



Key Knowledge, Skills and Understanding for History

Early Years

Key Knowledge

This document demonstrates which statements from the Development Matters are prerequisite skills for History within the national curriculum. The table below outlines the most relevant statements taken from the Early Learning Goals in the EYFS statutory framework and the Development Matters age ranges for Three and Four-Year-Olds and Reception to match the programme of study for History.

The most relevant statements for History are taken from the following areas of learning:

- Understanding the world
- Communication and

Key Skills and Understanding

Three and Four-Year-Olds	Understanding the World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • begin to make sense of their own life story and family's history • show interest in different occupations
Reception	Understanding the World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • talk about members of their immediate family and community • name and describe people who are familiar to them • comment on images of familiar situations in the past • compare and contrast characters from stories, including figures from the past
ELG	Communication and language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding
	Understanding the world: Past and present	<p>Children at the expected level of development will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society; • Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class; • Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling;



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Year 1

Key Knowledge**Toys from the past- Are 'today's toys' more fun than toys from the past?**

- Do they know that there were no televisions or electronic games in the past?
- Do they know that wood was widely used to make toys for children in the past, but toys are now frequently made from plastic nowadays?
- Do they know that toys from the past would not be able to move on their own whereas some toys today can move using batteries or electric?

Key Skills and Understanding

	Chronological understanding	Knowledge and interpretation	Historical enquiry
Expected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they put up to three objects in chronological order (recent history)? • Can they use words and phrases like: old, new and a long time ago? • Can they tell me about things that happened when they were little? • Can they recognise that a story that is read to them may have happened a long time ago? • Do they know that some objects belonged to the past? • Can they retell a familiar story set in the past? • Can they explain how they have changed since they were born? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do they appreciate that some famous people have helped our lives be better today? • Do they recognise that we celebrate certain events, such as bonfire night, because of what happened many years ago? • Can they begin to identify the main differences between old and new objects? • Can they identify objects from the past, such as vinyl records? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they ask and answer questions about old and new objects? • Can they spot old and new things in a picture? • Can they answer questions using an artefact/ photograph provided? • Can they give a plausible explanation about what an object was used for in the past?
Exceeding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they put up to five objects/events in chronological order (recent history)? • Can they use words and phrases like: very old, when mummy and daddy were little? • Can they use the words before and after correctly? • Can they say why they think a story was set in the past? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they explain why certain objects were different in the past, e.g. iron, music systems, televisions? • Can they tell us about an important historical event that happened in the past? • Can they explain differences between past and present in their life and that of other children from a different time in history? • Do they know who will succeed the queen and how the succession works? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they answer questions using a range of artefacts/ photographs provided? • Can they find out more about a famous person from the past and carry out some research on him or her?





Key Knowledge, Skills and Understanding for History

Year 2

Key Knowledge

Famous people- How has a Famous person influenced the world?

- Do they know that Florence Nightingale was a famous nurse during the Crimean War (1853-1856)?
- Do they know that George Stephenson invented the steam train in 1814?
- Do they know that the 'Gunpowder Plot' was a failed attempt to blow up parliament in 1605?

Seaside- Why did Grandmas like to be beside the seaside?

- Do they know that people visited the seaside in the past because they believed it was good for their health?
- Do they know that only very wealthy families visited the seaside in the late 1800's?

Key Skills and Understanding

	Chronological understanding	Knowledge and interpretation	Historical enquiry
Expected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they use words and phrases like: before I was born, when I was younger? • Can they use phrases and words like: 'before', 'after', 'past', 'present', 'then' and 'now'; in their historical learning? • Can they use the words 'past' and 'present' accurately? • Can they use a range of appropriate words and phrases to describe the past? • Can they sequence a set of events in chronological order and give reasons for their order? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they recount the life of someone famous from Britain who lived in the past giving attention to what they did earlier and what they did later? • Can they explain how their local area was different in the past? • Can they recount some interesting facts from an historical event, such as where the 'Fire of London' started? • Do they understand that we have a queen who rules us, and that Britain has had a king or queen for many years? • Can they give examples of things that are different in their life from that of their grandparents when they were young? • Can they explain why Britain has a special history by naming some famous events and some famous people? • Can they explain what is meant by a parliament? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they find out something about the past by talking to an older person? • Can they answer questions by using a specific source, such as an information book? • Can they research the life of a famous Briton from the past using different resources to help them? • Can they research about a famous event that happens in Britain and why it has been happening for some time? • Can they research the life of someone who used to live in their area using the Internet and other sources to find out about them?
Exceeding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they sequence a set of objects in chronological order and give reasons for their order? • Can they sequence events about their own life? • Can they sequence events about the life of a famous person? • Can they try to work out how long ago an event happened? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they give examples of things that are different in their life from that of a long time ago in a specific period of history e.g. Victorian times? • Can they explain why someone in the past acted in the way they did? • Can they explain why their locality is associated with a special historical event? • Can they explain what is meant by a democracy and why it is a good thing? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they say at least two ways they can find out about the past, for example using books and the internet? • Can they explain why eye-witness accounts may vary? • Can they research about a famous event that happens somewhere else in the world and why it has been happening for some time?





Key Knowledge

Stone Age- Who first lived in Britain?

- Do they know that the Stone Age started around 3 million years ago and is split into three time periods: Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic?
- Do they know that man first lived in Britain around 700,00 B.C.?
- Do they know about Stonehenge, how it was built and how it was used for worship and burials?
- Do they know that the Bronze age came after the Stone Age and this is when man started to use metal?

Ancient Greece- What was it like to live in Ancient Greece?

- Do they know that the Ancient Greeks created the Olympic games, and events included wrestling, boxing, long jump, javelin, discus and chariot racing?
- Do they know some of the differences between life in Sparta and life in Athens e.g. the people of Sparta were fierce soldiers who took what they wanted, the people of Athens were famous for music, art and theatre and traded with their neighbours?
- Do they know that the Ancient Greeks believed in many different Gods and that the king of all the Gods was Zeus?

Key Skills and Understanding

	Chronological understanding	Knowledge and interpretation	Historical enquiry
Expected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they describe events and periods using the words: BC, AD and decade? • Can they describe events from the past using dates when things happened? • Can they describe events and periods using the words: ancient and century? • Can they use a timeline within a specific time in history to set out the order things may have happened? • Can they use their mathematical knowledge to work out how long-ago events would have happened? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do they appreciate that the early Brits would not have communicated as we do or have eaten as we do? • Can they begin to picture what life would have been like for the early settlers? • Can they recognise that Britain has been invaded by several different groups over time? • Do they realise that invaders in the past would have fought fiercely, using hand to hand combat? • Can they suggest why certain events happened as they did in history? • Can they suggest why certain people acted as they did in history? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do they recognise the part that archaeologists have had in helping us understand more about what happened in the past? • Can they use various sources of evidence to answer questions? • Can they use various sources to piece together information about a period in history? • Can they research a specific event from the past? • Can they use their 'information finding' skills in writing to help them write about historical information? • Can they, through research, identify similarities and differences between given periods in history?
Exceeding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they set out on a timeline, within a given period, what special events took place? • Can they begin to recognise and quantify the different time periods that exists between different groups that invaded Britain? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they begin to appreciate why Britain would have been an important country to have invaded and conquered? • Can they appreciate that war/s would inevitably have brought much distress and bloodshed? • Do they have an appreciation that wars start for specific reasons and can last for a very long time? • Do they appreciate that invaders were often away from their homes for very long periods and would have been 'homesick'? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they begin to use more than one source of information to bring together a conclusion about an historical event? • Can they use specific search engines on the Internet to help them find information more rapidly?





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Year 4

Key Knowledge

Romans- Why were the Romans so powerful and what did we learn from them?

- Do they know the Romans first invaded Britain in 55BC and that they were not successful until 43AD?
- Do they know some of the things the Romans brought to Britain (roads, baths, aqueducts, plumbing, calendar)?
- Do they know about Boudicca's rebellion?
- Do they know why they left Britain in 400AD?

Anglo-Saxons & Vikings- Why did the Anglo-Saxons and Vikings not get along?

- Do they know the Anglo-Saxons were made up of three tribes: Angles; Saxons; and Jutes?
- Do they know how and why they came to Britain?
- Do they know King Harold was killed at the Battle of Hastings in 1066 and the significance of this?
- Do they know the Vikings first invaded Britain (Lindisfarne) in 793 AD?
- Do they know about the burial site at Sutton Hoo and can they interpret the artefacts to suggest who was buried there?
- Do they know York was an important city to the Vikings?

Key Skills and Understanding

	Chronological understanding	Knowledge and interpretation	Historical enquiry
Expected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they plot recent history on a timeline using centuries? • Can they place periods of history on a timeline showing periods of time? • Can they use their mathematical skills to round up time differences into centuries and decades? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they explain how events from the past have helped shape our lives? • Do they appreciate that wars have happened from a very long time ago and are often associated with invasion, conquering or religious differences? • Do they know that people who lived in the past cooked and travelled differently and used different weapons from ours? • Do they recognise that the lives of wealthy people were very different from those of poor people? • Do they appreciate how items found belonging to the past are helping us to build up an accurate picture of how people lived in the past? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they research two versions of an event and say how they differ? • Can they research what it was like for a child in a given period from the past and use photographs and illustrations to present their findings? • Can they give more than one reason to support an historical argument? • Can they communicate knowledge and understanding orally and in writing and offer points of view based upon what they have found out?
Exceeding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they use their mathematical skills to help them work out the time differences between certain major events in history? • Can they begin to build up a picture of what main events happened in Britain/ the world during different centuries? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they recognise that people's way of life in the past was dictated by the work they did? • Do they appreciate that the food people ate was different because of the availability of different sources of food? • Do they appreciate that weapons will have changed by the developments and inventions that would have occurred within a given time period? • Do they appreciate that wealthy people would have had a very different way of living which would have impacted upon their health and education? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they independently, or as part of a group, present an aspect they have researched about a given period of history using multi-media skills when doing so?





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Year 5

Key Knowledge

Egyptians- How can we re-discover the wonders of Ancient Egypt?

- Do they know that in 3000BC Egyptians created hieroglyphics, one of the earliest known writing systems?
- Do they know the famous Pharaoh rulers of Egypt, Tutankhamun (boy king) and Cleopatra (the last ruler of Egypt before the Romans)?
- Do they know that archaeologists use a sieve, trowel and brushes to discover artefacts, a famous discovery being the Egyptian Narmer Palette?
- Do they know the pyramids were constructed by transporting blocks on wooden sleds and were for Pharaohs to pass to the afterlife?

Medieval- How would you have survived medieval England?

- Do they know that religion in Medieval Britain was dominated by Christianity and so the church was very powerful?
- Do they know that from 1095-1272 nine crusades took place, which were a series of wars between Christians and Muslims?
- Do they know that the code of chivalry is a moral code system of bravery, honour and gallantry?
Do they know the black death was a plague from 1347 until 1350?

Key Skills and Understanding

	Chronological understanding	Knowledge and interpretation	Historical enquiry
Expected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they use dates and historical language in their work? • Can they draw a timeline with different time periods outlined which show different information, such as, periods of history, when famous people lived, etc.? • Can they use their mathematical skills to work out exact time scales and differences as need be? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they describe historical events from the different period/s they are studying/have studied? • Can they make comparisons between historical periods; explaining things that have changed and things which have stayed the same? • Can they explain the role that Britain has had in spreading Christian values across the world? • Can they begin to appreciate that how we make decisions has been through a Parliament for some time? • Do they appreciate that significant events in history have helped shape the country we have today? • Do they have a good understanding as to how crime and punishment has changed over the years? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they test out a hypothesis in order to answer a question? • Do they appreciate how historical artefacts have helped us understand more about British lives in the present and past?
Exceeding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they create timelines which outline the development of specific features, such as medicine; weaponry; transport, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do they appreciate how plagues and other major events have created huge differences to the way medicines and health care was developed? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they research the life of one person who has had an influence on the way Great Britain is divided into four separate countries?





Key Knowledge, Skills and Understanding for History

Year 6

Key Knowledge

- Mayans- Who were the Mayans and what have we learnt from them?**
- Do they know when the Mayans lived on a timeline (from 2000BC to 1500AD)?
 - Do they know that the Mayans lived in Mesoamerica (Mexico and Central America)?
 - Do they know that the Mayans were expert mathematicians (introducing the concept of zero) and astronomers (creating calendars)?
 - Do they know that Gods played a vital role in the Mayan culture?

- Shakespeare- To be or not to be, that is the question?**
- Do they know when Shakespeare lived on a timeline (1564-1616 during the Elizabethan era/Tudor period)?
 - Do they know the four different types of Shakespearean play (tragedy, comedy, history, romance)?
 - Do they know a play written by Shakespeare and its theme (Romeo and Juliet combined romance and tragedy)?
 - Do they know about The Globe Theatre, how it was designed and its use today?

Key Skills and Understanding

	Chronological understanding	Knowledge and interpretation	Historical enquiry
Expected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they say where a period of history fits on a timeline? • Can they place a specific event on a timeline by decade? • Can they place features of historical events and people from past societies and periods in a chronological framework? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they summarise the main events from a specific period in history, explaining the order in which key events happened? • Can they summarise how Britain has had a major influence on world history? • Can they summarise what Britain may have learnt from other countries and civilizations through time gone by and more recently? • Can they describe features of historical events and people from past societies and periods they have studied? • Can they recognise and describe differences and similarities/ changes and continuity between different periods of history? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they look at two different versions and say how the author may be attempting to persuade or give a specific viewpoint? • Can they identify and explain their understanding of propaganda? • Can they describe a key event from Britain's past using a range of evidence from different sources?
Exceeding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do they appreciate that some ancient civilizations showed greater advancements than people who lived centuries after them? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they suggest relationships between causes in history? • Can they appreciate how Britain once had an Empire and how that has helped or hindered our relationship with a number of countries today? • Can they trace the main events that define Britain's journey from a mono to a multi-cultural society? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they suggest why there may be different interpretations of events? • Can they suggest why certain events, people and changes might be seen as more significant than others? • Can they pose and answer their own historical questions?

