

History Level 7

Chapter 6 — Skills: analysis and communicating

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Continuity and change: what stayed, what shifted

Section 6A · Strand: Historical Concepts and Skills · Sub-strand: Continuity and change (Levels 7–8) **Owens:** VC2HH8S07 **Draws on:** VC2HH8S02 (sequencing, taught in 5B) · VC2HH8S03–VC2HH8S06 (source skills, taught in 5C–5F) · the content of Chapters 1–4

Teaching sequence

1. Words to define before we start

Key terms, defined before use.

- **Continuity** — what stays the same over time.
- **Change** — what becomes different over time.
- **Deviation** — a move away from what was usual.
- **Concurrent** — happening at the same time.
- **Rate** — how fast something changes. **Extent** — how much something changes; how many people and places it touches. **Order** — when changes happen, and which came first.
- **Turning point** — an event after which things are never quite the same.
- **Chronology** — events set out in time order (the skill you built in 5B).
- **Pattern** — something you can see repeating across many events.

Key words of this section

Subject terms for explaining continuity and change, defined at first use. Keep these meanings in mind as you read.

continuity what stays the same over time	change what becomes different over time	deviation a move away from what was usual	concurrent happening at the same time	rate how fast something changes
extent how much something changes — how many people and places it touches	order when changes happen — which came first, which followed	turning point an event after which things are never quite the same	chronology events arranged in time order	pattern something you can see repeating across many events

Rate, extent and order are the three handles on any change: how fast, how much, and when.
A chronology lets you see continuity and change; a pattern is what repeats across it.

Definition cards for the ten key words of this section: continuity, change, deviation, concurrent, rate, extent, order, turning point, chronology and pattern, with a one-line meaning on each card

Figure 1. The key words of this section.

Three of these words are the handles on any change: **rate** (how fast), **extent** (how much) and **order** (when). If an explanation of change uses none of the three, it is not yet an explanation — it is a list.

2. Continuity: describe it by what did not deviate .E02

History is not only change. .E02 describes continuity in three moves: the **lack of deviation** (the usual way of doing things carried on), the **similarity of important aspects** (the things that mattered most look the same before and after), and the **widespread** nature of the similarities (the sameness reaches across the whole society, not just one corner of it). And you describe it this way *even when* an event, idea, person or group has great **short-term significance**.

A model description. In 1066, William of Normandy beat Harold at Hastings and took the English crown; within twenty years, almost every parcel of land in England sat under a new Norman lord. That change at the top was real and quick. Now the continuity: nine people in ten still worked the land; the village, the plough team and the open fields carried on as before; most people kept their own language, faith and local customs. The conquest had great short-term significance — it changed who ruled — yet the similarities were widespread and the important aspects of daily life show a lack of deviation. That is what continuity looks like when it is described, not just claimed.

Sources: Wikipedia, “Norman conquest of England” and “Domesday Book”; accessed 25 August 2026.

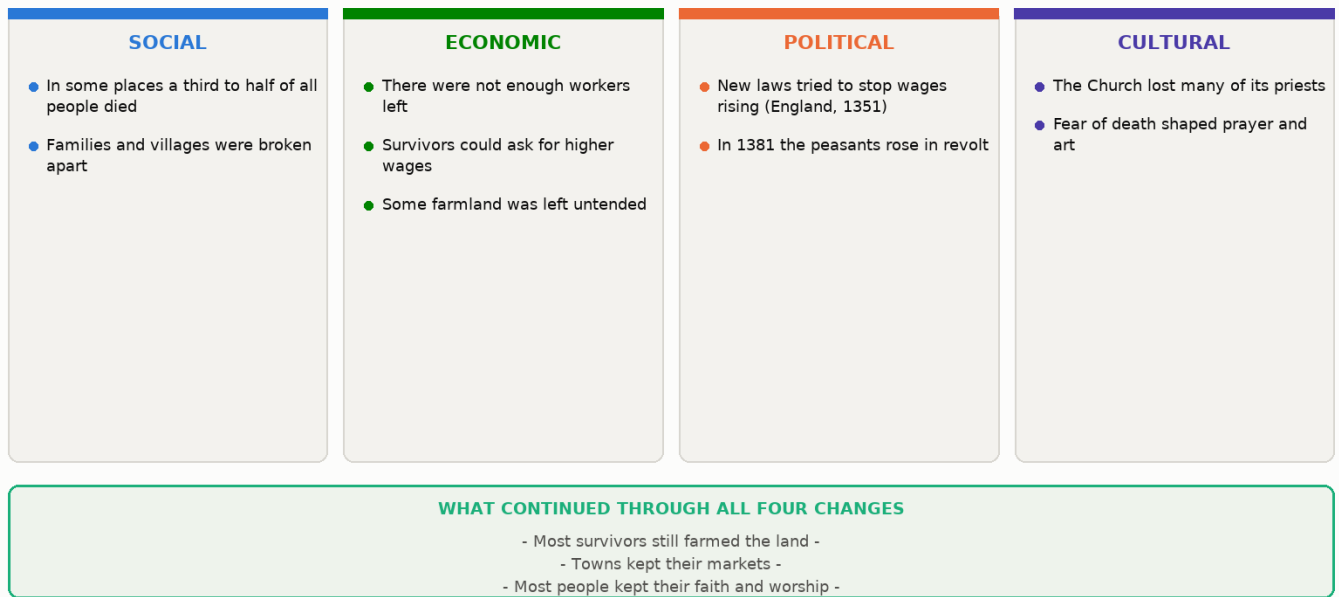
Check: In the model, which phrase does the work of each of the three moves of .E02? (“carried on as before” = lack of deviation; “the important aspects of daily life” = similarity of important aspects; “nine people in ten ... most people” = widespread similarities.)

3. Four lanes at once: concurrent change .E03

Big events rarely move only one part of life. Sort life into four lanes — **social** (people, families, classes and how they live), **economic** (work, trade, money and food), **political** (rule, law and power), **cultural** (belief, learning, art and language) — and then list what moved in each lane **at the same time**. Figure 2 runs this on the Black Death of 1347–1351 (the event you met in 3A), and it keeps a green strip for what continued underneath all four lanes. One event, four lanes of concurrent change, and continuity running under them.

Concurrent change: the Black Death in Europe, 1347-1351

One event, four kinds of change happening at the same time — and some things that stayed the same underneath.



Counts of the dead come from church records of the period — historians question how exact they are (section 3A). The political lane runs on past 1351: change keeps moving.

Four panels of concurrent change during the Black Death in Europe, 1347-1351: social (a third to half of all people died in some places; families and villages broken apart), economic (not enough workers left; survivors could ask for higher wages; some farmland left untended), political (England's 1351 law tried to stop wages rising; in 1381 the peasants rose in revolt), cultural (the Church lost many priests; fear of death shaped prayer and art), with a green strip below of what continued: most survivors still farmed the land, towns kept their markets, most people kept their faith

Figure 2. Concurrent change: one event, four lanes, and the continuity underneath.

Two cautions from earlier chapters. The counts of the dead lean on church records of the period, and historians question how exact those records are (3A). And the political lane runs on past 1351 — the wage law and the revolt of 1381 are consequences of the plague, which is where 6B picks the story up. A **peasant**, met in 1E and 3A, is a small farmer who works a lord's land; the peasants of 1381 were the grandchildren of the plague generation.

Check: Figure 2 puts “survivors could ask for higher wages” in the economic lane. Could it also sit in the social lane? Give a reason for your answer either way.

4. The class word bank .E04

An explanation is only as good as its words. .E04 asks the class to brainstorm a word bank for **rates**, **extents** and **order**; Figure 3 is a strong start. Before any new word is admitted, it must pass the test: does it say *how fast*, *how much* or *when*? A word that says none of the three stays out of the bank.

The class word bank: describing change

Every claim about change needs a word for its rate, its extent and its order. Start here, then add words of your own.

RATE How fast did it change?	EXTENT How much of life did it change?	ORDER When did it happen, and where does it sit in the sequence?
• rapid — very fast • sudden — fast and without warning • slow — taking a long time • gradual — little by little • steady — the same pace all the way	• widespread — across many places and people • limited — touching only a few • partial — some parts changed, some did not • complete — nothing stayed the same • local — in one place only	• turning point — after this, things are never quite the same • milestone — a marked step in a longer story • sequence — the order: first, then, next • concurrent — at the same time as something else • long-term / short-term — over a long time, or a short one

Brainstorm more terms as a class. Before you add one, check: does it say how fast, how much, or when? Words that say none of the three do not belong in this bank.

The class word bank in three columns. **RATE** (how fast did it change?): rapid, sudden, slow, gradual, steady. **EXTENT** (how much of life did it change?): widespread, limited, partial, complete, local. **ORDER** (when did it happen?): turning point, milestone, sequence, concurrent, long-term and short-term, each word with a short meaning

Figure 3. The class word bank: every claim about change needs a word for its rate, its extent and its order.

Check: Test three words from your own mouth — “huge”, “quickly”, “afterwards”. Which column does each earn, and which word fails the test? (“quickly” = rate; “afterwards” = order; “huge” fails unless it is saying how much, in which case it is an extent word like *widespread*.)

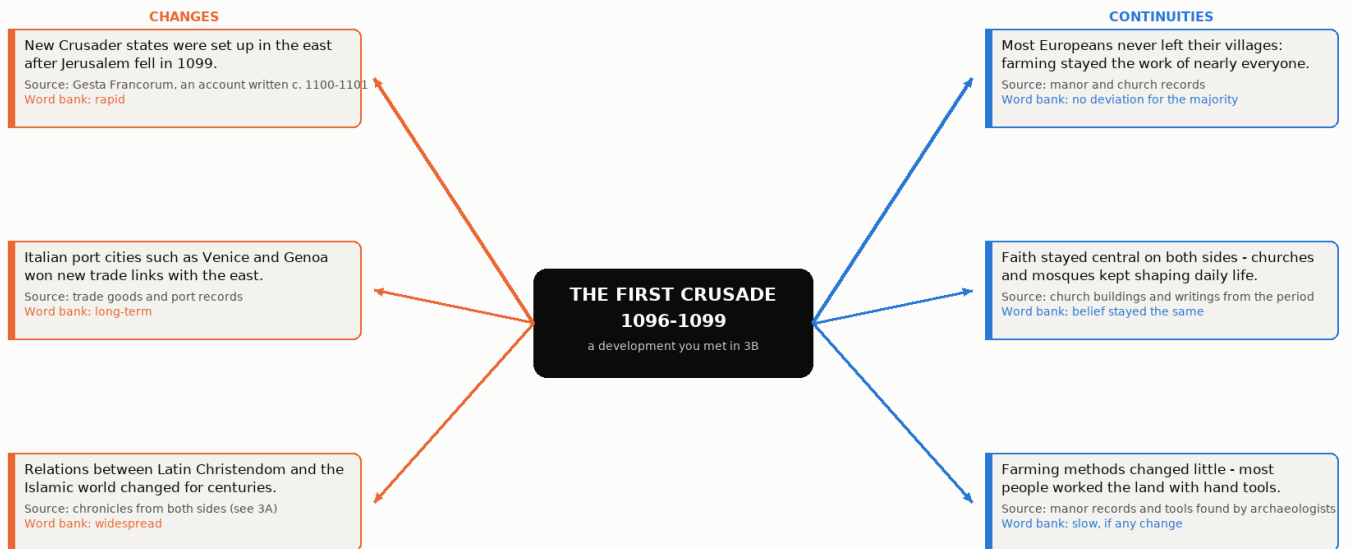
5. An annotated concept map .E05

The curriculum names three developments you may map for .E05: what followed the Renaissance in Europe, what the crusades changed, or what followed Spain’s conquest of the Americas. Figure 4 is a worked model using the second. A **crusade** was an armed journey to win back Jerusalem and the Holy Land, called for by the pope from 1095; the First Crusade (1096–1099) is the one you met in 3B.

The map’s rules sit under the figure: event with its dates in the middle; CHANGE branches; CONTINUITY branches; and **every branch carries two notes** — the source it rests on, and a word-bank word for rate, extent or order. The notes are the point. A branch without a source is a rumour; a branch without a word-bank word is a change undescribed. The change branch about the Crusader states rests on the *Gesta Francorum*, an account of the crusade written c. 1100–1101 by someone who was on it — a **primary source**, a source made at the time by people who were there (the idea is from 5C). A **chronicle** — a year-by-year written record — carries the third change branch.

Model concept map: the consequences of the First Crusade

The event sits in the middle. Branches show changes and continuities; each is annotated with a source and a word-bank word.



1. Put the development or event in the middle, with its dates.
2. Draw CHANGE branches - what became different, in which parts of life (social, economic, political, cultural).
3. Draw CONTINUITY branches - what stayed the same.
4. Annotate every branch: the source it rests on, plus a word-bank word for rate, extent or order.

Model annotated concept map: the First Crusade 1096-1099 at the centre; three orange change branches on the left (new Crusader states set up after Jerusalem fell in 1099, source Gesta Francorum, word bank rapid; new eastern trade links for the Italian port cities of Venice and Genoa, source trade goods and port records, word bank long-term; relations between Latin Christendom and the Islamic world changed for centuries, source chronicles from both sides, word bank widespread) and three blue continuity branches on the right (most Europeans never left their villages and farming stayed the work of nearly everyone, source manor and church records; faith stayed central on both sides, source church buildings and writings from the period; farming methods changed little, source manor records and tools found by archaeologists), with the four map rules below

Figure 4. A model concept map: the consequences of the First Crusade, every branch annotated with a source and a word-bank word.

Sources: Wikipedia, "First Crusade" and "Gesta Francorum"; accessed 25 August 2026.

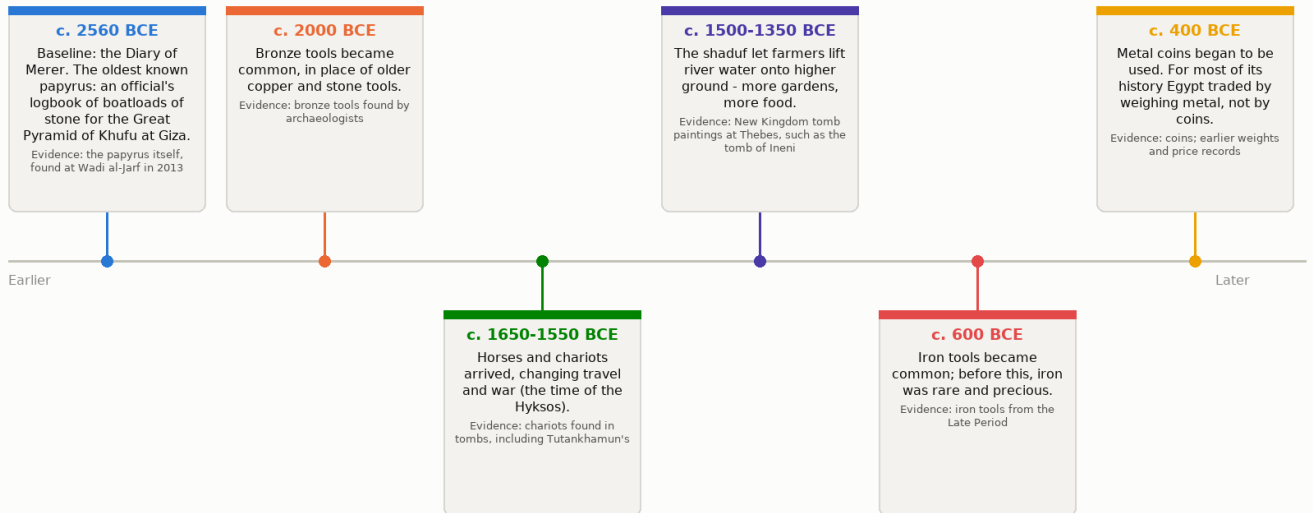
Check: Why does the map ask for a continuity branch as well as change branches? (Because .E05 says continuities and/or changes — and an event's full explanation is both halves, as Part 2 showed.)

6. Everyday life in ancient Egypt: list, rank, justify .E06

.E06 runs in three steps: **list** the changes, **rank** them, and **justify** the ranking with sources. Figure 5 does the listing: five dated changes in the everyday life of ancient Egypt, plus the starting point — the *Diary of Merer*, the oldest papyrus yet found, an official's logbook of boatloads of stone for the Great Pyramid of Khufu at Giza, found at Wadi al-Jarf in 2013. Every card names its evidence: the object, picture or writing that survived.

Changes in the everyday life of ancient Egypt

Five changes, each with its date and its evidence. The baseline is everyday working life along the Nile.



Dates are rounded. 'Evidence' names what historians hold in their hands - objects, pictures or writings that survived.
For the baseline, see 2A (farming the Nile) and 2C (everyday life). Ranking these changes is the task of Part 6.

Timeline of six dated cards for everyday life in ancient Egypt: c. 2560 BCE the Diary of Merer, the oldest known papyrus, an official's logbook of stone for the Great Pyramid of Khufu at Giza, the papyrus itself found at Wadi al-Jarf in 2013; c. 2000 BCE bronze tools common in place of copper and stone, evidence bronze tools found by archaeologists; c. 1650-1550 BCE horses and chariots arrived in the time of the Hyksos, evidence chariots found in tombs including Tutankhamun's; c. 1500-1350 BCE the shaduf let farmers lift river water onto higher ground, evidence New Kingdom tomb paintings at Thebes such as the tomb of Ineni; c. 600 BCE iron tools common, evidence iron tools from the Late Period; c. 400 BCE metal coins began to be used where trade had run by weighing metal, evidence coins and earlier weights and price records

Figure 5. Changes in the everyday life of ancient Egypt, each with its date and its evidence.

A **shaduf** is a pole with a bucket on one end and a weight on the other, used to lift river water onto higher ground. Ranking comes next: a rank is a judgement, and a judgement needs criteria. Figure 6 uses four — how many people it touched, how much it changed daily life, how long its effects lasted, and whether it led to further changes — and shows one argued ranking. Yours may differ; a different order with strong criteria and evidence earns full marks, and every claim keeps its source.

Ranking the changes: a method that works

Significance is not a guess. Test every change against four criteria, then defend your order.

People	Daily life	Duration	Knock-on
How many people did it touch?	How much did it change day-to-day life?	How long did its effects last?	Did it lead to further changes?

A model ranking (one argued answer - not the only one)

1	The shaduf (c. 1500-1350 BCE) Touched most farmers, changed the food supply, and stayed in use for thousands of years.
2	Bronze tools (c. 2000 BCE) Changed work and war for very many people, and came long before iron.
3	Iron tools (c. 600 BCE) Better tools for farming and craft work, but arrived late in Egypt's long story.
4	Horses and chariots (c. 1650-1550 BCE) Changed war and travel a great deal, but few ordinary people ever owned one.
5	Metal coins (c. 400 BCE) Changed trade, but came last, and many people still traded without them.

There is no single right order - a different ranking with strong criteria and evidence can earn full marks.

Every claim needs its evidence: tomb paintings (the shaduf), objects found by archaeologists (tools, chariots, coins), and writings (the Diary of Merer for the baseline). Full criteria for significance are built in section 6C.

Four criteria cards (how many people it touched, how much it changed daily life, how long its effects lasted, whether it led to further changes) above a model ranking of the five changes from most to least significant: 1 the shaduf, 2 bronze tools, 3 iron tools, 4 horses and chariots, 5 metal coins, each rank with a one-line reason tied to the criteria

Figure 6. Ranking the changes: four criteria, then one argued order.

Sources: Wikipedia, “Diary of Merer”, “Shaduf”, “Ineni”, “Hyksos”, “Tutankhamun” and “Wadi al-Jarf”; accessed 25 August 2026.

Check: The model ranking puts chariots fourth even though they changed war a great deal. Which single criterion does most of the work in that judgement? (How many people it touched — few ordinary people ever owned one.)

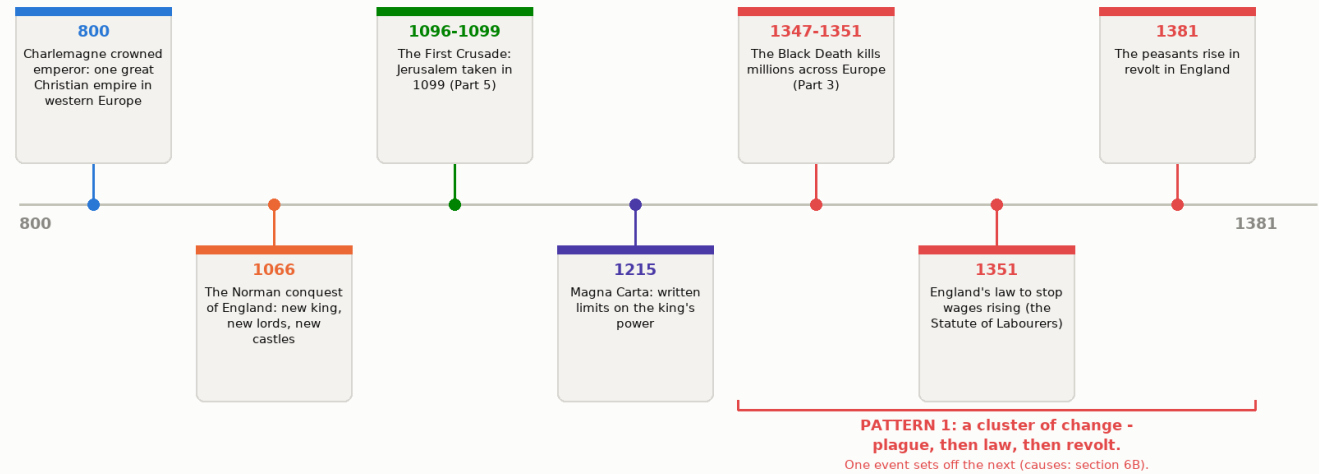
7. Chronologies: spotting patterns in medieval Europe .E07

A **chronology** is events set out in time order; a **pattern** is what repeats across it. .E07 asks you to read chronologies and spot patterns — what continued and what changed — in medieval Europe — **medieval** meaning of the Middle Ages, roughly 500–1500 CE in Europe. Figure 7 is a chronology of seven events from Chapters 1 and 3, with two patterns already marked, plus the continuity strip. Read it in three passes: look for **clusters** of change (1347–1381: plague, then wage law, then revolt — one event setting off the next, which is 6B’s territory); look for **long quiet stretches** (800–1347: daily life moved little, because most change touched the top of society first); and look for **what never moved** (the green strip).

A chronology of medieval Europe, 800-1381

Put events in time order, then look for patterns: clusters, gaps, and what never moved.

PATTERN 2: long stretches where daily life moved little - most events change the top of society first.



Dates are rounded; the events are the ones you met in Chapters 1 and 3.

Chronology of medieval Europe, 800-1381, with seven event cards (Charlemagne crowned emperor 800; the Norman conquest of England 1066; the First Crusade 1096-1099; Magna Carta 1215; the Black Death 1347-1351; England's law to stop wages rising 1351; the peasants' revolt of 1381), a red bracket over 1347-1381 marked pattern 1, a cluster of change, a blue line over the quiet stretch 800-1347 marked pattern 2, long stretches where daily life moved little, and a green continuity strip: most people farmed with hand tools, the Church stayed central, towns stayed small

Figure 7. A chronology of medieval Europe, 800–1381, with its patterns marked.

Sources: Wikipedia, "Charlemagne", "Norman conquest of England", "First Crusade", "Magna Carta", "Black Death", "Statute of Labourers" and "Peasants' Revolt"; accessed 25 August 2026.

Check: Pattern 1 is a cluster of change. Name one event from the cluster and one continuity from the green strip that the event did **not** break.

8. Pulling it together: explaining

To **explain** continuity and change is to give both halves, with reasons, using the handles of rate, extent and order. These frames carry the whole section:

Writing frames.

1. *In [place, dates], ... continued: ...* — name the important aspects that show a lack of deviation.
2. *At the same time, ... changed: in social life, ...; in economic life, ...; in political life, ...; in cultural life, ...* — list the concurrent changes, lane by lane.
3. *The change was [rapid / gradual / sudden / slow] and [widespread / limited]; it came [before / after] ..., so ... was (was not) a turning point.* — give rate, extent and order.

An explanation that finishes with only one half — all change, or all continuity — has described half the past and called it the whole.

Worked examples

Example 1 (with help). *Label with the word bank.* Below are five dated statements from earlier chapters. Each is labelled with a rate word, an extent word, and an order word where one applies; the reason for each label is given.

1. **1347–1351: the Black Death kills a third to half of Europe’s people in four years.** → **Rapid** (four years is fast for a continent), **widespread** (most of Europe), **turning point** (the cluster of 1347–1381 in Figure 7 begins here).
2. **c. 2000–1600 BCE: bronze tools slowly take the place of copper and stone tools in Egypt.** → **Slow / gradual** (four centuries), **widespread** in the end (work and war), **long-term** (it sits early in the sequence of Figure 5).
3. **1215: Magna Carta puts the king’s power in writing.** → **Sudden** (one meeting, one seal), **limited** at first (it bound a king to his barons, not to everyone), **turning point** in order (later law grows from the idea that the king is under the law — 3A).
4. **1096–1099: the First Crusade takes Jerusalem and sets up Crusader states.** → **Rapid** conquest, **widespread** consequences over centuries (Figure 4), and the start of a new **sequence** in relations between Latin Christendom and the Islamic world.
5. **800–1300: most Europeans farm the land with hand tools.** → Not a change at all: **continuity** — no deviation, widespread, across the whole stretch. Labelling it “change” would be the error .E02 warns against.

Example 2 (model). *A full explanation.* The task: using Figure 4, explain the continuity and change resulting from the First Crusade.

The First Crusade (1096–1099) brought change that was rapid in some lanes and long-term in others, with deep continuity underneath. Politically, new Crusader states were set up in the east after Jerusalem fell in 1099 — a rapid change, resting on the *Gesta Francorum*, a primary source written within two years of the event by a participant. Economically, Italian port cities such as Venice and Genoa won new trade links with the east — a slower, long-term change that trade goods and port records show. Culturally, relations between Latin Christendom and the Islamic world changed for centuries — widespread change recorded in chronicles on both sides. At the same time, continuity ran deep: most Europeans never left their villages and still farmed with hand tools (manor records, and tools found by archaeologists), and faith stayed central on both sides (church buildings and writings of the period). In the word bank: the crusade was a turning point for trade and for the relations of two worlds, yet for most villagers the important aspects of life show a lack of deviation — so the significance of the crusade, though real, was short-term for them, exactly the case .E02 describes.

Practice tasks

Practice with help

Q1 (.E02) Below are three statements about the Mongol conquest of Song China in 1279 (Chapter 4). One describes change; two describe continuity. Identify each, and for the two continuity statements, name the move of .E02 it uses (lack of deviation / similarity of important aspects / widespread similarities). (a) A new ruling house, the Yuan dynasty, now governed China. (b) Rice farming, villages and family life carried on much as before. (c) The learning of Confucius still shaped schooling and the running of government.

Q2 (.E03) Sort these five statements about the Black Death into the four lanes of Figure 2 (one lane takes two): (a) whole villages lost their workers; (b) survivors inherited land and goods; (c) England’s Statute of Labourers (1351) tried to freeze wages; (d) writers such as Boccaccio faced death head on in their work; (e) the Jacquerie of 1358 saw French peasants rise against their lords.

Q3 (.E04) Add **one word of your own** to each column of the word bank in Figure 3. For each, pass the test: say whether it tells how fast, how much, or when, and give a dated example from this book that the word fits.

Q4 (.E05) In Figure 4: (a) name the source that carries the trade branch; (b) the branch “most Europeans never left their villages” is annotated with the word-bank idea of *no deviation* — quote one key term from Part 1 that says the same thing; (c) explain in one sentence why every branch must carry a source.

Q5 (.E06) Figure 6 ranks the shaduf first. Justify that rank using **two** of the four criteria. Then explain why horses and chariots sit fourth even though they changed war a great deal.

Q6 (.E07) Figure 7 marks two patterns. Name them, and give **one dated card** from the chronology that supports each.

Practice on your own

Q7 (.E02, .E03) Choose **one** event from Chapters 1–4 (for example: the Mongol conquest of China, the decline of Egypt's Old Kingdom, or the coming of the Black Death). Write one paragraph that (i) describes the continuity using the three moves of .E02, and (ii) lists concurrent change in at least **two** of the four lanes. Every claim needs a date or a source from that chapter.

Q8 (.E05) Draw your **own** annotated concept map for one development the curriculum names: what followed the Renaissance in Europe (1D, 6B), or what followed the Mongol expansion (Chapter 4). At least two change branches and two continuity branches; every branch annotated with a source and a word-bank word. Follow the four rules under Figure 4.

Q9 (.E06) Make your **own** ranking of the five changes in Figure 5. Justify your top two ranks, each with **two** criteria and **one** source named on the cards.

Q10 (.E07) Using Figure 7, explain **one pattern of change and one pattern of continuity** in medieval Europe. Your explanation must use at least three dated events and two word-bank words, and end with a judgement about which pattern mattered more to ordinary people, with a reason.

Source-based inquiry task

Q11. Study Source A, then answer parts (a)–(e).

Meet the source: the Satire of the Trades

Before you use a source, ask where it came from, what it is for, and what it cannot show.

THE SATIRE OF THE TRADES

(the Instruction of Dua-Khety)

Composed in Egypt in the Middle Kingdom, about 2000 BCE. It is set as a scribe, Dua-Khety, teaching his son on the way to the royal school at Thebes.

It describes hard working lives - the coppersmith, the laundryman, the barber - and ends: no job is free of orders except the scribe's.

School students copied it for over a thousand years. Copies written about 1250 BCE survive from the workers' village of Deir el-Medina.

A primary source for everyday working life - and its long copying is evidence of continuity.

Origin

Who: a scribe, writing as Dua-Khety teaching his son. When: composed about 2000 BCE (Middle Kingdom). Form: a school text, copied by students for over a thousand years.

Content

Hard working lives: the coppersmith's fingers like a crocodile's claws, the laundryman at the river with the crocodiles, the barber working into the night - and the closing claim that only the scribe gives orders.

Purpose

To make schoolboys want to become scribes. It persuades by making other jobs sound terrible - so weigh every description against that aim.

Limits

One scribe praising his own job, exaggerating to make a point. It says little about women's work, and it never counts how many people did each job. Cross-check with tools, tombs and other writings.

Sources: Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, vol. 1 (1973); British Museum collection records, satire-of-the-trades ostraca; accessed 25 August 2026.

Source card for the Satire of the Trades (the Instruction of Dua-Khety): an Egyptian school text composed about 2000 BCE, set as a scribe teaching his son on the way to the school at Thebes, describing hard working lives (the coppersmith, the laundryman, the barber) and ending with the claim that no job is free of orders except the scribe's; notes that school students copied it for over a thousand years and that copies of about 1250 BCE survive from the workers' village of Deir el-Medina; four analysis boxes for where it came from, what it says, what it is for, and what it cannot show

Figure 8. Source A: the Satire of the Trades, with the four analysis boxes.

- Where it came from.** What kind of source is this — primary or secondary (the distinction is from 5C)? Who is speaking, and when was it first written?
- What it says.** Name two trades described, and the closing claim about the scribe.
- Continuity.** Copies of this school text survive from about 1250 BCE, over a thousand years after it was written. What does that long copying tell you about continuity in Egyptian schooling? Use one word-bank word in your answer.
- Change and limits.** Name one change to everyday work that this source, written c. 2000 BCE, **cannot** show (compare the later cards in Figure 5). Whose point of view — whose *perspective* — does it carry?
- Weighing it.** The text makes other jobs sound terrible to win schoolboys over to the scribe's life. How should that purpose change the way you use it as evidence for everyday work? Name one other kind of evidence from Figure 5 you would cross-check it against.

*Source: the Satire of the Trades (Instruction of Dua-Khety), Middle Kingdom Egypt, c. 2000 BCE, adapted; translation after Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, vol. 1 (1973); copies on ostraca from Deir el-Medina in the British Museum collection; accessed 25 August 2026.*

Answers

Q1. Change: (a) — a new dynasty is a political change. Continuity: (b) uses lack of deviation and widespread similarity (villages and family life across the country carried on); (c) uses similarity of important aspects (the learning that shaped government stayed the same under new rulers).

Q2. (a) social; (b) economic; (c) political; (d) cultural; (e) social (a revolt is people acting on their place in the world — political also accepted with a reason, since it challenged the lords' rule).

Q3. Accept any word that passes the test with a dated example: e.g. *quick* (rate — the taking of Jerusalem in 1099 after a short siege); *everywhere* (extent — by 1351 the plague had reached most of Europe); *later* (order — iron tools and coins came later than bronze). A word like *huge* fails unless it is used to say how much.

Q4. (a) Trade goods and port records. (b) *Continuity* — “no deviation” is exactly what continuity means. (c) A branch without a source is a claim nobody can check — the map explains, and explaining needs evidence (5D).

Q5. The shaduf: it touched most farmers (people), and it changed the food supply (daily life) — and its effects lasted thousands of years (duration). Chariots fourth: they changed war and travel a great deal, but few ordinary people ever owned one, so on “how many people it touched” they score low.

Q6. Pattern 1 (cluster of change, 1347–1381): supported by the Black Death card (or the wage law, or the revolt). Pattern 2 (long quiet stretches): supported by the gap between 800 and 1066, where the cards show change at the top (a coronation) and quiet below.

Q11. (a) A primary source: a school text composed in Egypt c. 2000 BCE, set as the scribe Dua-Khety teaching his son. (b) Any two of the coppersmith, the laundryman, the barber; the claim that no job is free of orders except the scribe's. (c) Schooling, and the scribe's high place in it, continued for over a thousand years — a slow, steady continuity (word-bank: *long-term* / *steady*). (d) It cannot show later changes such as iron tools (c. 600 BCE) or coins (c. 400 BCE); it carries the perspective of a scribe praising his own job. (e) Its purpose is to persuade, so every hard description must be weighed against that aim; cross-check with objects found by archaeologists (tools, weights) or with tomb paintings.

Model answers

Q7 (model, using Chapter 4). The Mongol conquest of China changed who ruled but left much of daily life unbroken. Continuity: rice farming and village life carried on much as before (lack of deviation), the learning of Confucius still shaped government (similarity of important aspects), and these similarities reached across the conquered south as well as the north (widespread). Concurrent change: in political life, the Yuan dynasty of Kublai Khan replaced the Song in 1279; in economic life, paper money and protected trade roads linked China to Europe (4B); in cultural life, merchants and envoys such as Marco Polo (1271–1295) moved between the two worlds. Source: Rubruck's account of Mongol life, 1253–1255, for the nomad way of life that continued under all of it.

Q8 (model, Mongol expansion). Centre: the Mongol expansion, c. 1206–1279. Change branches: one family's rule joined the east–west roads (source: Carpini's journey, 1245–1247; word bank: *rapid*); protected, low-tax trade grew (source: merchants' records and coins; *long-term*); disease later travelled the same roads (source: chronicles of the 1340s; *widespread*). Continuity branches: herding and moving with the seasons continued on the steppe (source: Rubruck, 1253–1255; *no deviation*); most Europeans and most Chinese still farmed with hand tools (source: manor and census records; *steady*). Every branch carries a source and a word-bank word, per the rules under Figure 4.

Q9 (model). 1 The shaduf — touched most farmers and changed the food supply (people, daily life), and stayed in use for thousands of years (duration); evidence: tomb paintings such as the tomb of Ineni. 2 Bronze tools — changed work and war for very many people (people), centuries before iron (order); evidence: tools found by archaeologists. A different order is acceptable when it is argued from the same criteria and the same cards.

Q10 (model). Pattern of change: the cluster of 1347–1381 — the Black Death (1347–1351) killed a third to half of Europe’s people, the wage law of 1351 tried to take back what the shortage had given workers, and the revolt of 1381 followed: rapid, widespread change in work, law and power. Pattern of continuity: across 800–1381 most people farmed with hand tools, the Church stayed central, and towns stayed small — a steady, widespread continuity. Judgement: to ordinary people the continuity mattered more, because the cluster changed their numbers and their wages but not their daily work; the green strip is their life, and the cluster is what happened to it. (The reverse judgement earns full marks with the same dated support.)

VC2HH8S07

Taught here: .E02–.E07. Excluded entire per TOC §2A-C: .E01 — retained as linkage key only.

Draws on: VC2HH8S02 (taught in 5B) · VC2HH8S03–VC2HH8S06 (taught in 5C–5F).

Causes and consequences: explaining what drives change

Section 6B · Strand: Historical Concepts and Skills · Sub-strand: Causes and consequences (Levels 7–8) **Owens:** VC2HH8S08 **Draws on:** VC2HH8S02 (sequencing, taught in 5B) · VC2HH8S03–VC2HH8S06 (source skills, taught in 5C–5F) · VC2HH8S07 (continuity and change, taught in 6A)

Teaching sequence

1. Words to define before we start

Key terms, defined before use.

- **Cause** — why something happened.
- **Consequence** — what happened because of it.
- **Trigger** — the short-term event that made something happen at once.
- **Long-term cause** — a cause that built up over a long time, often years or centuries.
- **Intended consequence** — a result someone meant to bring about. **Unintended consequence** — a result no one planned.
- **Pattern** — something that repeats across events, so it can be seen and explained.
- **Significance** — how important something was: its scale, its lasting effects, and the change it brought.
- **Chronicler** — a person who writes a year-by-year record of events; the record is a *chronicle*.

Key words of this section

The words you need for explaining causes and consequences. Contested terms are marked and treated in boxes later in the section.

cause why something happened	consequence what happened because of something else	trigger a short-term event that made something happen at once	long-term cause a cause that built up over a long time, often years or centuries
intended consequence a result someone meant to bring about	unintended consequence a result no one planned; it can appear long after the event	pattern something that repeats across events, so it can be seen and explained	significance how important something was: its scale, its lasting effects, and the changes it brought
decline (contested) a loss of strength or order over time; historians debate when decline becomes collapse	feudalism (contested) a modern term for medieval rule through lords, land and service; historians debate how well it fits the past	renaissance the flowering of art and learning in Europe, starting in Italy in the 1300s	graphic organiser a diagram that sorts ideas into boxes and arrows to show links

'Decline' and 'feudalism' are contested terms: both sides of each are set out in boxes in Parts 4 and 6.

Definition cards for the twelve key words of this section: *cause*, *consequence*, *trigger*, *long-term cause*, *intended consequence*, *unintended consequence*, *pattern*, *significance*, and the contested terms *decline* and *feudalism*, plus *renaissance* and *graphic organiser*

Figure 1. The key words of this section.

Two of these words — *decline* and *feudalism* — are **contested**: historians argue about how they should be used, so each gets a box of its own (Parts 5 and 7). Four more terms — *peasant*, *serf*, *statute* and *graphic organiser* — are defined where they first appear.

2. The four kinds, with examples you already know

Causes and consequences come in four kinds (Figure 2). The same event can wear two hats at once: it can be the **consequence** of one thing and the **cause** of the next. Sorting an event into the right kind is the first move in every explanation.

Kinds of causes and consequences

Each kind, with a dated example you have already met in this book.

Long-term cause

For centuries, herders on the steppe needed trade with farming lands to get grain and cloth (Chapter 4). This did not make war certain, but it made conflict more likely.

Trigger

In 1218 a Mongol trade caravan was seized at Otrar and the envoys sent after it were killed. War followed at once (Chapter 4).

Intended consequence

Mongol rulers protected merchants and kept taxes low, so that trade would grow along the roads (Chapter 4). That is what they meant to bring about.

Unintended consequence

The same open roads also carried the plague west in the 1340s (Chapters 3-4). No one planned that result.

Sentence frames

A long-term cause of ... was ...

The trigger for ... was ...

One intended consequence was ... ; one unintended consequence was ...

As a result, ...

Four panels, one for each kind of cause and consequence, each with a dated example from earlier chapters: a long-term cause (steppe herders needing trade), a trigger (the seizure of a caravan at Otrar in 1218), an intended consequence (Mongol rulers protecting merchants), and an unintended consequence (the same roads carrying plague west in the 1340s), with sentence frames below

Figure 2. The four kinds, with dated examples from Chapters 1–4.

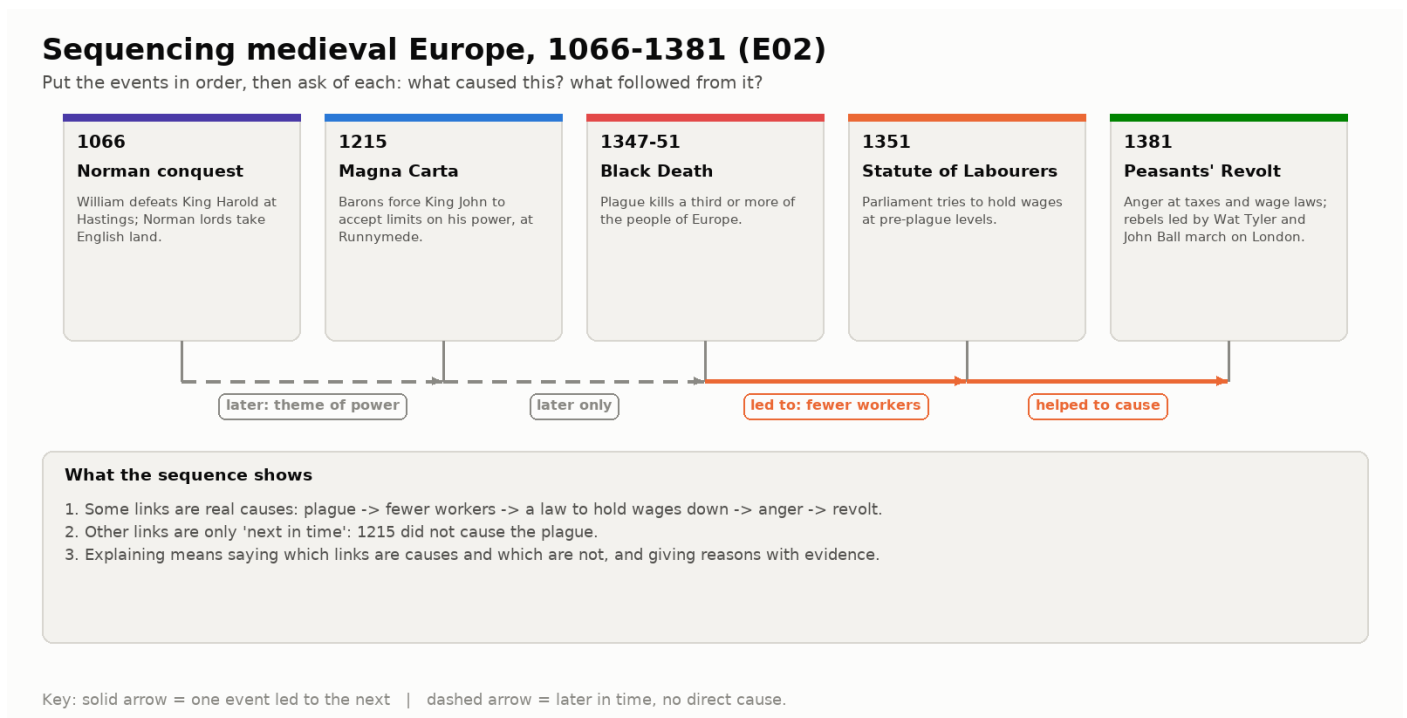
Check: The open roads that carried the plague west in the 1340s were an unintended consequence of Mongol rule. **Unintended for whom?** (For the Mongol rulers, who meant to grow trade, not to spread disease.)

3. Sequencing events to find patterns .E02

Putting events in order is not just a memory task. Once events stand in a row, you can ask two questions of each one — *what caused this?* and *what followed from it?* — and **broader patterns** appear. Follow the four steps:

1. **Order** the events by date.
2. **Ask** of each: what caused it? what followed?
3. **Mark** which links are real cause links and which are only “later in time”.
4. **Name the pattern**, and explain it by pointing to the key events, people, themes and evidence.

Figure 3 runs the method on five dated events from medieval England and Europe.



Five event cards in date order from 1066 to 1381: the Norman conquest, Magna Carta, the Black Death, the Statute of Labourers and the Peasants' Revolt; solid orange arrows mark the cause links from the plague to fewer workers, to the wage law, to the revolt, while dashed grey arrows mark links that are only later in time, with a box explaining what the sequence shows

Figure 3. Sequencing medieval Europe, 1066–1381. Solid arrows are cause links; dashed arrows are only “later in time”.

Notice the two different kinds of link. The chain 1347–51 → 1351 → 1381 is a **cause chain**: fewer workers pushed wages up, the law tried to freeze them, and anger at the law helped to cause the revolt. But 1215 did not cause the plague — it is only earlier in time, and its link to 1381 is a **theme** (power, law and the limits of kings), not a cause. Explaining means saying which links are causes and which are not, and giving reasons.

Sources: Wikipedia, “Norman conquest of England”, “Magna Carta”, “Black Death”, “Statute of Labourers” and “Peasants’ Revolt”; accessed 25 August 2026.

Check: In Figure 3, which two events are **consequences** of the Black Death? (The Statute of Labourers, and — through the chain of anger — the Peasants’ Revolt.)

4. Trigger or long-term causes? The First Crusade .E03

A **crusade** was an armed journey to win back Jerusalem and the Holy Land, called for by the pope from 1095; the people who went were **crusaders**. The First Crusade is a clean case for .E03, because the **trigger** is easy to point to, but the **long-term causes** had been building for decades (Figure 4).

The First Crusade: long-term causes, trigger, outcomes (E03)

The trigger made the crusade happen in 1095-1096. The long-term causes made it possible.

Long-term causes (built up over years)

Seljuk advance

The Seljuks defeated the Byzantines at Manzikert in 1071 and settled much of Anatolia.

Pilgrimage

Journeys to Jerusalem mattered deeply to Christians, and the roads east grew harder to use.

The pope's aims

Pope Urban II wanted to bring Christians together under his leadership and to help the eastern empire.

Alexios asks for help

In March 1095 envoys of Emperor Alexios I Komnenos asked for help at a church council in Italy.

TRIGGER

Council of Clermont, November 1095: Urban calls for an armed pilgrimage to free Jerusalem.

Crowds respond at once; armies begin to gather within months.

Outcomes

Armies set out, 1096

Several armies march east by land and sea; many die on the way.

Jerusalem taken

After a long march and hard sieges, the crusaders take Jerusalem in July 1099.

Lasting contact

Contact between Christian Europe and the eastern Mediterranean grows for generations.

Historians' views: what mattered most?

Carl Erdmann (1935)

The idea of the crusade grew slowly out of older ideas of holy war: a long build-up, not a sudden invention.

Jonathan Riley-Smith (1997)

Those who went were moved by faith, not just by land or loot: belief is a cause too.

Peter Frankopan (2012)

The push came from the east -- Alexios's call for help -- not only from the pope in Rome.

Source note: no one wrote down Urban's exact words at Clermont. Later accounts (Fulcher of Chartres; Robert the Monk, writing about 1106) differ from each other -- which is why historians can weigh the causes differently.

Diagram of the First Crusade with three columns: long-term causes (the Seljuk advance after Manzikert in 1071, the importance of pilgrimage, Pope Urban II's aims, and Emperor Alexios I Komnenos asking for help in March 1095), the trigger in the middle (Urban's call at the Council of Clermont in November 1095), and outcomes on the right (armies setting out in 1096, Jerusalem taken in July 1099, and lasting contact between Europe and the eastern Mediterranean); three cards below give the views of historians Carl Erdmann, Jonathan Riley-Smith and Peter Frankopan

Figure 4. The First Crusade: long-term causes, trigger and outcomes.

The three historians in Figure 4 do not disagree about the facts; they disagree about **what mattered most**. Erdmann (1935) stresses the slow growth of the *idea* of crusade out of older church ideas about war and pilgrimage. Riley-Smith (1997) looked at the people who actually went, and argues that faith — not land or loot — moved them. Frankopan (2012) turns the map around: the push, he says, came **from the east**, because it was Alexios I Komnenos who asked for help. All three are strong readings of the same events — which is exactly why .E03 asks you to identify differing interpretations, not to pretend there is only one.

One source warning: nobody wrote Urban's exact words down at Clermont. The speeches we have were set down later — Fulcher of Chartres was there, but his account survives in later copies; Robert the Monk wrote about 1106 — and they differ. So historians build their views from accounts that already disagree (see 5E and 5F).

Sources: Wikipedia, "First Crusade", "Council of Clermont", "Battle of Manzikert" and "Alexios I Komnenos"; Carl Erdmann, The Origin of the Idea of Crusade (1935); Jonathan Riley-Smith, The First Crusaders, 1095–1131 (1997); Peter Frankopan, The First Crusade: The Call from the East (2012); accessed 25 August 2026.**

Check: Manzikert was fought in 1071, Clermont was in 1095. What does the 24-year gap tell you about trigger and long-term causes? (The trigger set a date; the causes had been growing for a generation.)

5. The decline of an ancient society: Egypt's Old Kingdom .E04

Section 2D dates the end of the Old Kingdom to about 2181 BCE and the First Intermediate Period to c. 2181–2055 BCE. .E04 asks you to **analyse** the causes and consequences of that decline and then **rank** them. Figure 5 lays out the candidates, each with its evidence. A **nomarch** was a local ruler of an Egyptian province.

Egypt's Old Kingdom: causes and consequences of decline (E04)

Candidate causes on the left, consequences on the right. Dates follow section 2D.

Candidate causes (with evidence)

Repeated poor floods

Low Nile floods and a drying climate from about 2200 BCE.
Evidence: texts lamenting hunger.

Nomarchs grew stronger

Local rulers (nomarchs) made their posts hereditary and kept more wealth. Evidence: tomb texts boasting of feeding their towns in lean years.

Weak kingship

Pepi II's reign is recorded as 94 years (some historians doubt this); royal buildings grew smaller.

Pyramid costs

Building and keeping pyramid estates tied up land and labour for generations.

c. 2200-2055 BCE

Consequences

Rule divided

Rival courts at Herakleopolis (north) and Thebes (south), c. 2181-2055 BCE -- the First Intermediate Period.

Hunger and disorder

The Admonitions of Ipuwer laments the land thrown upside down -- but it is literature with a message, not plain report.

Trade and building slowed

Fewer great works; tombs were plundered.

Reunification

Mentuhotep II of Thebes reunited Egypt c. 2055 BCE; the Middle Kingdom begins.

'Decline' is contested: some historians say the Old Kingdom collapsed, others say it was transformed. Both sides are set out in the box in Part 4.

Two columns of cards for the decline of Egypt's Old Kingdom: candidate causes on the left (repeated poor Nile floods and a drying climate from about 2200 BCE, nomarchs growing stronger, the weak kingship of Pepi II's very long reign, and the cost of pyramid building) and consequences on the right (rule divided between Herakleopolis and Thebes, hunger and disorder recorded in texts such as the Admonitions of Ipuwer, slower trade and building, and reunification under Mentuhotep II about 2055 BCE)

Figure 5. Candidate causes and consequences of the Old Kingdom's decline.

Contested term: decline — collapse or transformation?

No single authority settles this word; historians use it in different ways, so both readings are set out before any judgement.

The collapse reading. Central rule broke down; texts speak of hunger; great building stopped; tombs were plundered. A state that could not feed its people or guard its dead had, on this reading, collapsed.

The transformation reading. Local rulers (the nomarchs) kept order where the king no longer could; writing, art and trade continued in new forms; and within about 125 years Mentuhotep II reunited Egypt. On this reading the old system was not destroyed — it was rearranged.

Weighing them. The curriculum's word is *decline*, and it sits between the two: a real loss of central strength (collapse is too sudden, business as usual is too soft). Use *decline*, and say which of the two readings your evidence supports.

Ranking comes next. A rank is a **judgement**, and a judgement needs **criteria**. Figure 6 uses four: *scale* (how many people were affected), *duration* (how long the effects lasted), *importance at the time*, and *strength of the evidence*. One worked judgement is shown; yours may differ, but it must be justified against the same criteria.

Ranking the causes: one worked judgement (E04)

Each cause is scored against four criteria, then ranked. Your ranking may differ -- it must be justified.

Candidate cause	Scale: how many people affected	Duration: how long effects lasted	Importance at the time	Strength of evidence	Rank
Repeated poor floods	Very high: harvests failed for many years	Long: hunger lasted decades	High: rulers were judged by the flood	Strong: texts lamenting hunger; river records	1
Nomarchs' growing power	Medium-high: rule changed across the provinces	Long: hereditary posts survived the breakdown	Medium: growing for generations	Strong: tomb texts	2
Weak kingship (Pepi II)	High at the top: decisions stalled	Medium: one long reign, but effects lasted	High: kingship held the system together	Medium: king lists; the 94 years doubted	3
Pyramid costs	Medium: land and labour tied up	Long: estates ran for generations	Medium: drained resources slowly	Medium: estate records	4

A rank is a judgement, not a fact: it must follow the criteria and the evidence. Reasonable people can rank these differently -- your job is to justify your order.

Ranking table scoring the four candidate causes of the Old Kingdom's decline against the criteria of scale, duration, importance at the time and strength of evidence, with a worked ranking of 1 repeated poor floods, 2 nomarchs' growing power, 3 weak kingship and 4 pyramid costs, and a note that any ranking must follow the criteria and the evidence

Figure 6. A worked ranking of the causes.

Sources: Wikipedia, "Old Kingdom of Egypt", "First Intermediate Period of Egypt", "Pepi II" and "Mentuhotep II"; Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature, vol. I* (1973), which translates the *Admonitions of Ipuwer* and treats it as literature with a message; accessed 25 August 2026.

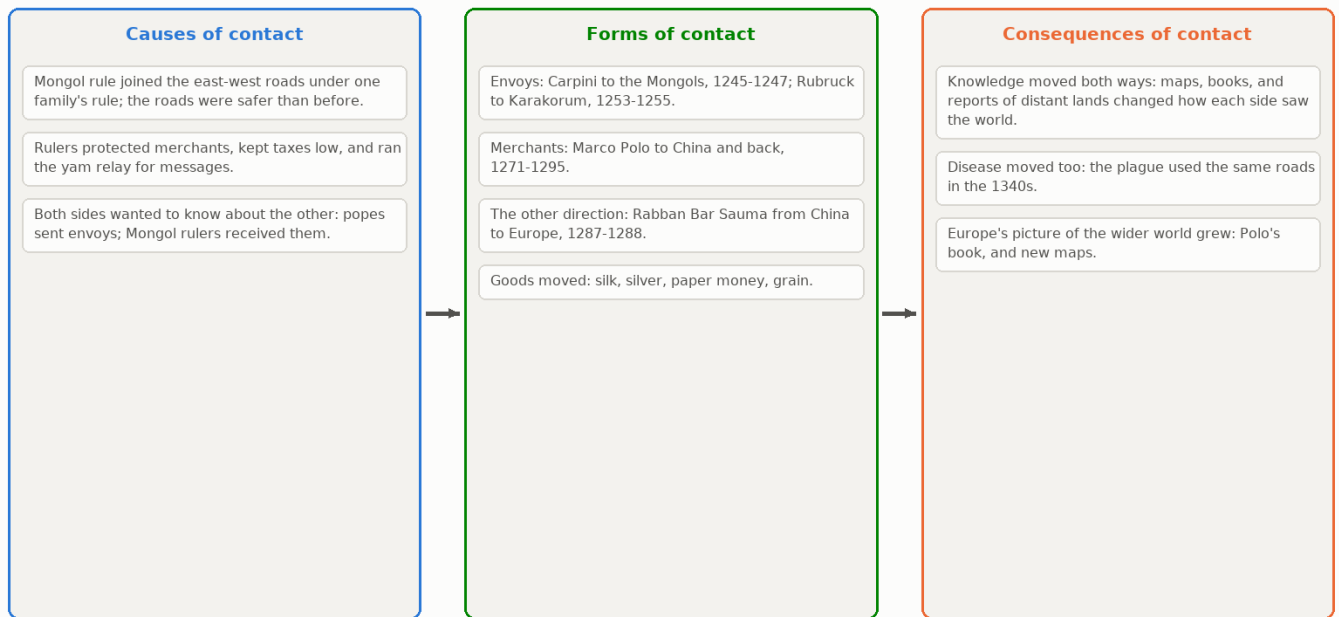
Check: Which cause in Figure 6 has the strongest evidence, and which the weakest? Say why. (Poor floods — many texts speak of hunger; pyramid costs — the estate records are thinner.)

6. Contact between societies: a graphic organiser .E05

A **graphic organiser** is a diagram that sorts ideas into boxes and arrows so the links between them can be seen at a glance. .E05 asks you to organise what caused **contact between societies** — and what followed — in one. Figure 7 is filled in as a model, using the Mongol–European contact you met in section 4B.

Graphic organiser: contact between Mongols and Europeans, c. 1240-1290 (E05)

Filled in as a model. In the practice tasks you build one for a different contact.



Reading across: the causes made the contact possible; the forms are the contact itself; the consequences are what followed -- intended and unintended.

Completed graphic organiser in three columns: causes of contact between Mongols and Europeans (one family's rule joining the east-west roads, protection of merchants and the yam relay, and curiosity on both sides), forms of contact (Carpini 1245-1247, Rubruck 1253-1255, Marco Polo 1271-1295, Rabban Bar Sauma 1287-1288, and goods such as silk and silver), and consequences of contact (knowledge and maps moving both ways, disease moving along the same roads in the 1340s, and Europe's picture of the wider world growing)

Figure 7. A graphic organiser filled in as a model: Mongol–European contact, c. 1240–1290.

Reading **across** the organiser is the point: the causes made the contact possible, the forms are the contact itself, and the consequences are what followed — intended (trade, knowledge) and unintended (disease). In Q5 you will build your own organiser for a different contact: Egypt and its neighbours (section 2E).

Sources: Wikipedia, “Giovanni da Pian del Carpini”, “William of Rubruck”, “Marco Polo” and “Rabban Bar Sauma”; accessed 25 August 2026.

7. The Black Death: severity, consequences and the Renaissance .E06

First, the terms. A **peasant** is a small farmer who works a lord's land, paying rent in work, crops or money. A **serf** is a peasant who is not free to leave the land; **serfdom** is the condition of being a serf (met in 1E and 3A). A **statute** is a law made by a ruler or parliament. **Medieval** means of the Middle Ages, roughly 500–1500 CE in Europe.

How severe was it? The **chroniclers** — Jean de Venette in France, Matteo Villani in Florence, and Boccaccio, who lived through it — wrote of whole streets left empty. Historians today estimate that a **third to a half** of the people of Europe died in 1347–1351, varying by place. Remember 3A: many of these estimates lean on church records of burials, and those records have limits.

The Black Death: severity and categorised long-term consequences (E06)

Categorising is the first step; the links between categories are what you explain next.

How severe?

Chroniclers (Venette, Villani, Boccaccio) wrote of whole streets emptying. Historians estimate that a third to half of the people of Europe died in 1347-1351, varying by place. Church records used for these estimates are questioned in section 3A.

Economic

Fewer workers -> survivors asked higher wages -> rulers froze wages by law: the Statute of Labourers, 1351.

Social

Anger boiled over into uprisings: the Jacquerie in France, 1358; the Peasants' Revolt in England, 1381. Survivors inherited land; more people could move up (social mobility).

Structures

Feudal structures weakened: lords let serfs pay money instead of service; serfdom faded away in western Europe.

Cultural

Writers and artists faced death head on: Boccaccio's Decameron (c. 1349-1353) opens with the plague in Florence.

Notice the chain across categories: fewer workers (economic) -> frozen wages (economic) -> anger (social) -> uprisings (social) -> weaker feudal structures (structures).

Severity strip and four panels sorting the Black Death's long-term consequences: economic (fewer workers, higher wages, the Statute of Labourers of 1351), social (the Jacquerie of 1358 and the Peasants' Revolt of 1381, and more social mobility), structures (feudal structures weakening as serfs pay money instead of service), and cultural (the Decameron by Boccaccio opening with the plague in Florence)

Figure 8. How severe the Black Death was, and its consequences by category.

The categories are not separate boxes; they chain together. Fewer workers (**economic**) meant survivors could ask for higher pay; rulers froze wages by law — the **Statute of Labourers** (1351); anger at the law boiled over into **uprisings** (**social**) — the Jacquerie in France (1358) and the Peasants' Revolt in England (1381), led by Wat Tyler and the priest John Ball. At the same time, lords let serfs pay money instead of service, so **serfdom faded** and **social mobility** rose (**structures**) — and writers such as Boccaccio faced death head on (**cultural**).

Contested term: feudalism

This is a historians' label, not a word people of the Middle Ages used for themselves; that is the kind of term it is, and both sides of the argument are set out.

The for side. The label gathers real things into one picture: lords holding land, peasants owing work and rent, service exchanged for protection. Without a single word, the pattern is hard to see or teach.

The against side. The historian E. A. R. Brown called it “the tyranny of a construct” (1974): a tidy modern system pressed onto messy, varied arrangements that looked different in every place. Susan Reynolds (1994) argued that the neat “feudal” picture does not match what the sources actually say.

Weighing them. The curriculum uses the phrase *feudal structures*, and so do we — carefully, meaning the web of land, lords and service, not a machine with fixed parts.

Was the plague a cause of the Renaissance? The *Renaissance* was the flowering of art and learning that began in Italy in the 1300s. E06 asks you to explain the Black Death's significance as one of its causes — so mark the link, then weigh it (Figure 9).

Debate: was the Black Death a cause of the Renaissance? (E06)

Both sides are stated as strongly as the evidence allows before any judgement.

For: yes, it was a cause

Survivors had more wealth per person, and rich families paid artists and writers.

Boccaccio set the Decameron (c. 1349-1353) in the plague years: new interest in how people live and die.

The labour shortage weakened old structures, so more people could move, work and learn (social mobility).

Against: it had earlier roots

The Renaissance began before the plague: Dante (d. 1321) and Giotto (d. 1337) did their great work before 1347.

Italian cities grew rich on trade before 1347; their wealth did not come from the plague.

Petrarch saw the plague as loss -- of friends and of books -- not as a fresh start.

Where this lands

The curriculum asks you to explain whether the Black Death helped cause the Renaissance. Historians accept that link but dispute its size: the plague changed Europe deeply, but the Renaissance had earlier roots too. Mark the link, then weigh it.

Debate card with two columns on whether the Black Death helped cause the Renaissance: for (survivors holding more wealth, the Decameron by Boccaccio set in the plague years, and more social mobility) and against (Dante and Giotto working before 1347, Italian cities already rich on trade, and Petrarch seeing the plague as loss), with a conclusion noting that historians accept the link but dispute its size

Figure 9. Debate: was the Black Death a cause of the Renaissance?

Sources: Wikipedia, “Black Death”, “Jean de Venette”, “Matteo Villani”, “Decameron”, “Jacquerie”, “Peasants’ Revolt”, “Statute of Labourers”, “Renaissance”, “Dante Alighieri”, “Giotto” and “Petrarch”; E. A. R. Brown, “The Tyranny of a Construct: Feudalism and Historians of Medieval Europe” (1974); Susan Reynolds, Fiefs and Vassals* (1994); accessed 25 August 2026.*

Check: Give one consequence of the Black Death from each of three different categories in Figure 8.

8. Pulling it together: contribution to continuity and change

The content description ends with the words **contribution to continuity and change**. Every explanation in this section should finish there: not only *what changed*, but *what stayed the same*. Take 1381. **Changed:** wages, wage law, open revolt, and the slow fading of serfdom. **Continued:** most people still farmed for a lord; kings and lords still ruled; and the revolt was crushed, so the old order proved hard to break. Figure 10 gives you frames for writing both halves.

Writing frames: causes, consequences, and continuity and change

Use these stems to build full sentences of your own.

Explaining causes	Explaining consequences	Continuity and change
A long-term cause of X was ...	One consequence was ...	X changed because ...
The trigger was ...	One intended consequence was ...; one unintended consequence was ...	Y continued because ...
This mattered because ...	As a result, ...	The event changed ..., but ... continued.
Historians differ: some say ..., others say ...	The effect lasted ...	Its contribution to change was ...; its contribution to continuity was ...

Frames are scaffolding: your goal is full sentences of your own, with dated events, named people, and evidence.

Three panels of sentence frames for explaining causes, explaining consequences, and linking an event to continuity and change, such as “a long-term cause of ... was ...”, “one unintended consequence was ...”, and “the event changed ..., but ... continued”

Figure 10. Writing frames for causes, consequences, and continuity and change.

Worked examples

Example 1 (with help). *Sort the chain.* Below are five dated facts from the Black Death chain. Each is labelled with its kind, and the reason for the label is given.

1. **1347: plague reaches Europe by sea, carried along trade roads from the east.** → **Trigger.** A dated event that set the crisis going at once. (The trade roads themselves were a *long-term cause* of the spread.)
2. **By 1351, a third or more of the people of many regions have died.** → **Consequence** of 1 — and a **cause** of 3. One event, two hats.
3. **With fewer workers, those alive can ask for higher pay.** → **Consequence** of 2 (an economic one).
4. **1351: the Statute of Labourers tries to hold wages at pre-plague levels.** → **Intended consequence** from the rulers’ point of view: they meant to freeze wages. It is also a **cause** of 5.
5. **1381: rebels led by Wat Tyler and John Ball march on London.** → From the rulers’ point of view, an **unintended consequence** of the chain: they meant to hold wages, not to face a revolt.

Notice the thinking moves: *order the facts, label the kinds, follow the point of view* (intended for whom? unintended for whom?).

Example 2 (model). *A full explanation.* The task: explain one cause and one consequence of the decline of Egypt’s Old Kingdom, and its contribution to continuity and change.

A long-term cause of the Old Kingdom’s decline was the repeated poor Nile floods from about 2200 BCE. The state’s whole strength stood on the harvest, so when floods failed for years, hunger followed and the king could no longer feed or pay his people; texts of the time speak of hunger, which is strong evidence that this cause was real. A major consequence was that rule divided between two rival courts, at Herakleopolis in the north and Thebes in the south, from c. 2181 BCE. Ranked against the criteria of scale and duration, the poor floods matter most: they touched every farm in Egypt for decades, while even the longest reign of a king was one life. The decline changed who held power — for about 125 years local nomarchs, not one king, kept order — but much continued: farming, writing, art and belief in the same gods. When Mentuhotep II reunited Egypt c. 2055 BCE, it was a kingdom much like the old one. Its contribution to

change was the shift of power to local rulers and back; its contribution to continuity was showing how deep the Egyptian way of life ran.

Practice tasks

Practice with help

Q1 (.E02) Figure 3 shows two dashed links. Name them, and say in one sentence each why they are “later in time” links and not cause links.

Q2 (.E02) Look again at Figure 3. What broader pattern do the five events show about **power, work and law** in medieval England? Explain your pattern using two key individuals and one theme.

Q3 (.E03) Sort these four statements about the First Crusade into *long-term causes* and *trigger*: (a) the Seljuk victory at Manzikert, 1071; (b) Alexios I Komnenos sending envoys to ask for help, March 1095; (c) Urban II’s call at Clermont, November 1095; (d) pilgrim roads east growing harder to use. Then: which of the three historians in Figure 4 would give statement (b) the most weight, and why?

Q4 (.E04) Figure 6 ranks the nomarchs’ growing power second. Justify that rank using **two** of the four criteria.

Q5 (.E05) Section 2E covered Egypt’s contact with its neighbours — trade across the eastern Mediterranean (with Cyprus, Crete and Greece), the battle of Kadesh (c. 1274 BCE), and a peace treaty with the Hittites. Build a graphic organiser with three columns (causes of contact / forms of contact / consequences of contact). Start from these given cards — cause: *Egypt needed timber and metal its own land lacked*; consequence: *styles in art and writing moved both ways* — and add **two causes, two forms and one more consequence** of your own from 2E.

Q6 (.E06) Sort these five consequences of the Black Death into the categories of Figure 8 (economic / social / structures / cultural): (a) survivors asking higher wages; (b) the Jacquerie of 1358; (c) serfs paying money instead of service; (d) the *Decameron* by Boccaccio; (e) survivors inheriting land and moving up in the world.

Practice on your own

Q7 (.E02) Choose **four or five dated events** from any one of Chapters 2–4. Put them in order, then explain one pattern of causes and consequences and one continuity across them. Point to the key events, people, themes and the one source of evidence from that chapter.

Q8 (.E03) “The First Crusade happened because of one speech at Clermont.” Do you agree? Weigh the trigger against the long-term causes, using **at least two** of the three historians in Figure 4.

Q9 (.E04) Make your **own** ranking of the four candidate causes in Figure 5. Justify your top two causes, each with two criteria.

Q10 (.E06) “The Black Death caused more change than anything else in late medieval Europe.” Draw a conclusion about the **severity** of the plague, then argue for or against this claim with dated evidence.

Source-based inquiry task

Q11. Study Source A, then answer parts (a)–(e).

Source for the inquiry task

A law made in England in 1351, five years after the plague arrived.

Source A. Statute of Labourers, England, 1351 (adapted)

Because a great part of the people, and especially the workers and servants, died in the said plague, some, seeing the trouble of the workers and the great shortage of servants, were unwilling to serve unless they received excessive payment ... we have ordered that every man and woman under sixty, free or unfree, who is not a craftsman and has no land of their own, shall serve for the same wages as before the plague ... and that no one shall give food or money to any beggar who is able to work.

Statute of Labourers (England), 1351; text printed in A. Luders and others (eds.), *Statutes of the Realm*, vol. 1 (1810).

Origin

What kind of source is this? Who made it, where, and when?

Content

What does it order? Which words show the rulers' worry?

Purpose

What was it trying to do? Whose interests does it serve?

Limits

What can it NOT tell us -- about workers' feelings, or whether the law worked?

In the task you will also link this source to the consequence chain: plague -> fewer workers -> law -> anger -> the revolt of 1381.

Source card for the inquiry task: an adapted extract of the Statute of Labourers made in England in 1351, noting the death of a great part of the people in the plague and the shortage of servants, ordering every able person under sixty without land to serve for the pre-plague wages and no one to give food or money to a beggar who can work, with the four analysis boxes for origin, content, purpose and limits

Figure 11. Source A: Statute of Labourers, England, 1351 (adapted), with the four analysis questions.

- (a) **Origin.** What kind of source is this? Who made it, where, and when?
- (b) **Content.** Point to two orders the law makes.
- (c) **Reading it.** The law complains that workers “were unwilling to serve unless they received excessive payment”. What can you **work out** about the labour market in 1351 from that complaint? Give reasons.
- (d) **Perspective and limits.** Whose interests does the law serve? Name one thing this source **cannot** tell us.
- (e) **The chain.** Place the law in the chain *plague* → *fewer workers* → *law* → *anger* → *revolt of 1381*. Is the law a cause, a consequence, or both? Say of what.

Source: Statute of Labourers (England), 1351, adapted; text printed in *Statutes of the Realm*, vol. 1 (1810), edited by A. Luders and others; accessed 25 August 2026.

Answers

Q1. 1066→1215 and 1215→1347–51. The Norman conquest did not make the barons force John to sign (that came from John's own rule and the barons' strength); and 1215 did not bring the plague (which came from the east along trade roads).

Q2. Pattern: power over work kept moving and was fought over — kings and lords claimed it (1066), law began to limit kings (1215), the plague shifted power towards workers (1347–51), rulers used law to take it back (1351), and workers fought back (1381). Individuals: King John; Wat Tyler (or John Ball). Theme: law as a weapon between rulers and the ruled.

Q3. Long-term causes: (a), (b), (d). Trigger: (c). Frankopan gives (b) most weight: his argument is that the call began in the east, with Alexios's request.

Q4. Scale/duration: nomarch power touched every province and outlasted the breakdown (hereditary posts). Importance: it moved real power — taxes, food, order — from the king to local rulers. (Strength of evidence could also be used: tomb texts are direct.)

Q5. Accept any organiser with the two given cards plus two causes (e.g. Egypt's grain and gold drew traders; rulers wanted allies and news), two forms (e.g. trade ships to Crete and Cyprus; envoys and a peace treaty after Kadesh), and one consequence (e.g. Egyptian and Hittite rulers exchanged gifts and letters; war technology and styles moved).

Q6. (a) economic; (b) social; (c) structures; (d) cultural; (e) social (mobility) — economic also accepted with a reason.

Q11. (a) A law (statute) made in England in 1351 by the king's government (Edward III's parliament). (b) E.g.: every able person under sixty without land must serve for the pre-plague wages; no one may give food or money to a beggar who can work. (c) Workers were scarce, so they could demand more pay — the shortage gave workers power the rulers wanted back. (d) It serves lords and employers who pay wages; it cannot tell us how workers felt, or whether the law worked. (e) Both: a consequence of the shortage (an intended one, from the rulers' view) and a cause of the anger that helped to bring the revolt of 1381.

Model answers

Q7 (model, using Chapter 4). Events: 1206 Temujin takes the title Genghis Khan; 1218 the caravan seized at Otrar and envoys killed; 1221 the Khwarezmian cities fall; c. 1240s–1290s envoys and merchants move (Carpini 1245–1247; Polo 1271–1295). Pattern of causes and consequences: the steppe's long-term need for trade (cause) made the roads matter; the seizure at Otrar (trigger) brought war; one intended consequence was protected, low-tax trade; one unintended consequence was the plague using the same roads in the 1340s. Continuity: herding and moving with the seasons continued through all of it (4A). Source of evidence: Rubruck's account of Mongol life, 1253–1255.

Q8 (model). Disagree in part. The speech at Clermont was the trigger: it set the date and the form, and crowds answered within months. But the crusade needed long-term causes to work at all — the Seljuk advance after Manzikert (1071), the hardening pilgrim roads, and Alexios's request for help. Frankopan gives the east the leading role; Erdmann shows the idea growing for decades before Urban spoke; Riley-Smith adds that faith moved the people who actually went. A trigger without those causes would have been a speech and nothing more.

Q9 (model). 1 Poor floods, 2 nomarchs' power. The floods rank first on scale (every farm lived by the Nile) and on strength of evidence (many texts speak of hunger). The nomarchs rank second on duration (hereditary posts outlasted the breakdown) and importance at the time (they kept order and grain in their provinces when the king could not). A different order is acceptable if justified against the same criteria.

Q10 (model). Conclusion on severity: severe beyond any other event of the period — chroniclers describe emptied streets, and historians estimate a third to half of Europe’s people died in 1347–1351. For the claim: the plague set off the chain of labour shortage, wage law, uprisings (Jacquerie 1358; the Peasants’ Revolt 1381) and the fading of serfdom — economic, social and structural change no battle caused. Against: change had other causes too (towns and trade were growing before 1347; kings and popes were already quarrelling), and much continued (lords, kings, the church). Weighing both, the plague caused more change than anything else in late medieval Europe — but it was not the only cause.

VC2HH8S08

Taught here: .E02–.E06. Excluded entire per TOC §2A-C: .E01 — retained as linkage key only.

Draws on: VC2HH8S02 (taught in 5B) · VC2HH8S03–VC2HH8S06 (taught in 5C–5F) · VC2HH8S07 (taught in 6A).

Deciding what mattered: analysing historical significance

Section 6C · Strand: Historical Concepts and Skills · Sub-strand: Historical significance · History 7 **Owns:** VC2HH8S09 **Draws on:** .E01–.E04 (all four elaborations, taught in this section)

Chapters 1 to 4 filled your notebook with the past: rivers and pyramids, castles and cathedrals, rulers and trade roads. This section asks the question historians ask next: **how much did all of that matter?**

You have already met this skill in pieces. In 1C you saw UNESCO test places against written **criteria** before listing them as world heritage. In 1D you ranked developments of the years 600–1750. In 2F you judged pharaohs with six criteria, and in 2G you learned that judgement words like *significant* need a frame before you argue with them. In 3D you asked four questions about a person's contribution. Here those pieces come together into one skill you can use on **any** individual, event, site, development or cultural achievement — in this book, or in any other place you meet the past.

A judgement word, defined before use.

The Victorian Curriculum uses the word *significance* but does not define it. So this section keeps the working meaning this book has used since 2G: a person, event, site, development or achievement is **significant** to the extent that it changed things for people at the time, or has kept changing things since. **Significance** is how much it mattered — and kept mattering.

That makes *significant* a judgement word, not a fixed fact. Two people can agree on every date and still come to different judgements about the same thing — so every claim of significance must name its test and rest on evidence. And remember the warning from 2F: *significant* does not mean *good*. Harm can leave as big a mark as help.

The other key words: a **criterion** is one test used to make a judgement — the plural is **criteria**. A **legacy** is what survives a society and still reaches later times. A **concept map** is a diagram that arranges ideas and shows the links between them. The **5 Rs** is the name of one set of five criteria, each named with an R (Part 2).

Key words for this section

Significant / significance

Mattered, and kept mattering: it changed things for people at the time, or has kept changing things since. A judgement word — say which test you are using, and give evidence. Not the same as famous. Not only about good things.

Criterion (criteria)

One test used to make a judgement. The plural is criteria. 'How many lives did it touch?' is a criterion.

Legacy

What survives a society and still reaches later times: things, skills, ideas, or places still standing.

Concept map

A diagram that arranges ideas and shows the links between them.

The 5 Rs

Five criteria, each named with R: Resonance, Relevance, Revealing, Remembered, Resulting in Change.

'At the time' and 'since'

'At the time' means the years when it happened, for the people who lived then. 'Since' means all the time after.

Six definition cards for the key words of this section: *significant and significance, criterion and criteria, legacy, concept map, the 5 Rs, and the phrase 'at the time'*, each with a one-line definition

Teaching sequence

Part 1 — The significance questions (.E01)

Before criteria come questions. The curriculum gives a family of questions for probing how much something mattered. They fall into two groups: questions about **the time it happened**, and questions about **all the time since**.

At the time

1. *Why does this person, event or achievement matter?* — the opening question: what is the mark it left?
2. *How much did it matter to the people living then?* — the people who were there are the first judges.
3. *How many lives did it touch?* — a few, a town, a kingdom, a continent?
4. *How far did people's lives change?* — a small shift, or a life turned upside down?

Since

5. *How long did its effects last?* — a season, a lifetime, centuries?
6. *Can we still feel its effects today?* — does it reach into your own world?
7. *What is its legacy?* — what survives and still reaches later times?

The significance questions (.E01)

At the time	Since
Why does this person, event or achievement matter? ● the opening question	How long did its effects last? ● measures length — points to durability / time
How much did it matter to the people living then? ● the people there are the first judges	Can we still feel its effects today? ● asks about today — points to relevance
How many lives did it touch? ● counts people — points to quantity / reach	What is its legacy? ● asks what survives — points to memory / remembered
How far did people's lives change? ● measures depth of change — points to profundity	

Ask these before you choose criteria. Every answer is a claim — and every claim needs evidence.

Seven question cards in two groups: four questions about the time something happened, and three questions about all the time since, with a note under each group saying which kind of test the questions point to

Try the questions on the **Great Pyramid at Giza**, built as the tomb of the pharaoh Khufu around 2600 BCE (2D, 2G). *Why does it matter?* It was the tallest building on Earth for thousands of years — 146.6 metres when new, about 2.3 million blocks. *How many lives did it touch?* The build organised workers and food across the whole kingdom for about 26 years. *Can we still feel its effects today?* Yes — it still stands at 138.5 metres, UNESCO listed the pyramid fields in 1979, and a 2017 scan found a hidden space inside. *What is its legacy?* Pyramid-shaped tombs turned up as far away as Rome (the tomb of Gaius Cestius, c. 18–12 BCE, still stands), and the site is still studied now. Notice what just happened: each question pulled a different kind of answer — number of people, depth of change, length of effect, what survives. That is exactly what the criteria in Part 2 sort out.

Check: which of the seven questions ask about people who were alive at the time, and which ask about people long after? Why do historians bother with both groups?

Part 2 — Criteria: the tests historians use (.E02)

A **criterion** is a test you can point to. Criteria turn “it really mattered” into “it mattered *because...*” — a claim other people can check. Historians use several sets. You need to know three, and they overlap.

Set one — the five criteria the curriculum names. Each comes with its own question:

- **Importance** — how much did it matter to the people of the time?
- **Profundity** — how deeply did it change people’s lives? (Did the change scratch the surface, or turn life upside down?)
- **Quantity** — how many lives did it touch?
- **Durability** — how long did its effects last?
- **Relevance** — how much has it helped people understand life today?

The curriculum's five criteria (.E02)

Importance

How much did it matter to the people of the time?

Profundity

How deeply did it change people's lives? — did the change scratch the surface, or turn life upside down?

Quantity

How many lives did it touch?

Durability

How long did its effects last?

Relevance

How much has it helped people understand life today?

Each criterion comes with its own question. Pick one set of criteria and use it all the way through a task.

Five cards for the criteria named by the curriculum: importance, profundity, quantity, durability, relevance, each with the question that goes with it

Set two — the 5 Rs. The curriculum also offers an alternative set, five criteria each named with an R:

- **Resonance** — does it still move people today? Do people still care about it, argue about it, feel it?
- **Relevance** — does it help us understand life today?
- **Revealing** — does it reveal something important about how people lived back then?
- **Remembered** — is it remembered, and how? (Being forgotten, or having your name erased, is part of this test too — think of Hatshepsut in 2F.)

- **Resulting in Change** — did it set off further change?

The 5 Rs — the curriculum's alternative set (.E02)

Resonance

Does it still move people today? Do people still care about it, argue about it, feel it?

Relevance

Does it help us understand life today?

Revealing

Does it reveal something important about how people lived back then?

Remembered

Is it remembered, and how? Being forgotten — or having your name erased — counts too.

Resulting in Change

Did it set off further change?

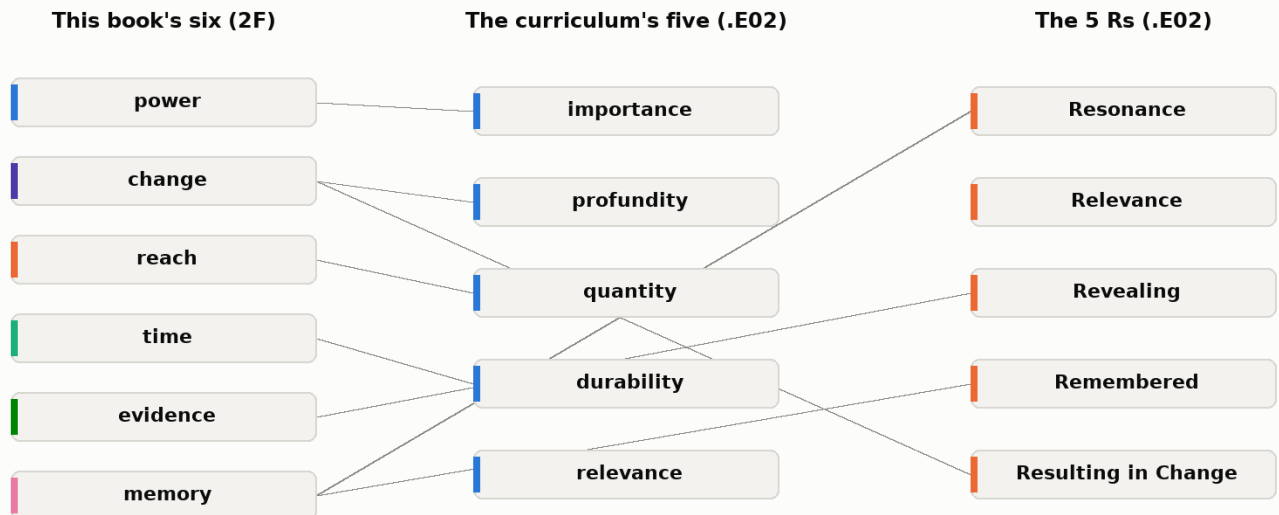
Five criteria, each named with R. Same rule: pick one set and use it all the way through.

Five cards for the alternative criteria called the 5 Rs: Resonance, Relevance, Revealing, Remembered and Resulting in Change, each with a one-line plain-language test

Set three — this book's six. In 2F you judged pharaohs with six criteria, and this book keeps using them, so here they are again: **power** (were they in charge, and how much could they do?), **change** (how much changed because of them?), **reach** (how many lives did it touch?), **time** (did the change last a short time or a long time?), **evidence** (how much is left for us to study today?) and **memory** (who tells their story, and how are they remembered?).

The three sets ask overlapping questions. This book's *reach* is close to *quantity*; *time* is close to *durability*; *memory* sits near *Remembered* and *Resonance*; *evidence* sits near *Revealing*. There is no perfect one-to-one match — the sets are different toolboxes for the same job.

Three toolboxes, one job: how the criteria sets overlap



The sets overlap — one tool can do two jobs, and no set is the one right answer. Pick one set and use it all the way through a task. Note: relevance (in both sets) asks how the past helps us understand the present.

Mapping table linking the three criteria sets: this book's six criteria from section 2F (power, change, reach, time, evidence, memory), the five criteria named by the curriculum (importance, profundity, quantity, durability, relevance) and the 5 Rs (Resonance, Relevance, Revealing, Remembered, Resulting in Change), with a note that the sets overlap and you should pick one set and use it all the way through a task

One rule for all three sets: **pick one set and use it all the way through a task**. Swapping toolboxes halfway through an answer makes the answer hard to follow and hard to mark.

Check: a student writes, “The Black Death was significant because it killed huge numbers of people, and its effects lasted for centuries.” Which two criteria is that student using — name one from the curriculum's five and the closest one from this book's six.

Part 3 — Ranking and justifying (.E03)

Ranking means putting individuals, events or achievements in order of significance — first, second, third — and then **justifying** the order: giving the reasons, criteria by criteria, with evidence.

The steps

1. **Choose your candidates** — and make sure the comparison is fair. If you rank an event against a person, say what frame you are using (2G's frame questions: *significant to whom? at the time, or since?*).
2. **Gather the evidence** — dates, numbers, named people and places from your chapters.
3. **Test each candidate against the criteria** — one set, used all the way through.
4. **Put them in order.**
5. **Justify the order** — sentence frames: *I rank ... first, because by the criterion of ... it ... / ... comes second: its ... was smaller/larger, since ...*

Two golden rules

- **Rule 1 — reasons over order.** What earns the mark is the quality of your reasoning: criteria named, evidence given, dates used. Two students can hand in opposite orders and both reason well.
- **Rule 2 — steelman the other side.** Before you finish, put the strongest case for the order you did *not* choose. If you cannot state it, you do not yet know your own case well enough.

And the warning from 2F stands: significant is not the same as good. A ranking can put a person who caused great harm at the top — the criteria measure the size and lasting power of the mark, not whether the mark was a blessing.

Ranking significance: the steps and the rules (.E03)

1

Choose your candidates — make the comparison fair, and say your frame: significant to whom? At the time, or since?

2

Gather the evidence — dates, numbers, named people and places from your chapters.

3

Test each candidate against the criteria — one set, all the way through.

4

Put them in order.

5

Justify the order — criteria named, evidence given, dates used.

Sentence frames for justifying

I rank ... first, because by the criterion of ... it ...

... comes second: its ... was smaller / larger, since ...

Golden rule 1

Reasons over order. The quality of your reasoning is what earns the mark — two opposite orders can both be argued well.

Golden rule 2

Steelman the other side. State the strongest case for the order you did not choose.

Warning

Significant is not the same as good. Harm can leave as big a mark as help.

Five steps for ranking significance (choose candidates, gather evidence, test against one set of criteria, put in order, justify) beside two golden rules — the reasons are what count, and the strongest case on the other side must be stated — and a warning that significant does not mean good

Worked example 2 below shows a full ranking with both sides stated.

Check: why is it fair to say that two students with opposite rankings can both deserve full marks? What would make one of them deserve a low mark?

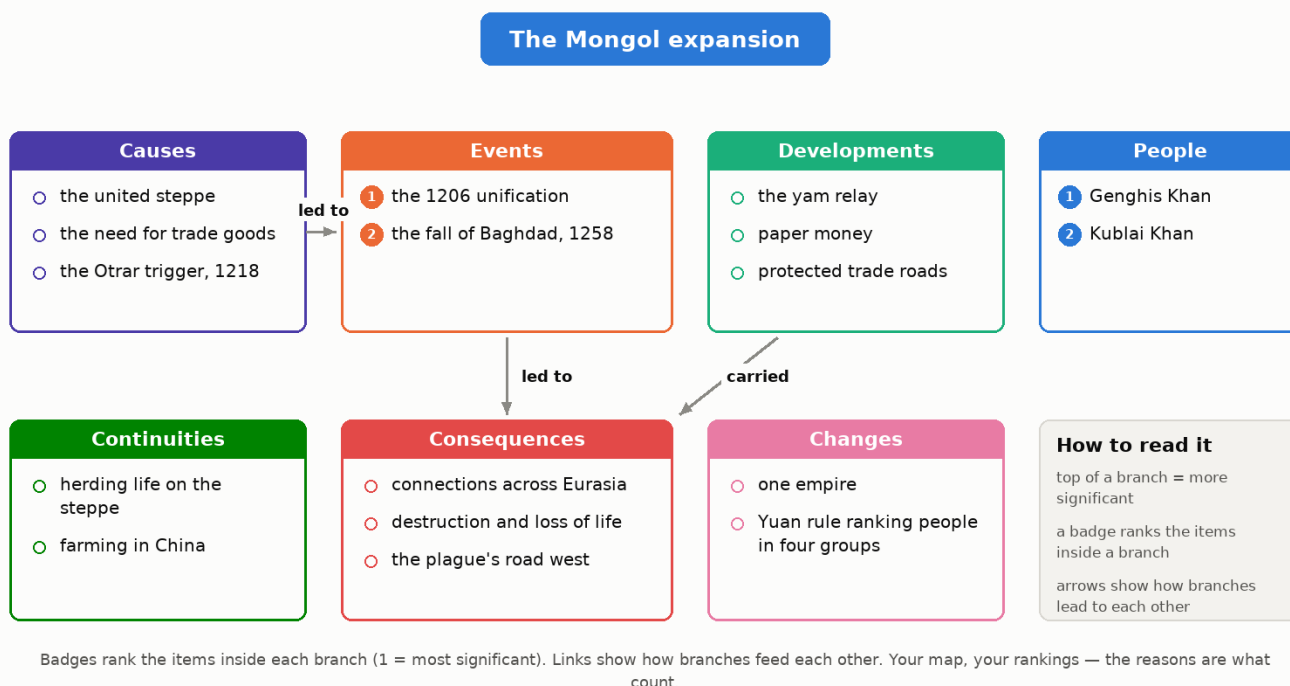
Part 4 — Concept maps of significance (.E04)

A **concept map** is a diagram that lays out ideas and shows how they connect. For significance, the layout does the ranking: the most significant items sit at the top (or biggest), lesser ones below (or smaller), and lines show how items join to each other — a cause feeding an event, an event feeding a consequence.

The curriculum asks for a concept map that ranks **people, events, causes, consequences, continuities, changes and developments** in one society. That is one map carrying the whole shape of a chapter — and it is also a test of whether you can tell those seven kinds apart.

The model below maps the **Mongol expansion** (Chapter 4). Read it top-down: branches are the seven kinds, and the badges rank the items inside each branch.

A significance concept map: the Mongol expansion (.E04)



Model concept map that ranks the significance of parts of the Mongol expansion: branches for people (Genghis Khan first, Kublai Khan second), events (the 1206 unification first, the fall of Baghdad 1258 second), causes (the united steppe, the need for trade, the Otrar trigger of 1218), consequences (connections across Eurasia, destruction, the plague's road west), continuities (herding life on the steppe, farming in China), changes (one empire, Yuan rule ranking people in four groups) and developments (the yam relay, paper money, protected trade), with ranking badges and links between branches

Notice the links: the **cause** “united steppe” feeds the **event** “1206 unification”, which feeds the **consequence** “connections across Eurasia”, while the **continuity** “farming in China” runs underneath the **change** “Yuan rule”. A good concept map is an argument you can see.

Check: in the model map, why does the 1206 unification rank above the fall of Baghdad as an event? Which criterion does that choice lean on most?

Part 5 — The skill across all four Knowledge chapters

This section belongs to every chapter in the book. The grid below gives one named, dated candidate for each of the five kinds this section studies — individuals, events, sites, developments and cultural achievements — from each Knowledge chapter. Every claim in it is something you have already studied.

Candidates for significance judgements across the four Knowledge chapters

Chapter	Individuals	Events	Sites	Developments	Cultural achievements
1 • Overview (600–1750)	Charlemagne crowned 800 CE (1D)	the fall of the last western Roman emperor, 476 CE (1D)	Abu Simbel, rescued 1959–1980 (1C)	the spread of Islam from 622 CE (1D)	the printing press, c. 1450 CE (1D)
2 • Ancient Egypt	Hatshepsut (2F)	breakdown of the Old Kingdom, c. 2181 BCE (2D)	the Great Pyramid at Giza (2D, 2G)	basin irrigation on the Nile (2A)	papyrus (2G)
3 • Medieval Europe	Hildegard of Bingen 1098–1179 (3D)	the Black Death 1347–1351 (3B)	Notre Dame Cathedral, begun 1163 (3A)	castles remaking rule after 1066 (3A)	illuminated manuscripts (3A)
4 • Mongol expansion	Kublai Khan (4B)	the kurultai of 1206 (4A)	Karakorum; Khanbaliq (Dadu) (4A, 4B)	the yam relay (4B)	The Secret History of the Mongols, c. 1240 (4A)

Every claim here is something you have already studied. Pick any cell: questions first, then one set of criteria, then reasons.

Grid of named and dated candidates for significance judgements across the four Knowledge chapters: Chapter 1 Overview (Charlemagne crowned 800 CE; the last western Roman emperor losing his throne 476 CE; Abu Simbel and its rescue 1959–1980; the spread of Islam from 622 CE; the printing press c. 1450 CE), Chapter 2 ancient Egypt (Hatshepsut; the breakdown of the Old Kingdom c. 2181 BCE; the Great Pyramid at Giza; basin irrigation on the Nile; papyrus), Chapter 3 medieval Europe (Hildegard of Bingen 1098–1179; the Black Death 1347–1351; Notre Dame Cathedral, begun 1163; castles remaking rule after 1066; illuminated manuscripts), Chapter 4 Mongol expansion (Kublai Khan; the kurultai of 1206; Karakorum and Khanbaliq; the yam relay; The Secret History of the Mongols c. 1240), each cell marked with the section where it was studied

Choose any cell and the skill is the same: questions first (Part 1), one set of criteria all the way through (Part 2), ranking with reasons if you are comparing (Part 3), and a map if you want to see a whole society at once (Part 4).

Check: pick one cell from the grid. Which of the seven questions from Part 1 would you ask first about it, and why that one?

Part 6 — Joining the skill to the other output skills

Significance never stands alone. When you explain **continuity and change** (6A), you will say which changes were the significant ones and why. When you explain **causes and consequences** (6B), you will weigh which causes and consequences mattered most — ranking is weighing. And when you **construct** your own historical piece (6D), a significance judgement with criteria and evidence is one of the strongest moves you can make. Keep these frames ready:

- ... is significant because, by the criterion of ..., it ...
- At the time it mattered because ...; it still matters today because ...
- Its legacy is ...
- It is remembered today in ..., which shows ...

Check: take one sentence frame above and finish it for the yam relay (4B). Then say which criterion your sentence leans on.

Worked examples

Worked example 1 — with help: analysing the significance of an event (.E01, .E02)

Task. How significant was the **Black Death** for medieval Europe? Use the curriculum's five criteria, with evidence from Chapter 3.

Scaffold.

1. **Importance** — to people living at the time. What did it feel like as it moved through? (Hint: 3B — where it reached, and how fast.)
2. **Profundity** — how deeply were lives affected? (Hint: 3B — the share of people who died; 3C — what happened to work, wages and law.)
3. **Quantity** — how many lives? (Hint: 3B — the estimates; England's numbers around 1300 and by 1400.)
4. **Durability** — for how long? (Hint: 3B/3C — the laws of 1349 and 1351, the revolt of 1381, serfdom weakening; 3E — historians still arguing about the toll.)
5. **Justify** — finish with one sentence that answers the question directly.

Worked response.

The Black Death was one of the most significant events in medieval Europe, by every criterion. **Importance:** to people at the time nothing else mattered more — the disease reached Sicily in October 1347 and then moved fast across Europe, emptying villages and killing workers, priests and lords (3B). **Profundity:** lives were turned upside down — between about a third and a half of Europe's people died in 1347–1351, and the survivors' world changed: workers could demand higher wages, and rulers answered with the laws of 1349 and 1351 to hold wages down (3B, 3C). **Quantity:** the numbers were enormous — historians estimate between about one in three and 60 in every 100 people died (3E), and England's people fell from about 5 million around 1300 to about 2 million by 1400 (3B). **Durability:** the consequences lasted centuries — the anger over wages and taxes helped cause the Peasants' Revolt of 1381, serfdom slowly weakened, and historians are still debating the death toll today (3B, 3C, 3E). So by importance, profundity, quantity and durability, the Black Death was not just an event of its decade: it bent the whole shape of medieval Europe.

Worked example 1 — scoring the Black Death against the five criteria (.E02)

Criterion	Its question	Evidence from Chapter 3	Verdict
Importance	How much did it matter to the people of the time?	It reached Sicily in October 1347, then swept across Europe fast — villages emptied, and workers, priests and lords all died.	To people at the time, nothing else mattered more
Profundity	How deeply did it change people's lives?	Between about a third and a half of Europe's people died in 1347–1351; survivors met new laws to hold wages down (1349, 1351).	Lives turned upside down
Quantity	How many lives did it touch?	Estimates run from about one in three to 60 in every 100 people dying; England fell from about 5 million (c. 1300) to about 2 million by 1400.	Huge numbers
Durability	How long did its effects last?	Anger over wages and taxes helped cause the Peasants' Revolt of 1381; serfdom slowly weakened; historians still debate the toll today.	Lasted centuries
Relevance	How much has it helped people understand life today?	Historians today still test the toll against new evidence (3E).	Still studied

Evidence is dated and drawn from Chapter 3 (sections 3B, 3C, 3E).

Worked-example table scoring the Black Death against the five curriculum criteria — importance, profundity, quantity, durability, relevance — each row giving the criterion's question, dated evidence from Chapter 3, and a one-line verdict

Worked example 2 — model response: ranking two individuals (.E03)

Task. Rank **Genghis Khan** and **Kublai Khan** in order of historical significance, using this book's six criteria from 2F. Justify your order — and state the strongest case for the other order.

Worked response.

I rank Genghis Khan first. By **power** and **change**, he did what no one had done before: he united the steppe tribes — the kurultai of 1206, the great meeting of steppe leaders, gave him his title — and turned scattered raiders into one army that took the largest land empire in history (4A, 4B). By **reach**, his conquests touched lives from China to the

edge of Europe, and by **time**, what he built lasted beyond him: the army organised in groups of ten, the written rules, the yam relay and the protected trade roads all carried on under the rulers who came after him (4B). By **memory**, he is still one of the best-known rulers in world history.

Kublai Khan comes second. He finished what his grandfather began in China: he named the Yuan dynasty — a new family line of rulers — in 1271, ruled all of China from Dadu, brought the Grand Canal to his capital by 1293, and his court drew visitors like Marco Polo (4B). His **reach** over more subjects may have been greater — but he ruled an empire that already existed; Genghis Khan made it exist.

The strongest case for the other order: Kublai Khan governed the richest, most crowded part of the empire, kept it running, and made the connections across Eurasia boom — so by *quantity* of lives governed and *relevance* to trade, he could be ranked first. That case is real; it simply weighs *government* over *founding*. My ranking weighs founding more, and says so.

Practice questions

Practice with help

Q1. (.E01) Match each student's question about the Great Pyramid to the closest significance question from Part 1.

(a) "Is it still studied and visited now?" (b) "How many workers were on the build, and how many farms worked to feed them?" (c) "What did it mean to the kingdom while Khufu ruled?" (d) "What survived it — in stone, and in later buildings?"

Q2. (.E02) Match each criterion from the curriculum's five to its question: (a) importance (b) profundity (c) quantity (d) durability (e) relevance. 1. How many lives did it touch? 2. How much did it matter to the people of the time? 3. How long did its effects last? 4. How much has it helped people understand life today? 5. How deeply did it change people's lives?

Q3. (.E02) Use the mapping figure. Which of this book's six criteria from 2F sits closest to (a) quantity? (b) durability? (c) the 5 R called Remembered? (d) the 5 R called Revealing?

Q4. (.E04) Copy this concept-map skeleton for **ancient Egypt** and sort these seven items into the right branches:

Hatshepsut · the breakdown of the Old Kingdom c. 2181 BCE · basin irrigation · papyrus · the Nile's flood, continuing for thousands of years · the kingdom splitting into rival rules · the Great Pyramid at Giza. Branches: people · events · causes · consequences · continuities · changes · developments. (One item will not fit any branch — say why.)

Q5. (.E03) Copy and complete with your own ranking and reasons, using one set of criteria all the way through: "I rank the Norman invasion of 1066 _____ the Magna Carta of 1215. By the criterion of _____, the Norman invasion ..., but by the criterion of _____, the Magna Carta ..."

Q6. (.E01, .E02) Stonehenge was begun about 5 000 years ago and is part of a world heritage site (1C). Answer three of the Part 1 questions about it, one sentence each. Then name which criterion from Part 2 each answer leans on.

Practice on your own

Q7. (.E02) Choose one cultural achievement from Chapter 2 — papyrus or brewing at scale (2G) — and test it with all of the 5 Rs. Write one sentence per R, each with a dated fact.

Q8. (.E03) Rank these three events of medieval Europe in order of significance: the Norman invasion of England (1066); Magna Carta (1215); the Black Death (1347–1351). Use at least two criteria, give dated evidence for each, and state the strongest case for a different order.

Q9. (.E04) Create your own concept map ranking significance in **one** society you have studied — medieval Europe or the Mongol Empire. It must show at least two individuals, two events, one development, one cause, one consequence, one continuity and one change, with ranking badges on the items and at least two links between branches.

Q10. (.E03) “Genghis Khan is remembered mainly as a destroyer.” State the strongest case **for** that claim and the strongest case **against** it, using evidence from 4B. Then give your own judgement and say which criteria it leans on. (Remember: significant is not the same as good — and your reasoning is what counts, not which side you land on.)

Source-based inquiry

Q11. (.E01, .E02) Read the source below, then answer the questions that follow.

“I shall speak of Egypt at length, because it has more wonders in it than any other country in the world, and works beyond words to describe.”

Adapted from Herodotus, Histories, Book 2. Herodotus was a Greek writer who visited Egypt in the mid-400s BCE and wrote his book around 440 BCE.

Source inquiry — a Greek visitor weighs Egypt (.E01, .E02)

THE SOURCE

"I shall speak of Egypt at length, because it has more wonders in it than any other country in the world, and works beyond words to describe."

Adapted from Herodotus, Histories, Book 2. Herodotus was a Greek visitor who wrote around 440 BCE — more than 2 000 years after the Great Pyramid was built.

Origin

Who wrote it, and when? For the building of the pyramids (c. 2600 BCE), is Herodotus a primary or a secondary source — and why?

Content

What judgement is he making about Egypt? Which significance question from Part 1 is he answering without knowing it?

Purpose and audience

He wrote for Greek readers. How might that shape what he calls a wonder?

Limits

An outsider, writing long after the great builds. Significant to whom — to a Greek visitor, or to the farmers of the Nile?

Source-analysis card for the Herodotus quote: on the left, a book-page card noting that Herodotus was a Greek visitor writing about Egypt around 440 BCE, more than two thousand years after the Great Pyramid was built; on the right, four analysis boxes — origin, content, purpose and audience, and limits — with significance questions attached

- Origin.** Who produced this source, and when? For the building of the pyramids (c. 2600 BCE), is Herodotus a primary source or a secondary source — and why? (2 marks)
 - Content.** What judgement is Herodotus making about Egypt? Which of the Part 1 questions is he answering without knowing it? (2 marks)
 - Test it.** Use two criteria from Part 2 to test his claim that Egypt has “more wonders than any other country”. For each criterion, give one fact from Chapters 1–2 that supports him or tests him. (2 marks)
 - Perspective and limits.** Herodotus was a Greek outsider writing for Greek readers, more than 2 000 years after the pyramids were built. Give one reason this makes his judgement useful and one reason it is limited. Use 2G’s frame question: *significant to whom?* (2 marks)
-

Answers

Q1. (a) Can we still feel its effects today? (b) How many lives did it touch? (c) How much did it matter to the people living then? (d) What is its legacy?

Q2. (a)–2 (b)–5 (c)–1 (d)–3 (e)–4.

Q3. (a) reach (b) time (c) memory (d) evidence.

Q4. Individuals: Hatshepsut. Events: the breakdown of the Old Kingdom c. 2181 BCE. Developments: basin irrigation. Consequences: the kingdom splitting into rival rules. Continuities: the Nile's flood, continuing for thousands of years. Changes: the kingdom splitting also fits as a change — but if it is used under consequences, then the odd one out is the Great Pyramid, which is a **site**, a kind the seven branches of . E04 do not include. (Accept either placement if reasoned.)

Q5. Any order with one criterion argued each way, dated evidence on both sides. Example: “I rank the Norman invasion of 1066 **above** the Magna Carta of 1215. By the criterion of **quantity**, the Norman invasion remade who owned the land and who ruled in England — a whole new top of society. But by the criterion of **durability**, the Magna Carta's idea that even the king is under the law lasted into parliaments (1265, 1295) and beyond (1D).”

Q6. Any three Part 1 questions answered with true facts from 1C and a criterion named for each. Example: “It is still protected and argued over today — the A303 tunnel plan was cancelled in 2026 (consequences still felt today → durability/relevance).”

Q7. See model response.

Q8. See model response — any order, if two criteria are used with dated evidence and the other side's strongest case is stated.

Q9. See model response for what to check.

Q10. See model response — mark the reasoning: both sides at full strength, then a stated judgement with criteria.

Q11. (a) Herodotus, a Greek writer, mid-400s BCE (book around 440 BCE). For the pyramid-building he is a **secondary source**: he wrote more than 2 000 years after c. 2600 BCE and was not there. (b) He is judging Egypt highly significant — answering “Why does it matter?” and “What is its legacy?” (c) Any two criteria with matching facts, e.g. **evidence**: the pyramids, temples and papyri still survive, supporting him; **quantity**: the wonders were built by and for a few — the pharaohs — which tests “any country”. (d) Useful: a careful outsider who visited and wrote down what he saw, so we can compare his view with Egyptian sources. Limited: he saw Egypt as a visitor, for Greek readers, long after the great builds — Egyptians themselves might name different wonders. Significant *to a Greek visitor* is not the same as significant *to the people of the Nile*.

Model responses

Q7. Model for **papyrus** (2G): *Relevance* — our word “paper” comes from “papyrus”, so the achievement sits inside our own writing lives. *Resonance* — people still care: the oldest written papyri we have, logbooks from c. 2560–2550 BCE found at Wadi al-Jarf, still make news among historians. *Revealing* — papyrus sheets reveal how the kingdom worked: those logbooks record crews moving stone for the Great Pyramid's age. *Remembered* — it was never forgotten; Greek and Roman writers used it for hundreds of years. *Resulting in Change* — cheap writing sheets changed what governments and traders could record, and later societies carried the habit on. (A brewing model would use the Abydos brewery of c. 3100 BCE and beer-and-bread wages.)

Q8. One model order: **1st the Black Death, 2nd Magna Carta, 3rd the Norman invasion**. By **quantity** and **profundity**, the Black Death stands first: between about a third and a half of Europe's people died in 1347–1351, and the survivors' world changed — wages, laws (1349, 1351), revolt (1381) and serfdom weakening (3B, 3C). By **durability**, Magna Carta stands second: agreed at Runnymede in 1215, its idea that even the king is under the law went on to shape the parliaments of 1265 and 1295 and reaches into systems like Australia's today (1D). The Norman invasion of 1066 remade England's rulers and castles (Warwick, 1068), but by **reach** it touched one kingdom, not a whole continent (3A, 3B). The strongest case for a different order: the Norman invasion's change to land, law and

language in England was so total and so durable that by *durability* alone it could rank above Magna Carta — a fair argument that simply weighs one criterion above the rest.

Q9. Check the map against the seven required kinds: two individuals (e.g. Charlemagne, Hildegard of Bingen for medieval Europe; Genghis Khan, Kublai Khan for the Mongol Empire), two events (e.g. 1066 and the Black Death; 1206 and Baghdad 1258), one development (castles and cathedrals; the yam), one cause (the Church crowning kings; the united steppe), one consequence (Magna Carta's reach; connections across Eurasia), one continuity (farming villages; herding life), one change (the growth of lords' power after 1066; one empire). Badges must rank inside branches, and at least two links must show how branches feed each other — for example, cause → event → consequence.

Q10. The strongest case **for**: the Mongol wars destroyed on a huge scale — towns that resisted were burned, people were killed, taken or forced to flee, and at Baghdad in 1258 one of the great cities of the age fell (4B); the sheer harm is why many remember him as a destroyer first. The strongest case **against**: the same rule also built — the united steppe (1206), the army organised in groups of ten, written rules, religious freedom, protected trade roads and the yam, which let goods, people and knowledge move from Europe to China as never before (4B). Judgement (one model): the claim is half true — destruction was real and vast, but “mainly” is wrong if we weigh **durability** and **legacy**: the connecting he built kept shaping Eurasia long after the burning stopped, and significance measures the size and lasting power of the mark, not only its cruelty. A student who lands on the other side with the same two-sided structure earns the same credit.

Q11. (*model for part c*) By **evidence**, Herodotus is right to call Egypt a land of wonders: the pyramids at Giza, temples, tombs and papyrus logbooks still survive — in 2017 scientists even found a hidden space inside the Great Pyramid — so the “works beyond words” are still there to be tested (2G). But by **quantity**, his claim needs care: those wonders were built by the labour of many for the glory of a few — pharaohs like Khufu — so “more wonders than any other country” may say as much about kings' power as about the whole country's life. That is the frame question doing its work: the wonders were certainly significant *to a Greek visitor*; whether they were the most significant things *to the farmers of the Nile* is a different question, and his source cannot answer it alone.

Constructing interpretations: terms, evidence and argument

Section 6D · Strand: Historical Skills · Sub-strand: Communicating **Owens:** VC2HH8S10 **Draws on:** .E01–.E05 (all taught; .E01 is taught **without** the terms ‘Country’, ‘Place’ and ‘Deep Time’ — removed, §2A)

Teaching sequence

1. Where everything comes together (CD)

This section is the last one in the book, and it is where everything comes together. The earlier chapters gave you knowledge — the first societies in Chapter 1, ancient Egypt in Chapter 2, medieval Europe in Chapter 3, the Mongol peoples in Chapter 4. Chapters 5 and 6 gave you skills: asking questions, ordering events, checking sources, and explaining continuity, change, causes, consequences and significance. Here you use all of it at once to **build a historical interpretation** — your own account of the past, built with the right terms, the right conventions, and evidence you can name.

Figure 1 sorts the terms and concepts of .E01 into four families. Keep it beside you for the rest of this section.

The historian's term toolbox

The terms of .E01, sorted into four families. Each term has one clear job.

1 Words about time

history	the past we can study from written records
pre-history	the time before written records
Pleistocene	the age of ice ages, ending about 11,700 years ago
Holocene	the warm age since then - the age we still live in
ancient	very long ago; in this book, up to about 600 CE
medieval	of the Middle Ages, about 600-1750 CE
pre-modern	the world before about 1750

2 Words about societies and beliefs

slavery	people owned and forced to work by other people
divine right	the idea that a ruler's power comes from God
feudalism	the medieval order of lords, land and service
worldview	the way a person or group sees the whole world
religion	a system of faith and worship

3 Words about cause and change

continuity	what stays the same over time
change	what becomes different over time
cause	what makes something happen
consequence	what happens because of something
significance	how important something is, and why

4 Words about inquiry

archaeology	studying the past through things people left behind
source	something from the past we can study
evidence	what a source can show us
interpretation	a view of the past built from evidence
convention	an agreed way of doing things

Three further terms in the curriculum's list (Country, Place, Deep Time) are not used in this book; as the front-of-book note explains. The last two terms here (interpretation, convention) come from the content description itself.

Chart of the historical terms of elaboration .E01 sorted into four families: words about time (history, pre-history, Pleistocene, Holocene, ancient, medieval, pre-modern), words about societies and beliefs (feudalism, divine right, slavery, worldview, religion), words about cause and change (continuity, change, cause, consequence, significance), and words about inquiry (archaeology, source, evidence, interpretation, convention), each with a one-line meaning, and a footer noting that Country, Place and Deep Time are not used in this book

Figure 1. The historian's term toolbox.

Three terms in the curriculum's list — *Country*, *Place* and *Deep Time* — are not used in this book; the front-of-book note (§2A) explains why. Every other term in .E01 is yours to use, and each one has one clear job.

2. Saying it precisely .E01

A term is only useful if it says exactly what you mean. *Ancient* does not mean *medieval*: the Great Pyramid was built c. 2600 BCE, in the ancient world, while the Battle of Hastings was fought in 1066 CE, in the medieval world. Figure 2 shows what precise terms and precise dates look like.

Say it precisely: fixing sloppy terms

A wrong time word, or no date at all, makes history vague. Fix the term, keep the meaning.

1.

NOT PRECISE

The Great Pyramid was built in medieval times.

PRECISE

The Great Pyramid was built in ancient Egypt, around 2600 BCE.

Why: Medieval means about 600-1750 CE. The pyramid is far older than that.

2.

NOT PRECISE

The Mongol peoples united in ancient times.

PRECISE

The Mongol peoples were united in 1206 CE, in the medieval period.

Why: In this book, 'ancient' ends at about 600 CE. 1206 CE is later.

3.

NOT PRECISE

Rameses II ruled Egypt a long time ago.

PRECISE

Rameses II ruled Egypt c. 1279-1213 BCE.

Why: Vague - 'a long time ago' could be any date. Give the date, with 'c.' for 'about'.

Date conventions historians use

BCE (Before Common Era) counts down toward zero. CE (Common Era) counts up.

A 'c.' before a date means 'about' - the exact date is not certain.

In this book the day comes first: 14 October 1066.

Chart showing three examples of imprecise wording fixed with precise historical terms and dates, plus a strip of the book's date conventions: BCE and CE, 'c.' for about, and the day first in a full date

Figure 2. Precise terms, precise dates.

The conventions of this book are the conventions of historians everywhere:

- **BCE / CE**, not **BC / AD**; **c.** before a date means “about” (c. 2600 BCE).
- In a full date, **the day comes first**: 14 October 1066, not October 14, 1066.
- Write about the past in the **past tense**, and **name your sources** so a reader can check them.

3. Four kinds of historical writing .E02

Historians write in four main kinds. An **interpretation** of the past can wear any of them, and the same knowledge can wear all four. Figure 3 models each kind on the same subject — the Great Pyramid — so you can see the difference clearly.

One topic, four shapes of historical writing

The same Great Pyramid at Giza, written about in the four shapes .E02 names.

Description

answers: **What was it like?**

The Great Pyramid at Giza is a stone monument about 146 metres tall when new, built as a tomb for the king Khufu around 2600 BCE.

model sentence

Explanation

answers: **Why, or how, did it happen?**

The pyramid was built as a royal tomb because Egyptians believed their king needed his body and goods kept safe for the afterlife.

model sentence

Narrative

answers: **What happened, in what order?**

First, workers cut stone blocks at the quarries. Then, teams moved them to the Giza plain. Over about 20 years, the pyramid rose, layer by layer.

model sentence

Argument

answers: **What is your claim, and why?**

The Great Pyramid is the most impressive thing built in the ancient world, because no older building comes close to its size.

model sentence

All four shapes can - and should - refer to evidence from sources. Arguments also need reasons.

Chart modelling the four kinds of historical writing on the Great Pyramid: a description says what it is like, an explanation says why and how, a narrative tells what happened in order, and an argument makes a claim and backs it with evidence

Figure 3. Description, explanation, narrative, argument — the same knowledge, four kinds of writing.

A **description** says what something was like. An **explanation** says why or how it happened. A **narrative** tells what happened, in order. An **argument** makes a claim and backs it with evidence. In every kind, evidence is named, not just used.

4. Evidence from an artwork: the Bayeux Tapestry .E02

One source you will use in this section is an artwork: the **Bayeux Tapestry**. A tapestry is a picture-story made of cloth — this one is a strip of linen, almost 70 metres long, with pictures stitched in coloured wool thread. It is full of **knights** — mounted soldiers from the noble class — and of archers, ships, leaders and battle. Figure 4 is your source card for it.

Meet the source: the Bayeux Tapestry

An artwork that tells a whole story - the evidence for worked example 1.

THE BAYEUX TAPESTRY
(it is stitched cloth, not a woven tapestry)

A strip of linen cloth almost 70 metres long, with pictures stitched in coloured wool thread.

It tells the story of Harold and William and the battle of Hastings on 14 October 1066: the oath, the ships, the castle mound, the fight, and William's victory.

Probably stitched in the 1070s CE, about ten years after the battle.

Kept at Bayeux, in France.

The pictures run scene by scene, like a film that unrolls from left to right.

Origin
Made probably in the 1070s CE, soon after the battle it shows. It is first certainly recorded in 1476, in a list of the goods of Bayeux Cathedral.

Content
About 70 scenes: Harold's oath to William, ships crossing the sea, the castle mound at Hastings, the battle itself - knights on horseback, archers, fallen soldiers - and William's victory.

Purpose and point of view
Made for the Norman side - the winners. It tells the conquest the way the Normans wanted it told: Harold breaks his oath, William wins his crown.

Limits
One side of the story. Historians check it against English sources, such as the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and the Domesday Book of 1086.

Sources: the Bayeux Tapestry and its first certain record (1476): en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bayeux_Tapestry; the Norman conquest: Section 3B of this book; accessed 25 August 2026.

Source card for the Bayeux Tapestry: a strip of stitched linen cloth about 70 metres long telling the story of Harold, William and the Battle of Hastings on 14 October 1066, probably stitched in the 1070s CE and kept at Bayeux in France, with boxes for origin, content, purpose and point of view, and limits, noting it tells the Norman side and is checked against the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and the Domesday Book

Figure 4. Meet the source: the Bayeux Tapestry.

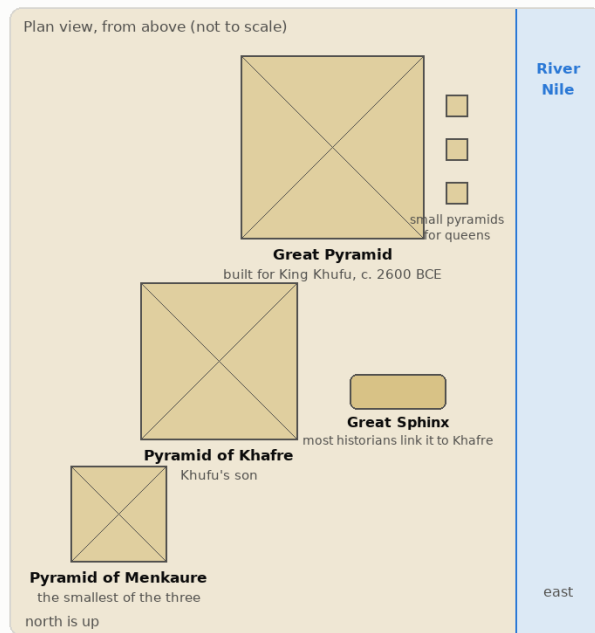
Read the card the way you learned in Chapter 5: **origin** (probably the 1070s CE, close to the events), **content** (about 70 scenes, from Harold's oath to William's victory), **purpose and point of view** (made for the Norman side — the winners), and **limits** (one side of the story, checked against English sources such as the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and the Domesday Book of 1086).

5. Recreating a site as a visual display .E03

One way to present an interpretation is a **visual display** that recreates a site and shows its specific features. The curriculum's own words for the labels and notes on your diagram are **annotations**. Figure 5 models a display plan for the pyramid site at Giza — the three pyramids, the Great Sphinx and the River Nile — which you met in Chapter 2.

Model display plan: recreating the pyramid complex at Giza

A visual display (.E03) shows a site's features, with a timeline, labels and notes, and a summary.



What a good display needs

- ☐ **Features**
the main parts of the site, drawn and placed with care: here, the three pyramids, the Sphinx, the small queens' pyramids, and the Nile on the east side
- ☐ **Timeline**
when each part was made: here, all around c. 2600 BCE, over about 20 years of building for the Great Pyramid alone
- ☐ **Labels and notes**
every part named and explained in a few words - the curriculum calls these annotations on a diagram
- ☐ **Summary**
one sentence that tells a stranger what the site is and why it matters
- ☐ **Sources**
named, so your audience can check your facts

Model summary

The Giza pyramid complex was a royal burial place built c. 2600 BCE for the kings of Egypt, on the west bank of the River Nile.

Sources: the layout and dates of the Giza complex: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giza_pyramid_complex;
the Great Pyramid's height (about 146 m when new): en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Pyramid_of_Giza; accessed 25 August 2026.

Model visual display plan of the pyramid site at Giza: a plan view from above showing the Great Pyramid built for King Khufu c. 2600 BCE, the Pyramid of Khafre, the Pyramid of Menkaure, the small queens' pyramids, the Great Sphinx and the River Nile on the east side, beside a checklist of what a good display needs — features, a timeline, labels and notes, a summary and named sources — and a model one-sentence summary

Figure 5. A model display: recreating the pyramid site at Giza.

Notice what the model does: it shows the **features** placed as they really sit, it carries a **timeline**, every part has a label and a short note, and one **summary** sentence tells a stranger what the site is and why it matters. The sources are named so your audience can check your facts.

6. Building an argument .E04

An argument is not a fight; it is a claim, a **criterion** (your test for judging), evidence, and a fair hearing for the other side. Figure 6 frames a real argument from this book: was 1206 CE — the year the great meeting of leaders made Temujin ruler with the title **Genghis Khan** (a *khan* is a ruler; Section 4A) — the biggest turning point for the Mongol peoples?

Argument frame: was 1206 CE the biggest turning point for the Mongol peoples?

Both sides below are strong. Your job in an argument: pick a side, give your criterion, back it with evidence.

THE CLAIM: yes, 1206 was the biggest turning point

1. The Secret History of the Mongols (c. 1240) records the great assembly giving Temujin the title Genghis Khan - many separate tribes became one people (Section 4A).
2. The new decimal units of 10, 100, 1,000 and 10,000 mixed the tribes together, so loyalty moved from tribe to khan.
3. Before 1206 the tribes raided each other; after it they acted as one, and a person could rise by skill, not only by birth.

THE COUNTER: no - the conquests after 1206 changed more

1. The empire, the new laws, the trade routes and the links across Asia and Europe all came with the conquests, after 1206 (Section 4B).
2. The conquests also brought terrible death tolls, which historians still weigh (Section 4E).
3. Daily life on the steppe - herds, gers, food - stayed much the same, so 1206 changed rule, not daily life (Section 4A).

How to finish your argument

First name your criterion for 'biggest': the biggest change in how the Mongols were ruled? in their daily life? in how the rest of the world met them? Then judge which side meets that criterion best, and say why. Marks go to your reasoning - terms used precisely, evidence named, the other side given a fair hearing - not to which side you pick.

Sources: the Secret History of the Mongols and the kurultai of 1206: Section 4A of this book and en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Secret_History_of_the_Mongols; accessed 25 August 2026.

Argument frame for the question whether 1206 CE was the biggest turning point for the Mongol peoples: one column gives the claim that it was, with evidence from The Secret History of the Mongols and the new decimal units; the other column gives the counter that the conquests after 1206 changed more; a bottom panel explains how to finish the argument by naming your criterion and judging which side meets it, with marks going to reasoning, not to the side you pick

Figure 6. An argument frame: both sides strong, then a verdict by criterion.

Both sides are strong — that is the point. Your marks in an argument never go to the side you pick; they go to your reasoning: terms used precisely, evidence named, and the other side given a fair hearing.

7. Choosing a format: audience and purpose .E05

The same findings can be shared in different formats — a **podcast** (a recorded audio show, like radio), an **oral presentation** (you, speaking to a room), or an **essay** (a written argument in paragraphs). Let your **audience** (who will read or listen) and your **purpose** (to tell, to show, or to argue) choose the format. Figure 7 matches each format to its audience, purpose and conventions. Your English lessons cover how these text types work; this section supplies the history.

Choose your format: who listens, and why?

Audience = who will read or listen. Purpose = what you want it to do for them. Let these choose your format.

What it is A recorded audio show, like radio - a podcast.	Audience and purpose Listeners at home or on the move; to tell a story and hold their interest.	Conventions to follow Short spoken sentences. A strong opening hook. Name your sources in words ("as the Bayeux Tapestry shows ..."). Aim for 3-5 minutes.
What it is You speak to a room, with your display behind you.	Audience and purpose Your class; to inform them or persuade them.	Conventions to follow Face your audience. Speak slowly. Point to your display as you talk. Do not read every word from the page.
What it is A written piece with a claim, built in paragraphs.	Audience and purpose Your teacher or another reader; to argue a case carefully.	Conventions to follow Paragraphs with a point plus evidence. Dates in BCE/CE, with 'c.' for about. Past tense. Sources named.

The same findings can wear any of these formats - what changes is the voice, not the evidence.

Table matching three formats for sharing historical findings — podcast, oral presentation and essay — to what each one is, the audience and purpose it suits, and the conventions to follow, such as spoken sentences and a strong opening hook for a podcast, facing your audience in a presentation, and paragraphs with a point plus evidence in an essay

Figure 7. Choose your format: who listens, and why?

8. Before you share it: the final check

Before any interpretation meets its audience, run it through the four checks in Figure 8.

Before you share it: the final check

Run your interpretation through these four checks before it meets its audience.

Terms precise ☐ Each term says exactly what you mean (ancient does not mean medieval). ☐ Time words carry dates (c. 2600 BCE; 14 October 1066).	Evidence named ☐ Each source is named: what it is, and when it was made. ☐ You say what each source shows, and where its limits sit.
Conventions kept ☐ Dates in BCE/CE, with 'c.' for about; the day comes first. ☐ Past tense; every source named so it can be checked.	Audience ready ☐ Your format matches your purpose (tell, show, or argue). ☐ Your audience can follow every step without getting lost.

If you can tick every box, your interpretation is ready to share.

Checklist card with four panels to check before sharing a historical interpretation: terms precise (each term says exactly what you mean, and time words carry dates), evidence named (each source is named and dated, with its limits stated), conventions kept (BCE and CE with 'c.' for about, the day first, past tense, sources named), and audience ready (the format matches the purpose and the audience can follow every step)

Figure 8. The final check: terms, evidence, conventions, audience.

Worked examples

Example 1 — describing a social structure with an artwork as evidence .E02

Task. Describe the social structure of Norman England after 1066, referring to evidence from the Bayeux Tapestry (Figure 4).

Key terms, defined before use. ***Knight*** — a mounted soldier from the noble class. ***Peasant*** — a poor farm worker of medieval times. ***Serf*** — a peasant who was not free to leave the land.

Model answer.

Norman England after 1066 had a social structure shaped like a pyramid. At the top stood the king — William, duke of Normandy, who won the crown by his victory at Hastings on 14 October 1066. Below him were the lords and bishops who held land from him, and below them the knights. At the bottom were the peasants, many of them serfs. The Bayeux Tapestry, stitched c. 1070s CE, shows this order in pictures: it names the great — William and Odo, a bishop — while knights fight on horseback in mail shirts and ordinary soldiers fight on foot with bow and shield. Made for the Norman side, the tapestry shows the order the winners wanted seen, so I check it against English sources (Section 3C).

Why it works.

- Terms precise.** *Medieval*, not *ancient*; *knights*, *peasants* and *serfs* are defined and used exactly.

- **Evidence named.** The tapestry is named and dated (c. 1070s CE), and the answer says what it shows.
- **Conventions kept.** Past tense; day-first date (14 October 1066); BCE/CE with *c.* for about.
- **Limits stated.** One source, one side — so the answer names the check against English sources.

Example 2 — arguing significance and causes with evidence .E04

Task. Explain why one past event mattered and what caused it. Back your answer with evidence. Give both sides a fair hearing.

Model answer (event: the union of the Mongol peoples, 1206 CE).

Yes — 1206 was the biggest turning point for the Mongol peoples, if “biggest” means the greatest change in how they were ruled and how they saw themselves. My criterion is change in rule and belonging. Before 1206 the tribes raided each other and loyalty stopped at the tribe; after the great meeting of 1206 made Temujin Genghis Khan, the new decimal units mixed the tribes together, loyalty moved to the khan, and a person could rise by skill, not only by birth (Section 4A). The Secret History of the Mongols (c. 1240 CE) records the meeting that made one people out of many tribes. The fair counter is that the conquest after 1206 changed the wider world more — new laws, new trade routes, links across Asia and Europe, and terrible death tolls (Sections 4B, 4E). I accept that for the rest of the world the conquest mattered most; my claim is about the Mongol peoples themselves, and for them the change of 1206 came first and made the rest possible.

Why it works.

- **Criterion named.** “Biggest” is given a test: change in rule and belonging.
- **Causes and significance.** The answer says what caused the change (the meeting, the new units) and why it matters.
- **Both sides strong.** The counter is given at full strength, then answered — not knocked down.
- **Evidence named and dated.** The Secret History (c. 1240 CE) and the section’s own findings.

Practice tasks

Practice with help

Q1. Each sentence below uses a time term wrongly. Use Figure 1 to rewrite it precisely. (a) “The Great Pyramid was built in medieval times.” (b) “The Battle of Hastings was fought in the ancient world.” (c) “The Holocene is the age of ice ages.”

Q2. Rewrite each of these the way a historian would write it (Figure 2). (a) “October 14, 1066 AD” (b) “around 2600 BC” (c) “the year 1206 AD”

Q3. Label each passage below: *description*, *explanation*, *narrative* or *argument* (Figure 3). (a) “The Nile flooded each year and left rich black silt, so Egyptian farms grew wheat with little rain.” (b) “In 1206 the leaders of the steppe met at a great gathering and made Temujin ruler, with the title Genghis Khan.” (c) “A medieval castle was a lord’s home and a fighting place: it had a keep, high walls and a hall.” (d) “The conquest of 1066 matters more than any other event in Chapter 3, because it changed who held the land and the law.”

Q4. Use the source card (Figure 4). (a) When was the Bayeux Tapestry probably made? (b) Whose side of the story does it tell? (c) Give one thing the tapestry can show about the battle, and one limit of it as evidence. (d) Name the two sources the card checks it against.

Q5. Use the model display (Figure 5). (a) The plan labels the three pyramids and the Sphinx. Write two more annotations of your own (for example, the small queens’ pyramids or the Nile), each a label plus a short note. (b) Write one timeline entry for the Great Pyramid. (c) Write your own one-sentence summary of the site.

Q6. Use the argument frame (Figure 6). Pick one side. (a) State your criterion for “biggest”. (b) Add one piece of evidence from Sections 4A–4E that is not already on your side’s list. (c) Name the strongest point of the other side, and say in one sentence how your answer deals with it.

Practice on your own

Q7. Choose one society from this book — ancient Egypt, medieval Europe or the Mongol peoples. Write a **description** of its social structure (80–120 words), referring to at least one source you met in that chapter (an artwork, an object or a written source). Name the source and when it was made.

Q8. Choose one event from this book. Write a **narrative** or an **explanation** of it (100–150 words), using at least three terms from Figure 1 precisely and at least two references to evidence.

Q9. Choose one event from this book. Write a short **argument** (150–200 words) explaining its significance and causes: a claim, a criterion, at least two causes, the best counter given a fair hearing, and evidence named.

Q10. Take your answer to Q9. Choose a format (podcast, oral presentation or essay) and a real audience. Write the **opening** of your piece (60–90 words) in that format’s voice, then list two conventions you kept.

Source-based inquiry task

Q11. Two sources on the same battle.

- **Source A** — the Bayeux Tapestry, stitched c. 1070s CE for the Norman side (Figure 4). It shows Harold’s army fighting on foot behind a wall of shields, while Norman knights attack on horseback.
 - **Source B** — the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, year-by-year accounts kept in English monasteries. Its entry for 1066 tells the battle from the English side — the side that lost.
- (a) What does Source A show about the way the two armies fought?
- (b) Why might Source B tell the story of the same battle in a different way from Source A?
- (c) Plan a 3-minute podcast for your class, “Two sides of 1066”. Write your three parts — opening hook, middle, close — and for each part name which source backs it and one convention you will follow.
-

Answers

Q1. (a) *Ancient* — the Great Pyramid was built c. 2600 BCE, long before the Middle Ages. (b) *Medieval* — 1066 CE sits inside the Middle Ages (c. 600–1750 CE). (c) The *Pleistocene* is the age of ice ages; the *Holocene* is the warm age since then — the one we live in.

Q2. (a) 14 October 1066 CE. (b) c. 2600 BCE. (c) 1206 CE.

Q3. (a) explanation. (b) narrative. (c) description. (d) argument.

Q4. (a) Probably the 1070s CE, about ten years after the battle. (b) The Norman side — the winners. (c) For example: it shows knights fighting on horseback, so we can see how the Normans fought; but it is one side's story, made for the winners. (d) The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and the Domesday Book (1086).

Q5. Answers will vary. For example: (a) “Small queens’ pyramids — burial places for the kings’ wives”; “River Nile — the water road of Egypt, on the east side”. (b) “Great Pyramid: built for Khufu, c. 2600 BCE, over about 20 years”. (c) “The Giza pyramid site is a royal burial place of ancient Egypt’s kings, built c. 2600 BCE on the west bank of the Nile.”

Q6. Answers will vary. A good answer names a workable criterion (“biggest change in rule”, “biggest change in daily life”, “biggest change for the rest of the world”), adds real evidence from 4A–4E (for example the new laws or the trade routes of the conquest, Section 4B), and gives the other side’s strongest point a fair hearing rather than ignoring it.

Q11. (a) The English fought on foot, close together behind shields; the Normans used horses and archers — two different ways of fighting. (b) The sources come from different sides with different purposes: A was made for the winners, B was kept by English monks of the side that lost, so each tells the battle from its own point of view. (c) Look for: three clear parts; each part backed by a named source; audience and purpose stated; spoken voice and day-first dates for a podcast.

Model answers

Q7 — model description (the Mongol peoples, using a written source)

At the top of Mongol society stood the khans and chiefs; most people were ordinary herding families, and there was no class of landowners, because the herds, not land, were the wealth (Section 4A). Women ran the camp, the herds and the carts and held respected roles. The Secret History of the Mongols (c. 1240 CE) shows this order: it tells of chiefs and their followers, of ordinary herders, and of women such as Hoelun, Temujin’s mother, who held her family together when the tribe left them behind. A person could rise by skill and loyalty, not only by birth.

Check: terms precise (khan defined in 4A); evidence named and dated; past tense; one limit could be added (the Secret History was written for the ruling family).

Q8 — model narrative (the conquest of England, 1066)

In early 1066 the English king, Edward the Confessor, died, and Harold took the crown. The Norman duke William claimed the crown was his, saying Harold had sworn an oath to him. Harold first marched north to defeat one invasion, then south to face William. On 14 October 1066 the two armies met at Hastings: Harold fell, and the English line broke. The **cause** of the war was a crown that two men claimed; the **consequence** was a new king and, by 1086, new lords over the land. The Bayeux Tapestry, stitched c. 1070s CE, shows the battle scene by scene, and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle tells the same year from the English side. By 25 December 1066 William was crowned king of England, and the **medieval** world of Chapter 3 had a new ruler.

Check: three Figure 1 terms used precisely (*medieval*, *cause*, *consequence*); two named, dated sources; day-first dates; past tense.

Q9 — model argument (significance and causes of the conquest of 1066)

The conquest of 1066 is the most significant event of Chapter 3, if significance means the greatest change in who held power. My criterion is change in rule, land and law. Its causes were the death of Edward the Confessor with no clear heir, William's claim and ambition, and Harold's need to hold a crown two rivals wanted. The consequences are plain in the sources: a new king crowned on 25 December 1066, new lords holding the land by 1086, as the Domesday Book shows, and the Bayeux Tapestry itself, made for the winning side. The fair counter is that for most peasants daily life changed little — the land still had to be worked, whoever held it. I accept that daily life carried on; my claim is about who held the land and the law, and there the change was total.

Check: claim, criterion, two causes, consequences, a strong counter, three named sources (tapestry, Chronicle, Domesday Book).

Q10 — model opening (podcast for the class, from the Q9 argument)

“Welcome to *Two Crowns for 1066*. I'm Sam, and in the next three minutes you'll hear about one year that changed England: a king died, an oath was claimed, and two armies met at Hastings on 14 October 1066. Stay to the end to hear why, for the land and the law, the conquest changed everything — and why, for most peasants, it changed nothing at all. Sources named as we go. First: January 1066, and a king lay dead.”

Conventions kept: spoken voice with short sentences and a hook; sources named in words (“sources named as we go”); day-first date; past tense.

Sources: the Bayeux Tapestry: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bayeux_Tapestry; the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anglo-Saxon_Chronicle; the Domesday Book: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Domesday_Book; the Norman conquest of England: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Norman_Conquest; the pyramid site at Giza: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giza_pyramid_complex; *The Secret History of the Mongols*: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Secret_History_of_the_Mongols; Sections 2A–2C, 3A–3C and 4A–4E of this book; accessed 25 August 2026.