

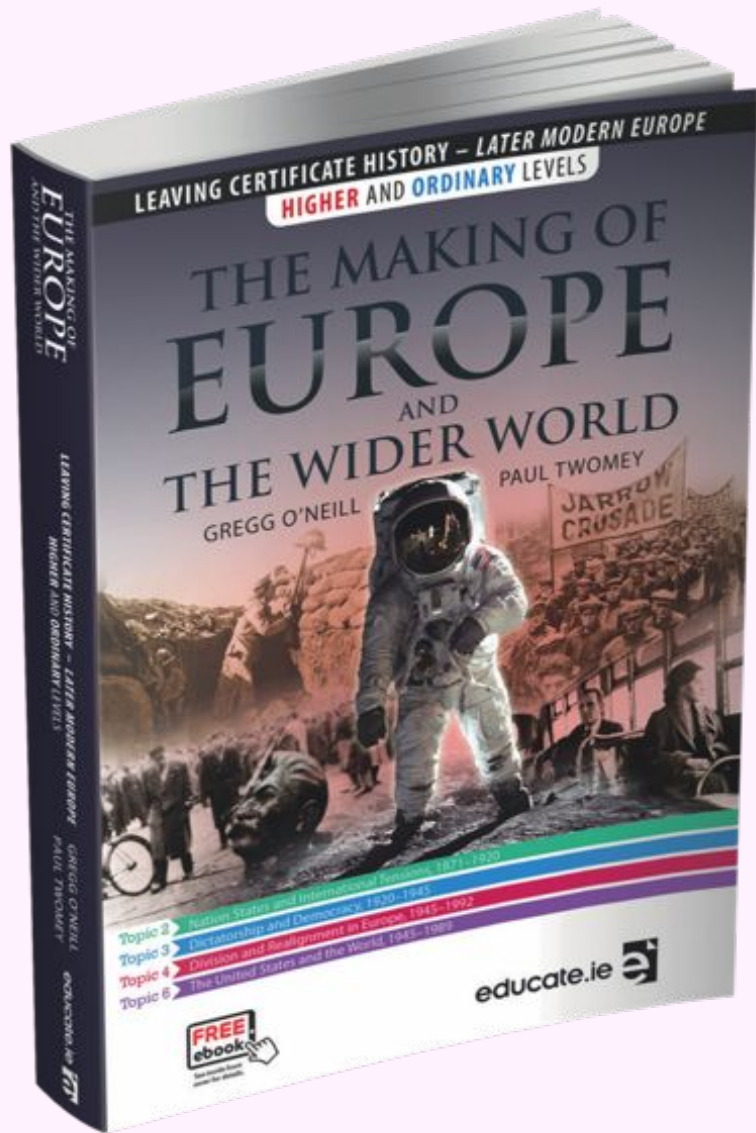
A photograph of the Stonehenge monument in England, featuring large grey stone structures arranged in a circular pattern on a green grassy field under a cloudy sky. The text is overlaid on the image.

Ch. 1 – The Nature of History

The Historian

Learning Outcomes

- 1.4 **DEMONSTRATE** awareness of historical concepts *such as* source and evidence; fact and opinion; viewpoint and objectivity; cause and consequence; change and continuity; time and space
- 1.5 **INVESTIGATE** the job of the historian, *including* how she/he finds and use evidence to form historical judgements which maybe revised and reinterpreted in the light of new evidence
- 1.6 **DEBATE** the usefulness and limitations of different types of primary and secondary sources of historical evidence, such as written, visual, aural, oral and tactile evidence; and **APPRECIATE** the contribution of archaeology and new technology to historical enquiry.
- 1.7 **DEVELOP** historical judgements based on evidence such as a museum, library, heritage centre, digital or other archive exhibition
- 1.10 **DEMONSTRATE** chronological awareness by creating and maintaining timelines to locate personalities, issues and events in their appropriate historical eras.



1.1 What is History?

History

- **History** is the study of the past.
- History is based on evidence and the study of sources.
- A **source** is something that gives us information or evidence about a person, place or thing in the past.
- History concerns itself with the study of *human activity*.
- It is a *story* of the past – and it continues right up to today.

History

- When we study history, we don't just look at the lives of important people but also the everyday lives of ordinary people.
- We learn about their jobs, their clothing, where they lived and what they did for entertainment.
- We also learn about major events from the past.
- When studying history, we investigate not only *what* happened but *why* it happened.

The difference between history and prehistory

- We use the word **prehistory** to speak about the period of time before writing was used.
- We rely on **archaeology** for evidence from this period of time.
- **Archaeology** is the study of the remains left by people in the past.
- We use the word **history** when we are speaking about everything that has happened since people began to use writing.
- We can use written sources and documents as evidence.



Questions Pg. 2 (Artefact Textbook; Green)

1. Define the terms history and prehistory in your own words.
2. Where does the word history come from?
3. Define the term source in your own words.
4. Give two examples of a source.
5. Define the term archaeology in your own words.

1.2 The Study of History

Why we study history?

- Through history, we learn **how people lived before us**.
- We gain an understanding of **how past events unfolded** – what were their causes and what were the consequences?
- Studying history helps us **understand how human experiences have shaped our society and the world**.
- We can learn to **recognise patterns of change**.
- All of this has an impact on us in the present day.

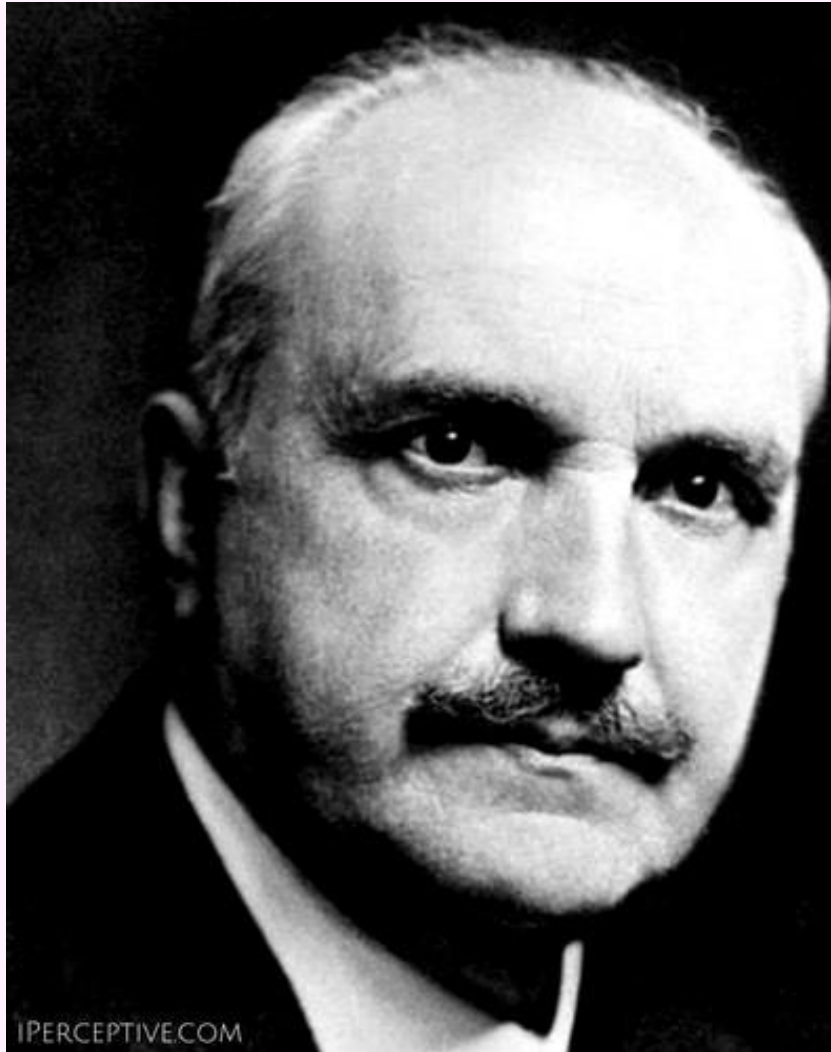
Why we study history?

- Examining history helps us see **how to avoid the mistakes our ancestors made**.
- We also want to know **how to flourish** – how many civilisations prospered and became powerful.
- We can **be inspired by people in the past**.
- We can **develop an appreciation of the cultural achievements of previous generation**.
- This develops **historical consciousness**; being able to place ourselves in the past human experience, linking the past, the present and the future.



Who studies history?

- Anybody can study history. As a student in this classroom; **YOU** are a historian!
- A **historian** is someone who is an expert in, or a student of, history.
- Historians gather evidence from a variety of sources to piece together information from the past.
- An **archaeologist** investigates places and objects left by people in the past, including the time before written records were kept.



“

Those who do not
remember the past are
condemned to repeat it.

George Santayana

(LIFE OF REASON, 1905)

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Questions Pg. 3 (Artefact Textbook; Green)

1. Define the term historian in your own words.
2. Name three groups of people who study history.
3. List three reasons why we study history.
4. Define the term historical consciousness in your own words.

1.3 The Job of the Historian

Finding Evidence

- The job of the historian involves gathering as much evidence as possible from as many different sources as they can find.
- This is so that they can **cross-check** their work; this is when more than one source is used to make sure the information is correct.
- A historian may go to libraries, archives and museums for many of these sources.
- An **archive** is a place that catalogues and stores a collection of written and other sources. For example the National Archives of Ireland in Dublin.
- A **museum** is a place that collects and displays objects for public education and appreciation. For example, the National Museum in Dublin.



Sources used by historians

- Historians use many types of source for information or evidence.
- Sources can be split into two categories; primary and secondary.
- A **primary source** is a source from the time of the event; a first-hand account of what happened.
- A **secondary source** is a source from a later date, after the time of the event.

Examples of Sources

Primary Sources

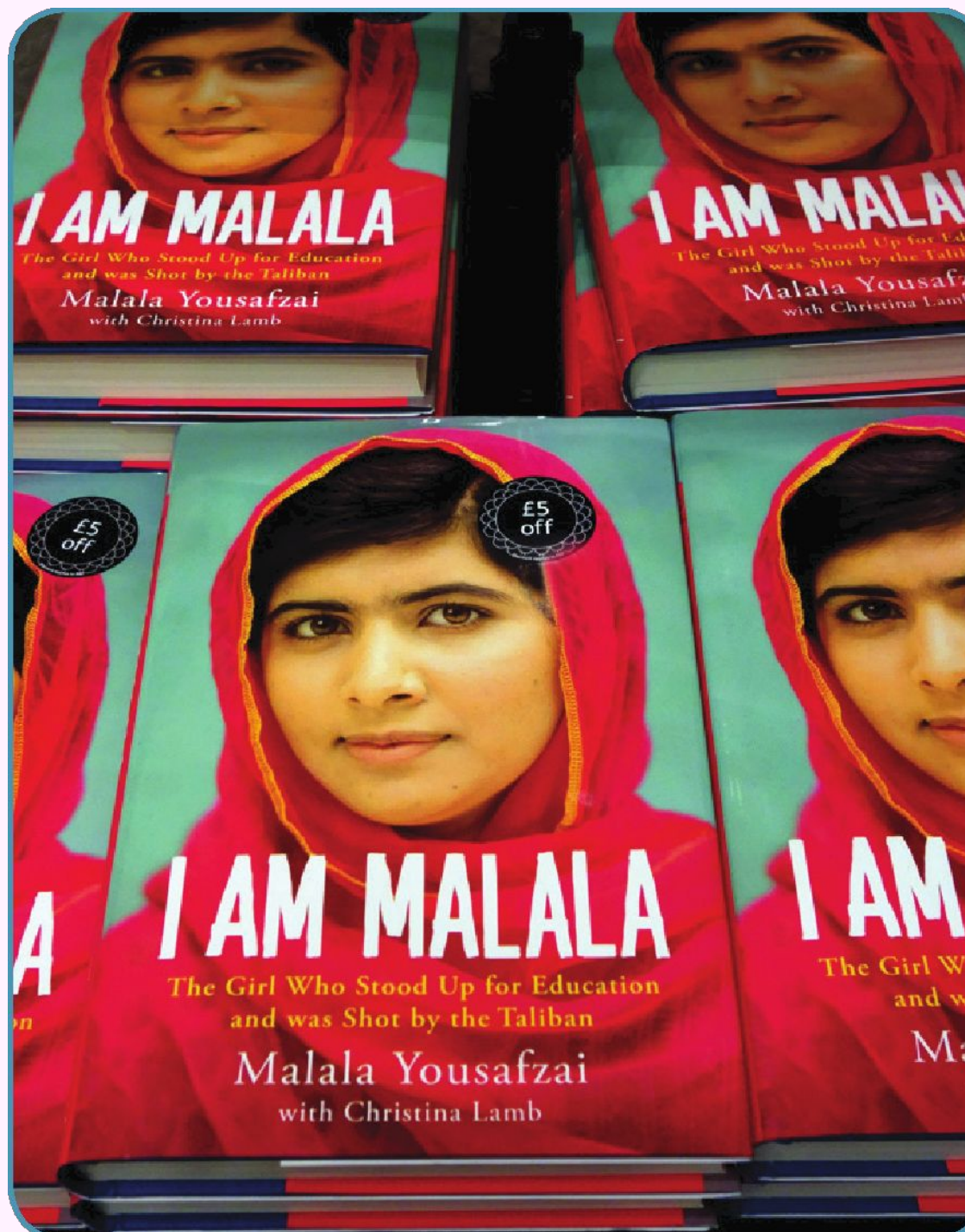
Artefacts	Photographs
Diaries	Cartoons and Drawings
Letters	Government Records
Emails	Newspapers
Interviews	Magazines
Speeches	Autobiographies
Posters	Maps

Secondary Sources

TV/Film and Radio Documentaries
Podcasts
Websites
History books and textbooks
Biographies
Handling Boxes
Movies

Sources used by historians

- Some of these words might be new to you.
- An **artefact** is any human-made object, e.g. pottery, a tool or a weapon.
- An **autobiography** is an account of a person's life written by the person themselves.
- A **biography** is an account of a person's life written by someone else.
- A **census** is an official survey of a population. In Ireland, a census is held every five years.
- A **handling box** contains replicas (copies) of artefacts, so that anyone can examine them without damaging an original.



Questions Pg. 5 (Artefact Textbook)

1. List four places a historian can find evidence.
2. Define the terms cross-checking and artefact in your own words.
3. List three examples of primary sources and three examples of secondary sources.
4. We must be cautious about accepting secondary sources as fact. Discuss the list of secondary sources above with your group and decide which source you think is the least reliable.

1.4 Working with Sources

Reliability of sources

- Historians must be careful of a number of things when using sources.
- Historians must find out how reliable a source is.
- To do this, they need to be aware of a number of issues;
 - **Accuracy** involves judging how accurate/correct the information you are using is.
 - **Bias** is when an account is not balanced or unfairly favours one side.
 - **Exaggeration** is when something is represented as better or worse than it actually was.
 - **Propaganda** is information that has been designed to influence the attitudes of the general public.

Types of sources

- Sources can be categorised into five different types.
 - **Written** – is a written document from the time.
 - **Visual** – what we can see.
 - **Aural** – what we can hear.
 - **Oral** – what we can discuss.
 - **Tactile** – a source that can be touched.
- Generally, primary sources tell us more clearly what life was like at the time.
- Secondary sources give us background information to aid what we learn from the primary source.

Source Type		Usefulness	Problems
Written Sources e.g. diaries, letters, emails, autobiographies , biographies and government records	Primary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We can see which language someone used then, and how.• They can tell us what people at the time were thinking• They may tell the story of a life or provide rich details.• They can provide us with information about local or world events at the time.• Official records can provide information about the state and its population at the time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• They may contain bias.• They may be exaggerated.• They may provide only some of the facts from the time.• They may be written in a different language, e.g. Latin.
	Secondary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• They can give us information gathered about the time.• They can be well-rounded, if they have been properly researched.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• They may contain bias.• They may be exaggerated.

Source Type		Usefulness	Problems
Visual Sources e.g. photographs, posters, art, cartoon, drawings, maps, documentary films	Primary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Photographs capture a moment in time• They can give us faces for the names we learn about in history.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Images could have been edited or changed for reasons of propaganda.• They may even have been created for the sole purpose of propaganda.
	Secondary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• They can be well-rounded and useful, if they have been properly researched and stick to the facts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The director or artist may be biased.

Source Type		Usefulness	Problems
Aural Sources e.g. recorded interviews, podcasts and speeches	Primary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recordings can tell us what someone then was thinking. Speeches and interviews can tell us a lot about issues of the time. How someone truly feels about something is clearer when you listen to them speak about it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They may contain bias. They may be exaggerated. If they are being interviewed a long time after the event, the person may have forgotten details.
	Secondary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They can be well-rounded and useful, if they have been properly researched and stick to the facts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The interviewer or sound editor may be biased.

Source Type		Usefulness	Problems
Oral Sources e.g. interviews carried out by the researcher	Primary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In an interview we can learn what someone thinks or once experienced. • We might hear stories or details from a person's life. • Someone's attitude is clearer, from their voice or expression, when you are speaking with them in person. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They may contain bias. • They may be exaggerated. • If they are being interviewed a long time after the event, the person may have forgotten details. • The person might not be prepared to speak openly with you.
	Secondary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They can give us information gathered about the time. • They can be well-rounded, if they have been properly researched. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They may contain bias. • They may be exaggerated. • Details may be left out, as it is not information from the original person.

Source Type		Usefulness	Problems
Tactile Sources e.g. artefacts and handling boxes	Primary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objects can give us information about how life was lived then. • We can see how objects have changed over time. • They can show us what materials people used then. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They may be damaged when found, or missing pieces, and so they may not give a complete picture.
	Secondary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They can provide us with examples of recreated items that may be too far away in museums for us to study. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They may not be made with the same materials as the original items.

Questions Pg. 7 (Artefact Textbook)

1. Define the terms primary source and secondary source in your own words.
2. Explain bias and propaganda in your own words.
3. List three examples of written source.
4. List three examples of tactile sources.
5. Name three things historians need to consider when studying sources.

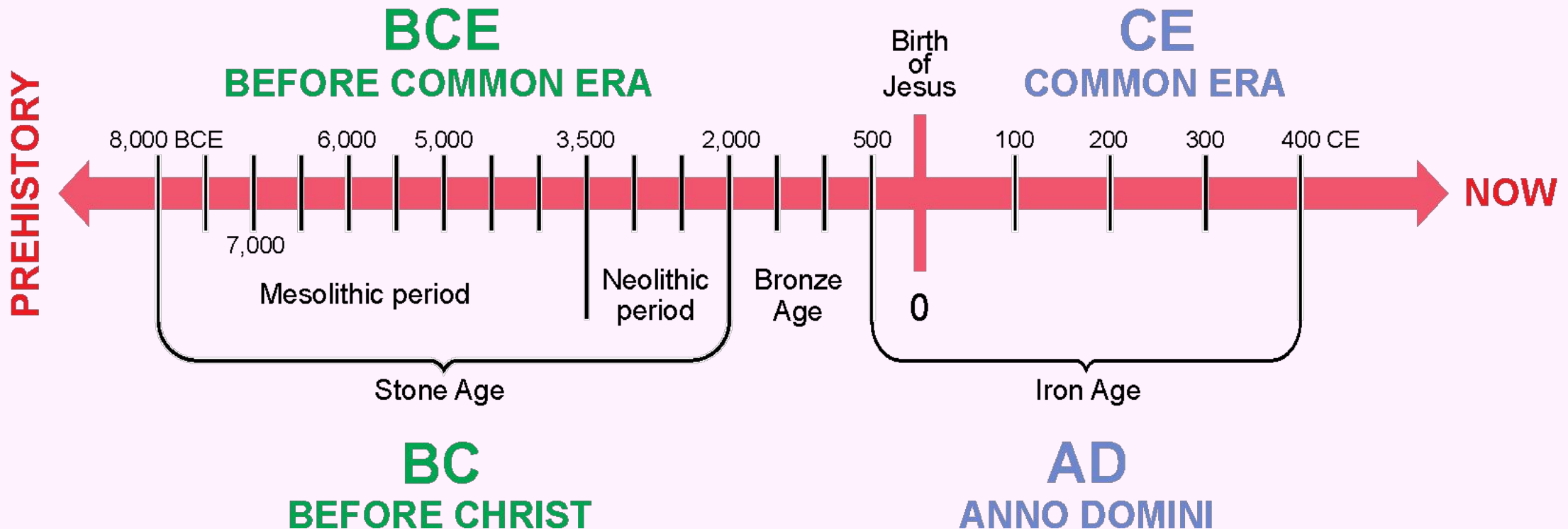
1.5 Time and Timelines

How Historians use time?

- The timing of events is important to the historian.
- When historians find out information, they must put it in **chronological order** – meaning they put events into the sequence in which they happened.
- To help with this, historians
 - Divide time into hours, days, weeks, months and years.
 - Group years into **decades** (10 years), **centuries** (100 years) and **millennia** (1,000 years)
 - Organise events using a common feature (e.g. Stone Age, Bronze Age)
 - Use **timelines** to show the order of events

Timelines and Dates

- In the Western World, the birth of Jesus Christ is used as a fixed starting point.
- We count all of time either forwards or backwards from this point.



Timelines and Dates

- We call any date **before** the birth of Jesus **BCE** (**Before Common Era**) or **BC** (**Before Christ**).
 - E.g. The first Olympic Games took place in 776 BCE/BC – 776 years before Jesus was born.
 - The year 776 BC was in the eight century BC; beginning in 799 BC and ending in 700 BC – think of it like a countdown!
- We call any date since the birth of Jesus either **CE** (**Common Era**) or **AD** (**Anno Domini – meaning ‘The Year of Our Lord’**)
 - E.g. The twenty-first century (this century) began with the year AD 2000 and will end with the year 2099.

1.6 Reinterpreting History

How history can be reinterpreted?

- Over time a new piece of evidence may emerge which may lead to an event or time in history being reinterpreted.
- **Reinterpretation** means to see something in a new or different light.
- New evidence sometimes creates doubt about what we believed to have happened during events and needs to be carefully studied.
- One example is the **sinking of the Titanic** in 1912.
 - New evidence has revealed that a fire weakened the hull, making it easier for the iceberg to breach the metal.

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Questions Pg. 10 (Artefact Textbook)

1. Define the term chronology in your own words.
2. List three ways historians put events in order.
3. What centuries do these years belong to; (a) AD 1066; (b) 514 BC?
4. Which is earlier; 30 BC or 41 BC?
5. Define the term reinterpretation in your own words.

1.7 How To Research Online

What's involved in online research?

- Organise your search
- Search further
- Is it a reliable source?
- Is it accurate?
- What is the purpose of the website?
- What is the background of the source?
- Write notes
- **Cite** (to refer to evidence you have gathered or read)
- Avoid **plagiarism** (passing someone else's work as your own without citing)

1.8 Summary and Questions

Summary

- In this half of the chapter, we learned that:
 - History is the study of the past.
 - Sources give us evidence from the past.
 - Sources can be primary or secondary and categorised into five types.
 - The time before writing is called prehistory. We depend on archaeology for this period.
 - Historians use museums, libraries and archives to find evidence and cross-check their sources.
 - Historians must judge how reliable a source is.

Summary

- History must sometimes be reinterpreted when new evidence is discovered.
- Historians put events into chronological order using hours, days, weeks, months and years.
 - Years are often counted in decades (ten years), centuries (100 years) or millennia (1,000 years).
- Historians make timelines using BCE/BC and CE/AD.
- When researching online, we must follow certain steps.

Questions Pg. 12 (Artefact Textbook)

1. History is the study of the _____.
- a) History is based on _____ and the study of _____.
- b) A source is something that gives us _____ about a person, place or thing in the past.
- c) We use the word _____ when we are speaking about the period of time before writing was used.
- d) We rely on _____ for evidence from this period of time.
- e) Archaeology is the study of the remains left by _____ in the past.

Missing words: People; Past; Information; Prehistory; Archaeology; Evidence; Sources

Questions Pg. 12 (Artefact Textbook)

2. List the most important reasons why you feel we should study history.
3. What is the difference between a historian and an archaeologist?
4. Which years mark the beginning and end of:
 - a) The fourteenth century
 - b) The third century BC
 - c) The twenty-first century