

# Learning to fly in **History**

Outstanding students of History become so because they are passionate about the subject and are willing to work independently to develop their knowledge and extend and challenge their thinking.

Examples of what they do are listed below - do as many of these as you can to attain top grades A Level. If you are considering applying to any of the Russell Group universities, and especially Oxbridge, these need to become second nature asap! **Remember that just doing what we tell you - in lessons and beyond – will not be enough.**

## In lessons

- Ask questions about what we are learning and contribute to class discussion. Good questions could start with:
  - “Is it a bit like...?”
  - “Can you tell me more about...”
  - “What is...?”
  - “I agree/disagree with... because... What does everyone else think?”
- Think critically about your own work and find ways to improve it
- Listen to other students and the teacher and be ready to challenge their ideas and argue with them!
- Think about ways in which new knowledge you encounter in lessons and outside fits in with what you already know

## Between your lessons

- Look back over your notes and activities after each lesson
- Review the work - make sure you know what you have or haven't understood
- Read ahead or around the topic, using books, articles or websites
- Make notes of any questions to ask your teachers or look up
- Contact your teacher, in person or by email, to ask for clarification and guidance
- The school library has an extensive range of books about history - why not do a search on heritage?

## Beyond your lessons

- Watch relevant history documentaries or historical films, read historical novels or nonfiction and keep a brief record in your folder of what you've seen/read and how it relates to what you've been studying
- Talk to your friends and family about what you have seen/read
- **Podcasts** like **In Our Time** on BBC Radio 4 (available on iPlayer) which discuss specific historical events or **The Rest is History** podcast.
- **Periodicals: BBC History Magazine** and **History Today** are both high-quality publications with articles covering the full gamut of historical interest from the ancient to the present day. Each issue contains wider reading suggestions as well as historical fiction and non-fiction book reviews.
- **TV/Films:** Look regularly at TV listings for good quality historical documentaries, films etc. A number of good documentary series are available on DVD: **Marr's History of Modern Britain; Masters of Money; Starkey's Monarchy; Starkey's Six Wives of Henry VIII, The West; The Civil War; Shama's History of Britain; Timelines**

- **TV: History of Britain** (YouTube), **Land of the Tsars** (Episode 3) Historical films and docudramas can be of dubious accuracy but many give a visual illustration of periods which cannot be rivalled elsewhere: **Elizabeth (1998); Cromwell (1970); Glory (1989); Nicholas and Alexandra (1971); The Way West (1967); Gladiator (2000); The Wind that Shakes the Barley (2007), Suffragette (2015).**

#### **Websites:**

- [www.activehistory.co.uk](http://www.activehistory.co.uk)
- [www.tudors.org](http://www.tudors.org)
- [www.historylearningsite.co.uk](http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk)
- [www.victorianweb.org](http://www.victorianweb.org)
- [www.johnandclare.net](http://www.johnandclare.net)
- [www.tudorhistory.org](http://www.tudorhistory.org)
- [www.spartacus-educational.com](http://www.spartacus-educational.com)

#### **Holiday visits**

- Museums, e.g. British Museum; Imperial War Museum & Cabinet War Rooms; National Maritime Museum, Greenwich.
- Elsewhere: American Museum (Bath); Ashmolean Museum (Oxford); Fitzwilliam Museum (Cambridge); Jorvik Viking Centre Museum (York); National Museum of Scotland (Edinburgh); St Fagans (near Cardiff)
- Visit Historical Sites administered by the National Trust ([www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk)) and English Heritage ([www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk)) and Cadw ([www.cadw.gov.wales](http://www.cadw.gov.wales)) – all websites have searchable directories – and also many great cathedrals around the country, e.g. Canterbury, Durham, Ely, Exeter, Hereford, Lincoln, Westminster Abbey, Winchester, Worcester, York Minster.

#### **Volunteering**

- Look into volunteering opportunities with the National Trust and English Heritage (see websites above), as well as at museums.
- Cathedral Camps: [www.csv.org.uk](http://www.csv.org.uk) spend your holiday working on conservation projects at a historical cathedral.
- Archaeology: opportunities offered by the Young Archaeologists' Club ([www.yac-uk.org](http://www.yac-uk.org)) run by the Council for British Archaeology.

**Once you have read a good article, listened to or watched a good show, or visited a site of interest, why not write it up for inclusion in our Newstead History Journal.**

**We recognise that you have busy lives and that this level of engagement is not always possible all the time - but this is what you should aim for if you want to reach the highest level in the subject. You don't need to do ALL of these things to improve in Politics - just doing one or two of them will have an impact.**