

KEY FEATURES **OF** **MODERN HISTORY**

1

5TH EDITION

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Bruce Dennett | Stephen Dixon | Bernie Howitt | Angela Wong

OXFORD



KEY FEATURES **OF** **MODERN HISTORY** **1**

5TH EDITION

YEAR 11

Bruce Dennett | Stephen Dixon | Bernie Howitt | Angela Wong

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Indexed by Tina Hutchings
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USING KEY FEATURES OF MODERN HISTORY 1

New South Wales' most trusted modern history series has been updated for the new Stage 6 Modern History syllabus. The first of a two-volume series, Key Features of Modern History 1 offers complete support for Year 11 teachers and their students, providing unparalleled depth and coverage and a range of new chapter features that will give students of all abilities the best chance of achieving success in Modern History.

Key enhancements:

- > All content has been explicitly aligned to the new Modern History Stage 6 syllabus (Year 11).
- > Subject experts Bruce Dennett, Stephen Dixon, Bernie Howitt and Angela Wong have developed comprehensive, engaging and appropriately levelled content.
- > Unambiguous language is used throughout the book, with plenty of visuals to engage students and support learning.
- > obook assess provides comprehensive student and teacher digital support including answers to every question in the book, class tests, videos and more.



'Focus questions', 'Key concepts and skills', and 'Learning goals' are clearly stated at the beginning of each chapter to guide teachers and students through the content.

Content includes up-to-date case studies, maps and rich visual and written source material

Margin glossary definitions help students to quickly and easily find the meaning of unfamiliar terms, to aid understanding



9.2b Understanding and using the sources

- 1 Why was the October Manifesto introduced, according to Source 1?
- 2 What changes were agreed to by Nicholas?
- 3 According to Source 1b, did Trotsky see the Tsar's desire for reform as genuine? Do Trotsky's comments suggest that revolutionary activity would increase or diminish after the issuing of the October Manifesto? Explain your answer.
- 4 The following questions refer to Source 1b.
 - a Which political parties did Lenin and Trotsky belong to?
 - b Which groups wished to retain the Tsar as head of state?
 - c State two policy differences that help explain why the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks disagreed with each other.

Political developments following the 1905 Revolution

Nicholas diluted the October Manifesto. He had hoped to buy peace with concessions and, feeling betrayed when strikes and protests continued, he returned to the methods of an autocrat. In the countryside, loyal troops moved through the villages with a campaign of burning and looting to subdue the rebellious peasants. On 16 December 1905, the St Petersburg soviet was closed and 19 of its members arrested. A general strike in Moscow led to street fighting from 21 December 1905 until 2 January 1906, resulting in deaths for the strikers and the deaths of more than 1000 workers.

Nicholas had bitterly resented having to concede a Duma, and tried to restrict its position by issuing a series of **Fundamental Laws** on 2 May 1906. These confirmed the Tsar's right to appoint his own ministers, legislate by decree and have complete control over foreign affairs. Laws passed by the Duma would require his approval. An Imperial Council, with half of its members appointed by the Tsar, would share power with the Duma.

The decision for the first Duma in 1906 and the second Duma in 1907 produced parliaments that were critical of the government, and both were dissolved by Nicholas after only a few months. Before the third Duma, Nicholas altered the electoral law to ensure that the representation of peasants, small landowners and urban dwellers was drastically reduced. The resulting Duma was a submissive and conservative body. It was allowed to serve its full term from 1907 to 1912, as was the fourth and final Duma from 1912 to 1917.

While the Duma met, the prime minister, Pyotr Stolypin, carried out a policy to repress the revolutionary elements, while offering limited land concessions to the peasants. This two-pronged approach was designed to consolidate the position of the Tsar by removing his revolutionary opponents and winning the loyalty and gratitude of the peasants.

9.2b Check your learning

- 1 What do you understand by the term 'revolution'? Do the events of 1905 merit the description of 'revolution'? Why or why not?
- 2 The events of 1905 have been called a 'dress rehearsal' for the Russian Revolution of 1917. What lessons might revolutionaries have drawn from the events of 1905?

9.3 The fall of the Romanov dynasty



SOURCE 21 This map shows Russia's south-west front line in 1914, including the location of the offensive led by Brusilov in 1916 and 1917.

War was declared between Germany and Russia in August 1914, and at first it seemed that the First World War would save the Romanov throne, not destroy it. Political differences were put aside as Russians joined to fight the common enemy in defence of the homeland. Volunteers hurried to join the army, and the Tsar himself took command. In the first half of the year – vanished. No strikes of any kind were recorded in the month of August 1914.

The role of the First World War in the collapse of the Romanov dynasty

At first, Russia's campaign on the south-west front seemed a story of unambiguous success. The Austrians were pushed back in Galicia, and the Germans were defeated at Gumbinnen. Then came the German response. At Tannenberg in August 1914, the Germans inflicted a heavy defeat on the Russians. Masses of prisoners, stores and guns were taken, and the Russian commander, Vladimir Samsonov, shot himself. In September, another heavy defeat at the Masurian Lakes confirmed the end of the advance against the Germans and the beginning of a three-year attempt to hold back the German advance into Russia's western provinces. There were some campaign successes against the Austro-Hungarian Army, spearheaded by Russian General Aleksei Brusilov, but the optimistic mood that had greeted the war was changed to one of increasing disillusionment.



SOURCE 22 Russian boy soldiers are guarded by German troops after their capture at the Battle of Tannenberg, 1914.

Many chapters feature a 'Profile' which allows for more in-depth learning about a historically significant person, event or phenomenon.

15.3 Understanding and using the sources

- 1 Analyse Source 6. What is it implying about King Leopold II's control of the Belgian Congo? Research the treatment of the indigenous peoples of the Congo under Belgian control and discuss whether the attitude shown in Source 6 is justified.
- 2 Analyse Source 7 and explain what point it is making about the Age of Imperialism.
- 3 Explain how steamships such as that shown in Source 8 could change international trade and increase the value of European colonies.

15.3 Check your learning

- 1 What percentage of the planet did European countries control by 1914?
- 2 Create a flow chart that explains the two-way trade process that enriched imperialist countries in the nineteenth century.
- 3 Identify a specific example of imperialism that benefitted the trade of an imperialist country. Research its impact on the population of the colonised country.
- 4 Conduct research to identify which areas of the planet had not been colonised by Europeans by 1914.



THE EAST INDIA COMPANY

Although the spreading of Christianity and 'civilised' Western ideas were used to justify imperialist expansion, these were not the core reasons behind colonisation. At the heart of imperialism was always the desire to secure profits for business owners and shareholders. Nowhere was this more evident than in the activities of the East India Company.

Known for a range of names during its years of operation, the East India Company was essentially an English private company formed to take advantage of new trading opportunities after the defeat of the Spanish Armada of 1588. In this conflict, England broke the monopoly (total control) Spain and Portugal had enjoyed in the East Indian spice trade.

Conflict with the Dutch in what was then called the Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia) saw the Company focus its attention in India in the early seventeenth century, while also pursuing interests in the Persian Gulf, South-East Asia and East Asia.

SOURCE 9 Tim Hetherington as Cuthbert Beckett, Chairman of the East India Trading Company, in *Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Men's Chest* (2006). The caricature company in the film was based on the real East India Company, with the process representing freedom from imperialist powers.

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The major products the Company traded in were cotton, silk, spices, tea and opium. The latter was eventually to bring it into conflict with China in the Opium Wars. The Company, displaying its inherent 'logic' of nineteenth-century imperialism, demanded to be able to sell Indian opium in China to pay for the Chinese tea it was selling in England. Twice after China banned the sale of opium to its citizens, wars were fought to ensure the Company had the right to sell opium to the Chinese.

For around 150 years, from the 1620s, the Company transported slaves to support its economic expansion.

The Company effectively ruled India on behalf of the British crown from 1834. Reassertment of the Company's imperialist role in India eventually resulted in the Indian Mutiny of 1857. As a result of this conflict, the British Government took formal control of India in 1858, and ended the Company's Indian possessions, its administrative powers and its armies.

The Company lost all its power. It was finally dissolved in 1873, after over 300 years as a spearhead of English imperialism.



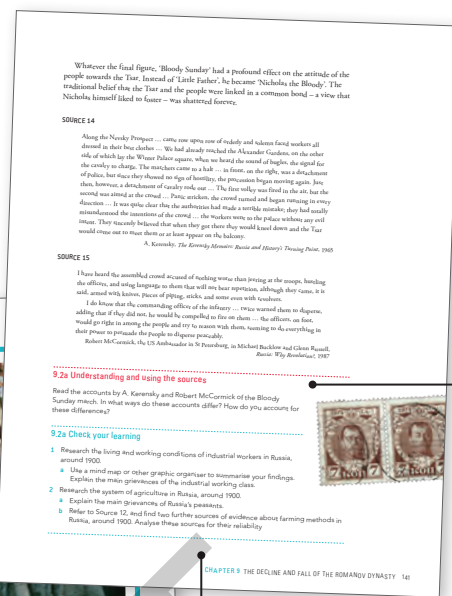
SOURCE 10 An artist's view of Company officials in a procession.



SOURCE 11 A woman smokes an opium pipe in modern-day China.

15.3 PROFILE TASKS

- 1 Which event paved the way for the establishment of the East India Company?
- 2 Research the Indian Mutiny and outline why the East India Company would have been overthrown by Indians.
- 3 Analyse Source 10 and explain how it could be used as evidence to help a historian understand the relationship between the East India Company and the Indian population.



'Understanding and using the sources' questions throughout each chapter enhance student understanding of how to use and critically analyse historical sources

'Check your learning' questions are given for each topic

obook assess

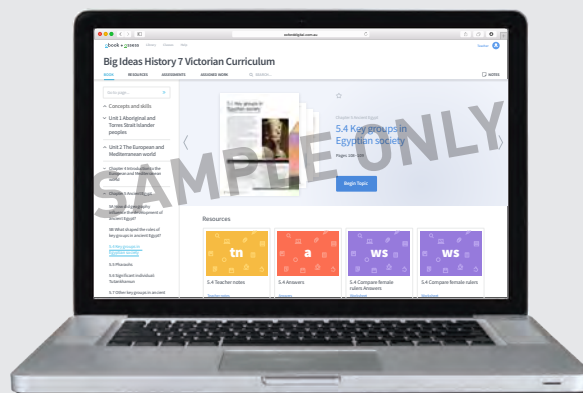
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The drama *12 Years a Slave* (2013) is based on the real life story of Solomon Northup, an African-American man who was kidnapped and sold as a slave to various plantations in the American South in the mid-1800s.



PART A

Investigating Modern History – The Nature of Modern History

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1

The Investigation of Historic Sites and Sources – the Trenches of the First World War and the Archaeology of Fromelles

War graves at the Thiepval Memorial to the Missing of the Somme, France

FOCUS QUESTIONS

- 1 What is the nature, range and importance of archives to researchers of modern history?
- 2 How valid are reconstructions of historic sites as a source of historical understanding?
- 3 How have archaeological and scientific techniques, historic sites and oral testimony contributed to our understanding of modern history?

KEY CONCEPTS AND SKILLS

Analysis and use of sources

Trench warfare was a major component of the First World War. There are a wide variety of sources that can be analysed to develop an understanding of the nature and impact of trench warfare in this war. These include written sources from participants in the war, such as letters, diaries and poems; visual sources such as photographs and drawings; and even the trenches themselves.

Historical interpretation

When you investigate a topic as large as the trenches of the First World War, you will be exposed to a variety of interpretations, as well as developing your own. Assess each interpretation for accuracy and validity by examining the sources it relies upon, and by looking at what has been excluded from the investigation.

Historical investigation and research

When you visit a museum or reconstructed historical site, you have to consider carefully the role it can play in a historical investigation. It may be a useful stimulus for developing valid historical questions, but you must always consider the validity of any museum exhibits or reconstructions as sources.

Explanation and communication

You may consider whether you could create models or reconstructions that can effectively communicate your own historical understanding.

LEARNING GOALS

- > Understand the wide range of different sources that support the study of modern history.
- > Develop an appreciation of the role of archaeology and science in the study of modern history.
- > Investigate the range of sources available to assist understanding of the nature of trench warfare in the First World War.

1.1 Introduction

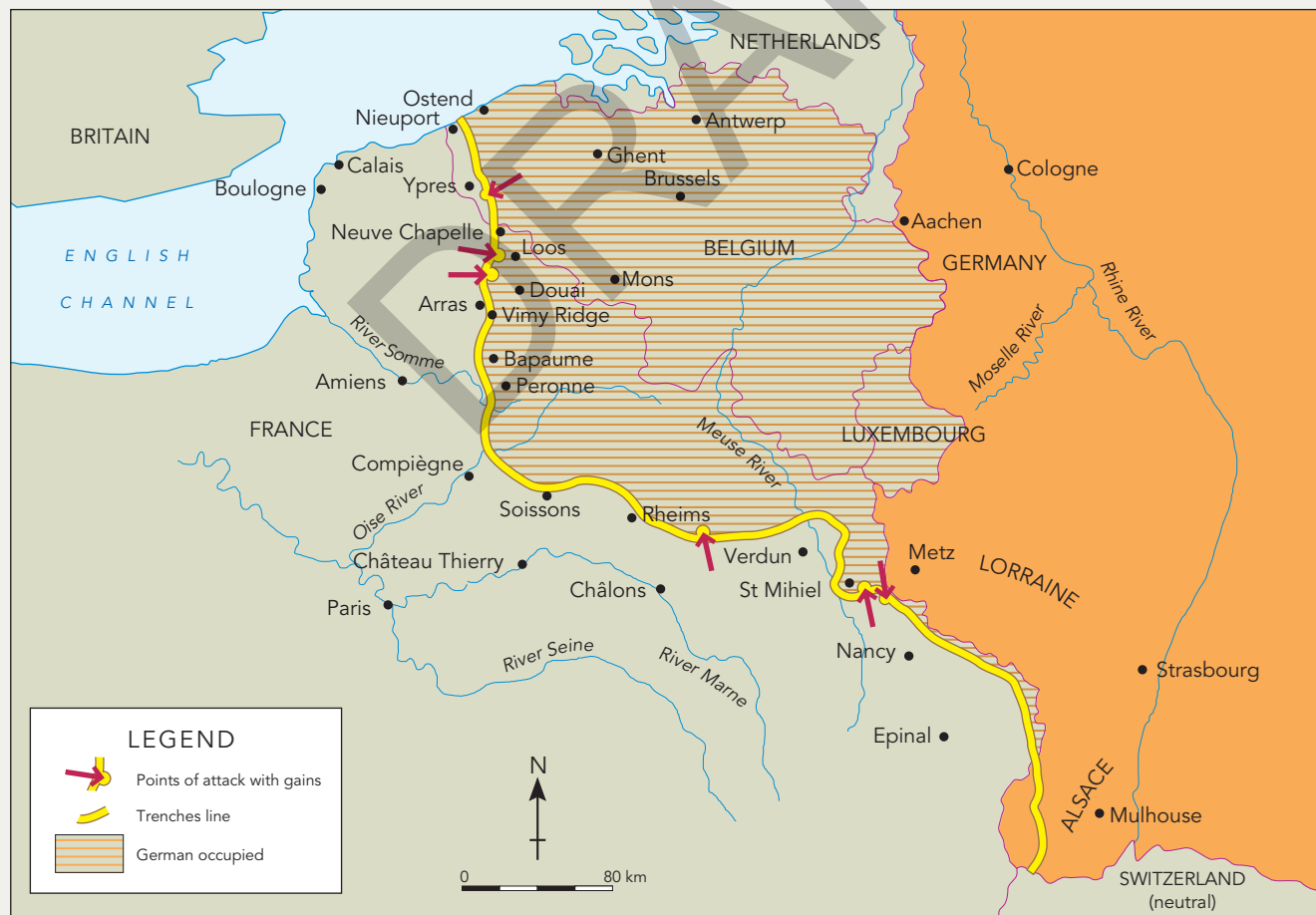
This chapter focuses on the investigation of historic sites and sources related to the trenches of the First World War (1914–18). The principal location of these trenches is known as the Western Front. The Western Front is not, however, a single site; rather, it is a series of different sites in France and Belgium. Here, the armies of France, the United States and the British Empire – which included Australia – fought bloody battles along a line of trenches that stretched from the Belgian coast to Switzerland.

The Western Front is unusual as a historic site, both because of its geographical size and because of the impact of the events that took place there.



SOURCE 1 A Muslim grave with French and Algerian flags at the National Necropolis and Ossuary in Douaumont, France. The site is a tribute to French and Algerian soldiers who died on the Verdun battlefield during the First World War.

THE WESTERN FRONT, 1915



SOURCE 2 This map of the Western Front in 1915 shows the extent of the trenches line, which stretched from the Belgian coast to Switzerland.

One hundred years after the end of the war, the scars are still visible on parts of the landscape. The trenches, war memorials, museums and military cemeteries – where row upon row of headstones stretch across the countryside – offer different versions of the story of the Great War. All the countries and all the families whose loved ones were involved in the war have their own special sites and their own special memories. Each country devotes special care to its own significant sites from the Western Front.

For the French, the Western Front was the site of the blood and sacrifice of a generation who fought to defend their home soil. For the British, it was the graveyard of the best of a generation. For many Germans in the 1920s and 30s, it was the birthplace of their mythical ‘Front Generation’ – maimed (both mentally and physically) by war and unable to adjust to civilian life.

More than being sites of remembrance, reconstructions of sites along the Western Front seek to provide visitors with an authentic experience of the war. Throughout this chapter, you should consider how authentic a reconstruction of such a place can be.



SOURCE 3 A recreation of a First World War dressing station (first aid post) at the Romagne '14-18' Museum in Romagne-sous-Montfaucon, Lorraine, France

1.1 Check your learning

- 1 Which countries were involved on the Western Front?
- 2 List some of the visible remains of the First World War that are still accessible.

1.1 Understanding and using the sources

- 1 Identify artefacts in Source 3 that could be from the First World War. What would a historian do to assess their authenticity?
- 2 What historical understanding can you draw from Source 2?
- 3 As a student of modern history, how could the grave shown in Source 1 and the reconstruction in Source 3 help you understand what happened on the Western Front?

1.2 The nature and importance of archives to historians

Archives are places where public records and other historical documents are kept. Your school may have its own archive, celebrating the school and past student achievements. Most countries have a national archive, housing a wide range of sources that outline the history of the country through official records. Museums, such as the Australian War Memorial, have archives relating to their area of research.



SOURCE 4 'Chateau Wood' by Frank Hurley, 1917

oral history

the collection and study of historical information using sound recordings of interviews with people who remember past events

Archives are a valuable source of information for historians and, as technology has developed, archives have become increasingly digitised and made available on museum websites. Researchers and the general public have more ready access to archival material than ever before. Historians investigating the First World War spend much of their time in archives, looking at letters, diaries, maps, official reports, plans and orders. Many archives also include recorded interviews with eyewitnesses and those who served in the war. These **oral histories** were often recorded after the war ended and were later transcribed, to become part of the written record.

Photography was well established as a means of recording events by the First World War and photographs have become important evidence in the process of reconstructing sites on the Western Front. Australian Frank Hurley became known as 'the mad photographer' for the risks he often took while photographing battles, such as Passchendaele in Belgium. Many of his photographs have become part of the Australian War Memorial's archive.

SOURCE 5

Wednesday: Rain, rain, more rain – it just poured and the mud is appalling – we slop around in gumboots with about 14 lbs [6.3 kg] of mud and straw and stuff attached to our boots ... several flashes of lightning – very bright indeed – and such heavy rain.

Staff Nurse Christine Erica Strom, Australian Army Nursing Service (AANS), taken from her diary, which is located in the Australian War Memorial's archives, Canberra

1.2 Understanding and using the sources

- 1 Explain how Sources 5 and 6 can help you understand the role of archives in historical research.
- 2 How would Source 5 help a history student who had been asked to use primary sources in explaining what it was like to serve in the First World War?

One of the most comprehensive archives for First World War studies is the Liddle Collection at Leeds University in the UK, founded in the 1970s by British historian Peter Liddle. Liddle had collected oral histories from First World War veterans from both the UK and Australia, including Australians who had served at Gallipoli and on the Western Front. Liddle's interest in these stories stemmed from a desire to preserve stories for future generations that, if not recorded, could be lost forever.

In 1978, British historian Denis Winter published *Death's Men: Soldiers of the Great War*, which was based on diaries and private letters from soldiers. Winter felt that 'both during and after the war the individual voices of the soldiers were lost in the collective picture'. He believed that there had been a neglect of the perspective of the individual soldier. Winter acknowledged one of the most important but often neglected truths of producing history: it is the vast variety of experiences that make up any story. From his interviews, Winter wrote what might be called a history from the 'bottom up'. Aside from a brief period just after the war, this perspective had been largely neglected, despite there being an abundance of materials that gave accounts of trench warfare from the first days of the war in 1914, until after the **armistice** in 1918.

The contribution of oral testimony to an understanding of life in the past

Many historical accounts rely heavily on oral testimony. In fact, the Liddle Collection at Leeds University is almost entirely based on oral testimony, and the Australian War Memorial's oral testimony collection is vast. These testimonies have provided historians with important insights into the times, emotions and perceptions of those with firsthand experience of life in the trenches.

Like all historical sources, however, such testimonies cannot be taken at face value. They need to be considered critically and approached first in terms of their context. This means considering who produced them, and when and why they were produced; and only then considering the content of what is being said. In other words, the key to using oral testimony is the same as using any historical source. First look at the context, and then look at the content.

The best way to understand the power and significance of oral history in understanding life in the past is to listen to recordings. The Australian War Memorial's collection is an ideal place to start. Its archives hold recordings of firsthand accounts of fighting at Gallipoli, as well as on the Western Front. These testimonies allow you to establish a sense of empathy with the soldiers of the First World War, as you hear them describe their experiences, and reflect on their survival and the changes war wrought on them. Oral history keeps memories alive long after the participants have passed on.

1.2 Check your learning

- 1 What are archives? Why are they useful for historians?
- 2 Describe the Liddle Collection. How could its contents provide a different perspective on the First World War than other official records?
- 3 Create a table with two columns that outlines the risks and advantages of using oral histories to develop historical understanding of a topic.

armistice
the agreement
made by opposing
sides in a war to stop
fighting



SOURCE 6
Poppies adorn
the Roll of
Honour walls at
the Australian
War Memorial in
Canberra. The War
Memorial holds an
extensive archive
of First World War
records.

1.3 The reconstruction of historic sites: the Western Front



SOURCE 7 The 19 240 Shrouds of the Somme exhibition, Exeter, England, on the 100th anniversary of the first day of the Battle of the Somme. Each figurine represents one British life lost in first four hours of the Battle of the Somme, 1 July 1916.

Today, some of the sites of the Western Front have been left as places of reflection, while others have seen trenches reconstructed to give visitors some understanding of what it looked like in 1916.

For young nations, such as Australia, New Zealand and Canada, key events of the First World War are often referred to as their 'coming of age'. In relation to Australia and New Zealand, it is the 1915 campaign at Gallipoli in Turkey that has the greatest meaning. Anzac Cove in Gallipoli has become an important focus of commemoration, and plays a significant role in the history and sense of identity for both countries. The Western Front – particularly the sites of Beaumont-Hamel and Vimy Ridge – plays a similar role in Canada's history and sense of identity. These two sites are examples of different approaches to reconstruction.

Beaumont-Hamel

■ **dominion**
a territory of a
sovereign or
government

■ **battalion**
a large body
of troops

In 1916, Newfoundland, Canada, was still a **dominion** of the British Empire (it would not become a Canadian province until 1949). As such, it answered Britain's call for troops to fight in the First World War and sent a **battalion** of 800 men to Europe.

Beaumont-Hamel, 120 km south-west of the Belgian border, was the battleground of the first day of the Battle of the Somme. The Somme – which has become a symbolic representation of the Great War, particularly for the British – was in fact a series of battles that were fought between 1 July and 18 November 1916, near the Somme River, 160 km north of Paris.

SOURCE 8

Soldiers leaving
a trench to attack
during the Battle
of the Somme



The first day of fighting, 1 July 1916, was one of the worst in the history of the British Army in terms of casualties. The Somme was designed by the British to be an offensive battle to break the **stalemate** on the Western Front. It did not go according to plan. The attack was preceded by a week-long bombardment of the German trenches, in which one-and-a-half million shells were fired. This artillery attack was intended to destroy the German barbed wire and wipe out the front-line trenches. However, this aim was not achieved. The Germans were aware of the impending attack and prepared for it by digging huge underground chambers, 12 m below the ground, to enable them to shelter from the bombardment. The result was that the battle lasted significantly longer than planned. The impact of four-and-a-half months of intense conflict left major scars on the French landscape.

The Canadians were part of the third wave of soldiers attempting to cross **no man's land** and seize the German trenches at Beaumont-Hamel on that first day. Of the almost 800 men that left their trenches at 8.45 a.m., most would be dead or dying within the first 20 minutes of the advance. At the next morning's roll call, only 68 men could respond. A total of 324 were killed or missing, and a further 386 were wounded, many so severely that they would die shortly after.

This was a devastating blow for such a small dominion, and 1 July remains an official day of remembrance in Newfoundland. The site of the battle at Beaumont-Hamel has also become a significant memorial, and the Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial is one of only two National Historic Sites of Canada outside of Canada itself.

Rather than try and reconstruct the trenches, the Canadian Government has left them as winding scars in the landscape (see Source 9). Visitors are able to walk through the trenches the Newfoundlanders left, and reflect on the huge sacrifice of lives that occurred on the morning of 1 July 1916.

■ **stalemate**
a situation where neither side is able to gain an advantage

■ **no man's land**
the area between the trench systems of opposing armies; soldiers were unlikely to return from this area



SOURCE 9 English school students visiting First World War trenches of the Battle of the Somme at the Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial, France

Vimy Ridge

On 9 April 1917, at Vimy Ridge in northern France, all four divisions of the Canadian Expeditionary Force fought together for the first time, successfully driving the German forces back and capturing the high ground. Today, Vimy Ridge is the site of a memorial to the 60 000 Canadians who gave their lives in the First World War: the Canadian National Vimy Memorial.



SOURCE 10 Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau walks through a trench at Vimy Ridge on 9 April 2017, the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge.

In contrast to Beaumont-Hamel, the decision was made by the Canadian Government to reconstruct the trenches at Vimy Ridge, using concrete sandbags (concrete moulded to look like sandbags) to ensure the safety of the many visitors that flock to the site each year.

Historical reconstructions cannot place us back in the reality of the First World War, but, when they are built accurately and with care, they can allow for a degree of authenticity. They can give visitors the opportunity to walk through and stand in the same places that their ancestors did, and gain both insight and historical understanding of the experiences those people endured.

1.3 Understanding and using the sources

- 1 What historical understandings can be gained by the school students visiting sites such as Beaumont-Hamel, as shown in Source 9?
- 2 Compare Sources 9 and 10. Explain how they show different approaches to the preservation and reconstruction of historic sites.
- 3 To what extent could Sources 9 and 10 be regarded as sources by historians investigating the First World War?

1.3 Check your learning

- 1 How long did the Battle of the Somme last?
 - 2 Describe what happened on the first morning of the Battle of the Somme.
 - 3 Why are the battle sites of Beaumont-Hamel and Vimy Ridge so significant for Canadians?
 - 4 Discuss the value of reconstructing historical sites. Outline the arguments for and against reconstructions.
-

1.4

The contribution of archaeological and scientific techniques in the investigation of the past

Australian and British historians and archaeologists have focused on sites in the Somme region to gain a better understanding of trench life and the experiences of ordinary soldiers in the First World War. The most significant of these undertakings was the 2009 excavation of mass graves at Pheasant Wood near Fromelles, France, close to the Belgian border.

The challenges of surveying trench sites

Battlefield archaeology can add an extra dimension to our understanding of war, as it gives us a unique insight into the experiences of soldiers. However, the excavation of trenches along the Western Front has sometimes been made difficult by the postwar construction of memorials and monuments where battles were once fought. While these can be of great emotional significance for soldiers and their families, memorials alter the original military **topography** and can contribute to the destruction of significant historical artefacts.

Fortunately for archaeologists, the Somme has provided a surprising number of artefacts; rather than monuments, the ongoing challenge here has been the decomposition of many of these artefacts. Archaeologists and historians have cross-referenced remains (for example shreds of uniforms, identifying badges and ammunition) with archival records (for example photographs and oral testimonies) to develop a deeper understanding of what occurred at sites such as Fromelles.

■ topography

the arrangement of the natural and artificial physical features of an area



SOURCE 11 A First World War mass grave at Fromelles



SOURCE 12 An archaeologist at work, recovering human remains and historical artefacts at Pheasant Wood

■ **stratigraphic dating**
the geological method of dating objects by their position in the stratigraphy – or layering – of rocks and sediment

Interestingly, even the most well-preserved trenches can cause problems for archaeologists using **stratigraphic dating** techniques. Stratigraphy – the method of dating artefacts by their relationship with the levels at which they were found, with the oldest artefacts on the bottom and the most recent on top – is not always useful when studying trenches. In fact, in the trenches the traditional stratigraphic picture was often reversed, as troops along the Western Front would frequently dig themselves deeper underground and throw their waste up onto the surface. The stratigraphy was further confused by the massive artillery explosions that blew enormous craters in the ground and completely rearranged the topography.

Excavations of trenches have been further complicated by the fact that after the war, farmers who attempted to reclaim their farmland would simply take all the mounds of debris above ground and shovel them into the trenches to fill them in. Hence traditional stratigraphy cannot be trusted, and other means have had to be used to determine the true origins of artefacts.

Aside from the dangers of drawing false conclusions, archaeologists working in the trenches face physical dangers. Even a hundred years after the Western Front was an active battlefield, archaeologists have still come across unexploded shells and gas cylinders. For this reason, all archaeological work has had to be done with professional bomb disposal experts and other personnel on site.



SOURCE 13
Private Thomas Cosgriff, 59th Battalion, of Albert Park, Victoria, aged 20, was one of the many Australians killed at Fromelles in July 1916. His remains were positively identified through DNA testing.

■ **geophysical**
relating to the use of instruments to study the physics of the earth in inaccessible areas
■ **oste archaeologist**
a specialist in the study of human skeletal remains

Forensic examinations and DNA analysis at Fromelles

For the Australians, one of the most significant places on the Western Front is Fromelles, the site of one of the bloodiest battles of the Great War. Here, Australia suffered more than 5000 casualties in one night, between 19 and 20 July 1916, in what is sometimes called Australia's greatest military disaster. Of these casualties, hundreds of soldiers remained missing for over 90 years, until a **geophysical** survey of the area, commissioned by the Australian Government in 2007, located an unmarked mass grave at Pheasant Wood in 2008. According to the Australian War Memorial, the excavation revealed 250 bodies, of which 203 were thought by archaeologists to be Australian (due to remnants of clothing or location of the bodies etc). After teams of **oste archaeologists** removed the soldiers' remains, DNA samples were taken from their teeth and bones. These were then matched with DNA from relatives of soldiers in Australia. By mid-2015, 144 of the 250 bodies had been positively identified, and each of these was confirmed to be Australian. The lost soldiers were identified through a combination of anthropological, archaeological, historical and DNA information.

1.4 Understanding and using the sources

Analyse Sources 11, 12 and 13. Explain how each source can help you understand more about the role and value of archaeologists in developing historical understanding of modern history.

1.4 Check your learning

- 1 Who conducted the search for unidentified Australian bodies at Pheasant Wood near Fromelles in 2008?
 - 2 Outline some of the difficulties facing archaeologists excavating First World War battlefields.
 - 3 Research the Australian and British troops' aim at the Battle of Fromelles. How successful were they?
-

VILLERS-BRETONNEUX

Villers-Bretonneux, near Amiens in northern France, was the site of a significant engagement that was critical in the outcome of the First World War. In 1918, the German Army launched a carefully planned offensive in an attempt to win the war before growing numbers of American troops arriving on the Western Front could overwhelm them. This attack, known as the Ludendorff Offensive, broke through the British and French lines and was close to succeeding in its aim. Australian troops were involved in halting the German advance, and one of the key sites in this battle was the small town of Villers-Bretonneux. More than 2000 Australians were killed or wounded, while the cost to the Germans was estimated at more than 10 000.

The people of Villers-Bretonneux continue to honour the considerable effort made by the Australian troops to prevent Germany from breaking through the French lines. Today, Australians visiting the town can have a cup of coffee at Café le Anzac or Café le Kangaroo, and watch the local primary school, the Victoria School, celebrate Anzac Day. The school houses the Australian National Memorial, and has also erected a sign in its playground that reads 'Do not forget Australia'.

Sites such as Villers-Bretonneux make a major contribution not only to the historical understanding of individuals, but also to a broader national understanding of identity. They can provide a focus for historical memories and understanding that help shape a broader historical narrative. Although Gallipoli has dominated Australia's historical memory, as historical understanding of Australia's role in the First World War has expanded, Western Front sites such as Villers-Bretonneux have risen in significance.



SOURCE 14 The Australian national rugby team, the Wallabies, visits the Victoria School, following a commemorative service at the Australian National Memorial in Villers-Bretonneux.



SOURCE 15 French children tend the graves of Australians killed in battle on the Western Front, Adelaide Cemetery, Villers-Bretonneux.

1.4 PROFILE TASKS

- 1 How do sites such as the memorials at Villers-Bretonneux and Vimy Ridge contribute to historical understanding?
- 2 Investigate the role Australia played in the battle at Villers-Bretonneux. How important was it for the outcome of the war?
- 3 Discuss why Australian sporting teams such as the Wallabies would travel to Villers-Bretonneux. How could historians use Source 14 to help them understand the contribution of Villers-Bretonneux to any historical narrative of Australia and its place in the world?

Traditionally, archaeology has been seen as the domain of ancient history. As this chapter about the Western Front in the First World War has shown, however, it also has a crucial role to play in helping us understand modern history. The so-called Great War destroyed large areas of the French countryside, but the skills of archaeologists have allowed for the reconstruction of some of the trenches along the front.

Reconstruction has emerged as a popular way of accessing the past in the twenty-first century. It can take the form of preserving trenches or recreating areas, such as the dressing station shown in Source 3. In each case, the aim is to allow people from the present to experience aspects of the past.

Reconstructions contribute to our historical understanding of the past, but, like all sources, have to be analysed carefully. They may give a researcher a greater understanding of the experiences of participants, or simply allow them to ask historical questions, such as what sort of lighting would be available in a field hospital, or how surgeries could be performed there.

Science too is making a significant contribution to our understanding of the past. After the physical discoveries of archaeologists showed the way at Fromelles in France, DNA testing was used on the remains exhumed from the mass graves of Fromelles. Here, modern science allowed 144 Australians, who had been buried unnamed in unmarked graves, to be identified and buried with dignity and recognition. More than providing closure to families whose relatives had been lost to history, DNA analysis also allowed historians to gain a deeper and more complete understanding of the Battle of Fromelles. Perhaps, in time, that greater understanding will lead to enhanced recognition of the role of Fromelles and other Western Front sites in the development of Australia's national identity.



SOURCE 16 Australian soldiers stand in front of a wall bearing the names of fallen First World War soldiers at a dawn service at the Australian National Memorial in Villers-Bretonneux, France.



FOR THE TEACHER

Check your obook assess for the following additional resources for this chapter:

Answers

Answers to each *Check your learning*, *Understanding and using the sources* and *Profile task* in this chapter

Teacher notes

Useful notes and advice for teaching this chapter, including syllabus connections and relevant weblinks

Class test

Comprehensive test to review students' skills and knowledge

assess quiz

Interactive auto-correcting multiple-choice quiz to test student comprehension

A large American flag is shown flying from a tall pole against a dark, cloudy sky. The flag is positioned in the upper right corner of the page, with its stripes and stars clearly visible. The background of the entire page is a dark, moody image of the sky and the flag.

2

The Contestability of the Past: Pearl Harbor

The American flag flying at the U.S.S. Arizona Memorial, Pearl Harbor

FOCUS QUESTIONS

- 1 How do the different interpretations of the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 illustrate the concept of contestability in history?
- 2 What do the sources and historians say about the bombing of Pearl Harbor?
- 3 How do the sources and evidence help historians evaluate different theories about the bombing of Pearl Harbor?

KEY CONCEPTS AND SKILLS

Historical interpretation

One of the roles of historians is to interpret events and sources. The events at Pearl Harbor have challenged historians because much of the information comes from Japanese and American perspectives. Even historians may have their interpretation of events influenced by their national origins.

Historical investigation and research

Developing a range of questions to guide an investigation is an important step towards success in history. It is critical that you develop questions that guide you towards a well-reasoned and well-supported conclusion. A good starting point here is to ask what you would like to know about the bombing of Pearl Harbor, and perhaps develop a mind map from that question.

Explanation and communication

When you are dealing with a contested topic such as the bombing of Pearl Harbor, it is critical that you provide evidence and examples to support your interpretation. When communicating your findings, it will be essential to plan a method that makes it very clear that you have conducted sufficient research to show you understand the significance of your sources.

Analysis and use of sources

It is vital that you examine carefully the origin and intent of the sources you are using to develop your own interpretation.

LEARNING GOALS

- > Understand the nature of contestability in history.
- > Identify the different historical interpretations of the bombing of Pearl Harbor and the reasons for them.
- > Discuss the contested interpretations of Pearl Harbor and assess their validity.

2.1 Introduction

■ **Allied Powers**
the coalition of countries in opposition to the Axis powers in the Second World War; they included Britain, the Commonwealth and France, which were joined by the United States and the Soviet Union in 1941

■ **Axis Powers**
the coalition of countries in opposition to the Allied powers in the Second World War; they included Germany, Italy and Japan

■ **capitalism**
an economic system in which businesses and industry are run for profit by private owners, rather than run by the government

As a student of history, you analyse and evaluate contested interpretations and representations of the past. This implies that historians will not always agree on why events occurred, or what those events mean. History is often contested, with differing historical interpretations around any given event. This is the case with the Japanese attack on the US naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, during the Second World War.

Japan's surprise attack on the US Navy's 7th Fleet on 7 December 1941 was a defining moment in twentieth-century history. The event triggered a dramatic response from the US Government and a change in the United States' view of its place and role in the world. Before Pearl Harbor, the United States had stood apart from the conflict between the **Allied Powers** and the **Axis Powers** that had been ongoing in theatres of war in Europe and North Africa since 1939. It was Pearl Harbor that led the United States into the Second World War, moving it away from a position of isolation from world affairs to the position it has held since after the war, the role of international leader of the Western, **capitalist** world.

In this chapter, we will use the bombing of the US naval base at Pearl Harbor to illustrate why it is important to examine contested interpretations, and the sources and evidence they are based on, before coming to a conclusion. As you examine the attack on Pearl Harbor, and the events that followed as a result, you will confront a range of viewpoints and interpretations. From these you will develop your own interpretation, using sources and evidence to support you through the process.



SOURCE 1 An aerial view of the U.S.S. Arizona Memorial, Pearl Harbor, with the sunken battleship just visible under the surface

Understanding the context: the background to Pearl Harbor

The Japanese economy had suffered during the **Great Depression** in the 1930s, and its industries lacked key resources, such as oil and rubber. Japan's invasion of China in 1937 was seen as an immediate solution to these problems. In 1940, Japanese Prime Minister Yosuke Matsuoka had announced the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, with the idea of creating a bloc of Japanese-occupied Asian nations that were free of Western influence. If realised, the scheme would have replaced Western imperialism with Japanese imperialism, allowing Japan to access resources from the Asian countries they would dominate.

These expansionist policies reflected the rise to power of aggressive military leaders in Japan. The most significant of these was Hideki Tojo, a general who became prime minister in October 1941. It was he who ordered the attack on Pearl Harbor. As prime minister until July 1944, Tojo led Japan through most of the Second World War.

In response to Japan's invasion of China, the United States had imposed **economic sanctions** on Japan in 1939. Britain also joined the economic blockade of Japan. If the sanctions had continued, Japan would run out of resources by 1942. Most critically for Japan, a shortage of oil was a serious threat in a world where oil had emerged as the fuel needed to drive both industry and the military.

The military leaders who dominated Japanese politics resented what they saw as Western interference in their country's right to secure their future through expansion. Against this background, a high-stakes attack on the United States seemed a realistic approach for the Japanese. The government believed that a decisive surprise attack on a key asset such as Pearl Harbor might prevent the United States from engaging in the war, and force it to drop economic sanctions that were slowly depleting the country.

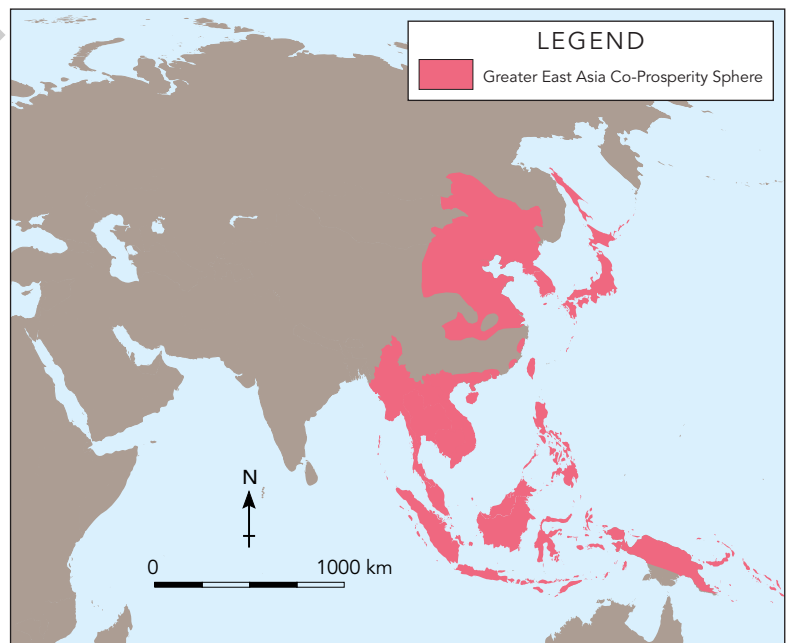
■ **Great Depression**
a period of severe economic downturn that began in the United States and quickly spread around the world during the 1930s and 40s

■ **economic sanctions**
restrictions on trade



SOURCE 2 Hideki Tojo, Prime Minister of Japan, 1941–44

THE PROPOSED GREATER EAST ASIA CO-PROSPERITY SPHERE, 1940



SOURCE 3 This 1940 map shows the proposed nations that Japan intended would comprise its Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere

But how would the United States respond to such an attack? The major risk was that Japan was unsure whether it could defeat the United States in a full-scale military confrontation. If the attack on Pearl Harbor succeeded in keeping the United States out of the war, it would be a success. If the United States chose instead to go to war, it could lead to Japan's defeat. It is unthinkable that Japan's leaders would have contemplated Pearl Harbor if they could have foreseen the catastrophic impact of the atomic bombs dropped by the United States on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. History, however, has to reject hindsight, and interpret decisions that were made at the time. Japan's decision to attack Pearl Harbor would have an impact on history throughout the Asia-Pacific region, as well as globally.

One of the many sources historians can access to help them understand the context of Pearl Harbor is the work of Ikezaki Tadataka, a Japanese civilian writer on military affairs. In 1929 he commented: 'It is well known that Japan's over-population grows more serious every year. Where should we find an outlet for these millions?' Tadataka went on to say that the Western powers had already divided up the world but the Asian mainland remained, and that Japan had a claim to the region 'written in the blood and treasure of two wars', referring to the wars that Japan had fought against China in 1894–95 and against Russia in 1904–05.

In trying to understand the historical context of Japan's decision to bomb Pearl Harbor, it can be valuable to examine its tactics in its first war with a Western power: the Russo-Japanese War. In 1904, a Japanese squadron of warships attacked the Russian naval base at Port Arthur (in Kiaodong Province, China), without warning and without any declaration of war. In December 1941, the Japanese – again without warning or declaration of war – attacked the US naval base at Pearl Harbor.

SOURCE 4

Russo-Japanese War (1904–05)

An important conflict over control of Manchuria and Korea. The Japanese launched a surprise attack on Russian warships at anchor in the naval base of Port Arthur ... without declaring war ... Port Arthur fell to the Japanese ... The Russian Baltic fleet sailed 28 000 km from its base in the East China Sea, only to be destroyed in the Tsushima Straits by the Japanese fleet ...

Edmund Wright (ed.), *The Desk Encyclopedia of World History*, 2006, p. 556

2.1 Understanding and using the sources

- 1 How can Source 3 help you understand the threat Japan presented to Australia in the period before and during the Second World War?
- 2 In what way could Source 4 be used as evidence by a historian investigating the reasons for the bombing of Pearl Harbor?

2.1 Check your learning

- 1 Explain what is meant by the concept of contestability in history.
- 2 Name two key resources that Japan was concerned about accessing during the Great Depression.
- 3 What was the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere?
- 4 Who was Hideki Tojo?
- 5 Which Japanese military action provided a precedent for the attack on Pearl Harbor?

2.2 The attack at Pearl Harbor

Just before eight o'clock in the morning of Sunday, 7 December 1941, Japan launched the first of two waves of attacks on the US naval base. In the first wave, 183 Imperial Japanese Navy aircraft bombed US aircraft parked in their hangars, as well as warships moored at the base. These included the battleship U.S.S. *Arizona*.

The *Arizona* exploded and sank after a bomb hit its gunpowder stores, resulting in the death of more than a thousand of its crew. It was the only ship from the attack that could not be salvaged. Today, a white memorial on the surface above where it sank is one of the most visible markers of the attack (see Source 1).



SOURCE 5 The U.S.S. *Arizona* explodes and sinks after a Japanese air strike hits its gunpowder stores

The second wave of attacks followed 90 minutes later, with the arrival of an additional 170 Japanese planes.

When the attack on Pearl Harbor was over, 18 American warships had been damaged or sunk and 2403 Americans had lost their lives.

There was, however, resistance during the two-hour attack. The US soldiers at the base mounted counter-attacks using anti-aircraft guns, and some US airmen were able to take to the skies, even as their airfield came under direct attack. The Japanese lost 29 aircraft, and 55 Japanese airmen were killed during the attack.



SOURCE 6 The scene from the airfield as the US naval destroyer U.S.S. *Shaw* explodes during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor

News and images of the shocking attack quickly appeared in newspapers and in film bulletins, and it seemed that American naval power in the Pacific had suffered a debilitating blow. However, the situation was not as bad as it first appeared. This was due partly to an element of chance, and partly to what proved to be poor decision making by the commander of the Japanese attack, Admiral Chuichi Nagumo. Nagumo decided against launching a third wave of attacks because he did not know the location of the US aircraft carriers and feared a counter-attack by US carrier-based aircraft. The initial waves of Japanese invaders had also suffered more casualties than they had anticipated, because of the retaliation of the American forces. Nagumo reasoned that the strikes had done enough.

The following day, US President Franklin D. Roosevelt declared war on Japan and, as a result, the United States entered into the Second World War on the side of the Allied Powers. Within six months of the attack on Pearl Harbor, the US Navy had rebuilt its strength. The United States led the resistance to Japan's expansion in two crucial sea battles: the Battle of the Coral Sea and the Battle of Midway (both 1942). America's ability to rapidly repair, rebuild and replace vessels lost at Pearl Harbor would prove to be crucial to the outcome of the Second World War.



SOURCE 7 Smoke rises from burning buildings at Pearl Harbor after the surprise attack by the Japanese.



SOURCE 8 An aerial view of Pearl Harbor, showing the damage inflicted by the bombing

2.2 Understanding and using the sources

- 1 Examine Sources 5, 6, 7 and 8. How could a historian use these sources to analyse whether the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor was successful?
- 2 What conclusions do you draw about the attack's short-term success after examining the sources?

2.2 Check your learning

- 1 Argue for or against the idea that the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor was successful.
- 2 Research the bombing of Pearl Harbor. List the major outcomes of the attack.

THE PEARL HARBOR ADVANCE-KNOWLEDGE CONSPIRACY THEORY

Ever since the attack on Pearl Harbor took place, a persistent conspiracy theory has suggested that President Franklin D. Roosevelt and the US Government were forewarned about the attacks, but did nothing to alert the field commander at Pearl Harbor. The reason for this, according to the theory, is that Roosevelt wanted a reason to bring the United States into the war and end American isolationism. Some go even further, to suggest that entering the Second World War had been the President's political aim all along. Considering that the country's entry into the war was a crucial step on the way to making the United States the superpower it is today, it is perhaps not surprising that this theory has had many supporters over the years.

As historians, it is crucial that we aim to find the source of the theories we study. The origin of the advance-knowledge theory can be traced back to a book published in September 1944 by John T. Flynn called *The Truth about Pearl Harbor*. Flynn was a journalist and a political opponent of Roosevelt. He was also a co-founder of the America First Committee, which wanted to keep the United States out of the Second World War.



SOURCE 9 The attack on Pearl Harbor was used for pro-war propaganda in the years that followed.



SOURCE 10 President Roosevelt, wearing a black armband, signs a declaration of war against Japan at 4.10 p.m. on 8 December 1941, the day after the attack on Pearl Harbor, while Cabinet members watch with mixed emotions.

For an opposing view, historians can look to the 1996 article 'How Roosevelt attacked Japan at Pearl Harbor: Myth masquerading as history' by Robert Butow, Professor of Japanese History at the University of Washington. The article, which is available online through the American National Archives, directly challenges the conspiracy theory, relying on evidence to support its argument. It shows how historians use sources not only to arrive at reasoned interpretations, but also to challenge conspiracy theorists who develop interpretations without the critical analysis used by historians.

2.2 PROFILE TASKS

- 1 What is the main argument of the conspiracy theory regarding President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Pearl Harbor?
- 2 Research John T. Flynn. Does his background provide any evidence that could be used to challenge his theory as being biased? Discuss how his background could influence his work, using the evidence you have researched.
- 3 Read the article 'How Roosevelt attacked Japan at Pearl Harbor: Myth masquerading as history' online, and explain how it uses evidence to reach its conclusions.

2.3 How historians test hypotheses about the past

hypothesis
a proposed
explanation for
an event

Historians develop **hypotheses** as they search for explanations to help understand why events occur. This is called understanding causation. A hypothesis is not necessarily true, but if sufficient evidence is available to support it, it may become accepted. To assess the validity of any hypothesis, historians have to ask a range of historical questions and investigate sources and evidence, in order to see whether they support the hypothesis. This process is the backbone of history as a discipline, and is something you will become increasingly familiar with in your studies.

Developing hypotheses from historical questions

Source 11 shows examples of hypotheses that could be developed from historical questions regarding the attack on Pearl Harbor. These reflect the emergence of new approaches by historians to questioning the causes and consequences of the Japanese attack.

SOURCE 11

QUESTIONS	HYPOTHESES
Why was the attack as successful as it was?	The Americans were unprepared for the attack on Pearl Harbor.
Who was to blame for the Americans being taken by surprise?	The commander of the Japanese fleet, Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto, out-thought the commander of the US fleet, Admiral Husband E. Kimmel.
Was there a conspiracy?	Americans believed President Roosevelt invited the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.
Was the defeat, in fact, as bad as it first appeared?	The bombing of Pearl Harbor devastated the American fleet.
How has the attack been remembered?	Pearl Harbor is the most momentous event in American history.

Using sources to consider the advance-knowledge theory

To assess the validity of any of these hypotheses, it is essential that you conduct a close analysis of sources and evidence. As an example of how historians use primary sources to test hypotheses, consider the question of the advance-knowledge theory. Historians assessing the hypothesis that Roosevelt was inviting a Japanese attack in order to enter into the Second World War can access a collection of interviews held by the US Library of Congress.

Shortly after the attack, the Archive of American Folk Song (now the Archive of Folk Culture, American Folklife Center) asked its fieldworkers to collect 'man on the street' reactions of ordinary Americans to the bombing and the subsequent declaration of war by the United States. A second series of interviews, called 'Dear Mr President', was recorded in January and February 1942. These interviews can be accessed online, giving historians and history students evidence of how ordinary Americans reacted to Pearl Harbor. Reviewing these will enable you to draw conclusions about whether such Americans were blaming President Roosevelt in the aftermath of the attack.



SOURCE 12 A Japanese photograph taken during the attack on Pearl Harbor

Problems associated with the evaluation of sources: authenticity, reliability and usefulness

The fact that historians rely on sources to interpret history does not mean that there is always consensus regarding the role and importance of any individual source. On the contrary, a group of historians could be placed in the same room with access to the same sources, and all could come up with different interpretations. The contested nature of topics such as the reasons behind Japan's decision to attack Pearl Harbor requires students to evaluate sources carefully by asking questions about their context, origin, audience and intention.

No one source will hold a complete answer, and sources are always open to interpretation. When developing your own conclusions, it is important that you understand the contested nature of history, and the need to always support your interpretation with reference to sources and evidence.

Japanese sources and perspectives

In trying to understand Japan's decision to bomb Pearl Harbor, it is important to consider Japanese sources and perspectives. One obvious problem for historians who are unable to read documents and books written in Japanese is the need to employ translators, if there is no English edition available.

In Ikezaki Tadataka's book from 1929, called *Why Fear the United States?*, the author argued that Japan had no reason to fear the United States, and that there was no scenario in which the United States could defeat Japan in a conflict. He particularly stressed the strength of the Japanese Navy as a decisive element. This becomes a valuable source for a historian investigating reasons for Japan's actions, but it would certainly require close evaluation to understand the sources Tadataka was using to build his opinions. A historian would be able to challenge Tadataka's assertions, and it is likely that relying on it as a source would lead to highly contested conclusions.

Censorship of sources

Many Western and Japanese academic historians have been critical about how Japanese high school textbooks during the 1960s and 70s recorded the history of the **Pacific War**. Even today the issue is contested. The most famous example was the censorship imposed by the Japanese Ministry of Education on textbooks written about the Pacific War. The details of the war were either ignored or presented in such a way that they absolved Japan of all guilt. Again, this creates problems for historians relying on those books as sources, and it also raises questions about potential bias or misunderstanding for students who were schooled using those books.

In 1953, Japanese historian Saburo Ienaga's book *The Pacific War 1931–1945: A Critical Perspective of Japan's Role in World War II* went against the trend of downplaying Japan's part in the war. His book became subject to strict censorship by the government's schoolbook authorisation system.

To this day, the Japanese Education Ministry maintains control over what can be included in history textbooks. In 2002 the ministry approved the publishing of the book *New History Textbook*, written by a group of right-wing scholars, which sought to downplay Japanese aggression and imperialism. This book was, however, rejected by over 99 per cent of Japanese schools.

■ **Pacific War**
the theatre of the Second World War, where the Allied Powers resisted the Japanese invasion of countries through the Pacific region and South-East Asia

SOURCE 13

I wrote this book to show the Japanese people the naked realities of the Pacific War. My objective was to stimulate reflection and self-criticism about the war.

Saburo Ienaga, *The Pacific War 1931–1945: A Critical Perspective on Japan's role in World War II*, 1978, p. xi



SOURCE 14 Did Australian Prime Minister William 'Billy' Hughes contribute to the attack on Pearl Harbor through his treatment of Japan at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919?

League of Nations
an international organisation established at the end of the First World War to maintain world peace and prevent the outbreak of future wars by encouraging nations to negotiate with each other

contestation
the process of disputing and debating different interpretations of sources by historians

Further historical perspectives about Pearl Harbor

Another perspective was provided by the American historian John W. Dower in his 1986 book, *War Without Mercy: Race & Power in the Pacific War*. Dower argued that both the Americans and the Japanese had used their sense of racial superiority to inform their ideas about the other power, and that these views helped explain the build-up to the attack on Pearl Harbor. After evaluating his sources, Dower described the Pacific War – including Pearl Harbor – as a 'race war'.

In a 2012 article in *The Australian* newspaper, titled '1930s couldn't happen again – could they?', Australian journalist Max Suich asked a question many historians may not have considered – did Australia contribute to the events that led to Pearl Harbor? Suich suggested that Australian Prime Minister Billy Hughes' very public humiliation of the Japanese Government at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, may have helped sow the seeds that led to Pearl Harbor. Hughes was determined to resist Japan's call for racial equality to be recognised by the emerging **League of Nations**. His success left Japan distrustful of the power of the British Empire in the Asia–Pacific region, and Japan's solution was to develop the concept of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere (see Section 2.1). The fact that few historians have drawn connections between Hughes' actions in Paris and Pearl Harbor doesn't mean those connections do not exist.

2.3 Understanding and using the sources

- 1 Explain how Source 13 outlines the intentions of Saburo Ienaga in writing his book. Does this indicate bias?
- 2 Explain how Ienaga contests and challenges the viewpoint of Ikezaki Tadakata. Discuss how their **contestation** helps you understand the way historical interpretations change across time. Why do you think this particular interpretation has changed?
- 3 Tadakata's book *Why Fear the United States?* was written 12 years before the attack on Pearl Harbor. Discuss to what extent this might affect its validity as a source.

2.3 Check your learning

- 1 Explain how and why historians create hypotheses.
- 2 How could the 'man on the street' interviews collected by the Archive of American Folk Song assist historians to support or challenge the idea that there was a US Government conspiracy surrounding Pearl Harbor?
- 3 Outline the argument Max Suich makes regarding Australia's possible involvement in the attack on Pearl Harbor.
- 4 Explain why Ikezaki Tadataka's writings could be a useful source for historians investigating the bombing of Pearl Harbor.
- 5 Discuss why Saburo Ienaga would be regarded as a controversial figure in Japanese education. Would his views also be contested in the West?
- 6 What interpretation did John W. Dower develop to help explain Pearl Harbor?

2.4 The role of sources and evidence in the evaluation of different theories and remembrances of the past

Any historian is entitled to develop an original interpretation or theory about the past, but they must base their suggestions on sources and evidence. As a history student, it is important to train yourself to look for the sources and evidence that have been used whenever you investigate a historical opinion.

One contested area that could be investigated is the reasons why the attack on Pearl Harbor was so successful in the short term. Examination of Japanese sources might help a historian decide that Japan's planning and preparation was superior to America's. This would, however, be an unlikely conclusion for a historian relying only on American sources.

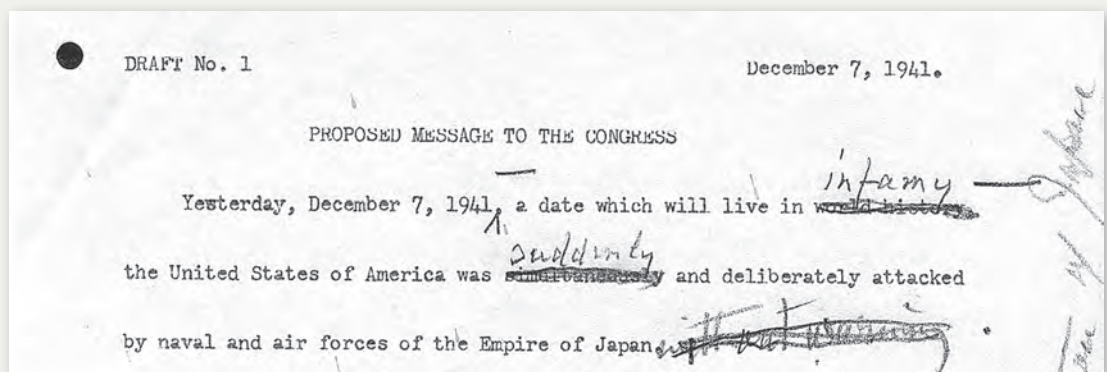
Pearl Harbor and the shaping of the American identity

Examining the draft and final copies of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's speech to the US Congress about Pearl Harbor provides an insight into the way sources can be used to help shape versions of the past. In the typed draft of the speech that had been given to the President, the text read 'December 7, 1941, a date which will live in world history'. Roosevelt took his pen and crossed out the words 'world history' and wrote in 'infamy'.



SOURCE 15 A US postage stamp commemorating the attack on Pearl Harbor, c. 1995

This was the beginning of the creation in the American public memory of the idea and image of Pearl Harbor. For generations of Americans, the legacy, myth-making and iconography associated with Pearl Harbor is similar to how Australians have viewed and represented Gallipoli and Anzac Day. This is not to deny the importance of the event, its historical implications and the tragedy of the loss of life. Nevertheless, Pearl Harbor has been used for propaganda and a range of political and nation-building purposes. Roosevelt and presidents after him have used Pearl Harbor to create a version of the American national identity. The historian's role is to use sources to evaluate this version and arrive at a valid interpretation.



SOURCE 16 An excerpt from the first draft of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's proposed message to the US Congress, with his handwritten corrections

The portrayal of Pearl Harbor in films

There have been two feature-length motion pictures made specifically about the attack on Pearl Harbor. The first, *Tora! Tora! Tora!*, was released in 1970 (in Japanese, 'tora' means 'tiger', which was the code name for the attack). This Japanese-American film, which was co-directed by one American and two Japanese directors, went to great lengths to deal with the details of the attack from both sides. The primary focus of the film was, however, the shortcomings of the US commanders at Pearl Harbor: Admiral Husband E. Kimmel and General Walter Short.

The second film about the attack was the 2001 Hollywood blockbuster *Pearl Harbor*, starring Ben Affleck, which received harsh criticism from survivors of the attack as being grossly inaccurate. One of the main historical inaccuracies is a scene in which the Japanese bombers deliberately target hospitals. In reality, this did not happen. Although a local medical centre was affected by the attack, resulting in one American casualty, there was no deliberate targeting of hospitals or medical centres by Japanese pilots.

When watching films that feature actual historic events, it is sometimes easy to forget that their main function is to entertain, and not to give a scene-by-scene accurate account. But as a student of history, it is important not only to challenge these often simplified versions of history, but also to question the intention behind them. In the case of *Pearl Harbor*, director Michael Bay clearly sets out to **vilify** the Japanese. It is up to you to consider the reasons for this, and what the impacts could be on the audience's understanding of the events.



■ **vilify**
to make abusive
statements about a
person or people,
so that others will
have a lower opinion
of them



SOURCE 17 A film still from the motion picture *Tora! Tora! Tora!* (1970)



SOURCE 18 A promotional image for the motion picture *Pearl Harbor* (2001)

Pearl Harbor memorial

The famous US Pearl Harbor memorial – the World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument – is, like these feature films, an example of how history is constructed. Until 1999, the centrepiece of the site was the glistening white U.S.S. *Arizona* Memorial, above the sunken battleship. This site is the resting place of more than a thousand American servicemen who died in the attack and is an official US war grave site. As such, it is a place treated with appropriate reverence.

In 1999, the *Arizona* was joined at the site by the U.S.S. *Missouri*. The *Missouri* had served with distinction in the Second World War, the Korean War, and Operation Desert Storm in the Persian Gulf. It is arguably most famous for being the location of the formal Japanese surrender that ended the Second World War. The official explanation for bringing the *Missouri* to Pearl Harbor was that the two warships represented the beginning and the end of the war. This is true, but – as is always the case with history – there is more to it. The *Arizona* represented an American defeat; while the *Missouri* reminds visitors of American power and the ultimate American victory.

Even for historians, it is easy to accept the official story of memorials and museums. However, the key to sound historical thinking is a willingness to recognise that there are always contested versions of every historical event.



SOURCE 19 The *Missouri* arrives at Pearl Harbor to join the *Arizona* at the Pearl Harbor memorial site.

2.4 Understanding and using the sources

- 1 Examine Sources 17 and 18. Explain what each seems to imply about the film interpretations of Pearl Harbor.
- 2 Analyse Source 19. Does it provide evidence to support or challenge the assertion that the *Missouri* was placed at the Pearl Harbor memorial site to convey an image of American strength, power and victory? Explain your answer.
- 3 Explain how Source 20 (next page) could be used as evidence of the ongoing significance of Pearl Harbor for Americans.

2.4 Check your learning

- 1 Discuss the significance of President Franklin D. Roosevelt changing 'world history' to 'infamy' in his speech to the US Congress.
 - 2 Research reviews and comments on the films *Tora! Tora! Tora!* (1970) and *Pearl Harbor* (2001). Discuss whether there is anything that would encourage you to rely on either film for historical understanding.
 - 3 Discuss the possible reasons behind the *Missouri* joining the *Arizona* at the Pearl Harbor memorial site. What explanation or explanations do you find most plausible?
-

As President Franklin D. Roosevelt said in his speech to the US Congress, 7 December 1941 is 'a date which will live on in infamy'. There are a range of perspectives and interpretations about what the significance of that date actually is. For some, it represents an unprovoked attack that cost the lives of innocent people; for others, it was a desperate attempt to guarantee a future for their country. Still others will argue it was the event that brought the United States firmly into a position of world leadership.

Historical interpretations are always contestable, and rely on facts, sources and evidence to support them. This chapter has introduced you to some of the views of Pearl Harbor that have been debated in the years since it occurred. You may accept some and reject others. In history, the important thing is to always rely on the evidence to help you come to a valid conclusion.



SOURCE 20 US President Barack Obama visits the U.S.S. *Arizona* Memorial at Pearl Harbor in 2011.



FOR THE TEACHER

Check your obook assess for the following additional resources for this chapter:

Answers

Answers to each *Check your learning*, *Understanding and using the sources* and *Profile task* in this chapter

Teacher notes

Useful notes and advice for teaching this chapter, including syllabus connections and relevant weblinks

Class test

Comprehensive test to review students' skills and knowledge

assess quiz

Interactive auto-correcting multiple-choice quiz to test student comprehension

3

The Construction of Modern Histories: The Holocaust

The extermination camp at Auschwitz, Poland

FOCUS QUESTIONS

- 1 How do historians construct history?
- 2 How does a study of the Holocaust reveal the way history is constructed?
- 3 What happens if sources are ignored when constructing history?

KEY CONCEPTS AND SKILLS

Analysis and use of sources

When historians are faced with a wide range of sources, they are also faced with an important decision: which are the most appropriate resources to use? Selection of sources is a critical element in the construction of history. If sources are ignored because they do not support a certain perspective, the result will be poor and biased history.

Historical interpretation

Once sources have been selected, they have to be interpreted. The meaning of sources is not absolute, and it is not unusual for historians to develop conflicting opinions from a single source. With its strong emotional impact, a history of the Holocaust is open to competing interpretations, often originating in personal connections. This is why it is important for you to always consider 'who is the historian?', as well as 'what are they saying?'

Historical investigation and research

We in the digital age, have wider access to sources than at any previous time in history. A key question to consider, though, is whether this makes it easier or more difficult for historians and history students. Historical investigation and research now require an ability to rapidly sort material to establish what is relevant to your specific inquiry.

Explanation and communication

Communicating about the Holocaust raises ethical issues. These can range from the use of confronting images of human suffering and death, through to the moral dilemmas faced by many participants of this period of history. Presenting any work on the Holocaust requires ethics and empathy, without compromising the integrity of your investigation.

LEARNING GOALS

- > Understand the way history can be constructed.
- > Be able to investigate the construction of Holocaust history.
- > Recognise and analyse the nature of sources historians have used, and how these sources impact upon their construction of history.

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter you will examine the various ways that history is constructed over time. Focusing on the Holocaust, the chapter will show how historians' selection of sources – and their approach to these sources – can affect how history is written and interpreted. The chapter will help you understand not only what historians do when they investigate history, but also the skills that you need to develop to be successful in your own history studies.

What was the Holocaust?

The Holocaust refers to the systematic mass murder of Jewish people and other minorities by Germany's Nazi Government under the command of Adolf Hitler during the Second World War (1939–45). Over the course of the Holocaust, more than half of all European Jews – more than six million people – died in Nazi-occupied territories. The word 'Holocaust' means 'sacrificed by fire' or 'burnt'. Jewish communities use the Hebrew word 'Shoah' instead, meaning 'catastrophe'.



SOURCE 1 Holocaust survivor Leo Bretholz points to his name in a record book of passengers on French trains bound for Nazi extermination camps. Also pictured is his yellow badge, marking him as a Jew.

Source of evidence

Histories of the Holocaust are constructed from a range of sources, including the memories of victims. Many families around the world can draw on personal connections to the Holocaust. In 2016, however, there were fewer than 100 000 Holocaust survivors still alive. As living memories fade, their recorded accounts will become the primary sources that inform historical records.

The Holocaust was not the first time in history that race hatred, fear and prejudice led to race violence and even **genocide**. What made the Holocaust different, aside from the scale of the murders, was the level of planning and organisation by German authorities. Their documents provide telling sources of evidence for historians, such as meticulous records kept of the Holocaust victims transported to Nazi extermination camps by train. Documents show that bureaucrats at the German Rail Authority billed the **Gestapo** for transporting people to the extermination camps – one way at the third-class rate, with discounts for children, and group rates for 400 or more passengers. In this matter-of-fact way, whole communities were sent to their deaths.



SOURCE 2 The entrance to Auschwitz: 'Arbeit macht frei' – 'work sets you free'

■ **genocide**
the deliberate and systematic mass killing of people based on their race, ethnicity, religion or culture

■ **Gestapo**
the secret police of Nazi Germany



SOURCE 3 A deportation train bringing Hungarian Jews to the Auschwitz extermination camp in Poland, c. 1942

Investigating the Holocaust

Although most people agree on the fact that Jews and other minorities were persecuted and murdered by the Nazis during this time, historians have used a variety of different methodologies to reconstruct the events. This, in turn, has led to a wide range of varying arguments about the nature, causes and impact of the Holocaust.

The nature of both the event and the evidence means that investigating the Holocaust can be an emotional experience. Still, the Holocaust needs to be remembered, and it needs to be understood. Remembering and attempting to understand are the first steps to ensuring that nothing like it ever happens again.

3.1 Check your learning

- 1 How would you describe the Holocaust?
- 2 Describe the types of sources available to historians investigating the Holocaust.

3.1 Understanding and using the sources

- 1 How could Sources 1 and 3 be used by historians investigating the history of the Holocaust?

3.2

Different types of histories

It is easy to say that ‘history is history’ – that historians simply select a topic, research information, analyse sources, and write down their findings. However, in practice historians have to consider the *type* of history they will produce, or the *approach* they will use, and this choice will impact on the topics they investigate, the sources they use, and the stories they tell. Instead of thinking of history as ‘history’, it can be useful to think of it as ‘histories’.

There are many different methods of investigating the past, and each one is useful in its own way. Four examples of different types of history are narrative history, biography, social history and cultural history.

Narrative history

chronology
a record of events
in the order they
took place

A narrative history tells the story of events, normally relying on **chronology** to move the narrative forward. National histories often use a narrative approach. For example, a narrative history of Australia might describe the change from Aboriginal nations, to convict settlements, to British colonies, to an independent nation, to a multicultural nation.

Some narrative histories may divert from chronology to focus on broader trends or themes. For example, the narrative history of Australia could include sections such as occupation and use of land, development of political independence, and leisure activities as ways of moving the narrative forward.

Biography

A biography examines history through the lens of the life of a particular person (or sometimes a group). By studying an individual, a historian can give insight into their life and times. One of the challenges for biographers is trying to establish the ideas and motives of the person they are writing about, particularly if they are relying on sources that are removed from that person. Some historians use biographies to examine how an individual influenced their society, while others use biographies to examine how events affected individuals.

Social history

Social history emerged in the 1960s as a reaction to the mainstream focus at the time on ‘history from above’. In other words, history was seen as being too concerned with the great events and the important and powerful individuals – particularly men – who shaped history.

Social history gave a stronger focus to the experiences of the broader population, creating a ‘history from below’. It often used previously overlooked sources, such as censuses, parish records and financial records, to understand the lives of ordinary people who left few other sources behind. By taking a more inclusive approach, it was believed that social history would give a deeper understanding of societies and the way they functioned.

SOURCE 4 A roll call at Buchenwald concentration camp; two prisoners in the foreground are supporting a comrade, as fainting was frequently an excuse for the guards to ‘liquidate’ useless inmates.



Cultural history

Cultural history combines elements of social history, intellectual history (the history of ideas) and anthropology (the study of human societies and cultures and their development) to develop a new way of investigating the past. Cultural historians argue that all forms of human culture – from rock music and films to ceremonies and place names – are ‘texts’ that can be ‘read’ in the same way as written sources. By examining these types of sources, cultural historians have been able to develop a deeper understanding of the past. Cultural history is the most popular type of history practised today.

Multiple approaches to history

Those outlined above are not the only approaches to history. *Intellectual historians* focus on the development and impact of ideas, *economic historians* examine the role of economic factors in history, *transnational historians* examine connections between nations, and *political historians* focus on political interactions within or between societies. Historians are constantly developing new ways of investigating the past, often influenced by other disciplines such as **sociology**, **literary studies**, **cultural studies** and **anthropology**.

There is no ‘right’ approach to history. Any of these approaches can be valuable, depending on what you are researching and the type of information you require. Many historians use different approaches for different topics, or combine multiple approaches in a single study. It is important to recognise that the construction of meaning through the interpretation of sources lies at the heart of history, regardless of the approach.

SOURCE 5

[T]he narrative of *A People's Tragedy* weaves between the private and the public spheres. Wherever possible, I have tried to emphasize the human aspect of its great events by listening to the voices of individual people whose lives become caught up in the storm. Their diaries, letters and other private writings feature prominently in this book. More substantially, the personal histories of several figures have been interwoven through the narrative. Some of these figures are well known ... while others are unknown even to historians ... In following the fortune of these figures, my aim has been to convey the chaos of these years, as it must have been felt by ordinary men and women.

Orlando Figes, *A People's Tragedy: The Russian Revolution 1891–1924*, 1996, Preface

3.2 Check your learning

- 1 Read Source 5 and discuss the approaches to history that are described there.
- 2 Consider the four different approaches to history discussed in this section: narrative, biography, social and cultural. Now for each approach, suggest one event, topic or period in modern history – apart from the Holocaust – that would be suitable for investigation using that approach.

■ **sociology**
the study of the development, structure and functioning of human society

■ **literary studies**
the evaluation and interpretation of literature

■ **cultural studies**
the study of the ways in which culture is constructed and organised, and the ways in which it changes over time

■ **anthropology**
the study of human societies and cultures, and their development



SOURCE 6 Mother and daughter at the Berlin Holocaust Monument

3.3 The historical context of the Holocaust

antisemitic
hostile to or
prejudiced
against Jews

The Holocaust was in many ways a direct consequence of Nazi Party ideology and its race-based thinking. Hitler made his **antisemitic** beliefs a central feature of his book *Mein Kampf* ('My Struggle'), published in 1925. However, hostility towards Jews has its origins as far back as the ancient world and appeared throughout Europe in the Middle Ages.

The Jewish people – especially those in Poland and Eastern Europe – were the prime targets for Nazi violence, but they were not the only victims of the Nazi Party's racial policies. The Nazis also persecuted the Sinti and Romani people (often referred to as 'Gypsies'), who were also seen by the Nazis as racially inferior. An estimated 500 000 Sinti and Romani people were killed during the Holocaust. Other victims included homosexuals, people with physical or intellectual disabilities, and political **dissidents**.

dissidents
people who
challenge
government policies



SOURCE 7 The Hall of Names in the Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum in Jerusalem remembers some of the six million Jews murdered during the Holocaust.



SOURCE 8 This 1935 chart shows racial classifications under the Nuremberg Laws: German, *Mischlinge* (mixed blood) and Jew.

The Nuremberg Laws

In 1935, Hitler's Nazi Government passed the Nuremberg Laws, which restricted the freedom of Jews to marry non-Jews and denied them German citizenship, as well as protection and equal opportunity under the law. Further laws ancillary to the Nuremberg Laws were passed, discriminating against Jewish people. These laws sought to remove all Jews from the government, universities and the army, and limited the number of Jewish students in public schools. Businesses owned by Jews were given to non-Jewish Germans. Meanwhile, government propaganda encouraged hatred of the Jews.

Kristallnacht

On the night of 9–10 November 1938, the persecution of Jewish people intensified with a series of coordinated attacks by Nazi Party members on Jewish synagogues and businesses across Germany. This was known as *Kristallnacht* ('Crystal Night', or 'Night of Broken Glass'). Jewish people were attacked, some were murdered, and at least 1000 synagogues were burnt. Jewish shops and business were wrecked and looted. While all of this took place, the police stood by and did nothing. The attacks were widely reported in the media, both in Germany and overseas; but despite the well-documented instances of murder, arson and robbery against Jews, none of the Nazis responsible were charged. Rather, the police blamed the victims.



SOURCE 9 Pedestrians glance at the broken windows of a Jewish-owned shop in Berlin after the attacks of *Kristallnacht*, November 1938.



SOURCE 10 Furnishings and ritual objects from the synagogue in Mosbach, Germany, are burnt on the town square, 10 November 1938.

Jewish ghettos

What began as an attack on Jewish people in Germany turned into the systematic, calculated mass murder of all of Europe's Jews who came under Nazi rule, as Germany overran much of Europe from 1939. Hitler's vision of the elimination of the Jews from Europe came into sharper focus in 1939 with the invasion of Poland and again in 1941 with the invasion of the Soviet Union. It was in these countries that the most significant populations of European Jews lived.

Soon after the German invasion of Poland in 1939, **ghettos** were set up in Nazi-occupied cities in Poland, Hungary and the Soviet Union. They were bricked off or encircled with barbed wire to stop people from escaping. Over the course of the war, many Jewish people were rounded up and forced to leave their homes and move into ghettos. The conditions inside were extremely brutal, and approximately 800 000 people died in the ghettos from malnutrition, disease and forced labour.

ghetto

a section of a town or city established by the Nazis during the Second World War to confine Jews and other 'undesirables', and isolate them from the wider population

Concentration camps

The Nazi Government used so-called **concentration camps** to contain Jews and other 'undesirables'. The exact number of concentration camps is not known, but it is generally accepted that the number is in the thousands. Even the terms used to describe the camps are open to interpretation, with historians generally breaking the camps into various categories, including prison camps, labour camps and extermination camps.

In labour camps, inmates were compelled to do hard physical labour such as mining and road building under harsh conditions. In many of these labour camps – like Buchenwald and Belsen – inmates were simply worked to death. Many prisoners also fell victim to disease and were killed as soon as they were unable to work.

concentration camp

a camp in which civilians and political prisoners or prisoners of war are detained under extremely harsh conditions

Auschwitz–Birkenau

Extermination camps were sometimes referred to as death camps. One of the largest of these was a complex of camps known as Auschwitz–Birkenau, which was a combined labour and extermination camp in Nazi-occupied Poland. Here, once inmates were considered unsuitable for forced labour, they were gassed and their bodies burnt in crematoria (giant ovens). Gold fillings were taken from the teeth of many of those murdered, and these were melted down and sent to the Reich Treasury, the finance authority of the Nazi Regime.

The statistics from Auschwitz (as the complex is commonly known) are staggering, and help explain why its name has become **synonymous** with the Holocaust. The exact number of victims is still debated, but according to the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, Hitler's state military organisation (the SS) systematically killed at least 960 000 of the 1.1–1.3 million Jews deported to the camp. Other victims included approximately 74 000 Poles, 21 000 Romani people, 15 000 Soviet prisoners of war and at least 10 000 people of various other nationalities. More people died at Auschwitz than at any other Nazi concentration camp and, probably, more than at any other extermination camp in history. Upon liberation in 1945, about 7000 starving prisoners were found alive in the camp.

synonymous

closely associated with or suggestive of something





SOURCE 11 The only known photo of the Birkenau extermination unit at Auschwitz. The photo raises the question of why the camp was not bombed in August 1944, when this picture was taken.



SOURCE 12 German students visiting Auschwitz.

3.3 Check your learning

- 1 Explain how and why historians could approach evidence that they obtain from Holocaust survivors differently from evidence obtained from other sources.
- 2 What were the Nuremberg Laws? What evidence would there be to confirm what they did?
- 3 How could you explain the large discrepancies in the number of camps run by the Nazis?
- 4 What were concentration camps and what evidence is there that they existed?

3.3 Understanding and using the sources

- 1 Find and examine an English translation of the chart shown in Source 8. How would you interpret it? What steps would you take to validate your interpretation?
- 2 Compare Sources 9 and 10. What do they reveal about *Kristallnacht*? Comment on the reliability of both sources. What interpretations can be drawn from them?
- 3 In what sort of historical investigation could you use Source 6 as evidence?
- 4 How important is the caption that accompanies Source 11 for helping you understand what it is showing you? Discuss how a different caption could change your interpretation of the source.
- 5 Examine Source 12. Why would school students be visiting Auschwitz? Discuss what you think Auschwitz represents in history. Does Source 12 support or challenge your view?

3.4 The role of evidence, interpretation and perspective in the construction of historical accounts

An area of historical study like the Holocaust brings with it a range of specific problems for historians looking to construct meanings from the available sources. There is a wide range of material, but much of it is disturbing and can elicit strong emotional responses. There is also the issue of the strong personal agendas of the people involved in creating historical records by telling their sides of the story.

In this section we explore the range of approaches and methodologies that Holocaust scholars have taken to gain an understanding of the Holocaust.

Richard Evans and a question of perspective: where to start

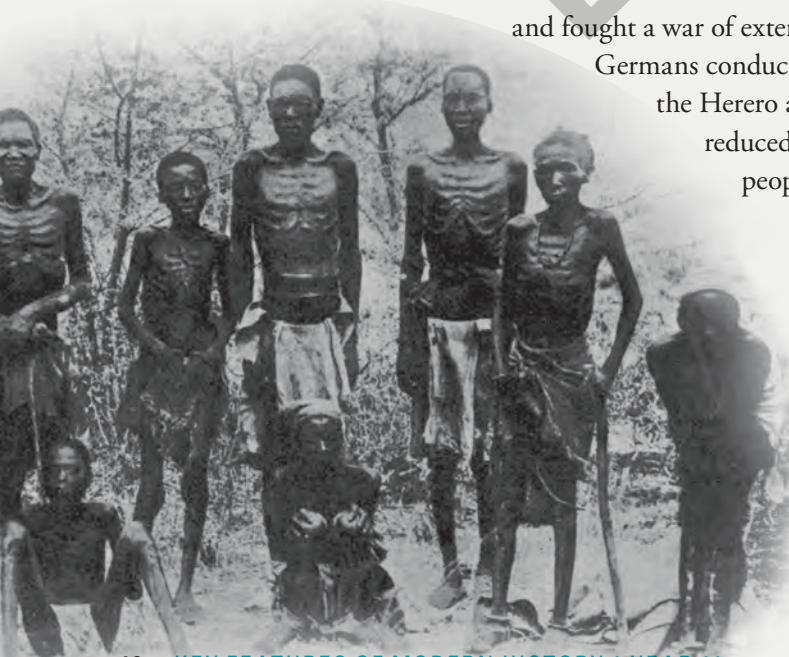
Richard Evans is one of the most respected academic historians writing about twentieth-century Germany and the Nazis. Evans is known to take a long-term view of German history. For example, much of his influential book *The Coming of the Third Reich* examines the nineteenth-century background to the rise of Hitler and the Nazi Party.

Evans adopted a similar approach in his construction of a history of the Holocaust, *The Third Reich at War*. His investigation of the nature and the causes of the Holocaust was not limited to the study of Hitler and Nazi race thinking. Instead, Evans went back to Germany's nineteenth-century and pre-First World War imperial tradition to look for clues.

Like many other European nations at the time, Germany had colonies in Africa in the nineteenth century. Among them was German South West Africa – now the country of Namibia – where the Germans arrived in 1884. When the local tribes resisted the increasing level of land seizures by the colonists, the German Government dispatched 14 000 troops under General Lothar von Trotha. Von Trotha claimed that the natives would only respond to violence and fought a war of extermination against them. Between 1904 and 1907, the Germans conducted a genocidal war against two of the local native tribes, the Herero and the Nama, resulting in the Herero population being reduced from 80 000 to 15 000, and half of the 20 000 Nama people being killed.

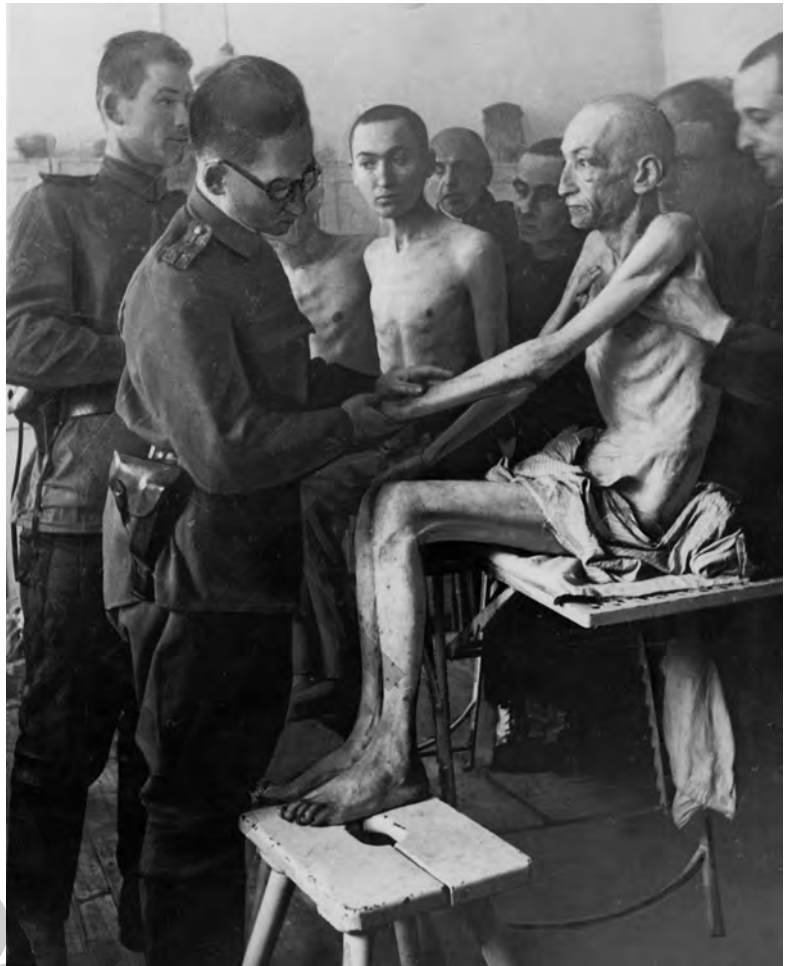
After the tribes' resistance had been crushed, the survivors were moved into special labour camps. The Germans called them 'concentration camps', the first time the Germans had used the term. The worst of these was on Shark Island on the coast of present-day Namibia. The prisoners were put to forced labour on limited rations. Part of their daily routine was to take the bodies of those who had been worked to death to the beach, where the bodies would drift out into shark-infested waters on the tide.

SOURCE 13 A group of starving Hereros, who had been driven into the desert of South West Africa by German forces in 1907



The Germans were not the only colonial power to mistreat native peoples, but they were the only ones to set up concentration camps and conduct them in a way that was designed, according to Evans, to ‘exterminate through labour’, in much the same way that the Nazis were to do some 30 years later.

As a precursor of the medical experiments that saw the Jewish inmates of the Nazi camps used as guinea pigs, the Africans were injected with experimental drugs and dangerously high doses of arsenic in the search of a cure for sleeping sickness (a serious and often fatal insect-borne disease). Death rates among the experiment subjects were exceptionally high.



SOURCE 14 A Soviet doctor examines survivors from Auschwitz after the camp was liberated on 27 January 1945.

SOURCE 15 Skulls of Herero and Nama tribespeople killed by German colonial forces were taken to Germany for medical experiments, in an attempt to demonstrate the racial superiority of Europeans over black Africans. More than 20 skulls, many of them draped with Namibian flags, were returned to Namibia in 2011.

3.4a Understanding and using the sources

- 1 Analyse Sources 13 and 15. Explain how they help you interpret the German occupation of South West Africa.
- 2 Compare and contrast Sources 13 and 14. Outline how they could assist a historian investigating continuity and change in Germany between 1870 and 1945.
- 3 Examine Source 15 and explain how it could be interpreted by:
 - a Namibian historian constructing a history of Namibia
 - b former member of the German occupying colonial force
 - c German doctor working for the Nazis during the Second World War.

Another disturbing precursor of the Holocaust was the introduction in 1905 of so-called 'racial hygiene programs', which banned mixed-race marriages. Unlike other European powers, the German colonial administrators passed laws to ban racial intermarriage across their colonies: in German East Africa in 1906 and in the German Pacific colony of Samoa in 1912.

As part of this process, the Germans introduced the term *Rassenschande*, meaning 'racial defilement'. It was argued that the 'naturally superior' European racial stock would be defiled or weakened by intermarriage with other peoples. This was the first time that the term had appeared in German legal terminology. It did not surface again until 1935, with the passing of the Nuremberg Laws.

In 1913, 20 years before Hitler came to power, a new law was passed in Germany that defined German citizenship on the basis of race and ethnic descent, rather than residence. Evans argued that this kind of 'race thinking' can be traced directly to the principles that Germany developed in its colonies. It was from this time that German nationalists began to speak of and write about Poles and Slavs as being racially inferior peoples. As a result, countries in Eastern Europe were increasingly viewed by German nationalists as being equivalent to Germany's overseas colonies – as places where the people, land and resources could be exploited to serve Germany, in much the same way that the Germans had exploited their overseas colonies.



3.4a Check your learning

- 1 What evidence is there that Richard Evans takes a long-term view of causes when constructing his histories?
- 2 Outline the similarities and differences between Germany's policies and behaviour as a colonial power, and its policies and behaviour in the 1930s.
- 3 Explain how Germany's policies on race were refined by its colonial experience.

Christopher Browning and the narrow interpretation

Christopher Browning, a leading Holocaust scholar, was interested in the question of where to focus an investigation that sought to interpret the reasons people were willing to implement Hitler's '**Final Solution** to the Jewish Problem'.

The implementation of the 'Final Solution' in Poland had proven difficult for the Germans. This was partly because the Jewish population in Poland was widespread and partly because, during the most intense period of mass murder, the German Army was short on manpower due to heavy fighting against the Soviet Union. While the numbers needed to staff extermination camps like Auschwitz were relatively small, rounding up thousands of Jews across the rural areas and small towns of Poland was a different matter. Hence German reservists – older men who had initially been seen as unfit for the German Army – were used for the task. Browning investigated one such unit that served in Poland around 1942–44: Reserve Police Battalion 101.

■ '**Final Solution**'
the Nazi Party's plan
for the extermination
of Jews in Europe



SOURCE 16

Polish Jews are marched to an extermination camp from the Warsaw ghetto – typical of the type of work carried out by Battalion 101.

In building his interpretation, Browning carefully reviewed the testimonies of surviving Battalion members during war crimes trials held between 1962 and 1972. The testimony of these men was important because, as Browning pointed out, the Holocaust was only possible because ‘individual human beings killed other human beings in large numbers over an extended period of time’. Browning wanted to know how these seemingly ordinary men had become ‘professional killers’.

3.4b Understanding and using the sources

- 1 Discuss your personal reaction to Sources 16 and 17. How do you interpret them?
- 2 What steps could you take to establish:
 - a the validity and reliability of Sources 16 and 17 and
 - b the thoughts and motivations of the reservists and soldiers involved?



SOURCE 17 German soldiers lead rural Polish women into the forest to be shot. Browning argues that this type of behaviour became routine.

Browning adopted the critical approach to evidence and sources that is the key to historical thinking. He acknowledged the limitations of the testimony of the old men who were the survivors of Battalion 101, and pointed out that the testimony of Battalion members had to be tested against other sources and the accounts of the surviving victims. Specifically, Browning noted that some of these accounts might be clouded and confused by selective memory. He also recognised that some of the men in the Battalion would be willing to lie or give a version of events that depicted themselves in the best possible light, due to fear of punishment.

Browning noted that his narrow interpretation of the actions of the members of Battalion 101 might be criticised for shifting the focus away from the atrocities of the Holocaust. In defence of his approach, Browning explained that at the time, murderous and criminal behaviour became part of everyday life and mass murder was no longer exceptional. He asserted that his study of Battalion 101 confirmed the degree to which mass murder had become routine. Browning maintains that trying to understand is not the same as excusing or forgiving. According to Browning, the men of Battalion 101 were, for the most part, middle-aged family men from lower-middle-class backgrounds who had been drafted into the reservists.

So why did most men in Battalion 101 become killers? Browning presents a few different theories to explain their behaviours, including:

- > wartime brutalisation
- > ideological indoctrination
- > racism
- > conformity.
- > acceptance of authority and respect for orders

Browning thought that the truth might lie in a combination of all these factors. The men of Battalion 101 seem to have been brutalised 'on the job'. In other words, the first time they killed would have been the most difficult.

Through his focused interpretation and examination of Battalion 101, Browning was able to draw wider conclusions through the critical use of a range of sources. Drawing on evidence from various testimonies, and probing the reasons why people acted the way they did, he shows how historians can sometimes stray into other fields – such as psychology – to assist their construction of history.

3.4b Check your learning

- 1 Why would Browning have to be careful in relying on the testimony of the survivors of Battalion 101 when constructing his history?
 - 2 Do you think Browning's interpretation of his sources helps you understand aspects of the Holocaust more clearly? Support your response with examples from this section.
 - 3 Discuss what you think were the contributing factors that enabled the men of Battalion 101 to become killers.
-



The Nuremberg War Crimes Trials 1945–49: where interpretation and perspective meet

The horrors of the Holocaust increased pressure on the victors to do more than had ever been done before to ensure that those guilty of crimes against humanity and peace were brought to justice. In terms of its scale, the Holocaust had been unlike anything that had gone before. For this very reason, the Holocaust and the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials saw, for the first time, the use of the word ‘genocide’ in a trial.

Nuremberg established and redefined many principles of international law. The Nuremberg Principles – a set of guidelines for determining what constitutes a war crime – included the following:

- > It is not a defence to say ‘I was only following orders’. Everyone is responsible for their own moral decisions.
- > Murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation and other inhumane acts done against any civilian population are crimes against humanity.

An important difference between the end of the Second World War and the end of other wars was that the winners did not just punish their defeated enemies. The Nazi leaders were given public trials and the chance to offer arguments in their own defence.

The Nuremberg War Crimes Trials produced valuable sources for historians to interpret. By hearing the perspective of those accused of war crimes, it ensured that Nazi viewpoints became part of the historical record. This helped historians to consider a range of perspectives when interpreting their sources, and thus helped ensure that history would not just reflect the viewpoint of the winners.



SOURCE 18 The Nuremberg War Crimes Trials, 1946

3.4c Understanding and using the sources

- 1 Analyse Source 18. What does it reveal about the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials? How useful would it be to a historian investigating the conduct of the Second World War?
- 2 Research the career of Hermann Goering. Why was he on trial at Nuremberg? What would be the strengths and weaknesses of his testimony for a historian?

3.4c Check your learning

- 1 Discuss the problems that could be associated with conducting trials such as those in Nuremberg in 1945–49.
 - 2 Create a Venn diagram with two circles – one to contain the strengths and one the weaknesses of a historian relying on the testimonies of those charged at Nuremberg as primary sources. Is there any overlap?
-

3.5 The role of selectivity, emphasis and omission in the construction of historical accounts

Holocaust deniers

people who seek to either deny the Holocaust ever took place, or argue that the numbers killed were wildly exaggerated

All historians have to make choices when they are constructing history. They choose which sources to use, how much emphasis to place on them, and which sources to ignore. Each decision has a significant impact on the history that is being constructed. Bias occurs when historians allow their personal feelings to interfere with the choices they make, rather than allowing their investigation to be objective.



SOURCE 19 The Shoes on the Danube Bank, a Holocaust memorial in Budapest, Hungary

David Irving and the construction of a case for Holocaust denial

The British writer David Irving is perhaps the most famous, or infamous, of the **Holocaust deniers**. He maintains that many of the claims made about the Holocaust are exaggerated or false. In 2006, an Austrian court sentenced Irving to three years in prison after he pleaded guilty to the charge of denying the Holocaust. This followed speeches he gave in Austria where he contested the existence of gas chambers in Auschwitz and claimed that camp victims died from disease rather than execution. He was released after serving 13 months of his sentence, and banned from ever returning to Austria. He now lectures to small, ticketed audiences, and there is still a debate about whether he deserves to be described as a historian, or as a historical writer.

Irving is not a trained academic historian, but has written extensively about the Nazi Regime and the Second World War, and claims to have discovered the 'objective truth' about Nazi Germany. This clearly contrasts with Christopher Browning's more careful approach, in meticulously and critically examining a range of sources and perspectives when constructing his history of Battalion 101. It is also at odds with Richard Evans' approach. Unlike Irving, Browning and Evans both recognise that there are different ways of looking at sources and evidence.

Irving's basic argument is that if an event has not been documented in an archive, then it did not take place. This idea has major implications for historians. In Australia, for example, such a view would mean that Indigenous perspectives could never be considered in constructing histories, because there are no archival records reflecting what is essentially an oral tradition.



SOURCE 20 David Irving under police guard at a trial in Austria in 2006, where he was found guilty of Holocaust denial and sentenced to three years in prison

Irving also interprets historical documents in a different way to trained historians. Most historians agree that documents should be read in context. But for Irving, the absence of an explicit document indicating that Hitler ordered the deliberate murder of millions means that there was no intent on Hitler's part to do so. In proving his point, Irving also leaves out many Nazi-related documents that do not support his preferred view. As an example, Irving disregarded a record from March 1942, where Joseph Goebbels discussed Hitler demanding a 'radical solution' to the Jewish question, even if it meant resorting to the most brutal methods.

3.5 Check your learning

- 1 Outline the arguments for and against regarding David Irving as a historian. What is your conclusion?
- 2 Is Irving entitled to write 'history' if he is selective in his sources, and ignores evidence that contradicts his viewpoint? Does this mean he should be banned from speaking?

HISTORY ON TRIAL

In the 1990s, David Irving's views were challenged by American historian Deborah Lipstadt, who wrote that Irving distorted the truth. He responded by suing her and her publishers, Penguin Books, for libel. Irving said Lipstadt had falsely labelled him a Holocaust denier, which affected his reputation as a historian. The defence argued that Irving had manipulated facts and evidence, and therefore should be labelled a Holocaust denier.

The case has been described as 'putting history on trial', with a court having to decide what constituted 'proper' history. Irving's use of sources was challenged by the defence's team, which included Richard Evans as the lead witness. Evans and two of his graduate students took 18 months to compile a 740-page report on Irving's works. Evans criticised Irving's scholarship and examination of sources, and Irving was



SOURCE 21 The *Irving v Penguin Books and Deborah Lipstadt* case was made into the feature film *Denial* (2016), with Rachel Weisz playing the role of Lipstadt.

unable to undermine his testimony. Several other well-known historians also appeared for the defence, and one of these, the architectural historian Robert Jan van Pelt, exposed Irving's misunderstanding of the architecture of Auschwitz. The trial concluded in 2000 in favour of Penguin and Lipstadt.

3.5 PROFILE TASKS

Research the *Irving v Penguin Books and Deborah Lipstadt* case.

- 1 Discuss the types of evidence Penguin Books and Lipstadt could have used to prove their case.
- 2 Examine some of the arguments made during the case. Explain how they have helped you understand how history is constructed.

It should now be clear that history can be constructed in many different ways. However, while there is no correct way to construct a history, there are clear requirements regarding accuracy, ethical behaviour and critical examination of sources. In this chapter you have examined the approaches of Richard Evans, Christopher Browning, and David Irving to the history of the Holocaust. Their different approaches show why it is more accurate to refer to 'history' as 'histories'.

History is not a static field of study, and its dynamic approach to interpretation and construction in the digital age presents new challenges for historians. As the 'putting history on trial' court case showed, however, the demand for historians to be honest and accurate when dealing with sources ensures that well-constructed histories will be valid.



SOURCE 22 Candles for remembrance.



FOR THE TEACHER

Check your obook assess for the following additional resources for this chapter:

Answers

Answers to each
Check your learning,
Understanding and
using the sources
and *Profile task* in this
chapter

Teacher notes

Useful notes and
advice for teaching
this chapter, including
syllabus connections
and relevant weblinks

Class test

Comprehensive test
to review students'
skills and knowledge

assess quiz

Interactive
auto-correcting
multiple-choice
quiz to test student
comprehension



4

History and Memory: Autobiography

KEY CONCEPTS AND SKILLS

Analysis and use of sources

The use of memory in history introduces historians to a range of new historical sources, such as autobiographies, audiobooks, films and memoirs. These require the same rigorous analysis that is applied to more traditional historical sources.

Historical interpretation

The deeply personal and imperfect nature of memory makes historical interpretation critical if memory is to play any role in history. It becomes essential not only to establish the historical context of the memory, but also to corroborate any memory that is being used as evidence.

Historical investigation and research

Memory considerably expands the range of evidence available when conducting a historical investigation.

Explanation and communication

As you access different types of sources, think about how they can be effectively presented. If, for example, you are accessing the memories of a musician, a slideshow incorporating words, visual sources and music may be effective.

LEARNING GOALS

- > Gain an appreciation of the role of memory in history.
- > Develop the ability to critically analyse and use historical sources that rely on memory.
- > Extend understanding of what constitutes a historical source.
- > Critically examine the way traditional history, including history in schools, is adapting to the range of material available as historical sources.

Could a glowing review of an Ed Sheeran concert influence attendees' memories and lead them to mythologise their own experience?

FOCUS QUESTIONS

- 1 What role does memory play in history?
- 2 How can we analyse national memory in history?
- 3 How is collective memory reflected in history?

4.1

Introduction

■ **collective memory**
the memory of a group of people, passed from one generation to the next

Memory is perhaps our greatest asset as humans. It allows us to link generations and place ourselves in history. Our **collective memory** as a species has allowed humans to dominate the planet. Memory allows us to recall experiences, both trivial and life-changing, and our memories can be particularly vivid when linked to stimuli, such as sound or smell.

We have become increasingly used to accessing peoples' memories through *autobiographies*, where people write the story of their own life. Some may be famous, celebrating a life of achievement; others may simply be recording personal memories for limited distribution to family and friends. Some write everything themselves; others rely on a ghost writer, but all are using memory and creating historical sources. Their usefulness, validity and reliability as sources in historical investigations have to be tested, and this is a major focus of this chapter.

The value and significance of memory in history

In the digital age, students and historians have access to an ever-increasing array of sources based in some way upon memory. They can be valuable as primary sources from participants in an historical event. However, it is crucial that you learn to interrogate these sources with a critical eye, rather than simply accept an account because the person was involved in the event or time.

Consider the words of Robert Forster, the Australian singer and songwriter with the band The Go-Betweens. Source 1 is an extract from his autobiography, *Grant & I*, describing a memory of a day in 1972 when he was home from school sick.

SOURCE 1

I was sitting in the loungeroom chair enjoying the luxury of listening to the radio by day and not a snatched half hour at night, and the dust in the air from my mother's sweeping was creating a glittering storm effect when from the radio came, 'Didn't know what time it was the lights were low oh oh ...'

Robert Forster, *Grant & I: Inside and Outside The Go-Betweens*, 2016, p. 13

The song Forster is referring to is 'Starman' by David Bowie. The moment Forster first heard Bowie was of such significance for him that he was able to recall the light in the room when the song came on the radio. Does the fact that Forster's memory appears to be so precise make this a reliable historical source? Does the fact that he subsequently became a major figure in Australian music colour his memory and attach greater significance to the event? Is memory rendered unreliable because it often operates with **hindsight**?

Many sources you will encounter in your study of history are first-hand accounts based on memory, and these are the types of questions we have to ask when using memory as a historical source.

■ **hindsight**
understanding of a situation or event only after it has happened or developed

Source 2 is an extract from an interview with American singer Linda Ronstadt about her autobiography, *Simple Dreams* (extracted in Source 3). Around this time, Ronstadt had revealed that she was suffering from Parkinson's disease, a condition that can have an effect on memory.

SOURCE 2

I've never written anything. I never wrote a journal or a diary, and I only had one letter that my parents had saved – it was a story about the Doors that I wrote about in the book, chartering a DC-3 and what it was like. Otherwise it was from my memory, which is failing. I had to check with everybody and ask, 'Do you remember it this way?' I had a good copy editor who checked dates and stuff like that. Otherwise I'd have people dying way before they ever had children.

Jeff Tamarkin, interview with Linda Ronstadt, *Best Classic Bands* website, 2013

SOURCE 3

The next day we had a show in Boston. We went to the airport early in the morning to find that a massive snowstorm had grounded all the planes ... so we waited several hours while [manager Herb Cohen] chartered a DC-3 passenger aircraft. But we still didn't have a pilot ... Herb found someone who flew in his spare time ... We were all green faced with motion sickness, and in a propeller plane it took us two and a half hours to get to Boston.

Linda Ronstadt, *Simple Dreams*, 2013, p. 45



SOURCE 4 Linda Ronstadt receiving the 2013 National Medal of Arts from President Barack Obama in the White House

4.1 Check your learning

- 1 Think about the oldest memory you have, as well as your most precious memory.
 - a Talk to someone who can corroborate or challenge these memories. This may be someone you shared the memory with, someone who was an observer, or someone who is linked by time or place.
 - b Analyse the different perceptions of the memories that are revealed by your discussions.
 - c Explain what this tells you about history, and what issues it reveals about relying on memory as a historical source.
- 2 What would you call your autobiography if you wrote it at this stage of life?

4.1 Understanding and using the sources

- 1 Analyse Source 1. Do you believe that Robert Forster's precise recalling of this situation makes his autobiography more or less reliable as a historical source?
- 2 Read Source 2 carefully. Would a historian worry about using Linda Ronstadt's autobiography as an historical source if she only had one letter from the time to refer back to? Is Ronstadt's 'failing memory' made more valid by the techniques she talks about using to verify her memories?
- 3 Source 3 is Ronstadt's account of the 'story about the Doors', based on the letter she refers to in Source 2. Does this make Source 3 a reliable source? Do you feel Ronstadt's memory has been **corroborated** in these two sources?
- 4 Source 4 indicates that Ronstadt has achieved considerable success in her career. Does this have any impact on the value of her autobiography as a historical source?

corroborate
to confirm or
give support to a
statement, theory or
finding

4.2 History and memoir

■ memoir
a historical account
or biography written
from personal
knowledge

Every history student has been told to ‘back up your claims with evidence’ and asked ‘where are your sources?’ Writing about a historical question is different from writing a **memoir**, because of the emphasis by historians to assess the reliability of their sources.

British journalist Ian Jack, in an article in *The Guardian* newspaper (9 February 2003), describes a memoir as wanting ‘to do more than record the past; it wants to re-create it’. He then goes on to ask a key question that needs to be considered if you are using a memoir as a historical source: ‘Who can remember with any exactness how things were with themselves and others 50, or 40 or 10 years ago?’



SOURCE 5 David Bowie: a significant influence on Robert Forster

In Source 1, Robert Forster recreates the moment he first heard David Bowie with precise detail. Jack’s question means that you have to ascertain whether that detail is the result of the significance of the moment etching the detail in Forster’s memory, or whether it is simply serving as a literary flourish. For the historian examining the contribution of Forster and The Go-Betweens to Australian culture, this account may be less important than other known information, such as the significance of Bowie as an influence on Forster. A primary source, such as music charts that show ‘Starman’ entering the Australian charts in November 1972, would also corroborate Forster’s recollections.

Linda Ronstadt’s battles with Parkinson’s disease, and its impact on her memory (which she alludes to in Source 2), illustrate the need for any history relying on memory to be thoroughly checked before it can be regarded as a reliable source. Ronstadt’s awareness of this has ensured that she has already taken steps to help corroborate her own memory, arguably increasing the reliability of her work.

4.2a Check your learning

- 1 How would you explain the difference between history and memoir?
- 2 What role can memoirs and autobiographies play as sources for understanding of a historical event?
- 3 Ian Jack asks the question: ‘Who can remember with any exactness how things were with themselves and others 50, or 40 or 10 years ago?’
 - a As a class, discuss significant historical moments that you have lived through. Develop a list and ask each other what you remember about any of those events.
 - b Discuss the results and decide as a class what you think the answer to Jack’s question is.

The tensions between national memory and different perspectives of the past

Certain events become deeply ingrained in a country's history, culture and sense of national identity, and the national ceremonies that celebrate or commemorate them can be regarded as 'national memoirs'. Anzac Day in Australia is one example. There is widespread acceptance of the date – 25 April – and the ceremonies associated with Anzac Day. This does not mean, however, that national ceremonies are not open to changing historical interpretations.

Consider the emerging debate over the celebration of Australia Day on 26 January. From one historical perspective, this date commemorates the official beginning of British colonisation of Australia and the start of the Australian nation. A competing perspective is that the date recognises the British invasion of the Australian continent, and the illegal seizure of Indigenous Australian lands.

Youth radio network Triple J has led the debate on this potentially divisive issue. Triple J's musical countdown on Australia Day, 'Hottest 100', has become a significant event for many Australians. In 2017, however, the network stated that it would review the timing of the 'Hottest 100', and consult widely. The issue was also brought into greater focus by 'January 26', a song by Indigenous Australian duo A.B. Original that came in at number 16 on the 2016 'Hottest 100' countdown. This song challenges the ongoing acceptance of 26 January as a national day, making the case for change.

SOURCE 7

We have to make ourselves uncomfortable to be able to make everyone else uncomfortable to initiate change, because if we're all comfortable, nothing is going to change.

Adam Briggs of A.B. Original, discussing the need to change the date of Australia Day, 7.30, ABC Radio, 26 January 2017

SOURCE 8

Mr Joyce said he was tired of people 'weeping' about Australia Day. 'Today is a day about celebration,' he said. 'I'm just sick of these people who, every time, they want to make us feel guilty about it ... They don't like Australia Day, they're just miserable ... and I wish they'd crawl under a rock and hide for a little bit.'

Padraig Collins, 'Deputy PM tells Australia Day protesters to "crawl under a rock"', *The Irish Times*, 26 January 2017



SOURCE 6 Young Australians celebrate Australia Day by the beach.



SOURCE 9 Adam Briggs performs with A.B. Original at St Jerome's Laneway Festival, Brisbane, 26 January 2017.

4.2b Check your learning

- 1 Analyse the debate over 26 January in Australian society. Outline the competing perspectives, and also the historical arguments those perspectives represent. Discuss why Australia is even considering changing the date for this national ceremony.
- 2 Analyse the different perspectives of the Australia Day issue presented in Sources 7 and 9. In pairs, write a conversation between Adam Briggs and Deputy Prime Minister Barnaby Joyce where they explain their perspectives to each other, and present it to the class. Which aspects of national memory would Briggs and Joyce be drawing from?
- 3 Create a collage of images that could all be included under the heading 'Australia Day'. Analyse them and discuss what they have in common.

4.2 PROFILE



SOURCE 10 Afghan refugee Najeeba Wazefadost

TESTIMONIES OF REFUGEES

Najeeba Wazefadost arrived in Australia in 2000. Her family escaped from Afghanistan when she was 12, and took the journey by boat from Indonesia to Australia. In 2012, Najeeba was asked to share her story as part of a Refugee Week campaign to have Australians put faces and personalities to refugees.

As Australia's treatment of refugees becomes an increasingly controversial aspect of our history, the testimonies of people like Najeeba will become important source material for historians. The memories of refugees will be essential in any historical investigation if a fair and valid understanding is to be established.

SOURCE 11

It was a horrifying journey to come to Australia by boat, or I should actually call it a piece of wood. We had to sit in the boat for more than a week, just hoping to survive. We risked being drowned in the Pacific Ocean.

We had no clue that we would arrive in Australia and be imprisoned in a place like Curtin detention centre. The first thing we saw was security guards with guns coming towards us. We were coming from a war-torn country where we were really traumatised. I was a child, and being detained in a jail-like environment only added to that trauma.

Najeeba Wazefadost's account, reported on abc.net.au

4.2 PROFILE TASKS

- 1 Explain why the memories of refugees such as Najeeba would 'be essential in any historical investigation if a fair and valid understanding is to be established'.
- 2 Read Source 11. Analyse the impact of Najeeba's memories on your own perception of refugees. Explain why you accept or reject her account as a reliable source of information.

4.3

The contribution of oral history to understanding the past

oral history

the collection and study of historical information using sound recordings of interviews with people who remember past events

Oral history refers to information gathered through the recording of memories. The term ‘oral history’ is used because the information is transmitted by voice. Oral history usually refers to an interview, quite often done with the explicit purpose of gaining access to a person’s memories about a time, place or event. Frequently, oral history is most valuable in the areas of social and cultural history; collecting oral testimonies can often reveal the small details of daily life that larger-scale narratives ignore.

Many autobiographies, particularly those which nominate a co-author, are often based on hours of interviews. In this way, they often preserve valuable memories and act as a written summary of oral history. Autobiographies and interviews can help historians understand the past, and often provide unique perspectives that are overlooked in mainstream historical accounts.

Indigenous Australian oral histories

Although they have probably been part of Australia’s history for at least 60 000 years, Indigenous Australian oral histories have been largely ignored by ‘traditional history’. The emerging acceptance of the role of memory and oral history into mainstream historical studies opens exciting opportunities for a re-evaluation of Indigenous oral histories in Australian **historiography**.

historiography

the study of the construction of history

Gathering oral histories

The process of gathering oral histories needs to comply with strict ethical guidelines that concern a range of issues such as privacy, the right to use material in a public forum, confidentiality, and giving interviewees the right to review, correct and withdraw material. Even in a classroom setting, collecting any oral history has to be conducted under strict ethical protocols.

4.3 Check your learning

- 1 Analyse the value of oral history for a historian. What would be a good example of oral history aiding historical understanding?
- 2 Research the role of oral tradition in Indigenous Australian culture and history. How could a greater understanding and acceptance of this influence Australian history and historiography?
- 3 Design an oral history project that you could conduct. Consider the following:
 - > the area of investigation your oral history interview could contribute to
 - > the person you could conduct the interview with
 - > the ethical considerations necessary to conduct the interview
 - > how you will record the interview and present the information you find
 - > how conducting this project could deepen your historical understanding of your area of investigation.

The Cold War and sources based on memory

Cold War

the state of political conflict and hostility that existed between the Soviet Union and the United States from 1945 to 1990

The increasing availability of oral and autobiographical sources allows historians to broaden the scope of their historical inquiries. The **Cold War**, for example, has traditionally been observed through the prism of political history, but oral and autobiographical histories provide rich source material that allows for deeper and broader perspectives. Consider how the following sources could add depth to the historical understanding of an investigation into the Cold War.

SOURCE 12

In 1969, Czechoslovakia was part of an Eastern European Rock and Roll Festival, endorsed by the Soviets, and the festival's organizers approached the State Department and asked if The Beach Boys would participate. We were supposedly the only rock group in America that was acceptable ... We accepted the invitation, and a representative from the State Department flew into Los Angeles and swore us in as official ambassadors.

Mike Love with James S. Hirsch, *Good Vibrations: My Life as a Beach Boy*, 2016, p. 220

SOURCE 13

[In 1988] I brought my band to East Berlin ... 160 000-plus East Germans showed up. The wall still stood, but the first cracks were definitely appearing in its once impregnable façade. Conditions were not what they had been a decade ago. There in an open field stood the largest single crowd I'd ever seen or played to ... Home-stitched American flags flew in the East German wind.

Bruce Springsteen, *Born To Run*, 2016, p. 352



SOURCE 14 Fans of Bruce Springsteen gather at a concert in East Berlin, 19 July 1988.

4.3 Understanding and using the sources

The following questions refer to Sources 12, 13 and 14.

- 1 Explain how these sources contribute to your understanding of the Cold War. Why might these perspectives be valuable to historians?
- 2 Research the term 'soft power'. How could these sources contribute to an understanding of the role of soft power in the Cold War?
- 3 Explain how the memories of the East Germans shown in Source 14 could be useful and reliable sources for historians investigating the end of Communism in Eastern Europe. What other types of sources would help challenge or corroborate these memories?

4.4

Expressions of collective memory

‘Expressions of collective memory’ refers to the ways the memory of a community may be stored and transmitted. These can range from local histories designed to preserve the memory and heritage of local areas, through to statues commemorating past events or contributions by significant individuals.



SOURCE 15 Part of the Explorer's Monument, Esplanade Reserve, Fremantle, Western Australia

punitive
intended as
punishment

The Explorers' Monument in Fremantle, Western Australia, illustrates how memory can be a highly contested field for historical interpretation and the construction of histories. The monument, which was unveiled in 1913, is a statue of the explorer and politician Maitland Brown, set on a base that is inset with plaques (see Source 15). The top plaque commemorates the deaths of the explorers Frederick Panter, James Harding and William Goldwyer at the hands of Aboriginal Australians near La Grange Bay in the Kimberley region of Western Australia in 1864; and the career of Brown, who led a **punitive** expedition that returned the remains of the three men the following year. The inscription refers to the deaths of the three explorers as murder by ‘treacherous natives’. Brown is described as ‘one of the pioneer pastoralists and premier politicians of this state’. The plaque concludes with ‘Lest We Forget’.

The second plaque was added in 1994 after ongoing challenges to the collective memory displayed in the first plaque. The new plaque comments that ‘the monument describes the events at La Grange from one perspective only: the viewpoint of the white settlers’. It also adds the information that Brown's expedition resulted in ‘the deaths of somewhere around twenty Aboriginal people’. It also concludes with ‘Lest We Forget’ and ‘Mapa Jarriya-Nyalaku’, mirroring the traditional White perspective with an Indigenous manifestation.

SOURCE 16

THIS MONUMENT WAS ERECTED BY C. J. BROCKMAN as a fellow bush wanderer's tribute to the memories of PANTER, HARDING and GOLDWYER, earliest explorers after Grey and Gregory of this Terra Incognita, attacked at night by treacherous natives [they] were murdered at Boola Boola near [La] Grange Bay on the 13th November 1864.

Also as an appreciative token of remembrance of MAITLAND BROWN one of the pioneer pastoralists and premier politicians of this state. Intrepid leader of the government search and punitive party. His remains together with the sad relics of the ill fated three recovered with great risk and danger from lone wilds repose under a public monument in the East Perth Cemetery.

Lest We Forget.

The inscription on the plaque on the top, unveiled in 1913

SOURCE 17

This plaque was erected by people who found the monument before you offensive.

The monument described the events at La Grange from one perspective only; the viewpoint of the white ‘settlers’. No mention is made of the right of Aboriginal people to defend their land or of the history of provocation which led to the explorers' deaths. The ‘punitive party’ mentioned here ended in the deaths of somewhere around twenty aboriginal people. The whites were well-armed and equipped and none of their party was killed or wounded. This plaque is in memory of the Aboriginal people killed at La Grange. It also commemorates all other Aboriginal people who died during the invasion of their country.

Lest We Forget. Mapa Jarriya-Nyalaku.

The inscription on the second plaque, added in 1994



SOURCE 18 An engraving by C. Robinson for *The Illustrated London News*, 7 October 1865: 'Finding the remains of the lost explorers, Harding, Panter, and Goldwyer, near Lagrange Bay, North-West Australia'

4.4a Check your learning

Describe what you understand by the term 'collective memory'. List a range of examples that you feel qualify as collective memory, and explain why you think they do.

4.4 Understanding and using the sources

- 1 Explain how Source 15 could be used as evidence in a discussion about collective memory and what comprises history.
- 2 Identify the perspectives that are presented in Sources 16 and 17.
- 3 Discuss the ways in which Sources 16 and 17 could be used as historical sources. How could a historian verify the information contained in these inscriptions?
- 4 Explain how the inscriptions shown in Sources 16 and 17 help you understand and explain important historical concepts, including:
 - > different perspectives
 - > reliability of sources
 - > continuity and change
 - > significance
 - > interpretation.
- 5 How could Indigenous Australian oral traditions balance the view given in the plaque?

The concert experience – where memory can become myth

Music concerts, sporting events, plays, dances and other forms of cultural interaction are a rich source of personal memories. As most occur in the public space, they are also often reviewed in public areas, such as social media and traditional media. Reviews can be a powerful influence on collective and individual memory. A positive review can lead people to start mythologising their own experience. What becomes critical when using reviews as a historical source is to consider the perspective of the reviewer, and to also research whether they have any **vested interests** in the review.

■ **vested interests**
personal interests
that may influence a
perspective

SOURCE 19 A review of Adele's concert, ANZ Stadium, Sydney, 10 March 2017

When a quite massive show – of construction, technology and staging – that really should have been done from a conventional, face-everyone-all-the-time stage, still feels human-scale (and you could almost say living room-scale) something is being done right somewhere.

And whatever other quibbles there may be, such as *When We Were Young* being preposterous, *Take It All* is a mighty song.

Every man or woman would agree.

Bernard Zuel, 'Adele review: She's all human – every man and woman would agree', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 March 2017

4.4b Check your learning

- 1 Think of a concert or similar cultural experience that you have attended.
 - a Conduct some research to find a review of the event. Does it match your perception of the event? Does it influence the way you remember the event?
 - b Write a review of the event and swap it with a classmate. Can they correctly identify your perspective?
- 2 Does the fact that Bernard Zuel was employed by the *Sydney Morning Herald* to write reviews impact on the reliability of Source 19? Explain your answer.
- 3 To what extent does a historian need to consider the commercial considerations that may have impacted upon the area they are investigating? Discuss areas where you think this may be significant. To what extent do you think your own memory is impacted by commercial activity, such as advertising and promotion?



SOURCE 20 Adele in concert at ANZ Stadium, Sydney, 10 March 2017

This chapter has explored the role that memory plays in the construction and understanding of history, and the challenges this can present for historians. As any student of history knows, societies change, and so do understandings of not only what comprises history, but also what constitutes a valid and reliable historical source. As the world undergoes a digital revolution, historians constantly have to refine their understanding of sources. Historical memory is an important part of that process.

Each generation has collective memory of historical events they have experienced. They also have accounts from the collective memory of the previous generation, of the events that generation lived through. In this way, collective memory is transferred across generations.

Many of these memories have been recorded on film (for documentaries), or in oral histories or autobiographies. The increasing availability of such sources allows historians to broaden the scope of their historical inquiries. The emergence of rock 'n' roll autobiographies and memoirs, for example, has not only shed light on the origins and influence of rock 'n' roll as a major cultural and historical change, but has also allowed for the introduction of new perspectives on significant events such as the Cold War.

Historians will always face the challenge of confronting potential distortions of understanding from faulty memory, as well as deliberate manipulations of historical record. Your challenge as a Modern History student is to recognise not only key facts, but also the sources that allow you to verify what is fact, what is distortion, what is memory, and what can be supported with evidence.



SOURCE 21 The Berlin Wall was a symbol of the Cold War, and its fall in 1989 marked the war's approaching end.



FOR THE TEACHER

Check your obook assess for the following additional resources for this chapter:

Answers

Answers to each *Check your learning*, *Understanding and using the sources* and *Profile task* in this chapter

Teacher notes

Useful notes and advice for teaching this chapter, including syllabus connections and relevant weblinks

Class test

Comprehensive test to review students' skills and knowledge

assess quiz

Interactive auto-correcting multiple-choice quiz to test student comprehension