HISTORY CURRICULUM MAP: Y7-11

Curriculum rationale & design	History at Astrea Academy Trust enables scholars to build a rich and coherent understanding of the past and to appreciate how historical knowledge is constructed, tested and debated. Our curriculum is knowledge-rich and enquiry-led. Scholars develop secure knowledge of people, events, places, societies and developments, while learning how historians use evidence, construct explanations, compare periods and reach substantiated judgements. Historical knowledge and historical thinking are therefore not treated as separate aims. Scholars need detailed knowledge of particular contexts before they can reason meaningfully about causation, change and continuity, similarity and difference, evidence, interpretations and significance. The curriculum is structured around carefully framed historical enquiries. Each enquiry gives purpose to the selection and sequencing of content, identifies the disciplinary thinking scholars will develop and culminates in an extended historical argument. Scholars do not encounter the past as a series of disconnected facts or isolated topics. They use substantive knowledge to address historically meaningful questions, such as why the Western Roman Empire fell, how historians have learned about the person buried at Sutton Hoo, how far the Norman Conquest changed England, why Europeans went on crusade, how Britain constructed an empire and why Victorians interpreted industrialisation differently. **Types of historical knowledge** Our curriculum develops several interdependent forms of historical knowledge. **Substantive knowledge** Scholars acquire detailed knowledge of the people, events, developments and societies included within each enquiry. The curriculum prioritises depth and coherence so that scholars can construct meaningful mental frameworks rather than encounter history as a superficial survey. Core knowledge is specified within each unit and deliberately revisited through lesson retrieval, vocabulary recall, knowledge organisers and later enquiries. This substantive knowledge provides the foundation for disciplinary thinking. Scholars cannot explain why Rome fell without knowing about military decline, government, religion, the division of the Empire, invasion and environmental pressure. They cannot judge the reliability of claims about the Middle Passage without knowledge of the transatlantic slave trade, abolitionist campaigning, testimony and the conditions aboard slave ships.

Chronological knowledge

Chronology gives scholars an organising framework through which events and developments can be situated, connected and compared. The Key Stage 3 curriculum follows a broadly chronological journey from the ancient and medieval worlds, through early modern religious and political transformation, to empire, industrialisation, political reform and twentieth-century conflict and change.

Chronology is not limited to remembering dates or placing events in order. Scholars use chronology to understand sequence, duration, development and turning points. For example, the Wars of the Roses enquiry uses Henry V's strong personal rule as a reference point before tracing minority government, factional conflict, disputed succession and Henry VII's reconstruction of royal legitimacy. The English Civil War enquiry uses chronological sequencing to explain how mistrust, resistance and failed compromise escalated towards an outcome that had not initially been intended.

Substantive concepts

Scholars repeatedly encounter concepts such as empire, monarchy, authority, legitimacy, government, religion, revolution, Parliament, rights, migration, trade and power. These concepts are not taught as fixed dictionary definitions. Their meanings become richer as scholars meet them in contrasting historical settings.

For example, scholars encounter empire through Rome, the Byzantine and Islamic worlds, Medieval Mali and the British Empire. They examine monarchy through Anglo-Saxon kingship, Norman conquest, medieval political relationships, the Wars of the Roses, Tudor religious change, the English Civil War and Georgian constitutional government.

Repeated encounters allow scholars to recognise both common features and important historical differences. Their understanding of a concept is therefore built through examples, comparison and contextual knowledge rather than through abstraction alone.

Disciplinary knowledge

Scholars learn how historians ask questions and construct knowledge about the past. The disciplinary dimensions of history are taught explicitly through the content of each enquiry. These include:

- **Causation:** identifying causes, explaining their roles, connecting them and judging their relative importance.

- **Change and continuity:** assessing the extent, pace, reach and depth of change, while considering what continued and for whom.
- **Evidence:** drawing inferences, testing claims through corroboration and expressing appropriate levels of confidence.
- **Interpretations:** explaining how accounts of the past are constructed through experience, purpose, selection, emphasis and omission.
- **Similarity and difference:** establishing valid grounds for comparison and using comparison to form and refine historical concepts.
- **Significance:** applying explicit criteria to judge historical importance rather than equating significance with fame or memorability.

Disciplinary knowledge is not treated as a generic toolkit that can be applied without secure knowledge of the period. Causal reasoning about the fall of an empire differs from explaining religious reform, human motivation, imperial expansion or political escalation. Each enquiry teaches scholars how a particular disciplinary question operates within a particular historical context.

Sequencing and coherence

The curriculum is carefully sequenced so that earlier knowledge supports later understanding. Vocabulary to retrieve, connections to previous enquiries and links to future study are identified within individual unit maps. This makes progression substantive as well as disciplinary.

Year 7 establishes shared chronological, conceptual and disciplinary foundations. Scholars begin with the Roman world before examining how claims about the early medieval past are constructed through the Sutton Hoo evidence. They trace the development of an English nation, assess the uneven consequences of Norman conquest and then widen their geographical frame through the rise of Islam and the Crusades. The final sequence examines political power through medieval monarchy, Mansa Musa's projection of authority and the changing nature of English monarchy during the Wars of the Roses.

Year 8 uses these foundations to investigate the transition from the medieval to the modern world. Scholars test the extent and unevenness of Renaissance change before explaining the English Reformation and the escalation of conflict between monarchy and Parliament. They trace the development of constitutional monarchy and Parliamentary government, then examine how

British commercial, political and military power operated through empire and enslavement. The Summer sequence places Britain within an interconnected Atlantic and industrial world of revolution, technological transformation, contested rights and political reform.

Year 9 extends the narrative into the twentieth century through the First World War, the Russian Revolution, Soviet Russia, the breakdown of international peace, the Second World War, the Holocaust and Civil Rights. This sequence enables scholars to examine war, revolution, dictatorship, genocide, rights and political change within the chronological contexts needed to understand them.

At Key Stage 4, scholars undertake Edexcel GCSE History through Medicine in Britain and the British sector of the Western Front, Weimar and Nazi Germany, the Cold War and Elizabethan England. Key Stage 3 is not designed as an extended rehearsal for GCSE examinations, but it deliberately establishes the chronological, substantive, conceptual and disciplinary foundations upon which successful GCSE study depends. Scholars arrive at GCSE having already encountered long-term thematic development, political and religious change, dictatorship, empire, warfare, source-based historical enquiry and competing interpretations.

Disciplinary progression

Progression does not consist simply of scholars writing longer answers or handling more content. It involves increasingly sophisticated historical reasoning.

In causation enquiries, scholars move from identifying and weighing several causes to explaining how causes interact and perform different roles. The Rise of Islam distinguishes initial expansion from consolidation, while the Reformation distinguishes enabling conditions, immediate triggers and subsequent motivations. The English Civil War adds escalation, responsibility, human agency and contingency.

In change and continuity enquiries, scholars move from comparing England before and after the Norman Conquest to tracing changes in an institution across several reigns. The Renaissance and Georgian Britain enquiries then require judgements about the speed, depth, reach and unevenness of change across different groups, places and aspects of society.

Evidential reasoning begins with inference and uncertainty at Sutton Hoo. It later develops into claim-level corroboration in the study of the Middle Passage, where scholars judge the reliability of specific claims rather than labelling an entire source as

reliable or unreliable. Historical interpretations are taught distinctly from evidence. In the Industrial Revolution enquiry, scholars explain how Victorian interpretations were shaped by experience, position, purpose, audience, selection and emphasis.

Similarity and difference is used in the Age of Revolutions to construct a defensible definition of revolution across the American, French and Haitian contexts. Historical significance is developed through the Female Suffrage enquiry, where scholars apply criteria including impact, contribution, representativeness and legacy while distinguishing significance from public prominence or sole causation.

British, European and wider-world history

The curriculum provides a coherent history of Britain while locating British developments within European and wider-world contexts. Scholars study the Islamic world, Byzantine Empire, Medieval Mali, European religious change, colonisation, the British Empire, slavery, Atlantic revolutions and modern global conflict. These are not isolated additions to a predominantly national story. They provide knowledge required to understand connections between societies and the movement of people, ideas, beliefs, technologies, goods and power.

The Renaissance is presented as dependent upon earlier and wider networks of knowledge rather than as an exclusively European achievement. Medieval Mali is situated within trade, pilgrimage and scholarly networks connecting West Africa to North Africa and the Islamic world. The Age of Revolutions treats Haiti as central to understanding revolutionary claims about freedom, equality and human rights.

The curriculum also places the experiences of Indigenous, colonised, enslaved, working-class and female historical actors within the central analytical questions of units. Indigenous dispossession and coerced labour form part of the explanation of how British imperial power was constructed. Testimony from formerly enslaved people is central to reconstructing the Middle Passage. Female Suffrage places the well-known Suffragette campaign within a wider movement that included Suffragists, working women and other campaigners.

This approach helps scholars recognise historical agency and diversity within societies without reducing individuals or groups to disconnected representative stories.

Historical literacy and communication

Reading, vocabulary and writing are integral to learning history. Scholars encounter rich historical narratives, primary evidence, material culture and the work of historians. Each unit identifies core vocabulary; vocabulary scholars will encounter and vocabulary to retrieve from earlier learning. This structure supports precision while ensuring that previously learned concepts remain available for later reasoning.

Writing is taught explicitly as a form of historical communication. Scholars learn to:

- Make historically valid claims
- Select precise supporting evidence
- Explain connections and consequences
- Qualify generalisations
- Compare causes and interpretations
- Express degrees of certainty
- Organise knowledge thematically or chronologically
- Reach substantiated judgements

Shared structures such as “because, but, so” and claim, example and explanation support scholars in moving from assertion to reasoned explanation. These structures are adapted according to disciplinary purpose. In an evidence enquiry, they can connect corroboration, limitation and confidence. In a change enquiry, they can connect transformation, continuity and overall extent. In a causal enquiry, they can connect motive, obstacle, interaction and consequence.

Scaffolding is designed to make complex historical thinking accessible, while the progression of planning and extended writing develops scholars’ capacity to select, organise and communicate historical knowledge with increasing independence.

An ambitious curriculum for all scholars

HISTORY CURRICULUM MAP: Y7-11

	The history curriculum is ambitious for every scholar. It does not narrow historical content or disciplinary demand according to perceived starting point. Instead, access is supported through coherent exposition, explicit vocabulary instruction, retrieval of prior knowledge, structured reading, modelling, guided practice and carefully sequenced writing. The opening Year 7 units provide a shared foundation for scholars arriving with different experiences of primary history. Later enquiries repeatedly reactivate earlier learning so that new content is attached to increasingly secure historical frameworks. Through the study of history, scholars learn to resist simplistic narratives, unsupported assertions and single-cause explanations. They learn that change is often uneven, that historical experiences differ, that evidence is incomplete, that interpretations are constructed and that judgements require criteria and supporting knowledge. The curriculum therefore prepares scholars for successful further study while also enabling them to become historically informed readers, writers and citizens who can engage critically with claims about Britain, the wider world and the past.
Curriculum aims	• **Build Secure and Connected Historical Knowledge:** Scholars develop rich knowledge of people, events, societies and developments within a coherent chronological framework. Earlier knowledge and vocabulary are deliberately retrieved so that scholars make connections across periods and build increasingly secure historical understanding. • **Develop Disciplinary Knowledge Through Enquiry:** Scholars learn how historians construct explanations, test claims and reach judgements through causation, change and continuity, similarity and difference, evidence, interpretations and significance. These disciplinary concepts are taught through specific historical contexts and revisited with increasing sophistication. • **Develop Historical Literacy and Communication:** Scholars read challenging historical narratives, evidence and interpretations, acquire precise subject vocabulary and learn to construct clear, evidence-based arguments. Explicit modelling, guided practice and extended writing enable scholars to communicate increasingly independently as historians. • **Deliver a Coherent and Cumulative Five-Year Journey:** The curriculum moves from the ancient and medieval worlds through early modern transformation, empire, industrialisation and political reform to twentieth-century conflict and change. Substantive concepts including empire, monarchy, authority, religion, government, revolution and rights recur across contrasting contexts and accumulate meaning over time. • **Connect British, European and Wider-World Histories:** British history is situated within wider histories of migration, belief, trade, conquest, colonisation, enslavement, revolution and global conflict. Scholars examine the experiences

	and agency of diverse historical actors and recognise the connections that have shaped Britain and the wider world. • **Develop Critical, Informed and Historically Grounded Thinkers:** Scholars learn to resist simplistic narratives, monocausal explanations and unsupported claims. They recognise that evidence may be incomplete, change uneven, interpretations constructed and significance dependent upon explicit criteria, enabling them to reach careful and substantiated judgements about the past. • **Develop Critical Thinkers and Responsible Citizens:** Through engagement with different perspectives, scholars learn to analyse arguments, evaluate evidence, challenge assumptions and justify their own conclusions. The curriculum promotes intellectual curiosity, respectful disagreement and informed participation in a diverse and democratic society.
Assessment	Regular retrieval practice is embedded throughout the History curriculum to strengthen recall, identify misconceptions and connect new learning to scholars' developing chronological and conceptual frameworks. Each unit includes a knowledge test based on the substantive knowledge and vocabulary specified within its curriculum map. Secure knowledge provides the foundation scholars need to reason historically and construct valid claims about the past. Each unit is organised around an overarching historical enquiry. Scholars complete regular historical writing before planning and producing an extended response to the enquiry question. These responses assess different forms of disciplinary understanding according to the purpose of the unit, including causation, change and continuity, similarity and difference, evidence, interpretations and historical significance. Essays are read by teachers and followed by whole-class feedback which addresses common misconceptions, gaps in knowledge and areas for improvement in historical reasoning and communication. Scholars are formally assessed at the mid-year and end-of-year points. These cumulative assessments sample content taught across multiple units and include a combination of knowledge questions, chronological sequencing and extended historical writing. Extended questions require scholars to apply secure substantive knowledge to specified disciplinary problems rather than demonstrate generic skills in isolation. Formal assessments are marked using agreed mark schemes. Mark bands reward increasingly developed historical explanation, accurate and specific supporting knowledge and clear communication. Scholars receive a formal percentage outcome following each mid-year and end-of-year assessment. Taken together, retrieval practice, unit knowledge tests, enquiry essays and formal assessments provide a balanced picture of scholars' historical learning. Assessment checks whether scholars know and remember the taught curriculum, whether they can connect knowledge across periods and whether they can select and deploy that knowledge to construct increasingly precise, evidence-based and qualified historical arguments. At GCSE, Scholars take the Edexcel GCSE in History. To prepare for this, in Year 10, scholars complete a Diagnostic Assessment

	and a formal mock paper. In year 11 scholars encounter 2 more mock series in preparation for their summer exams.

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	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Year 7	The Romans The Anglo Saxons Sutton Hoo	Norman England The Rise of Islam The Crusades	Medieval Monarchy Medieval Mali The Wars of the Roses
Year 8	The Renaissance The Reformation The English Civil War	Georgian Britian The British Empire Slavery	The Age of Revolutions Industrial Revolution Women's Suffrage
Year 9 (Interim)	The First World War The Russian Revolution Soviet Russia	Steps to War The Second World War	The Holocaust Civil Rights
Year 10	Medicine Through Time	Medicine on the Western Front Weimar and Nazi Germany	Weimar and Nazi Germany The Cold War
Year 11	The Cold War Elizabethan England	Elizabethan England Revision	Revision GCSE Exams