, students develop knowledge and understanding relating to broader enduring ideas that underpin the Humanities and Social Sciences in the Australian Curriculum, which are represented in varying ways across the subjects. The key ideas are outlined below:

Who we are, who came before us, and traditions and values that have shaped societies

Students explore their own identity, Australia's heritage and cultural diversity, and Australia's identity as a nation in the world. They examine the significance of traditions and shared values within society.

How societies and economies operate and how they are changing over time

Students learn about Australian society and other societies in the world, both past and present; and how they function socially, culturally, economically and politically. Students examine developments that have resulted in or are bringing about change.

The ways people, places, ideas and events are perceived and connected

Students are provided with opportunities to explore different perceptions of people, places, ideas and events. They develop an understanding of the interdependent nature of the world and the interrelationships within and between the natural environment, human communities and economies. They explore how people, ideas and events are connected over time and increasingly interconnected across local, national, regional and global contexts.

How people exercise their responsibilities, participate in society and make informed decisions

Students examine how individuals and groups have participated in and contributed to society past and present. They examine the rights and responsibilities of individuals and groups over time and in different contexts. They develop an understanding of the need to make decisions, the importance of ethical considerations and being informed when making decisions, the processes for decision-making and the implications of decisions that are made for individuals, society, the economy and the environment.

Year 8 Level Description**The ancient to the modern world**

The Year 8 curriculum provides a study of history from the end of the ancient period to the beginning of the modern period, c.650– 1750 AD (CE). This was when major civilisations around the world came into contact with each other. Social, economic, religious and political beliefs were often challenged and significantly changed. It was the period when the modern world began to take shape.

The content provides opportunities to develop historical understanding through key concepts, including **evidence, continuity and change, cause and effect, perspectives, empathy, significance** and **contestability**. These concepts may be investigated within a particular historical context to facilitate an understanding of the past and to provide a focus for historical inquiries.

The history content at this year level involves two strands: historical knowledge and understanding, and historical skills. These strands are interrelated and have been developed to be taught in an integrated way, and in ways that are appropriate to specific local contexts. The order and detail in which they are taught are programming decisions.

Key inquiry questions

A framework for developing students' historical knowledge, understanding and skills is provided by **inquiry questions** through the use and interpretation of sources. The key inquiry questions for Year 8 are:

- How did societies change from the end of the ancient period to the beginning of the modern age?
- What key beliefs and values emerged and how did they influence societies?
- What were the causes and effects of contact between societies in this period?
- Which significant people, groups and ideas from this period have influenced the world today?

Structure
 In the Australian Curriculum, the Humanities and Social Sciences learning area comprises five subjects: F–6/7 Humanities and Social Sciences, and Years 7–10 History, Geography, Civics and Citizenship and Economics and Business. In all five subjects, the curriculum is organised into two broad interrelated strands: knowledge and understanding, and inquiry and skills.
 In the F–6/7 Humanities and Social Sciences curriculum, history, geography, civics and citizenship and economics and business are presented as sub-strands of the knowledge and understanding strand. In these years, students are introduced to history and geography from Foundation Year, civics and citizenship in Year 3 and economics and business in Year 5. In Years 7–10, the curriculum is organised by subject. In Years 9 and 10, student access to Geography, Civics and Citizenship and Economics and Business will be determined by school authorities or individual schools.

Year 8 Content Descriptions

| Overview of the ancient to modern world | The Western and Islamic world | The Asia-Pacific world | Expanding Contact | History Skills |
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| <p>The following content is taught as part of an overview for the historical period. It is not intended to be taught in depth. Overview content identifies important features of the period, c.650 AD (CE) – 1750, as part of an expansive chronology that helps students understand broad patterns of historical change. As such, the overview provides the broader context for the teaching of depth study content and can be built into various parts of a teaching and learning program. This means that overview content can be used to give students an introduction to the historical period; to make the links to and between the depth studies; and to consolidate understanding through a review of the period.</p> <p>Overview content for the ancient to modern world (Byzantine, Celtic, Anglo-Saxon, Viking, Ottoman, Khmer, Mongols, Yuan and Ming dynasties, Aztec, Inca) includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the transformation of the Roman world and the spread of Christianity and Islam key features of the medieval world (feudalism, trade routes, voyages of discovery, contact and conflict) the emergence of ideas about the world and the place of people in it by the end of the period (such as the Renaissance, the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment). <p>Depth studies There are three depth studies for this historical period. For each depth study, there are up to four electives that focus on a particular society, event, movement or development. It is expected that ONE elective will be studied in detail. The content in each depth study elective is designed to allow detailed study of specific aspects of this historical period. As part of a teaching and learning program, depth study content can be integrated with the overview content and/or with other depth study electives.</p> | <p>Students investigate ONE of these societies/empires from the Western or Islamic world in depth: the Vikings or Medieval Europe or the Ottoman Empire or Renaissance Italy.</p> <p>The Ottoman Empire (c.1299 – c.1683) The way of life in the Ottoman Empire (social, cultural, economic and political features) and the roles and relationships of different groups in society. Significant developments and/or cultural achievements that reflect the power and influence of the Ottoman Empire, such as the fall of Constantinople in 1453 AD (CE), art and architecture. Relationships with subject peoples, including the policy of religious tolerance. The role of significant individuals such as Selim I or Suleiman the Magnificent in maintaining the strength and influence of the Ottoman Empire.</p> <p>Renaissance Italy (c.1400 – c.1600) The way of life in Renaissance Italy (social, cultural, economic and political features) and the roles and relationships of different groups in society. Significant developments and/or cultural achievements that reflect the concentration of wealth and power in the city-states, such as art and learning. Relationships between rulers and ruled in ONE Italian city-state such as Florence or Naples. The role and achievements of significant individuals such as Lucrezia Borgia, Galileo, Leonardo da Vinci, Niccolo Machiavelli. The spread of Renaissance culture to the rest of Europe, and its legacy.</p> <p>The Vikings (c.790 – c.1066) The way of life in Viking society (social, cultural, economic and political features) and the roles and relationships of different groups in society. Significant developments and/or cultural achievements that led to Viking expansion, including weapons and shipbuilding, and the extent of their trade. Viking conquests and relationships with subject peoples, including the perspectives of monks, changes in the way of life of the English, and the Norman invasion. The role of a significant individual in the expansion of Viking settlement and influence, such as Erik the Red or Leif Ericson.</p> <p>Medieval Europe (c.590 – c.1500) The way of life in Medieval Europe (social, cultural, economic and political features) and the roles and relationships of different groups in society. Significant developments and/or cultural achievements, such as changing relations between Islam and the West (including the Crusades), architecture, medieval manuscripts and music Continuity and change in society in ONE of the following areas: crime and punishment; military and defence systems; towns, cities and commerce. Dominance of the Catholic Church and the role of significant individuals such as Charlemagne.</p> | <p>Students investigate ONE of these Asia-Pacific societies in depth: the Angkor/Khmer Empire or Shogunate Japan or the Polynesian expansion across the Pacific. N.B. Where appropriate, this depth study may include some reference beyond the end of the period c.1750.</p> <p>Angkor/Khmer Empire (c.802 – c.1431) The way of life in the Khmer Empire, including, social, cultural, economic and political features (including the role of the king). Reasons for Angkor’s rise to prominence, including wealth from trade and agriculture. Cultural achievements of the Khmer civilisation, including its system of water management and the building of the temples of Angkor. Theories of the decline of Angkor, such as the overuse of water resources, neglect of public works as a result of ongoing war, and the effects of climate change.</p> <p>Japan under the Shoguns’ (c.794 – 1867) The way of life in shogunate Japan, including social, cultural, economic and political features (including the feudal system and the increasing power of the shogun). The role of the Tokugawa Shogunate in reimposing a feudal system (based on daimyo and samurai) and the increasing control of the Shogun over foreign trade. The use of environmental resources in Shogunate Japan and the forestry and land use policies of the Tokugawa Shogunate. Theories about the decline of the Shogunate, including modernisation and westernisation, through the adoption of Western arms and technology.</p> <p>The Polynesian expansion across the Pacific (c.700 – 1756) Theories about the origin and spread of Polynesian settlers throughout the Pacific. The way of life in ONE Polynesian society, including social, cultural, economic and political features, such as the role of the ariki in Maori and in Rapa Nui society (Easter Island). Cultural achievements of ONE Polynesian society, such as the Ta moko and hangi in Maori society OR the moai constructed on Easter Island. The way Polynesian societies used environmental resources (sustainably and unsustainably), including the extinction of the moa in New Zealand, the use of religious/supernatural threats to conserve resources, and the exploitation of Easter Island’s palm trees.</p> | <p>Students investigate ONE of the following historical developments in depth to explore the interaction of societies in this period: the Mongol expansion or the Black Death in Africa, Asia and Europe or the Spanish conquest of the Aztecs and Incas.</p> <p>Mongol expansion (c.1206 – c.1368) The nomadic lifestyle of the Mongols and the rise of Temujin (Genghis Khan). The organisation of the Mongol army under Genghis Khan and the treatment of conquered peoples, such as the codification of laws and exemption of teachers, lawyers and artists from taxes. The extent of the Mongol expansion as one of the largest land empires in history. The consequences of the Mongol expansion, including its impact on life in China during and after the Mongol conquest and contributions to European knowledge and trade routes.</p> <p>The Black Death in Asia, Europe and Africa (14th century plague) Living conditions and religious beliefs in the 14th century, including life expectancy, medical knowledge and beliefs about the power of God. The role of expanding trade between Europe and Asia in the Black Death, including the origin and spread of the disease. Causes and symptoms of the Black Death and the responses of different groups in society to the spread of the disease, such as the flagellants and monasteries. The immediate- and long-term effects of the Black Death on Asian, European and African populations, and conflicting theories about the impact of the plague.</p> <p>The Spanish conquest of the Americas (c.1492 – c.1572) Pre-Columbian life in the Americas, including social organisation, city life and beliefs. When, how and why the Spanish arrived in the Americas, and where they went, including the various societies and geographical features they encountered. The nature of the interaction between the Spanish and the indigenous populations, with a particular focus on either the Aztecs OR Incas. The immediate and long-term effects of the conquest on the Aztecs OR Incas as well as on the wider world.</p> | <p>Chronology, terms and concepts Sequence historical events, developments and periods Use historical terms and concepts.</p> <p>Historical questions and research Identify a range of questions about the past to inform a historical inquiry. Identify and locate relevant sources, using ICT and other methods.</p> <p>Analyse and use of sources Identify the origin and purpose of primary and secondary sources. Locate, compare, select and use information from a range of sources as evidence. Draw conclusions about the usefulness of sources.</p> <p>Perspectives and interpretations Identify and describe points of view, attitudes and values in primary and secondary sources.</p> <p>Explanation and communication Develop texts, particularly descriptions and explanations that use evidence from a range of sources that are acknowledged. Use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, written) and digital technologies.</p> |