

History Curriculum Map

Intent

At Conisborough College, our History curriculum follows a clear chronological journey from the medieval period to the modern day. Students study a diverse range of people, places and events so they can build secure knowledge, debate confidently and think critically about the past.

Our curriculum is organised around three big ideas of **Power**, **Identity** and **Connectivity**. These themes help students make meaningful links between units and practise more abstract and creative thinking.

Students develop key historical skills through enquiries focused on **causation**, **change** and **significance**. They revisit these disciplinary concepts each year in new contexts, deepening their understanding of how historians explain and interpret the past. They also learn how historical interpretations are formed and why they differ.

Our aim is to build curiosity and encourage students to question both the past and the present. Students learn how history shapes identity and how studying different periods and people helps us become more empathetic and open-minded. This prepares them to understand the modern world with confidence.

Throughout KS3 and GCSE, students build a strong foundation of knowledge and disciplinary thinking. They learn to ask thoughtful questions, think independently and develop analytical skills that help them become reflective, informed young people.

Year 7	Empires in the East and West C.1000 Students explore major empires across Europe, Africa and Asia to understand how power, belief, and connectivity shaped societies. They compare Chinese dynasties, the Islamic Empire, the Byzantine Empire and the Holy Roman Empire, learning how trade routes like the Silk Roads spread ideas, religion and technology. How skills build: - Introduces similarity and difference through comparing empires. - Builds chronology by placing global societies in the same period. - Develops early significance: why these empires mattered. How knowledge connects: - Establishes global context for later units on empire, religion and trade. - Builds foundations for Year 8 Empire and Year 9 WW1 (alliances, global connections).	Norman Conquest and Control Students learn how 1066 transformed England. They study Anglo-Saxon society, the succession crisis, the battles of 1066, and how the Normans used castles, fear, feudalism and administration to control the population. How skills build: - Strengthens causation (why William won). - Introduces consequence and change (changes under Norman rule). - Builds evidence inference using the Bayeux Tapestry How knowledge connects: - Sets up Year 8 work on monarchy, rebellion and political change. - Builds understanding of power and succession for later units.	Religion in the Middle Ages Students investigate the power of the medieval Church, beliefs about heaven and hell, pilgrimage, and the Church’s influence on education and healthcare. They also study the persecution of Jewish communities. How skills build: - Develops evidence inference (Doom paintings) - Builds significance (why the Church mattered). How knowledge connects: - Prepares students for Year 8 Reformation - Builds conceptual understanding of beliefs, identity, and persecution.	Challenges to the Medieval Monarchs Students develop a more accurate and nuanced understanding of the historical idea of monarchy and royal power. They will learn that medieval monarchs did not hold absolute control and often had to compete with other sources of power such as the Church, nobles, and local leaders. How skills build: - Deepens causation (why monarchs were challenged). - Strengthens consequence (impact of Magna Carta, Peasants’ Revolt). - Builds change and continuity (monarchy over time). How knowledge connects: - Leads directly into Year 8 Civil War - Builds understanding of power, protest, and democracy.	Medieval Mali This unit explores the significance of Mansa Musa, the ninth Mansa of the Mali Empire. Students look at his infamous Hajj to Mecca and the impact this had on the Mali Empire, especially in the creation of Timbuktu as an influential city of learning. How skills build: - Strengthens global comparison. - Builds significance (Mansa Musa’s legacy). - Reinforces connectivity (trade, religion, knowledge) How knowledge connects: - Supports Year 8 African kingdoms in the Transatlantic Slave Trade unit. - Builds global awareness and diversity.
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Year 8	The Reformation and the Tudors From Y7 there should be a sense of how important Christianity was to society, this topic is about seismic upheaval that happened across all sections of society. Students study religious change, political crisis and social diversity in Tudor England. They explore the break with Rome, the Reformation, Elizabeth’s challenges and early English exploration. How skills build: • Strengthens causation (why Henry broke with Rome). • Builds change/continuity (religion across Tudor monarchs). How knowledge connects: • Prepares students for Year 8 Civil War • Builds conceptual threads of belief, power, and identity.	England: A world turned upside down Students explore how royal power was challenged and reshaped across the seventeenth century. They study James I and the Gunpowder Plot, the long- and short-term causes of the Civil War and the execution of Charles I. They investigate the Interregnum, then cover the Restoration, concerns over James II, and the Glorious Revolution as a turning point in limiting royal authority. How skills build: • Strengthens evaluating causes (importance, comparison). • Deepens consequence (execution of Charles I, Restoration). How knowledge connects: • Leads into Year 9 WW1 (causation, alliances, political change). • Builds understanding of democracy, protest, and rights.	The Transatlantic Slave Trade Students develop an understanding of African societies before European involvement by studying the kingdoms of Benin and Songhai. They then examine the triangular trade, learning how people were taken from Africa, transported along the Middle Passage, and forced to produce goods such as sugar, tobacco, and coffee. Students explore the brutal reality of enslavement while also studying resistance and expressions of Black agency. How skills build: • Strengthens significance (abolition movement). • Builds interpretation (voices of enslaved people). • How knowledge connects: • Prepares students for Year 9 Holocaust (persecution, identity). • Builds conceptual threads of migration, trade, power, and resistance.	The industrial Revolution In this unit, students explore the major changes in England between 1750 and 1900 known as the Industrial Revolution. They investigate the causes and consequences of rapid industrial growth, new technologies, and changing working conditions, asking whether this period of “progress” benefited everyone. How skills build: • Deepens change/continuity (extent and pace of change). • Strengthens consequence (social impacts). • Builds evaluating significance (key inventions). How knowledge connects: • Leads into Year 8 Empire (industrialisation and imperial expansion). • Supports Year 9 suffrage (rights, protest, class).	The British Empire Students develop an understanding of the complexity of the British Empire and how it changed over time. They explore how Britain gained power in different regions in different ways, and how people across the empire experienced British rule. Case studies from, India, Australia, and Africa help students understand the varied and often unequal relationships within the empire. How skills build: • Strengthens similarity/difference (coloniser vs colonised). • Builds interpretation (different views of empire). • Deepens consequence (political, economic, social impacts). • How knowledge connects: • Directly prepares students for Year 9 WW1 (imperialism). • Builds conceptual threads of power, identity, migration, and trade.
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Year 9	World War One Students deepen their understanding of causation by exploring whether World War One was inevitable and identifying its main causes. Students then apply this knowledge to understand the experience of WW1 on the front line and at home. How skills build: • Deepens complex causation (interlinked factors). • Strengthens interpretation (soldier experiences). • Builds significance (impact on rights, society) • How knowledge connects: • Leads into suffrage (women’s roles). • Prepares for WW2 (global conflict, nationalism). .	Suffrage Students investigate how democratic rights expanded. They study the Chartists, suffragists, suffragettes and the impact of WW1 on political change. How skills build: • Strengthens evaluation (peaceful vs militant protest). • Builds change/continuity (rights over time). • Deepens significance (Representation of the People Acts). How knowledge connects: • Builds on Year 8 protest movements. • Prepares for Year 9 WW2 (rights, identity, democracy).	World War Two Students explore the causes of WW2, life in 1930s Britain, the Blitz, evacuation, rationing, propaganda and the changing roles of women. They analyse how total war affected civilians and soldiers How skills build: • Strengthens interpretation (propaganda, leadership). • Deepens evaluation (civilian vs. soldiers experience • Deepens similarity/difference (civilian experiences). How knowledge connects: • Leads directly into the Holocaust. • Builds conceptual threads of identity, belief, power, and migration.	The Holocaust Students investigate antisemitism over time and the persecution of Jewish people in the 20th century. They focus on how Jewish communities were treated in Nazi Germany and how increasing discrimination and violence led to the Final Solution and the Holocaust. How skills build: • Deepens interpretation (sources, testimonies). • Strengthens significance (memory, responsibility). • Builds similarity/difference (individual experiences). How knowledge connects: • Builds on Year 7 Jewish persecution and Year 8 slavery. • Develops understanding of identity, rights, prejudice, and humanity.	Post War Britain Students explore how Britain changed between 1945 and 1979 and assess the impact of the Second World War on people’s lives. They study the creation of the welfare state, migration from the Commonwealth, civil rights campaigns and shifts in work, housing and identity. The enquiry focuses on how far British society changed after 1945. How skills build: • Deepens Change and continuity (evaluating the extent of post-war change). • Strengthens Significance (importance of developments such as the NHS and Windrush). • Deepens Similarity and difference (comparing experiences of different groups in post-war Britain). How knowledge connects: • Builds on Year 8 Empire (migration, identity, belonging). • Builds on Year 9 WW2 (impact of total war on society). • Strengthens understanding of identity, rights, equality, and the role of the state in modern Britain.
Year 10	Paper 1: Medicine Through Time, 1250–Present Students study how medical understanding, treatment and public health developed from the Middle Ages to the present day. They investigate beliefs about disease, the influence of factors such as the Church, government, science and technology, and the role of key individuals across four periods. Students gain a clear sense of long-term chronology and understand how Britain changed over 1000 years, from limited knowledge to the creation of the NHS. How skills build: • Change and continuity across four periods (extent, pace, turning points). • Causation using GCSE factors (government, science, individuals, war, religion). • Significance (judging turning points such as germ theory). • Similarity and difference across periods.			Paper 3: Weimar and Nazi Germany 1918,1939 Students study Germany from the end of the First World War to the outbreak of the Second World War. They begin with the Weimar Republic, examining its origins, early challenges and the so-called ‘golden age’. They assess economic, political and social change, including reasons for early unpopularity, recovery under Stresemann and changes to living standards. Students then investigate why support for the Nazi Party increased after 1929 and how Hitler established a totalitarian state, analysing the interplay between propaganda, terror, ideology and control. How skills build: • Causation (reasons for Weimar instability and Nazi rise) • Source analysis and evaluation (usefulness, reliability, provenance). • Interpretation analysis (why interpretations differ; evaluating interpretations using contextual knowledge). • Substantiated judgement using precise knowledge of the period	

	How knowledge connects: • Builds directly on KS3 medicine, Church influence, scientific change and public health. • Strengthens understanding of power, knowledge, innovation and government action. • Provides long-term context for WW1 medical developments in the historic environment study. • Establishes the full chronology of British history that underpins the GCSE course. Historic Environment: The British Sector of the Western Front, 1914–18 Students investigate how conditions on the Western Front shaped illness, injury and medical treatment. They study trench systems, new weapons, types of wounds, and the development of medical responses such as triage, blood transfusion and mobile X-ray units. How skills build: • Source analysis and evaluation using contemporary evidence. • Enquiry skills (constructing evidence-based conclusions). • Significance of WW1 medical developments. • Accurate description of features of the period (GCSE exam requirement). How knowledge connects: • Builds directly on KS3 WW1 (trench warfare, volunteering, empire troops). • Links to Medicine Through Time by showing how early 20th-century conditions accelerated medical change. • Strengthens understanding of warfare, innovation, technology and public health. • Provides contextual depth for modern medicine and the development of the NHS.	How knowledge connects: • Builds on KS3 WW1 (German defeat, political instability). • Builds on KS3 Suffrage and protest (democracy, rights, political change). • Builds on KS3 WW2 (Nazi ideology, dictatorship, causes of conflict). • Strengthens understanding of power, democracy, identity, propaganda, and state control.
Year 11	Paper 2: Superpower Relations and the Cold War Students study the global conflict between the USA and the USSR from 1945 to 1991. They learn about the origins and development of the Cold War, the division of Europe, crises such as Berlin and Cuba, the building and demolition of the Berlin Wall, and how tensions eventually eased leading to the collapse of the USSR. Students examine how the conflict affected countries within both the American and Soviet spheres of influence and analyse the interplay of political, military, economic and ideological factors across the period. How skills build: • Causation (reasons for Cold War tension and escalation). • Key features (accurate description of events, crises and policies). • Change and continuity (shifts in relations from confrontation to détente). • Consequence (impact of crises on global politics). • Similarity and difference (comparing American and Soviet aims, methods and influence). • Significance (importance of turning points such as Berlin, Cuba and Gorbachev’s reforms). Strengthens AO1–AO2 knowledge and understanding needed for GCSE period studies. How knowledge connects: Builds on KS3 WW2 (origins of post-war tension, division of Europe). Strengthens understanding of power, ideology, democracy vs dictatorship, and international relations. Provides essential background for later GCSE topics on conflict, diplomacy and global change.	Paper 2: Elizabethan England 1558-1588 Students study England during the early years of Elizabeth I’s reign, focusing on the problems she faced when she became queen, religious divisions in England, relations with Spain, and how the lives of ordinary people changed. They follow the three key topics in sequence, understanding how political, religious and social developments interacted and shaped Elizabethan England. How skills build: • Causation — explaining the reasons behind Elizabeth’s early problems, religious tension, foreign conflict and the launch of the Spanish Armada. • Judgement — evaluating the importance of key events and decisions (e.g., the Religious Settlement, Mary Queen of Scots, plots, foreign policy choices). • Describing key features — accurate knowledge of developments such as the Religious Settlement, Elizabethan society, relations with Spain and the Armada. How knowledge connects: Builds on KS3 Tudors (Reformation, Elizabeth’s legitimacy, plots, foreign threats). Builds on KS3 Medieval monarchy (succession, challenges to royal authority). Strengthens understanding of religion, power, foreign relations, and social change. Provides essential context for wider GCSE themes of monarchy, conflict and state authority.

Impact:

At Conisborough College, our History curriculum ensures that students develop a secure and meaningful understanding of the past by studying diverse people, places and periods. Through this, they learn to make sense of the world they inhabit today. Students build strong disciplinary skills such as thinking, analysing, explaining, literacy and oracy, which support their wider learning and prepare them for future study, employment and life beyond school. We aim to foster curiosity and a lifelong love of learning.

Progress is measured through regular formative assessment, including in-lesson quizzes and checks within small steps of learning which allow teachers to adapt their teaching responsively. Students also complete summative assessments twice per year at KS3, ensuring they develop the precision, stamina and confidence needed for KS4.

At KS3, students learn not only historical knowledge but how to *use* that knowledge: they practise explanation, analysis, evaluation, thematic linking, and the interpretation of sources and interpretations. These skills directly prepare them for GCSE expectations to describe, explain, and evaluate.

At KS4, students are regularly assessed through keyword tests to secure historic literacy, and they receive targeted feedback on exam-style questions throughout the course. Mock exams further prepare students for public examinations, ensuring they can confidently access all question types and apply their knowledge and skills with accuracy and independence.

Through this structured progression, students leave Conisborough College as thoughtful, analytical young historians who can use evidence, construct arguments, and understand the complexity of the past and its relevance to the present.