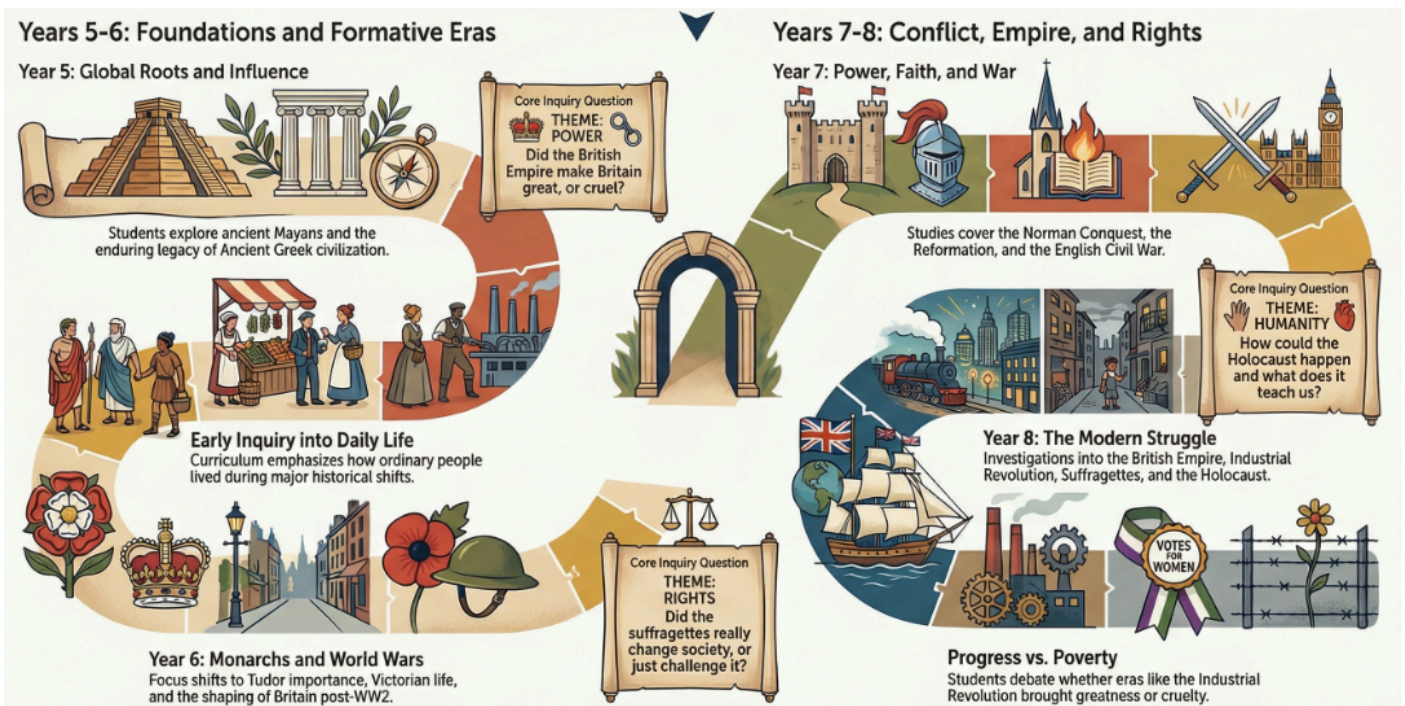


Ralph Sadleir School



‘Students of Today, Citizens of Tomorrow’

History Guide for Parents



A Parent's Guide to History at Ralph Sadleir School

"The Subject for Life: Building Students of Today and Citizens of Tomorrow"

At Ralph Sadleir School, History is far more than a collection of dates and names; it is a vital discipline that prepares our children for the complexities of the modern world. Our curriculum is specifically designed to fulfill our school motto: "**Students of Today, Citizens of Tomorrow**". By exploring the triumphs, struggles, and diverse societies of the past, we equip our students with the character, intellect, and empathy required for future success and engaged citizenship.

1. Our Core Values in the History Classroom

History provides a unique landscape to cultivate the five core values of Ralph Sadleir School:

- **Respect & Kindness:** Through the study of diverse societies and historical figures, students explore motivations and perspectives different from their own. This develops deep empathy and social cohesion.
- **Determination:** History is a subject of intellectual rigor. Students must analyse complex sources and evaluate competing interpretations, requiring resilience and precision.
- **Confidence:** By constructing evidence-based arguments, students find their voice and learn to articulate sophisticated historical judgments.
- **Responsibility:** By studying cause and consequence, students understand the impact of human actions, fostering a sense of duty toward their community and the wider world.

2. The Curriculum Journey (Years 5–8)

Our History curriculum is more than a list of topics; it is a four-year voyage that travels from the mysteries of ancient civilizations to the complex social challenges of our modern world. We teach History through "Enquiry Questions"—powerful, overarching problems that invite your child to step into the shoes of a historian, investigate the evidence, and reach their own reasoned conclusions.

The Adventure Begins: Year 5

The journey starts by looking far across the ocean and back in time to Mesoamerica, asking, "Who were the Mayans?" This unit introduces students to a complex non-European civilization, followed by an exploration of how the Ancient Greeks laid the foundations for our modern democracy.

As the year progresses, students return to British shores to see why the Tudors remain so central to our national story and discover the domestic realities of life during Queen Victoria's long reign

Expanding Horizons: Year 6

In Year 6, students broaden their scope to look at themes that span centuries. They investigate the evolution of Crime and Punishment, tracking how justice has changed from the trials of the past to the laws of today. They celebrate "Herstory," discovering the women who changed the world but are often left out of traditional textbooks. The year ends with the sobering and heroic investigation into how World War I was fought and won and concludes by examining the home front and the global impact of World War II, helping students understand how the conflict shaped the Britain they live in today.

Deepening Inquiry: Year 7

As students move into Year 7, the questions become more analytical. They begin with the monumental turning point of 1066, asking how the Norman Conquest changed English life forever. They dive into the grit of Medieval Life. After returning to the social history of Tudor England, they explore the dramatic religious upheavals of the Reformation. Students then evaluate the reign of Elizabeth I and explore a darker chapter of the 17th century: the English Civil War and the social paranoia of the witch hunts, learning how fear can affect a society.

Mastering the Modern World: Year 8

In their final year, our students tackle the most significant and challenging issues of modern history. They begin with a critical evaluation of the British Empire, debating whether it brought greatness or cruelty to the world. They learn about the transformation of the Industrial Revolution, weighing the benefits of technology against the hardships faced by ordinary people. They move into the 20th century investigating the Suffragettes' struggle for the vote and the horrors of the Holocaust, a vital enquiry into human choice and moral responsibility. The journey concludes with the Civil Rights movement, as students ask whether society has truly achieved equality or if the struggle for justice continues today.

Why This Path?

By the time your child completes this journey, they will have developed a robust sense of chronology and the ability to handle evidence with maturity. Moving from the foundational stories of Year 5 to the sophisticated global debates of Year 8 ensures they leave Ralph Sadleir not just with knowledge of the past, but with the critical thinking skills to be the "Citizens of Tomorrow."

3. How We Teach: The Ralph Sadleir Approach

To ensure high-quality learning, History lessons follow a consistent, evidence-based structure.

The Lesson Routine Each session typically begins with a "**Flashback**", a retrieval practice task where students recall information from previous lessons to build long-term memory. This is followed by engaging starters to introduce new historical ideas. Teachers use "Think Alouds" to model how expert historians interrogate texts and linguistic "signposts".

Writing Like a Historian: POKE We use the **POKE (Point, Own Knowledge, Explain)** structure to scaffold analytical answers. This ensures students construct well-substantiated responses to questions regarding causation and significance.

Analysing Sources: We use the **TOPCAT** acronym to judge source utility:

- Type
- Origin
- Purpose
- Content
- Accuracy
- Typicality

4. High Expectations in Exercise Books

A student's exercise book is a record of their pride and progress. Our presentation standards include:

- Using pink A4 books written in blue or black ink.
- Underlining all titles and dates with a ruler.
- Neatly sticking in all work without overlaps.
- Using **Green or Red Pens** for "DIRT" (Dedicated Improvement and Reflection Time) to respond to teacher feedback.

5. Support and Adaptation

We focus on making challenging history accessible to all learners through adaptive teaching.

- **Dual-Coding:** Pairing key historical terms with visuals to support memory.
- **Source Chunking:** Breaking dense primary sources into manageable paragraphs with focused questions.
- **Graphic Organisers:** Using "fishbone" diagrams for causes and flow charts for historical processes like revolutions.
- **Pre-teaching:** Defining abstract concepts like *urbanisation* or *imperialism* using simple language before starting a new unit.

6. Developing Oracy (Speaking and Listening)

History is a collaborative subject where we "talk like a historian".

- **Talk Roles:** In debates, students are assigned roles such as "The Builder" (adding to points) or "The Challenger" (presenting counter-arguments).
- **Harkness Discussions:** Student-led circles where they invite others into the conversation using specific sentence stems.
- **Hot Seating:** "Fed-in-Fact" role-play where students must adapt their responses to new evidence provided on fact cards.

7. Assessment and Marking

Our feedback culture is designed to be sustainable and high-impact.

- **Formative Assessment:** Teachers use mini-whiteboards, hinge questions, and exit tickets to check understanding during the lesson.
- **Summative Assessment:** Students complete one main formal assessment per term, featuring a mix of multiple-choice, short-answer, and essay-style questions.
- **Progress Ladders:** Feedback on formal work clearly states "What I have Achieved" and specific "Next Steps" for improvement.

8. Enrichment and British Values

We aim to make the past tangible through diverse experiences.

- **Trips and Visitors:** Where possible, we visit castles, museums, or theatre productions and host enrichment days with guest speakers.
- **British Values:** History is the primary vehicle for teaching values such as **Democracy** (through debates), the **Rule of Law** (studying leaders), and **Individual Liberty** (investigating chosen topics).

9. Future Careers

History equips students with the analytical and communication skills for a wide range of future paths:

- **Traditional Roles:** Lawyer, Archaeologist, Diplomat, or Museum Curator.
- **Creative Paths:** Game Narrative Designer, Journalist, or Podcast Host.
- **Future Super Jobs:** Virtual Reality Archaeologist, Space Colony Planner, or Ethical Memory Engineer!!

By the end of Year 8, our students move to Freman College with a robust chronological understanding and the critical thinking skills necessary to navigate their future as informed citizens.