

History Level 2

Chapter 2 — Historical Concepts and Skills I: starting and gathering an investigation

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Asking historical questions

You can find out about the past. All you need is a good question!

In this topic, you will learn how to ask **historical questions** about things from the past.

Teacher note: several activities ask students to bring a photo or object from home, or to ask questions of an older family member. Offer every student a choice of person and source — a grandparent, an aunt or uncle, a neighbour, or another grown-up they know and trust — so no child is left out by their family or care situation. This section is exercised on the family stories of Section 1A and the local place of Section 1E (see the TOC, decision D4).

Our learning

What is history?

History is finding out about the past. People who love the past ask questions about it. You can too!

What is the past?

The **past** is the time before now. Yesterday is the past. Last year is the past. When your mum and dad were little, that was the past too.

What is a historical question?

Historical means *about the past*. So a **historical question** is a question about the past.

- *How old am I now?* — This is about now. It is **not** a historical question.
- *How old was I on my first birthday?* — This is about the past. It **is** a historical question!

Question words

Strong questions start with a **question word**: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How? Each question word asks for a different kind of answer.

Question words

Who?

asks about a person

Who built this hall?

What?

asks about a thing

What did they play?

Where?

asks about a place

Where was I born?

When?

asks about a time

When was this taken?

Why?

asks for a reason

Why is it important?

How?

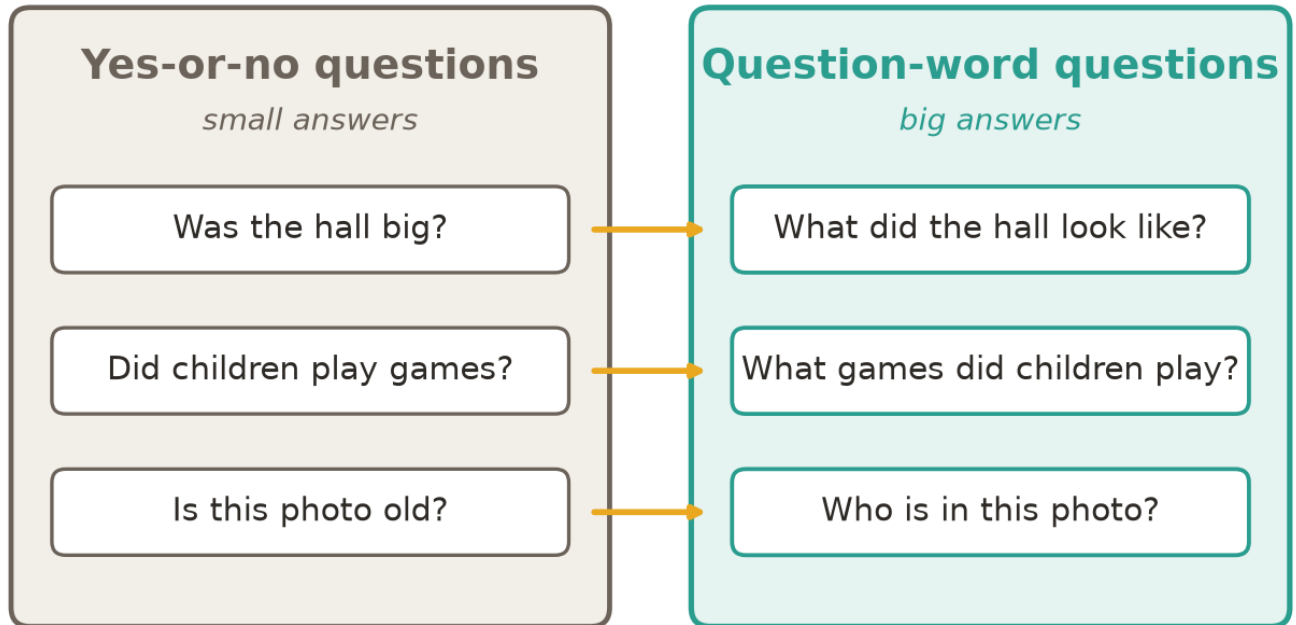
asks about the way something happens

How was this made?

The six question words, who, what, where, when, why and how, each with what it asks about and one example question

Some questions can be answered with just *yes* or *no*. A yes-or-no question gives a small answer. A question that starts with a question word gives a big answer. It tells us more!

Which question tells us more?



A question word gives a big answer!

Two lists side by side: yes-or-no questions that give small answers, and question-word questions that tell us more

Four things we can ask about

Historical questions can be about four things: **objects**, **people**, **places** and **events**.

- An **object** is a thing, like an old toy or an old cup.
- **People** are the ones in the story — your family, or the people who lived long ago.
- A **place** is somewhere, like your school or an old building in your town.
- An **event** is something that happened, like a party or a school day long ago.

Four things we can ask about

Objects



How old is this toy?

People



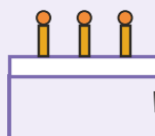
Who is in this photo?

Places



What is the oldest building in your town?

Events



What happened at the party?

Four pictures showing an object, a person, a place and an event, with one example question under each

Sources give us ideas for questions

A **source** is something that helps us find out about the past. A photo is a source. An old toy is a source. A story that someone tells you is a source too.

When we look at a source, questions pop into our heads. Looking and asking go together! You will learn more about sources in Topic 2C.

Worked examples

Example 1 — with help

The class looks at an old photo. It shows children playing a game long ago. The teacher asks: *What can we wonder about this photo?* Together, the class asks questions.

What we can see

A question we can ask

children

Who are the children?

a place

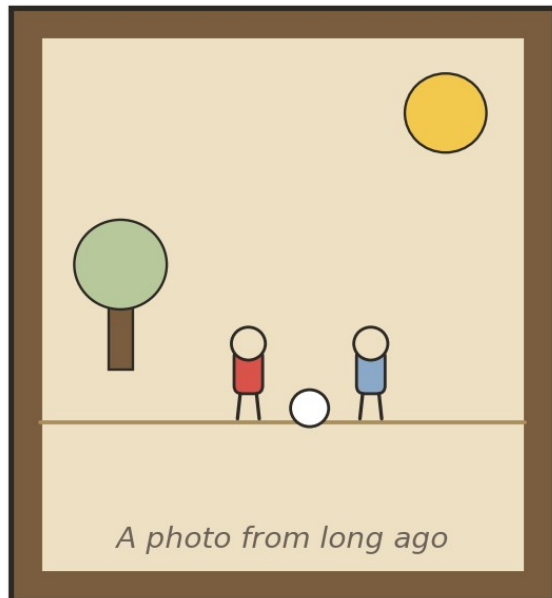
Where are they?

a game

What game are they playing?

Every question is about the past, so every question is a **historical question**. The photo is the **source**, and the source gave the class ideas for questions.

Look at a source, then ask!



Who are the children?

Where are they?

What game are they playing?

A picture of an old photo showing children playing a game long ago, with three question bubbles next to it

Example 2 — with help

The teacher reads the class a story about their town long ago. The students ask questions **before**, **during** and **after** the story.

When we ask

Our question

before the story

I wonder what our town was like long ago.

during the story

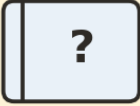
Why did the children walk to school?

after the story

How was the town different to now?

Asking before, during and after helps us listen well and think hard.

Questions before, during and after a story

Before the story	During the story	After the story
		
I wonder what our town was like long ago.	Why did the children walk to school?	How was the town different to now?

Three pictures for before, during and after a story, each with a model question

Example 3 — on your own

When you ask someone questions to find out about something, that is called an **interview**. Tom interviews his grandmother about when she was little. He asks:

1. Where were you born?
2. What was your house like?
3. What games did you play?
4. What did you do at school?
5. What was your favourite place?

Tom writes the answers down. Now he knows more about his family's past.

A model interview

My family interview

Ask: my grandmother

1. Where were you born? _____
2. What was your house like? _____
3. What games did you play? _____
4. What did you do at school? _____
5. What was your favourite place? _____
6. Write one of your own: _____

Say thank you at the end!

A model family interview card with five written questions and a line to add one more

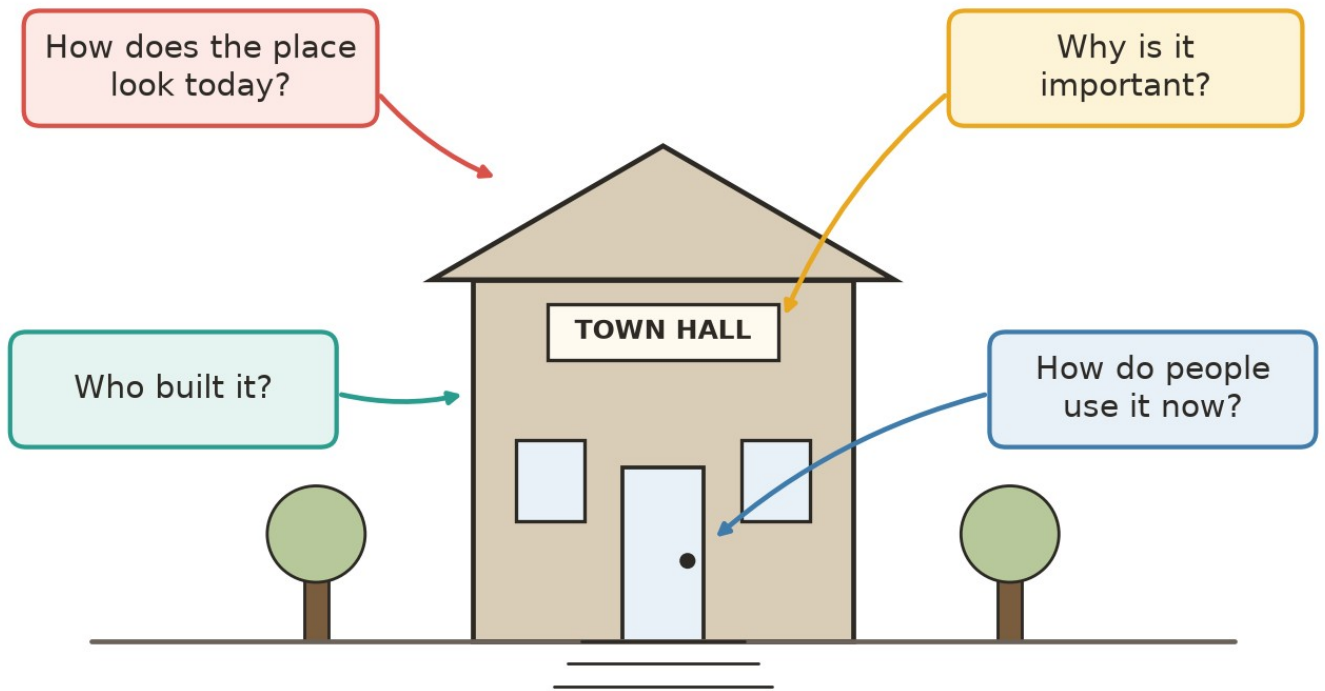
Example 4 — on your own

A **site** is a place with a history. The class visits the old hall in their town. They look at the hall and ask:

- How does the place look today?
- Who built it?
- How do people use it now?
- Why is it important to our town?

The hall is old and it has a story. The class's questions will help them find it out.

Questions about a place



A site is a place with a history.

A labelled drawing of an old town hall with four question labels pointing to it

Practice questions

With help

Q1. Circle the historical questions. A historical question is about the past.

1. How old was I on my first birthday?
2. What will we have for lunch today?
3. Where did my dad go to school?
4. What is the weather like now?
5. What did my sister do yesterday?

Q2. Join each question word to what it asks about.

Question word	Asks about
Who?	a place
Where?	a time
When?	a person
What?	a reason
Why?	a thing
How?	the way something happens

Q3. Sort the questions into the right box: **object**, **person**, **place** or **event**.

1. What was the old phone like?
2. How old is this cup?
3. Who made this toy?
4. What did your grandmother do when she was little?
5. What is the oldest building in your town?
6. Where did your town get its name?
7. What happened at the party?
8. When was the school picnic?

Q4. Tick the question that tells us more in each pair.

1. ☐ Was the hall big? ☐ What did the hall look like?
2. ☐ Did children play games? ☐ What games did children play?
3. ☐ Is this photo old? ☐ Who is in this photo?

Q5. Look at the old photo in Example 1. Write two questions about it. Start one question with *Where* and one with *What*.

On your own

Q6. Bring a photo from home, or draw one. Write three historical questions about it.

Q7. Write four questions to ask an older person in your family about when they were little.

Q8. Think of an old place where you live — an old building, a park or a clock tower. Write four questions about it.

Q9. You will listen to a story about the past. Write one question you could ask **before** the story, one **during** the story and one **after** the story.

Q10. Make your own question planner about *me when I was a baby*. Use the planner in the picture to help you.

A model question planner

My question planner

Topic: me when I was a baby

Who?	Who was there when I was born?
Where?	Where did I sleep?
What?	What did I play with?
When?	When did I take my first step?
How?	How old was I in my first photo?

Now make one of your own!

A model question planner about me when I was a baby, with one question for who, where, what, when and how

Answers

Q1. The historical questions are 1, 3 and 5.

Q2. Who? — a person. Where? — a place. When? — a time. What? — a thing. Why? — a reason. How? — the way something happens.

Q3. Object: 1, 2. Person: 3, 4. Place: 5, 6. Event: 7, 8.

Q4. 1. What did the hall look like? 2. What games did children play? 3. Who is in this photo?

Q5. Answers will be different. One good answer: *Where are the children?* and *What game are they playing?*

Q6–Q10. Answers will be different for every student. See the worked answers for one good way to answer.

Worked answers

Q1. A historical question asks about the past — about a time before now.

1. *How old was I on my first birthday?* — your first birthday was before now, so this **is** a historical question.
2. *What will we have for lunch today?* — this is about a time that has not happened yet, so it is **not** a historical question.
3. *Where did my dad go to school?* — your dad went to school before now, so this **is** a historical question.
4. *What is the weather like now?* — this is about now, so it is **not** a historical question.
5. *What did my sister do yesterday?* — yesterday is the past, so this **is** a historical question.

Q2. *Who?* asks about a person. *Where?* asks about a place. *When?* asks about a time. *What?* asks about a thing. *Why?* asks for a reason. *How?* asks about the way something happens.

Q3. Look at what each question is about. Questions 1 and 2 are about things (a phone, a cup), so they go in **object**. Questions 3 and 4 are about people, so they go in **person**. Questions 5 and 6 are about the town and its buildings, so they go in **place**. Questions 7 and 8 are about things that happened (a party, a picnic), so they go in **event**.

Q4. A yes-or-no question gives a small answer. A question-word question gives a big answer. In each pair, the second question starts with a question word (*What? What? Who?*), so it tells us more.

Q5. One good answer: *Where are the children?* and *What game are they playing?* Both questions start with a question word, and both are about the past.

Q6. One good answer: a photo of a baby in a park. *Where was I? · Who was with me? · How old was I?*

Q7. One good way — questions for a grandparent: *Where did you live when you were little? · What games did you play? · What was your school like? · What was your favourite toy?*

Q8. One good way — questions about an old building: *How does the place look today? · Who built it? · How do people use it now? · Why is it important?*

Q9. One good answer: before — *I wonder what our town was like long ago.* During — *Why did the children walk to school?* After — *How was the town different to now?*

Q10. One good planner about *me when I was a baby*: Who? — *Who was there when I was born?* Where? — *Where did I sleep?* What? — *What did I play with?* When? — *When did I take my first step?* How? — *How old was I in my first photo?*

Owns: VC2HH2S01 Draws on: VC2HH2S01.E01, .E02, .E03, .E04, .E05

Putting events in order: chronology and first timelines

Chapter 2 · Section 2B · History Year 2 (single-year book, birth to Year 10 series)

In 1A and 1B, we met Mai and her family. We heard their stories. Now we put those stories in order, first to last. That is what this part of the book is about.

CURRICULUM TRACEABILITY – teacher reference, not student text

Owns: VC2HH2S02

(Historical Concepts and Skills · Chronology · Foundation to Level 2)

Achievement-standard focus (our words): students ask questions about the past, and put important events – from the past and from their own lives – in order, first to last.

Draws on (coverage linkage only – not a teaching walkthrough, D13):

VC2HH2S02.E01 – putting big personal days in order from photos or drawings (the book's five: born, learned to walk, moved house, rode a bike, started school)

VC2HH2S02.E02 – making a timeline out of ordered photos or drawings of big days in the student's own life or community

VC2HH2S02.E03 – ordering big events from one person's life, from a place's history or from the local community, in formats that carry no scale (here: unscaled card timelines and told stories)

(Neutral remainder only: no First Nations content in 2B – TOC §2 D5; the §2A exclusions are not taught here.)

Level boundaries (Chapter 2 block notes; TOC §4):

- timelines here are UNSCALED – no dated number line, no scale
- the primary/secondary source distinction is NOT taught (Levels 3-4)
- interpretations are NOT anticipated (Levels 3-4)

D4 integration: every timeline and task here is exercised on the personal and family events collected in 1A-1B (Mai; mum Linh; dad Tom; Grandma Rosa; the class Nellie Melba cards from 1A).

Vocabulary: ceiling Year 2 (WORD_LEVEL_POLICY). Subject terms are defined at first use in student text: chronology, timeline, sequence, significant, unscaled (the curriculum's own word, E03).

What we learn

In 1A and 1B, we collected stories and photos. Mai brought photos of her big days. Grandma Rosa told stories about when she was little. The Nellie Melba cards came from a real person. Now we put them all in order.

1. Big days, mixed up

Mai's big days are mixed up!

Which happened first? Which happened last?

Mai's mum and dad help her remember. Photos help too.

Five cards about Mai's big days, mixed up: a school bag for Mai started school; a baby for Mai was a baby; a bike for Mai rode a bike; a house and a box for Mai's family moved house; a small child for Mai learned to walk. Every card has a question mark. Below it asks: Which happened first? Which happened last?

Mai has five big days. The cards are mixed up.

Ask a friend: Which happened first? Which happened last? Mai's mum and dad help her remember. Photos help too.

2. Order words

Order words

We use these words to say when things happen

before Sleep comes before you wake up. **after** Dinner comes after lunch. **long ago** → **now**

A chart of order words over one day: **FIRST** I wake up, with a sun; **NEXT** I work at school, with a pencil; **THEN** I eat dinner, with a bowl; **LAST** I go to bed, with a moon. Below: before, sleep comes before you wake up; after, dinner comes after lunch; and long ago to now.

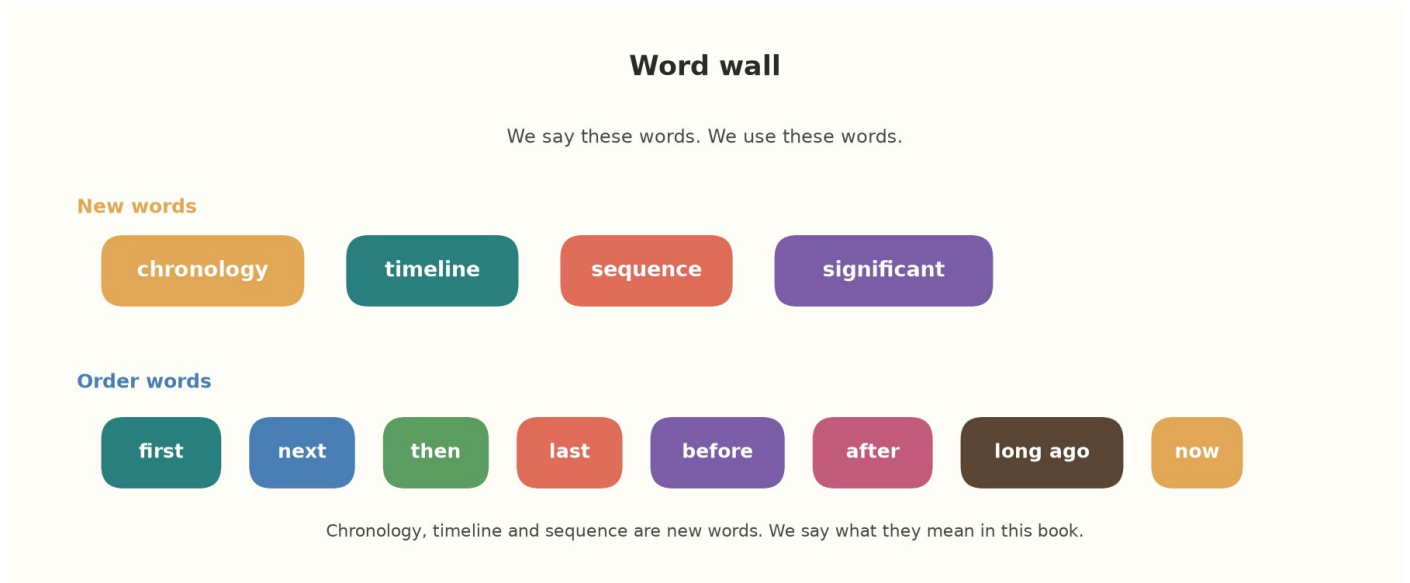
We use order words to say when things happened.

First, next, then, last. First I wake up. Next I go to school. Then I eat dinner. Last I go to bed.

Before and after. Sleep comes before you wake up. Dinner comes after lunch.

Long ago and now. Grandma Rosa was a baby long ago. Mai is at school now.

3. New words



A word wall. New words: chronology, timeline, sequence, significant. Order words: first, next, then, last, before, after, long ago, now. Below it says: Chronology, timeline and sequence are new words. We say what they mean in this book.

Chronology is the order things happened in. First this, then that. When we put Mai's cards in order, that is chronology.

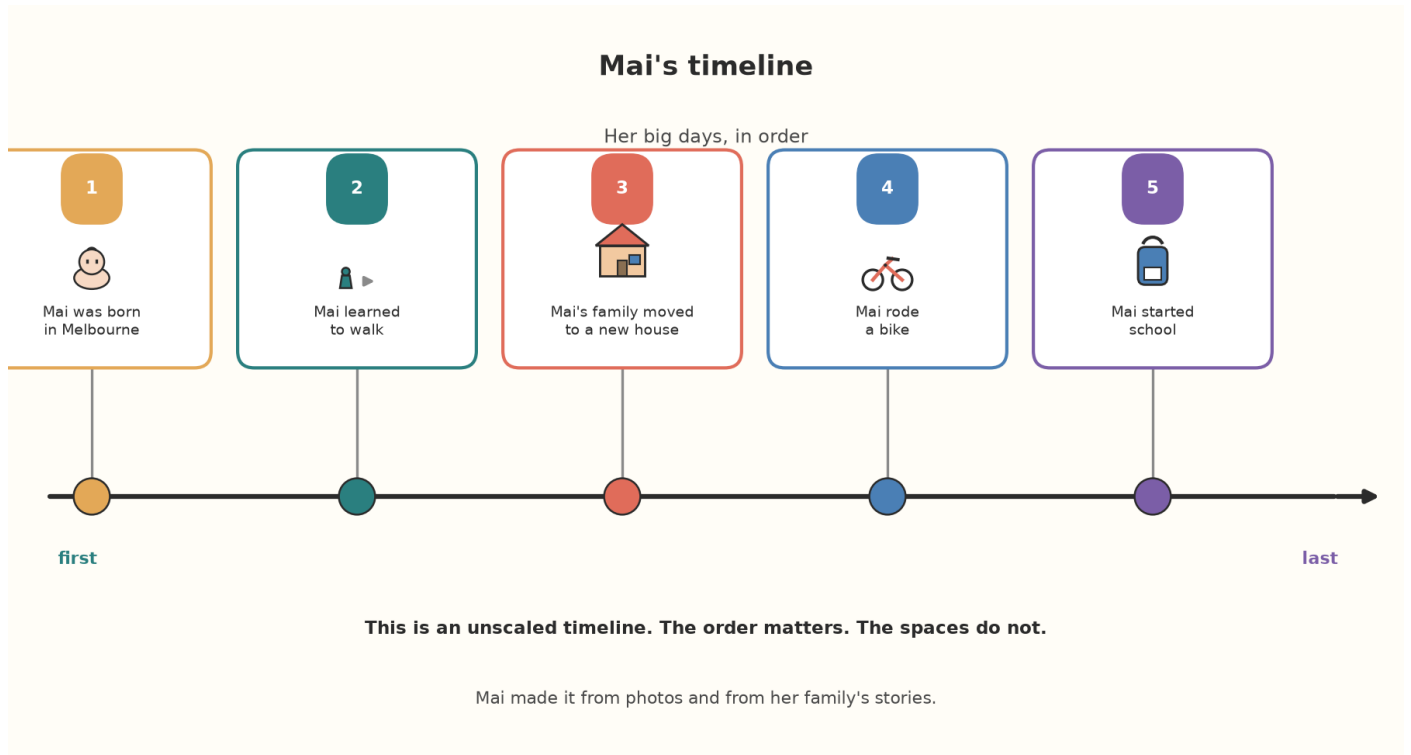
A **timeline** is a line that shows big days in order. We read it from left to right. First is at one end. Last is at the other end.

Sequence means to put in order. When we sequence the cards, we put them first to last.

Significant means important. A big day is significant when it matters to you and your family. Your first day of school is significant.

Our timelines are **unscaled**. That is a big word. It means the line has no numbers on it. The spaces do not matter. Only the order matters.

4. Mai's timeline



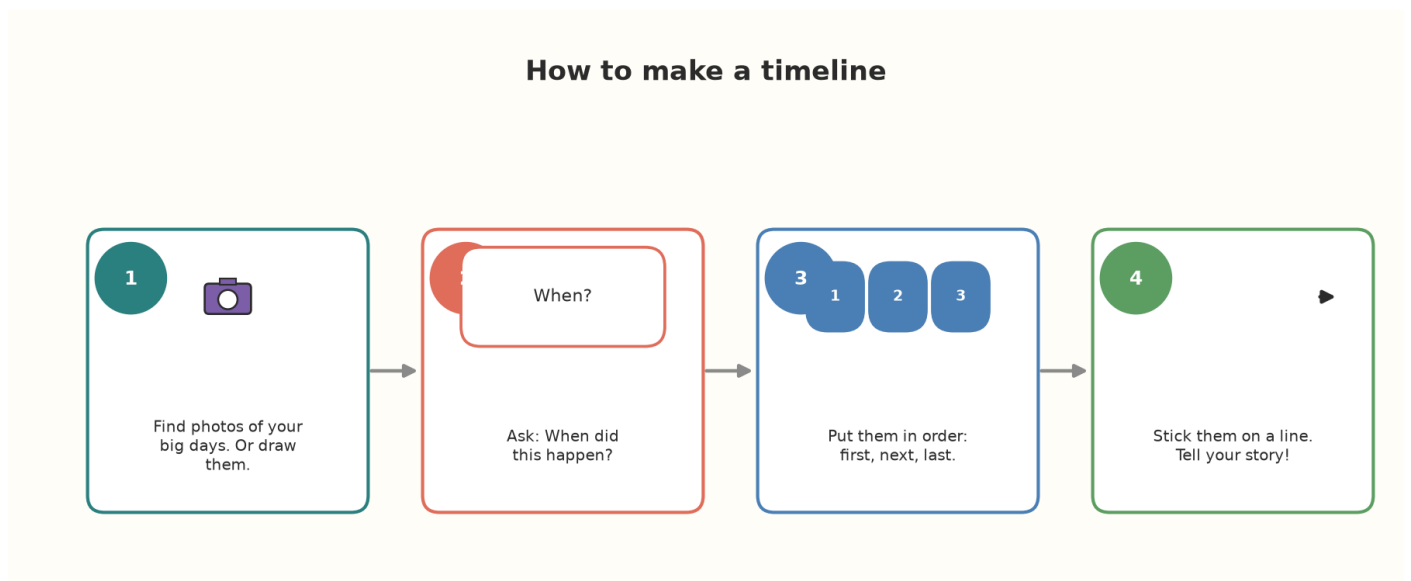
Mai's unscaled timeline: five cards on a line with an arrow, in order. 1 Mai was born in Melbourne, with a baby. 2 Mai learned to walk, with a small child walking. 3 Mai's family moved to a new house, with a house. 4 Mai rode a bike, with a bike. 5 Mai started school, with a school bag. Below: This is an unscaled timeline. The order matters. The spaces do not. Mai made it from photos and from her family's stories.

Mai put her big days in order. Then she stuck them on a line. That line is her timeline.

Say it with me. First, Mai was born in Melbourne. Next, she learned to walk. Then, her family moved to a new house. Then, she rode a bike. Last, she started school.

The line has no numbers on it. It is unscaled. The order matters. The spaces do not.

5. How to make a timeline

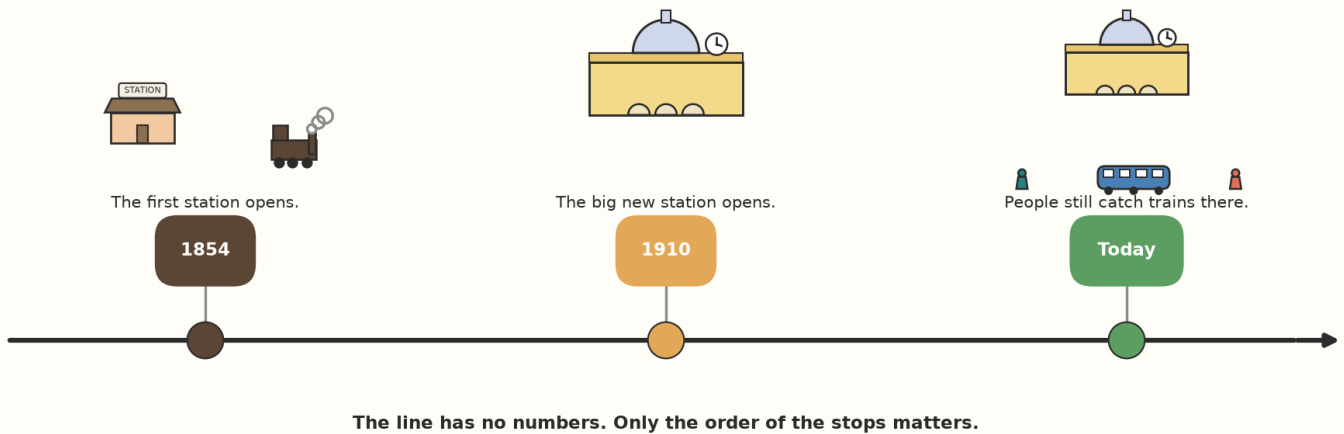


Four steps to make a timeline. 1 Find photos of your big days, or draw them, with a camera. 2 Ask: When did this happen? with a speech bubble. 3 Put them in order: first, next, last, with chips 1, 2, 3. 4 Stick them on a line and tell your story, with a line and an arrow.

Now you know how. We make one together, then you make your own.

6. A real place, in order

A real place: Flinders Street Station, Melbourne



Timeline of a real place: Flinders Street Station, Melbourne, with three stops. 1854, the first station opens, a small station and an old train. 1910, the big new station opens, a big building with a dome and a clock. Today, people still catch trains there, the building with a train and two people. Below: The line has no numbers. Only the order of the stops matters.

Flinders Street Station is a real place in Melbourne. It is old, and it is still there now.

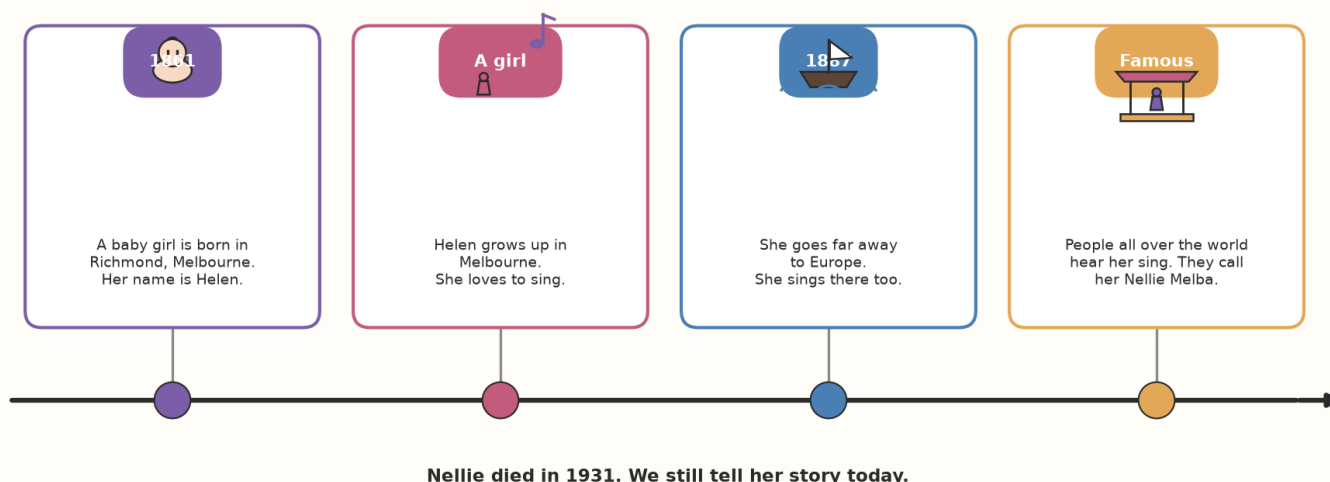
Long ago, the first station opened. That was in 1854. Next, the big new station opened. That was in 1910. Today, people still catch trains there.

Say the story of the place in order: first, next, today.

7. A real person, in order

A real person: Nellie Melba

You met her story in 1A



Timeline of a real person: Nellie Melba, with four cards. 1861, a baby girl is born in Richmond, in Melbourne, her name is Helen, with a baby. A girl, Helen grows up in Melbourne and she loves to sing, with a girl and a music note. 1887, she goes far away to Europe and she sings there too, with a ship. Famous, people all over the world hear her sing and they call her Nellie Melba, with a person on a stage. Below: Nellie died in 1931. We still tell her story today.

Nellie Melba was a real person. You met her story in 1A.

First, a baby girl was born in Richmond, in Melbourne. Her name was Helen. Next, Helen grew up. She loved to sing. Then, she went far away to Europe by ship. She sang there too. Last, people all over the world heard her sing. They called her Nellie Melba.

Nellie died in 1931. We still tell her story today. Her story has a chronology. We can put it on a timeline.

Worked examples

Example 1 — with help

Put Mai's mixed-up cards in order (the picture up the top). The teacher thinks out loud; the class helps.

Step	What we do
1	Look at the five cards. Say what you see on each card.
2	Ask: Which day came first? A baby comes before walking. So "Mai was a baby" is first.
3	Ask: What came next? A baby learns to walk. So "Mai learned to walk" is next.
4	Ask: What came then? "Mai's family moved house" is then. "Mai rode a bike" comes after that.
5	Ask: Which day was last? Big kids go to school. So "Mai started school" is last.
6	Say it all together: born, walk, moved house, rode a bike, started school.

Example 2 — with help

Make a timeline from Mai's cards. The teacher draws; the class says where each card goes.

Step	What we do
1	Draw a long line. Put an arrow on the right end.
2	Stick the cards on the line, first to last.
3	Say "first" under the left end. Say "last" under the right end.
4	Tell the story from left to right. Mai's timeline up the top shows it done.

Example 3 — on your own

Look at the Flinders Street Station timeline. Say the story of the place in order. Start like this: Long ago, the first station opened. A friend listens and says if the order is right.

Example 4 — on your own

In 1A we made three cards about Nellie Melba. Now we have four cards (the timeline up the top). Put the four cards in order. Then tell a friend: Which card is first? Which card is last?

Practice questions

With help

Q1. Fill in the order words. Use first, next, then, last.

_____ I wake up. _____ I go to school. _____ I eat dinner. _____ I go to bed.

Q2. Look at Mai's timeline. Mai rode a bike. Was that before or after she learned to walk? Was it before or after she started school?

Q3. Look at the family story strip. Put the three cards in the slots, first to last.

Our family story strip

Stories from 1A

1

2

3



firstlast



Mai was born
in Melbourne.



Grandma Rosa walked
to school with her sister.

?

Grandma Rosa was born
in a small town near Ballarat.

Which card goes in slot 1? Which goes in slot 3?

A family story strip: a line with an arrow and three empty slots, 1, 2, 3. Below, three cards mixed up: Mai was born in Melbourne, with a baby; Grandma Rosa walked to school with her sister, with two children walking; Grandma Rosa was born in a small town near Ballarat, with a small house. Below it asks: Which card goes in slot 1? Which goes in slot 3?

Q4. Put Nellie's story in order. Say it with a friend: a baby is born in Richmond / Helen grows up and loves to sing / Helen goes to Europe by ship / the world hears her sing.

Q5. Draw your day. Draw three things you did today. Put your pictures in order. Say: First... Next... Last...

On your own

Q6. My timeline. Pick three, four or five of your big days. It might be learning to walk, a new baby in your family, moving house, or your first day of school. Draw them, or use photos. Put them in order on a line. Tell a friend your story.

Q7. Cut out the cards. Put May Gibbs's life in order. Stick the cards on the empty line. Then say the story.

Cut out the cards. Put May Gibbs's life in order.



May sailed to Australia with her family.

1



1877 — May was born in England.

2



1918 — May wrote her famous book *Snugglypot and Cuddlepig*.

3



May's books are still read today.

4

→

firstlast

*Four cards to cut out, mixed up: May sailed to Australia with her family, with a ship; 1877, May was born in England, with a baby; 1918, May wrote her famous book *Snugglypot and Cuddlepig*, with a book and a gumnut baby; May's books are still read today, with a child reading an open book. Below, an empty line with an arrow and slots 1, 2, 3, 4.*

Q8. A place you know. Think of a place you know. It might be your school, your street, or a park. Say what the place was like long ago. Say what the place is like now. Which one comes first?

Q9. Tell it in order. Pick one story from 1A or 1B. Tell it to a friend, first to last. Use the order words. Your friend listens. Was the order right?

Answers

Q1. First I wake up. Next I go to school. Then I eat dinner. Last I go to bed.

Q2. Riding a bike was after learning to walk. It was before starting school.

Q3. Slot 1: Grandma Rosa was born in a small town near Ballarat. Slot 2: Grandma Rosa walked to school with her sister. Slot 3: Mai was born in Melbourne.

Q4. A baby is born in Richmond → Helen grows up and loves to sing → Helen goes to Europe by ship → the world hears her sing.

Q5. Answers will be different. Listen for: three pictures, in order, said with first, next, last.

Q6. Answers will be different. Look for: big days in order on a line, and a story told from first to last.

Q7. 1877, born in England → sailed to Australia with her family → 1918, wrote her famous book → books still read today.

Q8. Answers will be different. Listen for: long ago first, now last.

Q9. Listen for: the story told from first to last, with order words.

Worked answers

Models of what ordering and telling can sound like.

Q1/Q2 — order words, before and after.

First I wake up. Next I go to school. Then I eat dinner. Last I go to bed. I rode my bike after I learned to walk. I rode my bike before I started school.

Q3 — the family strip.

First, Grandma Rosa was born in a small town near Ballarat. Next, Grandma Rosa walked to school with her sister. Last, Mai was born in Melbourne. Grandma Rosa was little before Mai was born. That is why her cards come first.

Q5 — my day (model telling).

First, I woke up. Next, I played at school. Last, I went to bed.

Q6 — my timeline (model telling).

First, I was born. Next, I learned to walk. Then, my family got a dog. Last, I started school. That is my timeline. The order matters. The spaces do not.

Q7 — May Gibbs.

First, May was born in England. That was in 1877. Next, May sailed to Australia with her family. Then, May wrote her famous book Snugglepot and Cuddlepie. That was in 1918. Last, May's books are still read today.

Q8 — a place you know (model).

I picked the park near my house. Long ago, there was no park. Next, people made the park. Now, I play there. The park story goes from long ago to now.

Q9 — tell it in order (model, Nellie).

First, a baby girl was born in Richmond. Her name was Helen. Next, she grew up and loved to sing. Then, she went to Europe by ship. Last, the world heard her sing. People called her Nellie Melba.

SCORING GUIDE — teacher reference

Assessed against the band achievement standard as it applies to this section (our words): students put important events from the past and from their own lives in order, first to last. Evidence is the ordered cards/timelines (Q3, Q4, Q6, Q7) and the told sequences (Q5, Q8, Q9). With-help items (Q1-Q5) check the order words and before/after; on-your-own items (Q6-Q9) check the full skill: pick significant events, sequence them, place them on an unscaled timeline, tell the story first to last. "Answers will be different" items are scored on order and telling, not on content.

SOURCES — real, named, checkable referents (SOURCE_USE.md). All web sources retrieved 2026-08-24.

1. Flinders Street Station, Melbourne — first station opened 12 September 1854, the city end of Victoria's first railway; the present building was completed in 1909 and officially opened in 1910, architects Fawcett and Ashworth; on the Victorian Heritage Register. Wikipedia, "Flinders Street railway station", https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flinders_Street_railway_station, retrieved 2026-08-24.
2. May Gibbs — born 17 January 1877 in Sydenham, London; sailed to Australia with her family as a child; The Complete Adventures of Snugglepoot and Cuddlepoot published 1918; died 27 November 1969. Wikipedia, "May Gibbs", https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/May_Gibbs, retrieved 2026-08-24.
3. Nellie Melba — born Helen Porter Mitchell, 19 May 1861, Richmond, Melbourne; grew up in Melbourne; first major European opera debut in Brussels, October 1887; took her stage name from Melbourne; died 23 February 1931. Wikipedia, "Nellie Melba", https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nellie_Melba, retrieved 2026-08-24. (Continuity with the 1A Nellie Melba cards.)
4. Character continuity with 1A-1B of this book: Mai (sample child, Melbourne), mum Linh, dad Tom, Grandma Rosa (born near Ballarat) — see `src/gen_1a.py`. No sibling is defined for Mai, so no "birth of a sibling" example is used for her.
5. Dominant source type is the class's own collected sources (photos and family stories from 1A-1B), per SOURCE_USE.md. Teachers outside Melbourne substitute a local place for Flinders Street Station and keep the same order-words and timeline script.
6. Contested terms (CONTESTED_TERMS.md Rule 1): "significant" carries an operational child definition at first use (important; it matters to you and your family). No other contested terms are used.
7. Exclusions: no First Nations content in this section (CONTENT_POLICY Rule 1; TOC §2 D5 and §2A). The §2A exclusions are not taught here.

Sources: what they are, and what they can tell us

Teacher note (not student-facing). Section 2C · History Level 2 (Foundation–Level 2 band). Owns VC2HH2S03 (strand: Historical Concepts and Skills, sub-strand: Using historical sources); draws on VC2HH2S03.E01–.E04; band achievement-standard sentence 5 applies to this section — its perspectives half belongs to 2D’s CD, VC2HH2S04, and is not taught here. Exercised on Chapter 1 content per TOC D4: the daily-life objects and toys of 1C and the local place of 1E. No First Nations content (TOC §2A: 2C carries none). The primary/secondary source distinction and interpretations are NOT taught (Levels 3–4 handoff, TOC §4). Vocabulary ceiling Yr2 (TOC D9): the curriculum/subject words *artefact(s)*, *museum(s)*, *community*, *interview(s)* and *significant* sit above the Yr2 ladder and are defined at first use in word boxes; all other student-facing words are at or below Yr2. Operational definitions follow CONTESTED_TERMS Rule 1 — “in this book” frames each term. All model sources (Sam’s family photo and story, the old objects, the town map) are invented originals for this section (SOURCE_USE Rules 2–3, TOC D10); no real person, site or published collection is referenced.

Learn about sources

What is a source?

The past is the time before now. We cannot go and see the past. So how do we find out about it?

New word: source — In this book, a *source* is anything that can tell us about the past.

We use sources. Sources are like clues. They help us find out about the past. When we look at a source and think about what it tells us, we are learning about the past.

Sources can be many things

New word: artefact — In this book, an *artefact* is a thing that people made or used long ago.

An old toy from your grandma’s house is an artefact. So is an old iron, or an old spoon.

New word: museum — In this book, a *museum* is a place where old and special things are kept safe, so people can go and look at them.

Sources can be many kinds of things: photos, artefacts, books, stories, maps, newspapers, and videos on phones, computers and tablets. Museums keep many sources safe for us.

Sources can be many things



Pictures of eight kinds of sources in boxes: a photo, an old toy, a book, a person telling a story, a map, a newspaper, a video, and a museum building

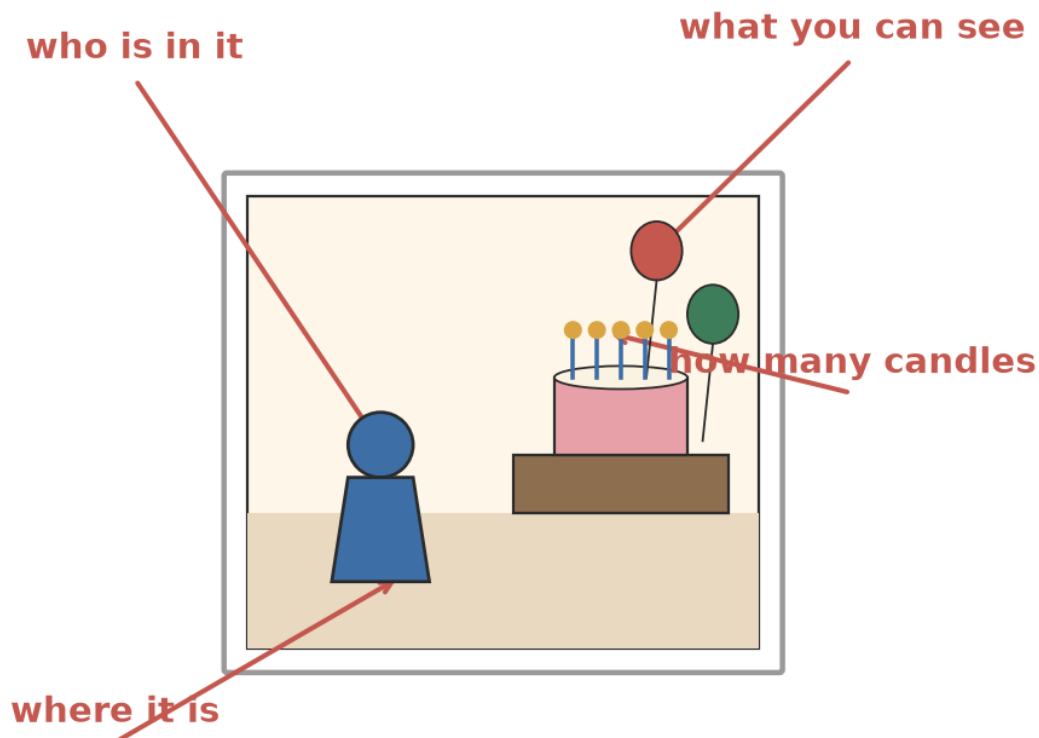
Features and content

New word: features — In this book, the *features* of a source are the things we can see about it. Who is in it? What is in it? Does it have words? Is it old or new?

New word: content — In this book, the *content* of a source is what it shows us or tells us.

Every source has **features** and **content**. Let's look at a model photo. It shows the day Sam turned five.

A model photo, with its features



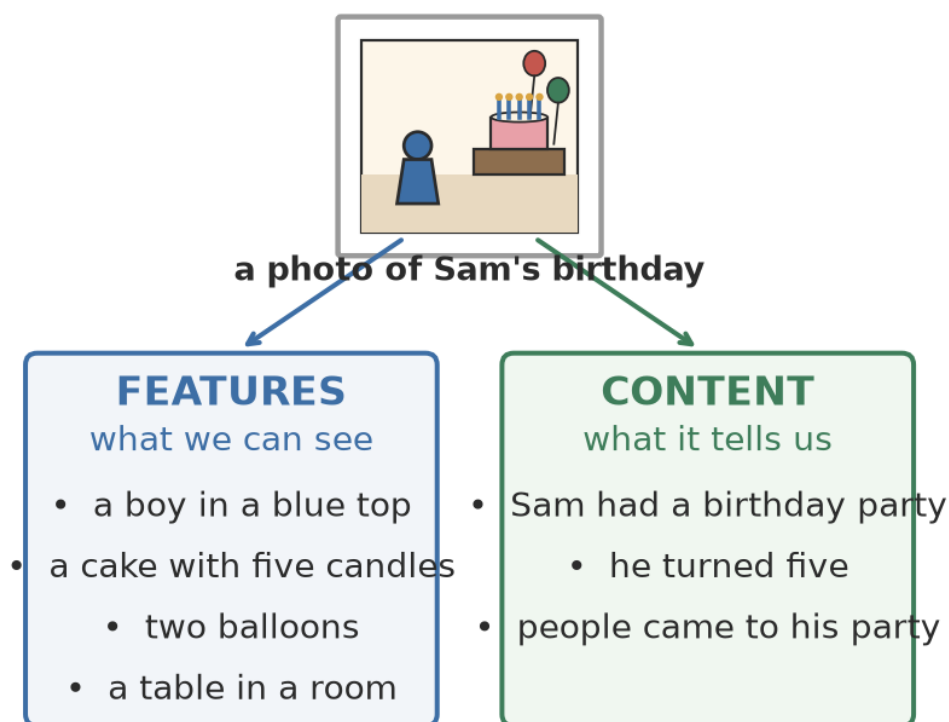
The photo shows Sam's birthday. He is turning five.

A model photo of a boy's birthday party, with words pointing to who is in it, what you can see, where it is, and how many candles there are

The **features** of the photo are what we can see: a boy in a blue top, a cake with five candles, two balloons, a table in a room. The **content** of the photo is what it tells us: Sam had a birthday party, he turned five, and people came to his party.

New word: evidence — In this book, *evidence* is what we find out from a source. The five candles are evidence that Sam turned five!

Features and content



A picture of the birthday photo at the top, with one box listing its features and one box listing its content

Here are three sources with their features and their content:

Source	Features (what we can see)	Content (what it tells us)
the birthday photo	a boy, a cake, five candles	Sam turned five
an old iron	made of metal, heavy	people made their clothes flat and smooth
a map of a town	street names, a park, a river	Wattle Street is named for a plant

The same day, two sources

New word: significant — In this book, *significant* means very important. A significant event is a big day we remember, like your first day at school or the day a new baby comes home.

Sam's birthday was a significant day for his family. We have two sources about it: a photo, and a story told by his grandma.

The photo shows what the day looked like. The story tells us more: how happy Sam felt, the songs they sang, who could not come, and what happened next. The two sources tell us different things, and both are good.

The same day, two sources

What can each one tell us about Sam's birthday?

The photo

shows what the day looked like:

- ✓ who was there
- ✓ the cake and the candles
- ✓ the balloons
- ✓ what Sam wore

Grandma's story

tells us more about the day:

- ✓ how happy Sam felt
- ✓ the songs they sang
- ✓ who could not come
- ✓ what happened next

Two sources can tell us different things about the same day.

Two boxes side by side: what the photo of Sam's birthday shows, and what Grandma's story about the same day tells

New word: community — In this book, your *community* is all the people who live in the same place as you — the people in your street, your school and your town.

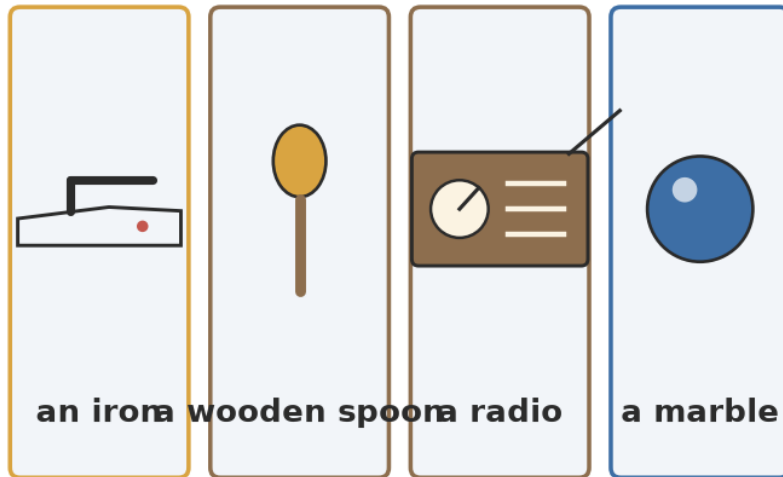
Big days in your community work the same way. Think about the place in your town from 1E. A photo of that place and a story about it would tell us different things too.

Old things and the jobs they did

Old things were made to do a job. If we look at the features of an old thing, we can work out the job it did.

Old things from long ago

What was each one for?

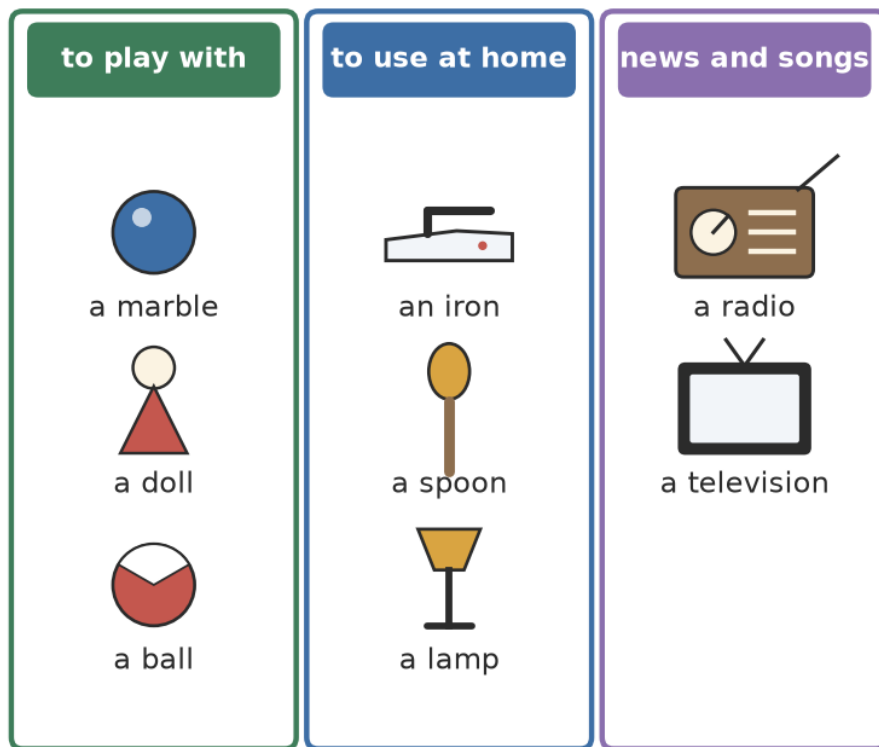


Drawings of four old things: an iron, a wooden spoon, a radio and a marble

An iron is heavy and made of metal. Its job was to make clothes flat and smooth. A spoon was for cooking and eating. A radio played songs and news. A marble was for a game.

When we put things into groups by their jobs, we sort them. Let's sort!

Sorted by the job they did



A sorting picture with three groups of old things: to play with, to use at home, and news and songs

In 1C you saw old toys and games. Old toys sort into the “to play with” group!

Collecting our own sources

Now you can be a source finder. You can collect sources from your family and your home.

- **A photo** — ask at home for an old photo you can bring to class.
- **An old thing** — an old toy, an old spoon, an old hat.
- **A story** — someone in your family can tell you about when they were little.
- **A map** — a map of your street has names on it.

New word: interview — In this book, an *interview* is a talk where one person asks questions and the other person answers. When your grandma tells you about her first day at school, that talk is an interview!

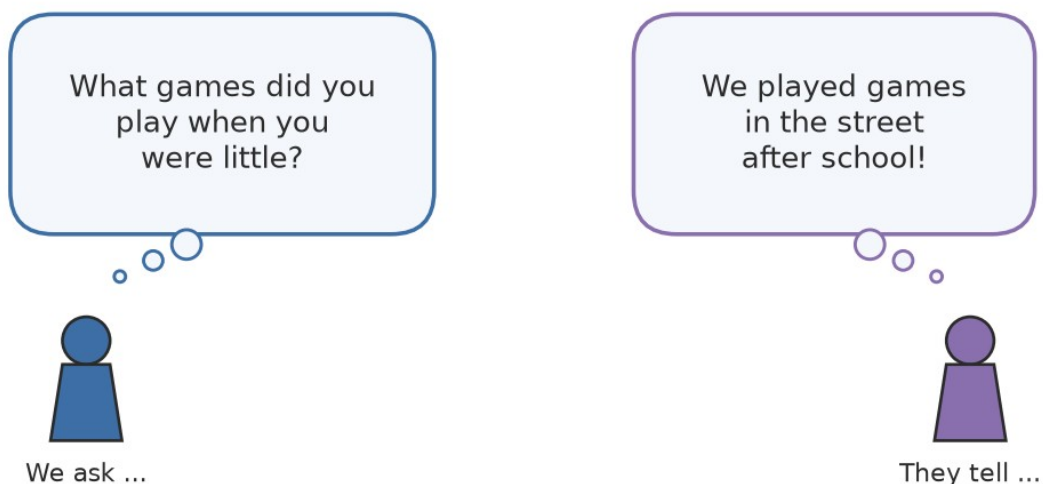
My source collection

Things I can bring to class

☒		a photo from home
☒		an old thing from long ago
☒		a story from my family
☒		an interview with someone
☒		a map of my street

A list of sources to collect: a photo from home, an old thing, a story from my family, an interview, and a map of my street

What is an interview?

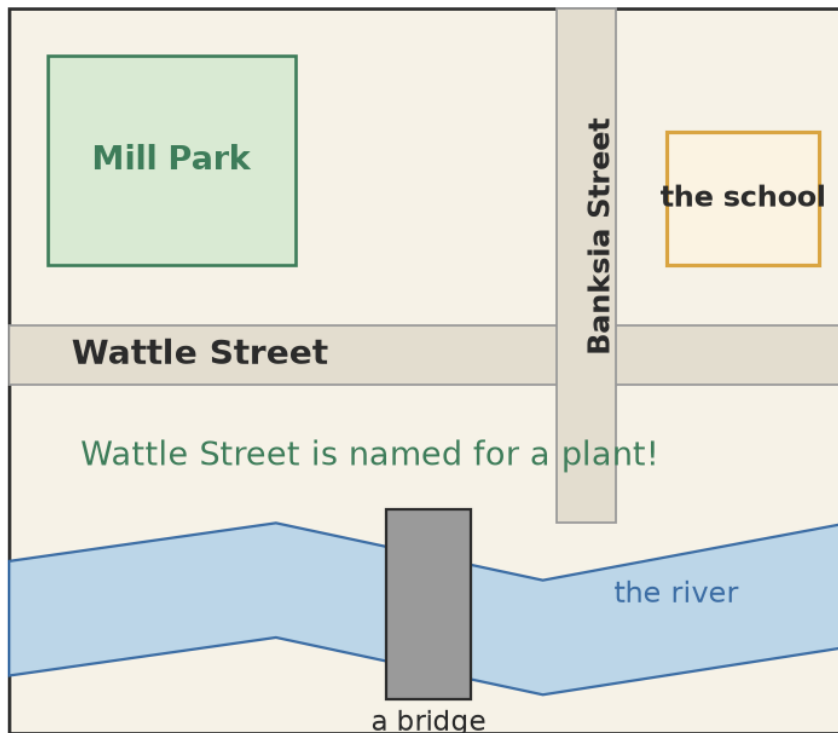


An interview: one person asks, the other answers.

A child asking a grandparent a question in an interview, with the talk in bubbles

Maps are sources too. The names of streets and parks can tell us about the past. Wattle Street may be named for the wattle plants that grew there once!

A map can be a source



Street and place names can tell us about the past.

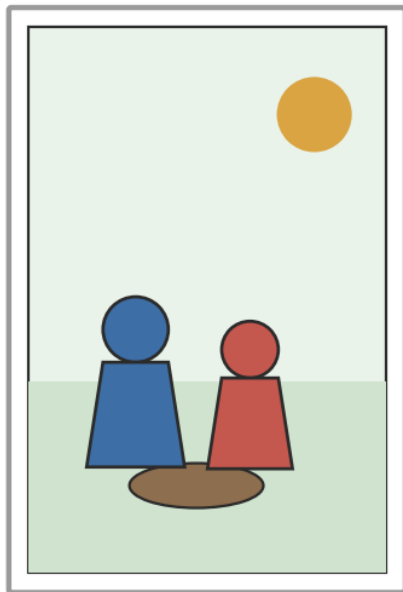
A simple map of a town with Wattle Street, Banksia Street, Mill Park, a school, a river and a bridge

Newspapers are sources too. An old newspaper can show us what happened on one day, long ago.

What sources can and cannot tell us

A source tells us some things, but not everything. A photo cannot tell us what things smelled like, or how people felt. That is why we use more than one source. A photo and a story and an old thing, all together, tell us much more.

What can't this photo tell us?



→ What did the food smell like?

→ What sounds could you hear?

→ How did the people feel?

a photo of a family picnic long ago

One source cannot tell us everything.

A model photo of a family picnic with three questions it cannot answer: what the food smelled like, what sounds you could hear, and how people felt

Let's look at some sources together

Example 1 — with help

Look at the old iron in the “Old things” picture.

We look at	We can say
what it is	It is an iron.
what it is made of	It is made of metal.
how it feels	It is heavy.
its job	It made clothes flat and smooth.
what it tells us	People long ago made their clothes smooth too.

Example 2 — with help

Look at the model photo of Sam's birthday.

We look at	We can say
features	a boy, a cake, five candles, two balloons
content	it was Sam's birthday party
evidence	the candles show he turned five

Example 3 — you try some

Look at the old radio in the “Old things” picture.

- (a) Say two features of the old radio.
- (b) What was its job?
- (c) What can it tell us about the past?

Example 4 — you try some

Mia wants to know what her street looked like long ago. Put a tick next to each source that would help.

- an old photo of her street
 - a story from her grandpa about the street
 - a photo of her new shoes
-

Now you try

With help

Q1. Look at the model photo of Sam’s birthday. (a) Write down two features you can see. (b) What does the photo tell us?

Q2. Put a tick next to each thing that is a source about the past.

- a photo of your dad when he was a baby
- a story your aunty tells about her school
- a toy your mum played with
- a new pen from the shop today

Q3. Match each source to its kind: **photo, object, interview, map**. (a) Your grandpa tells you about his first day at school. (b) an old wooden spoon (c) a picture of your town from long ago (d) a drawing of your street with the names on it

Q4. Sort these old things into two groups — **to play with**, and **to use at home**: a marble, an iron, a doll, a spoon, a ball, a lamp.

Q5. Fill in each gap with *see* or *felt*. (a) A story can tell us how people _____. (b) A photo shows us what we could _____.

Q6. Finish the sentence: “Museums keep old things safe so _____.”

On your own

Q7. Draw a picture of a source from your family. Label two features on your drawing.

Q8. Write three questions you could ask in an interview with someone in your family, about when they were little.

Q9. The class wants to know what games children played long ago. Name two sources that would help. Say why each one would help.

Q10. Look at the old radio in the “Old things” picture. (a) Write two features. (b) What was its job? (c) What does it tell us about the past?

Q11. A photo cannot tell us everything about a day. Say two things a photo cannot tell us.

Q12. You want to find out about your street long ago. Name two sources you could use.

Answers

Q1. (a) Any two of: a boy in a blue top; a cake; five candles; two balloons; a table in a room. (b) It tells us Sam had a birthday party and he turned five.

Q2. Ticks: the photo of your dad; the story from your aunty; the toy your mum played with. No tick: the new pen from today.

Q3. (a) interview. (b) object. (c) photo. (d) map.

Q4. To play with: a marble, a doll, a ball. To use at home: an iron, a spoon, a lamp.

Q5. (a) felt. (b) see.

Q6. ... so we can look at them and learn about the past.

Q7. Check: your drawing shows a source, and two features are labelled.

Q8. Check: three questions, each one about when the person was little.

Q9. Any two sources with a why. Example: an old photo (it shows the games) and an interview with a grandparent (they can tell us the games they played).

Q10. (a) Any two of: it is a box; it has a round part you turn; it has lines on the front. (b) Its job was to play songs and news. (c) People long ago listened to songs and news at home.

Q11. Any two of: what things smelled like; what sounds you could hear; how people felt; what happened next.

Q12. Any two of: an old photo of your street; a story from someone in your family; a map of your street; an old newspaper.

Model answers

Model answer — Q1

(a) I can see a boy in a blue top. I can see a cake with five candles.

(b) The photo tells us it was Sam's birthday. He turned five, and people came to his party.

Model answer — Q9

Two sources that would help are:

1. an old photo of children playing — it would show us the games and the toys;
2. an interview with a grandparent — they could tell us about the games they played.

Model answer — Q10

(a) The radio is a box. It has a round part you turn.

(b) Its job was to play songs and news.

(c) It tells us that people long ago listened to songs and news at home.

Perspectives: who is telling the story?

Two people can be at the same event and tell it in different ways. In this part of the book, you will learn why, and what to ask when someone tells you a story about the past.

Teacher note — curriculum trace. Section 2D owns VC2HH2S04 (strand: Historical Concepts and Skills; sub-strand: Using historical sources). It draws on VC2HH2S04 .E01 (in our words: finding what matters to the person telling a story about the past) and VC2HH2S04 .E02 (in our words: two people can tell one past event differently — the book’s example is a mother and a grandmother telling the same school day two ways) — exactly two elaborations; the docx count governs and the CSV’s doubled rows are a known export anomaly (TOC D8). Band achievement-standard sentence 5 applies to this section: the perspectives half is taught here, and its features-and-content half is 2C’s CD, VC2HH2S03.

Teacher note — term definitions (CONTESTED_TERMS Rule 1). The Victorian Curriculum uses the term *perspective* but does not define it. This section therefore treats it as *one person’s own telling of something — how that person saw it, felt it and tells it* (the student definition box below), and every task here is answerable on that definition alone. *Source* is recalled from 2C with the same meaning the student met there.

Teacher note — level boundary (TOC §4). Historical *interpretations* (Levels 3–4), primary/secondary source labels and dated or scaled timelines are not taught here and do not appear.

Teacher note — Chapter 1 exercise (TOC D4). The family is 1A’s book family; the first-day-of-school stories also serve 1C; the 1969 television is 1C/1F’s then-and-now; the birthday party is 1D’s celebrations.

Teacher note — administration. Any story or question here may be read aloud as an administration decision; every student-facing word is at or below the Year 2 ceiling regardless.

Teacher note — full source line for the Moon words. NASA Apollo 11 Lunar Surface Journal, history.nasa.gov/alsj/a11/a11.step.html (read 24 August 2026). The student-facing text and figure carry a shortened, in-ceiling version; this block carries the full citation with retrieval date.

New words

Two words to know.

source — a thing that tells us about the past, or about an event. A story someone tells, a photo, or an old object can be a source. (You met sources in part 2C.)

perspective — one person’s own telling of something. How one person saw it, felt it, and tells it. In this book, when we say *perspective*, that is what we mean. Two people can have different perspectives on the same event.

Learn

One event, two stories

An **event** is something that happens. Here is one event from our book family: the day Mum started school. Mum and Grandma were both there.

The same event, two stories

Mum and Grandma were both there on Mum's first day of school

I was five. My new bag felt so big. I felt scared at the gate.



Mum

I took a photo of her at the gate. She looked so big. I felt proud.



Grandma

one event

Mum's first day
of school

Same day. Same place. Two different stories.

Mum and Grandma each telling a story about the same day, Mum's first day of school

Read Mum's story:

"I was five. My new bag felt so big. I held my mum's hand. I felt scared at the school gate. Then I saw the paints and the books, and I felt glad."

Read Grandma's story:

"I walked with my little girl to her new school. I took a photo of her at the gate. She looked so big. I felt proud. Then I went home, and the house was so quiet."

The two stories are about the same day. But they are not the same story. Mum tells the parts that were important to Mum. Grandma tells the parts that were important to Grandma.

Sorting the two stories

The same event, told by Mum and by Grandma

	Mum's story	Grandma's story
What did they tell?	I was five. I had a new bag. I held my mum's hand at the gate.	We walked to her new school. I took a photo at the gate.
What was important to them?	Her new bag, and how scared, then glad, she felt.	The photo, and how proud she felt.
How did they feel?	Scared, then glad	Proud

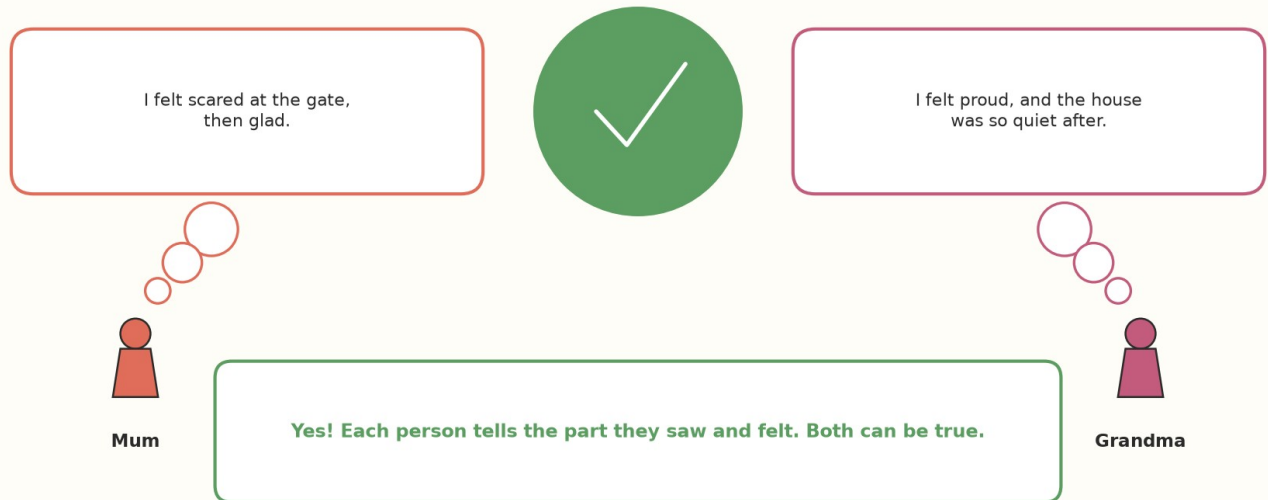
A table sorting Mum's story and Grandma's story: what they told, what was important to them, how they felt

Can both stories be true?

Yes! Both stories can be true. Nobody is wrong. Mum tells the part she saw and felt. Grandma tells the part she saw and felt. They have different perspectives on the same event.

Can both stories be true?

Mum and Grandma tell about the same day



Mum's story and Grandma's story with a big tick and the words: yes, each person tells the part they saw and felt, both can be true

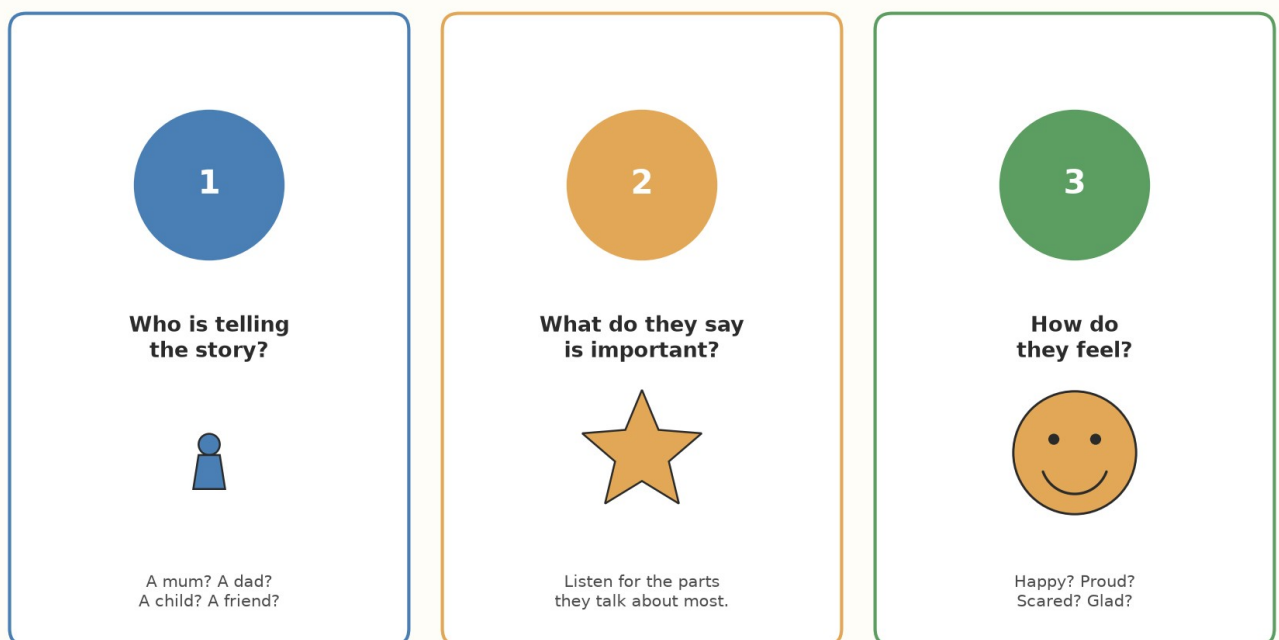
When two stories about one event are different, we do not pick a winner. We ask our clue questions instead.

Listening clues

When someone tells you a story about the past, listen for three things.

Listening clues

Use these three clues when someone tells you a story about the past



Three clue cards: one, who is telling the story; two, what do they say is important; three, how do they feel

A real story from long ago

In July 1969, a man named Neil Armstrong walked on the Moon. He was the first person to walk on the Moon. Lots of people watched it on TV. These were his first words on the Moon:



The first words Neil Armstrong said on the Moon in 1969, with the source line under them

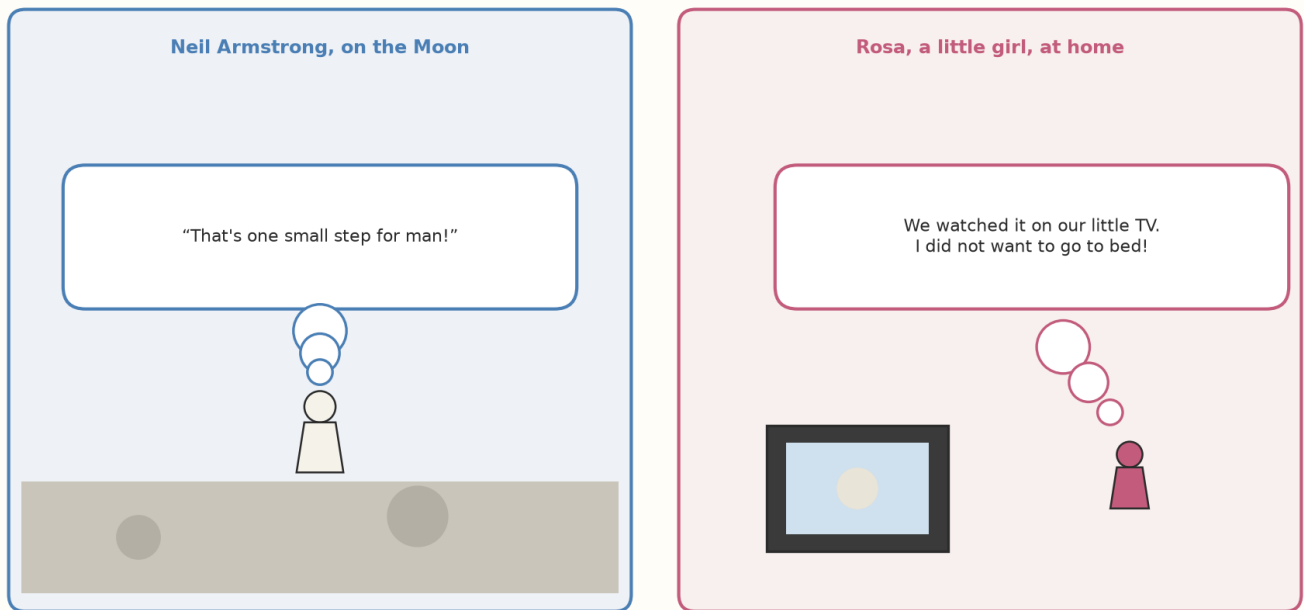
That is a real source: the words of a real person, kept so we can read them today (NASA, read 24 August 2026). The full source line is in the teacher note at the top. Those words are Neil Armstrong's perspective. He was the man on the Moon. His story is about his step.

Grandma Rosa was a little girl in 1969. Her family watched the Moon walk on TV. Here is her story. It is a model story — we made it up for this book.

"I sat on the floor with my mum and dad. We watched the man walk on the Moon, on our little TV. It was late. I did not want to go to bed. I had never seen anything like it!"

Two people, one event

The first Moon walk, July 1969



He stood on the Moon. She watched from home. Same event, two stories.

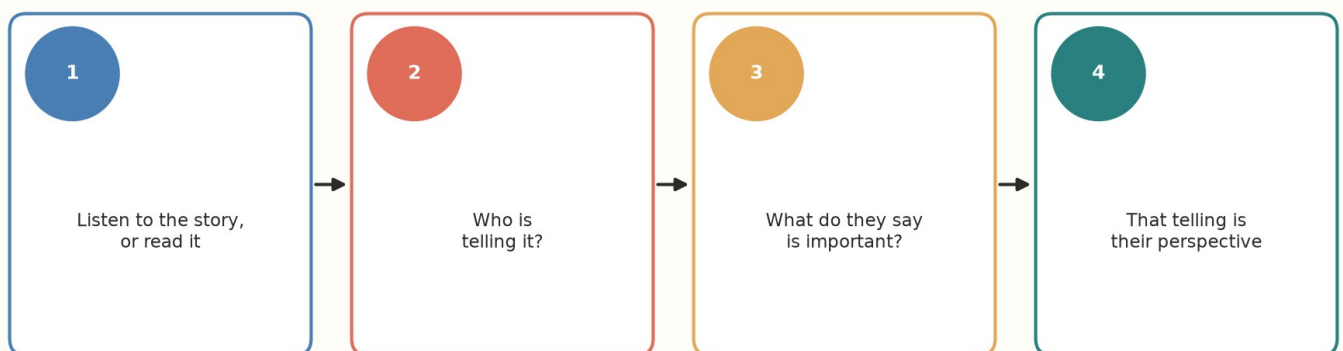
Neil Armstrong on the Moon and a little girl watching the same event on TV at home

Neil Armstrong and little Rosa were part of the same big event. He was on the Moon. She was at home, watching. His story and her story are different, and both are true.

How to find a perspective

You can find the perspective in any story. Follow the steps.

How to find a perspective



Four steps: listen to the story or read it; who is telling it; what do they say is important; that telling is their perspective

Step 1: Listen to the story, or read it. Step 2: Ask, who is telling it? Step 3: Ask, what do they say is important? Step 4: Ask, how do they feel? Put it together — that telling is their perspective.

A story and its clues

Mai wrote a story about her puppy. We can find its perspective with our steps.

Mai's story, and its clues

Mai wrote this story. The arrows point to the clues.

The day our puppy came home

One day, Dad and I went in the

car to get our new puppy.

He was small and soft.

He sat on my lap and went to sleep.

That was the best day.

by Mai

What was important to Mai?

The puppy sitting on her lap

How did Mai feel?

Happy — “the best day”

Who is telling this story?

Mai — she wrote it

Mai’s written story about the day her puppy came home, with three clue cards and arrows pointing to the story

Who is telling? Mai — she wrote it. What was important to Mai? The puppy sat on her lap and went to sleep. How did Mai feel? Happy — “the best day”. So the story’s perspective is Mai’s own telling of that day.

Worked examples

Example 1 — with help

Two people tell about the same event: Mai’s birthday party, the day she turned six.

Mai’s story: “I was six. My party was so fun. The best part was my cake. It had six candles.”

Dad’s story: “We had the party in the back garden. I put up lots of flags. I took photos of Mai with her friends. My legs were tired, but I was happy.”

We fill in the table.

	Mai	Dad
Who is telling?	Mai	Dad
What was important?	Her cake, with six candles	The flags, and the photos
How did they feel?	Happy — it was fun	Tired, but happy

Same party. Two perspectives.

Example 2 — you watch first, then we check

Look again at the Moon walk stories (Neil Armstrong’s words, and Rosa’s story). Find each perspective.

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Neil Armstrong: his story is about his own step on the Moon. Rosa: her story is about watching on TV with her mum and dad, and staying up late. Same event. Two perspectives. No one is wrong.

Practice questions

With help

Here are two more stories about the same event: sports day.

Mai's story: "It was sports day. I was in the egg and spoon race. I went slow, and I did not drop my egg. My friend Priya cheered for me. That was the best part."

Dad's story: "I went to watch sports day. I saw Mai in the egg and spoon race. She was smiling so big. I took lots of photos. I stood up a long time, and my legs were tired. I loved watching her."

Q1. (a) Who tells the first story? (b) Who tells the second story?

Q2. In Mai's story: (a) What was important to Mai? (b) How did she feel at the end?

Q3. In Dad's story: (a) What did Dad take lots of? (b) How did his legs feel? (c) How did Dad feel about watching Mai?

Q4. Tell one way Mai's story and Dad's story are the same, and one way they are different.

Q5. Two of these are our clue questions, and one is not. Put a tick next to the clue questions. (a) Who is telling the story? (b) What day is it today? (c) How do they feel?

Q6. Fill in this table about the sports day stories.

	Mai	Dad
Who is telling?	...	...
What was important?	...	...
How did they feel?	...	...

On your own

Q7. Ask two people at home about the same event — the day you were born, a family party, or a trip. Use the cards, or ask your own questions. Then write or draw one way their stories were different.

Ask at home

Ask two people in your family the same questions, about the same event

1

Tell me about your first day of school.

2

What was important to you that day?

3

How did you feel?

4

What do you remember most?

Write or draw their answers. Then look: what is the same, and what is different?

Four cards with questions to ask your family: tell me about your first day of school; what was important to you that day; how did you feel; what do you remember most

Q8. Here is a story: “I helped Mai ride her bike. I ran next to her and held the bike. Then she did it on her own! I was so happy.” (a) Who is telling this story? (b) What was important to them? (c) How did they feel?

Q9. Draw one event two ways: how you saw it, and how your mum or dad saw it. Tell a friend about your two pictures.

Q10. Write two questions you would like to ask Grandma about her first day of school.

Q11. Look at a family photo with someone at home. Ask them: what was important to you that day? Write or draw their answer.

Q12. Tell a friend about a day when your story and your brother’s, sister’s or friend’s story were different. What was important to you? What was important to them?

Answers

Q1. (a) Mai. (b) Dad.

Q2. (a) Not dropping her egg, and Priya cheering for her. (b) Happy — it was the best part.

Q3. (a) Photos. (b) Tired. (c) He loved it.

Q4. Same: both stories are about sports day and the egg and spoon race. Different: Mai tells about her race, and Dad tells about watching her and taking photos.

Q5. (a) and (c) are clue questions. (b) is not.

Q6. Mai: not dropping her egg; cheering from Priya; happy. Dad: photos of Mai; tired legs but he loved watching.

Q7. Answers will be your own family's stories. The two stories should be different in at least one way.

Q8. (a) A parent (Mum or Dad) — the one who helped Mai. (b) Mai riding on her own. (c) Happy.

Q9. Your two pictures will show the same event from two people.

Q10. Good questions use our clues: who, what was important, how did you feel.

Q11. The answer is that person's perspective on the photo's day.

Q12. Two people, one day, two tellings — both can be true.

Why the answers work

Every answer here came from the same three moves: find **who is telling**, find **what they say is important**, and find **how they feel**. That is what finding a perspective is. Two stories about one event can both be true, because each person tells the part they saw and felt. You now have the listening clues for any story about the past — your family's stories, our book family's stories, and real voices from long ago, like Neil Armstrong's.