

GCSE HISTORY



The GCSE History course contains two different components each with 2 sections. Each component is assessed in one of two exams lasting 1 hour and 45 minutes long each. Both exams will be at the end of year 11 and each is worth 50% of the marks.

Section A: Period Study Option 1B: USA 1920-1973 Opportunity and Inequality

This period study focuses on the development of the USA during a difficult half century of change. It was a period of opportunity and inequality-when some Americans lived the 'American Dream' whilst others dealt with the nightmare of poverty, discrimination and prejudice. You will study the political, social and cultural aspects of these 2 developments and the role ideas played in bringing about change. You will also look at the role of key individuals and groups in shaping change and the impact the developments had on them. The first part of this unit examines America in the 'boom' of the 1920s, covering the growth of the consumer society exemplified by the Ford motor company and social developments such as the cinema, jazz music, and flappers. We discover how divided a nation the United States was at this time through the study of organised crime and Al Capone, prohibition of alcohol, and the experiences of immigrants and African Americans, including the impact of the KKK. The second part of the unit focuses upon Americans' experiences of the Depression and the New Deal, a period of time when the American economy appeared to be 'broken' with millions unemployed, starving, and homeless, and then appeared to be 'fixed' again by the policies of President Roosevelt and the Second World War. In the third part of the unit, we focus upon post-war America, with the return of consumerism and prosperity. We see the growth of Rock and Roll and television in popular culture alongside the growth of racial tension and the development of the Civil Rights campaigns in the 1950s and 1960s, including Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, and the Black Power Movement. The study of the history of the world's only Superpower is vital for anyone who wishes to understand the world in which we live today.

Section B: Wider World depth study: Conflict and tension, 1918–1939

This wider world depth study enables students to understand the complicated world of international relations-what are the diverse interests of different individuals and states? It focuses on the causes of the Second World War and why it proved difficult to resolve the issues which caused it. We start at the end of the First World War with the attempts to make a lasting peace from the ruins of a battered Europe. We examine the Treaty of Versailles, how the different countries involved felt the peace treaty, and how it could be seen as simply a ceasefire for 20 years. We examine the formation of the League of Nations and how it spectacularly failed in its purpose-to keep global peace. Finally, we examine the roles of Hitler, Stalin, and Neville Chamberlain in the outbreak of World War Two.

Component 2: Shaping the Nation.

Section A: Thematic study

Our thematic study will focus on the health of the British people over the last 1000 years. It focuses on understanding the reasons for the changes and continuity that take place over a long period of time as well how quickly or slowly that change happened. We'll also test if all of the change was for the better. Characters and events such as Hippocrates, Galen, Paré, Harvey, Pasteur, Koch, Nightingale, the Black Death, the discovery of circulation, DNA and the founding of the modern NHS all feature. We will also study the impact of people with wonderfully colourful names and/or spectacular facial hair-Sir Joseph Bazalgette, David Lloyd George, Winston Churchill, and Seebohm

Rowntree, as well as simpler names such as John Snow (no, not the Game of Thrones character- much more interesting and influential!) This unit, at times can require a strong stomach, so if you like blood and guts in your history, this is the topic for you!

Section B: British depth study including the historical environment

This section allows us to study the arrival of the Normans and the impact of their rule on England. It includes 1066 and all that including all the major battles of that year as well as the very brutal methods William the Conqueror used in order to gain control of England. We will also look at what it was like to live under the Normans including the use of the Feudal system and the production of the Domesday Book. The development of the Norman Church and monasteries are also covered in this section. Within this depth study we will also focus on a specific historical site, named by the exam board, which is worth 10% of the total GCSE. This may be a Cathedral, a monastery or a castle. We will develop an understanding of the key features of buildings of this type and understand what the relationship between the key events and sites were.

Is this the right course for you?

The skills that you will develop through study of GCSE History are highly valued by ALL employers. Skills such as research and problem solving, written and verbal communication, the ability to select the right information to support an argument, and to decide if a source of information is reliable or not are abilities that are key in the 21st century workplace. Furthermore, you will be expected to read and understand a lot of information so it will further improve your already good literacy skills. Studying GCSE History will prepare you to progress to a wide range of Post 16 courses and will open up career opportunities in journalism, law, teaching, politics, television and media, banking, and archaeology to name but a few.

For further information please contact Mr McCudden