

Primary History Skills Progression Matrix (EYFS – Year 6)

Historical Skill	EYFS	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Talk about the past	Talks about events in their own lives and family history. Uses words such as old, new, before and after.	Distinguishes between past and present.	Describes differences between now and the past using examples.	Describes features of periods studied using historical language.	Explains similarities and differences between periods studied.	Explains changes and continuities across periods.	Makes links between periods and explains historical developments over time.
Sequence events chronologically	Orders familiar events from their own life.	Orders 3–5 events or objects from earliest to latest.	Places people and events on a simple timeline.	Places periods studied on a timeline using BC and AD.	Uses timelines to show overlap between civilisations and periods.	Compares chronology across different periods.	Uses chronology securely to make connections across British and world history.
Use historical vocabulary	Uses simple words such as old, new, yesterday and long ago.	Uses past and present accurately.	Uses words such as monarch, reign, artefact and century.	Uses BC, AD, civilisation, empire and invasion accurately.	Uses increasingly precise historical vocabulary in discussions and writing.	Selects historical vocabulary confidently to explain ideas.	Uses precise historical terminology to develop arguments and explanations.
Ask questions about the past	Asks simple questions about stories, objects and photographs.	Asks questions beginning Who? What? Where?	Asks and answers questions using sources.	Asks historically valid questions such as Why did...?	Develops questions that require evidence and explanation.	Plans lines of enquiry independently.	Constructs and refines historical enquiries independently.
Use historical sources	Looks at photographs and objects and discusses what they show.	Uses pictures, stories and artefacts to learn about the past.	Uses books, photographs and artefacts to answer questions.	Identifies primary and secondary sources.	Compares different sources and identifies similarities and differences.	Evaluates the usefulness and reliability of sources.	Critically evaluates sources, considering bias, purpose and limitations.
Interpret the past	Knows stories tell us about the past.	Recognises we learn about the past in different ways.	Understands people may remember events differently.	Identifies differences between accounts of the same event.	Explains why interpretations differ.	Compares interpretations and judges which is most convincing.	Analyses interpretations using evidence, context and viewpoint.
Identify similarities and differences	Talks about similarities and differences between their lives and others.	Identifies simple similarities and differences between past and present.	Compares ways of life from different periods.	Describes similarities and differences within periods studied.	Explains similarities and differences across periods and societies.	Explains patterns of continuity and change.	Makes sophisticated comparisons across periods and locations.
Explain cause and consequence	Talks simply about why things happened in stories.	Describes what happened.	Suggests simple reasons why events or people are important.	Explains causes and consequences of events studied.	Identifies several causes and consequences of historical events.	Explains how causes are linked and evaluates their importance.	Analyses multiple causes and consequences, supporting explanations with evidence.
Judge historical significance	Recognises some people or events are important.	Describes why a person or event is remembered.	Explains why significant people or events are important.	Identifies why people or events were significant at the time.	Explains significance using historical criteria.	Evaluates significance in relation to change and impact.	Makes justified judgements about significance using evidence.
Communicate historical understanding	Shares ideas orally using simple vocabulary.	Talks and writes simply about the past.	Records ideas using historical vocabulary.	Presents findings using timelines and historical language.	Organises ideas using appropriate historical terms.	Uses evidence to support explanations and arguments.	Constructs balanced historical arguments supported by evidence.

National Curriculum concepts covered: Chronological Understanding, Historical Enquiry, Using Historical Evidence, Historical Interpretations, Similarity and Difference, Cause and Consequence, Historical Significance, Historical Communication.