# History and geography sample scope and sequence––small school Stage 2 and Stage 3

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## Introduction

It is suggested that schools plan for a semester of geography, and a semester of history each year, timetabling an average of 90 minutes per week. This sample small school scope and sequence has been developed as a 4-year cycle, allowing for cross stage settings.

This sample semester based HSIE (history and geography) scope and sequence allows for conceptual teaching and learning across Stage 2 and Stage 3, using historical and geographical concepts. The content and skills for Stage 2 and Stage 3 is taught through a conceptual lens.

History is a disciplined process of inquiry into the past that helps to explain how people, events and forces from the past have shaped our world. An investigation of an historical issue through a range of sources can stimulate curiosity and develop problem-solving, research and critical thinking skills. The aim of the history syllabus is to stimulate students’ interest in and enjoyment of exploring the past, to develop a critical understanding of the past and its impact on the present, to develop the critical skills of historical inquiry and to enable students to participate as active, informed and responsible citizens.

Through the study of geography, students are encouraged to question why the world is the way it is, reflect on their relationships with and responsibilities for the world and propose actions designed to shape a socially just and sustainable future. Geographical inquiry involves students acquiring, processing and communicating geographical information. Through an inquiry approach, students explain patterns, evaluate consequences and contribute to the management of places and environments in an increasingly complex world.

Knowledge and understanding, concepts, skills and tools are interrelated and should be taught in an integrated way to provide meaningful learning experiences for students.

[History K–10 Syllabus](http://syllabus.nesa.nsw.edu.au/hsie/history-k10) © NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales, 2012.

[Geography K-10 Syllabus](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/learning-areas/hsie/geography-k-10) © NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales, 2015.

## ****History – Overview of four-year cycle****

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Syllabus | Year A | Year B | Year C | Year D |
| Outcomes | **HT2-1**  **HT2-2**  **HT2-5**  **HT3-2**  **HT3-5** | **HT2-3**  **HT2-4**  **HT2-5**  **HT3-3**  **HT3-4**  **HT3-5** | **HT2-1**  **HT2-2**  **HT2-5**  **HT3-2**  **HT3-5** | **HT2-3**  **HT2-4**  **HT2-5**  **HT3-3**  **HT3-4**  **HT3-5** |
| Content | Stage 2 –Community and Remembrance  Stage 3 – The Australian Colonies | Stage 2 – First Contacts  Stage 3 – Australia as a Nation | Stage 2 – Community and Remembrance  Stage 3 – The Australian Colonies | Stage 2 – First Contacts  Stage 3 – Australia as a Nation |
| Concepts | * Significance * Perspectives * Empathetic understanding * Contestability (Stage 3) | * Cause and effect * Continuity and change * Perspectives * Empathetic understanding * Contestability (Stage 3) | * Significance * Perspectives * Empathetic understanding * Contestability (Stage 3) | * Cause and effect * Continuity and change * Perspectives * Empathetic understanding * Contestability (Stage 3) |

## ****Geography – Overview of four-year cycle****

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Syllabus | Year A | Year B | Year C | Year D |
| Outcomes | **GE2-1**  **GE2-2**  **GE 2-3**  **GE2-4**  **GE3-1**  **GE3-2**  **GE3-3**  **GE3-4** | **GE2-1**  **GE2-2**  **GE 2-3**  **GE2-4**  **GE3-1**  **GE3-2**  **GE3-4** | **GE2-1**  **GE2-2**  **GE 2-3**  **GE2-4**  **GE3-1**  **GE3-2**  **GE3-3**  **GE3-4** | **GE2-1**  **GE2-2**  **GE 2-3**  **GE2-4**  **GE3-1**  **GE3-2**  **GE3-4** |
| Content | Stage 2 – Places are similar and different.  Stage 3 – Factors that shape places. | Stage 2 – The Earth’s environment.  Stage 3 – A diverse and connected world. | Stage 2 – Places are similar and different.  Stage 3 – Factors that shape places. | Stage 2 – The Earth’s environment.  Stage 3 – A diverse and connected world. |
| Concepts | * Places * Environment * Sustainability * Change | * Scale * Interconnection * Sustainability * Change * Space | * Places * Environment * Sustainability * Change | * Scale * Interconnection * Sustainability * Change * Space |

## History – Year A, semester 1

### Outcomes

**HT2-1** identifies celebrations and commemorations of significance in Australia and the world.

**HT2-2** describes and explains how significant individuals, groups and events contributed to changes in the local community over time.

**HT2-5** applies skills of historical inquiry and communication.

**HT3-1** describes and explains the significance of people, groups, places and events to the development of Australia.

**HT3-2** describes and explains different experiences of people living in Australia over time.

**HT3-5** applies a variety of skills of historical inquiry and communication.

### Concepts

Significance – the importance of significant events and people.

Perspectives – different points of view in the past and present.

Empathetic understanding – how and why people in the past may have lived and behaved differently and how attitudes may differ from today.

Contestability (Stage 3) – historical events or issues may be interpreted differently by historians.

### Content

* Stage 2 – Community and remembrance.
* Stage 3 – The Australian colonies.

The study of Community and remembrance and The Australian colonies will allow students to examine the development of Australia as a nation, significant events and people, political and economic developments that shaped Australia.

### Key inquiry questions

Stage 2 – How has our community changed and how do we remember significant events?

Stage 3 – What were the significant events and who were the significant people that shaped Australian colonies?

### Historical skills

**Comprehension: chronology, terms and concepts:**

* respond, read and write to show understanding of historical matters
* sequence familiar and historical people and events
* use historical terms and concepts.

**Analysis and use of sources:**

* locate relevant information from sources provided
* locate information relevant to inquiry questions in a range of sources
* compare information from a range of sources.

**Perspectives and interpretations:**

* identify different points of view within an historical context, past and present.

**Empathetic understanding:**

* explain how and why people in the past may have lived and behaved differently from today
* explain why the behaviour and attitudes of people from the past may differ from today.

**Research:**

* pose a range of questions about the past
* plan an historical inquiry
* identify and pose questions to inform an historical inquiry
* identify and locate a range of relevant sources to support an historical inquiry.

**Explanation and communication:**

* use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, written) and digital technologies
* develop historical texts, particularly narratives and descriptions, which incorporate source material.

## Geography – Year A, semester 2

### Geography outcomes

**GE2-1** examines features and characteristics of places and environments.

**GE2-2** describes the ways people, places and environments interact.

**GE2-3** examines differing perceptions about the management of places and environments.

**GE2-4** acquires and communicates geographical information using geographical tools for inquiry.

**GE3-1** describes the diverse features and characteristics of places and environments.

**GE3-2** explains interactions and connections between people, places and environments.

**GE3-3** compares and contrasts influences on the management of places and environments.

**GE3-4** acquires, processes and communicates geographical information using geographical tools for inquiry.

### Geographical concepts

Place – characteristics of places and their similarities and differences.

Environment – interconnections between people, places and environments and understand how the environment influences people and people influence the environment.

Sustainability – differing views about environmental sustainability.

Change – changes to environmental and human characteristics of places.

### Geography content

* Stage 2 – Places are similar and different
* Stage 3 – Factors that shape places

The study of **Places are similar and different** and Factors that shape places will allow students to examine natural and human features of Australia and the diverse characteristics of Australia’s neighbouring countries. They will explore the different climates, settlement patterns and demographic characteristics of places and use this information to imagine what it would be like to live in different places. Students explore how the environment influences the human characteristics of places and examine ways people influence the characteristics of places, including the management of spaces.

### Key inquiry questions

Stage 2 – How and why are places similar and different and what would it be like to live in a neighbouring country?

Stage 3 – How do people and environments influence one another?

### Geographical tools

**Maps:**

* large-scale maps, world map, globe, sketch maps, small-scale maps, sketch maps, political maps, topographic maps, flowline maps
* maps to identify location, latitude, direction, distance, map references, spatial distributions and patterns.

**Fieldwork:**

* observing, measuring, collecting and recording data, conducting surveys or interviews
* fieldwork instruments such as measuring devices, maps, photographs, compasses, global positioning systems (GPS).

**Graphs and statistics:**

* tally charts, pictographs, data tables, column graphs, simple statistics
* pictographs, data tables, column graphs, line graphs, climate graphs, multiple graphs on a geographical theme, statistics to find patterns.

**Spatial technologies:**

* virtual maps
* satellite images
* global positioning systems (GPS).

**Visual representations:**

* photographs, illustrations, diagrams, story books, multimedia, web and app tools, aerial photographs, flow diagrams, annotated diagrams.

## History – Year B, semester 1

### History outcomes

**HT2-3** describes people, events and actions related to world exploration and its effects.

**HT2-4** describes and explains how significant individuals, groups and events contributed to changes in the local community over time.

**HT2-5** applies skills of historical inquiry and communication.

**HT3-3** identifies change and continuity and describes the causes and effects of change on Australian society.

**HT3-4** describes and explains the struggles for rights and freedoms in Australia, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

**HT3-5** applies a variety of skills of historical inquiry and communication.

### Historical concepts

Cause and effect – reasons, causes and effects of an historical event or development.

Continuity and change – continuity and change in Australian society due to British colonisation.

Perspectives – different points of view within an historical context.

Empathetic understanding – how and why people in the past may have lived and behaved differently and how attitudes may differ from today.

Contestability (Stage 3) – historical events or issues may be interpreted differently by historians.

### History content

* Stage 2 – First Contacts.
* Stage 3 – Australia as a Nation.

The study of First contacts and Australia as a nation will allow students to examine European exploration and colonisation and the impact on societies and how these experiences contributed to cultural diversity. The study will allow students to explore the factors that led to Federation and experiences of democracy and citizenship over time.

### Key inquiry questions

Stage 2 – Why did the great journeys of exploration occur and what was life like for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples before the arrival of the Europeans?

Stage 3 – Why and how did Australia become a nation and how did society change throughout the twentieth century?

### Historical skills

**Comprehension: chronology, terms and concepts:**

* respond, read and write to show understanding of historical matters
* sequence familiar and historical people and events
* use historical terms and concepts.

**Analysis and use of sources:**

* locate relevant information from sources provided
* locate information relevant to inquiry questions in a range of sources
* compare information from a range of sources.

**Perspectives and interpretations:**

* identify different points of view within an historical context, past and present.

**Empathetic understanding:**

* explain how and why people in the past may have lived and behaved differently from today
* explain why the behaviour and attitudes of people from the past may differ from today.

**Research:**

* pose a range of questions about the past
* plan an historical inquiry
* identify and pose questions to inform an historical inquiry
* identify and locate a range of relevant sources to support an historical inquiry.

**Explanation and communication:**

* use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, written) and digital technologies
* develop historical texts, particularly narratives and descriptions, which incorporate source material.

## Geography – Year B, semester 2

### Outcomes

**GE2-1** examines features and characteristics of places and environments.

**GE2-2** describes the ways people, places and environments interact.

**GE2-3** examines differing perceptions about the management of places and environments.

**GE2-4** acquires and communicates geographical information using geographical tools for inquiry.

**GE3-1** describes the diverse features and characteristics of places and environments.

**GE3-2** explains interactions and connections between people, places and environments.

**GE3-4** acquires, processes and communicates geographical information using geographical tools for inquiry.

### Concepts

Scale – types of settlement and the environmental and human characteristics of places on local, regional and global scales.

Interconnection – interconnections between people, places and environments and the diversity of cultures and peoples around the world.

Sustainability – ways in which people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, use and protect natural resources and the extent of environmental change.

Change – changes to environmental and human characteristics of places.

Space – settlement patterns and how people organise and manage spaces in their local environment.

### Content

* Stage 2 – The Earth’s environment.
* Stage 3 – A diverse and connected world.

The study of The Earth’s environment and A diverse and connected world will allow students to explore the climate, natural vegetation and native animals of places in Australia and Asia. They will examine the importance of vegetation and natural resources to the environment, animals and people and learn about the ways people value environments, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. Students will learn about the diversity of the world’s people, including the Indigenous Peoples of other countries. Students will explore and reflect upon similarities, differences and the importance of intercultural understanding.

### Key inquiry questions

Stage 2 – How does the environment support the lives of people and other living things?

Stage 3 –How does places, people and cultures differ across the world?

### Tools

**Maps:**

* large-scale maps, world map, globe, sketch maps, small-scale maps, sketch maps, political maps, topographic maps, flowline maps
* maps to identify location, latitude, direction, distance, map references, spatial distributions and patterns.

**Fieldwork:**

* observing, measuring, collecting and recording data, conducting surveys or interviews
* fieldwork instruments such as measuring devices, maps, photographs, compasses, global positioning system (GPS).

**Graphs and statistics:**

* tally charts, pictographs, data tables, column graphs, simple statistics
* pictographs, data tables, column graphs, line graphs, climate graphs, multiple graphs on a geographical theme, statistics to find patterns.

**Spatial technologies:**

* virtual maps
* satellite images
* global positioning systems (GPS).

**Visual representations:**

* photographs, illustrations, diagrams, story books, multimedia, web and app tools, aerial photographs, flow diagrams, annotated diagrams.

## History – Year C, semester 1

### Outcomes

**HT2-1** identifies celebrations and commemorations of significance in Australia and the world.

**HT2-2** describes and explains how significant individuals, groups and events contributed to changes in the local community over time.

**HT2-5** applies skills of historical inquiry and communication.

**HT3-1** describes and explains the significance of people, groups, places and events to the development of Australia.

**HT3-2** describes and explains different experiences of people living in Australia over time.

**HT3-5** applies a variety of skills of historical inquiry and communication.

### Concepts

Significance – the importance and meaning of national commemorations and celebrations and the importance of the contributions of individuals and groups to their times.

Perspectives – different points of view in the past and present.

Empathetic understanding – how and why people in the past may have lived and behaved differently and how attitudes may differ from today.

Contestability (Stage 3) – historical events or issues may be interpreted differently by historians.

### Content

* Stage 2 – Community and remembrance.
* Stage 3 – The Australian colonies.

The study of Community and Remembrance and The Australian Colonies will allow students to study identity and diversity and examine significant celebrations, commemorations and contributions by individuals and groups. Students will look at the founding of British colonies and the development of a colony. They will learn what life was like for different groups in the colonial period.

### Key inquiry questions

Stage 2 – How have different groups and individuals contributed to community and what celebrations are significant round the world?

Stage 3 – How did an Australian colony develop and how did colonial settlement change the environment?

### Skills

**Comprehension: chronology, terms and concepts:**

* respond, read and write to show understanding of historical matters
* sequence familiar and historical people and events
* use historical terms and concepts.

**Analysis and use of sources:**

* locate relevant information from sources provided
* locate information relevant to inquiry questions in a range of sources
* compare information from a range of sources.

**Perspectives and interpretations:**

* identify different points of view within an historical context, past and present.

**Empathetic understanding:**

* explain how and why people in the past may have lived and behaved differently from today
* explain why the behaviour and attitudes of people from the past may differ from today.

**Research:**

* pose a range of questions about the past
* plan an historical inquiry
* identify and pose questions to inform an historical inquiry
* identify and locate a range of relevant sources to support an historical inquiry.

**Explanation and communication:**

* use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, written) and digital technologies
* develop historical texts, particularly narratives and descriptions, which incorporate source material.

## Geography – Year C, semester 2

### Outcomes

**GE2-1** examines features and characteristics of places and environments.

**GE2-2** describes the ways people, places and environments interact.

**GE2-3** examines differing perceptions about the management of places and environments.

**GE2-4** acquires and communicates geographical information using geographical tools for inquiry.

**GE3-1** describes the diverse features and characteristics of places and environments.

**GE3-2** explains interactions and connections between people, places and environments.

**GE3-3** compares and contrasts influences on the management of places and environments.

**GE3-4** acquires, processes and communicates geographical information using geographical tools for inquiry.

### Concepts

Place – characteristics of places and their similarities and differences.

Environment – differing perceptions about the management of use environments and the effect of natural disasters.

Sustainability – differing views about environmental sustainability.

Change – changes to environmental and human characteristics of places.

### Content

* Stage 2 – Places are similar and different.
* Stage 3 – Factors that shape places.

The study of Places are similar and different and Factors that shape places will allow students to consider how people’s perceptions of places are the basis for actions to protect places and environments. Students will explore the impact bushfires have on Australian people, places and environments and propose ways people can reduce the impact of bushfires in the future.

### Key inquiry questions

Stage 2 – How do people’s perceptions about places influence their views about the protection of places?

Stage 3 – How do people influence places and how can the impact of bushfires on people and places be reduced?

### Tools

**Maps:**

* large-scale maps, world map, globe, sketch maps, small-scale maps, sketch maps, political maps, topographic maps, flowline maps
* maps to identify location, latitude, direction, distance, map references, spatial distributions and patterns.

**Fieldwork:**

* observing, measuring, collecting and recording data, conducting surveys or interviews
* fieldwork instruments such as measuring devices, maps, photographs, compasses, global positioning system (GPS).

**Graphs and statistics:**

* tally charts, pictographs, data tables, column graphs, simple statistics
* pictographs, data tables, column graphs, line graphs, climate graphs, multiple graphs on a geographical theme, statistics to find patterns.

**Spatial technologies:**

* virtual maps
* satellite images
* global positioning systems (GPS).

**Visual representations –** photographs, illustrations, diagrams, story books, multimedia, web and app tools, aerial photographs, flow diagrams, annotated diagrams.

## ****History – Year D, semester 1****

### History outcomes

**HT2-3** describes people, events and actions related to world exploration and its effects.

**HT2-4** describes and explains how significant individuals, groups and events contributed to changes in the local community over time.

**HT2-5** applies skills of historical inquiry and communication.

**HT3-3** identifies change and continuity and describes the causes and effects of change on Australian society.

**HT3-4** describes and explains the struggles for rights and freedoms in Australia, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

**HT3-5** applies a variety of skills of historical inquiry and communication.

### Concepts

Cause and effect – reasons, causes and effects of an historical event or development.

Continuity and change – continuity and change in Australian society due to colonisation.

Perspectives – different points of view within an historical context.

Empathetic understanding – how and why people in the past may have lived and behaved differently and how attitudes may differ from today.

Contestability (Stage 3) – historical events or issues may be interpreted differently by historians.

### Content

* Stage 2 – First Contacts.
* Stage 3 – Australia as a Nation.

The study of First contacts and Australia as a nation will allow students to study the movements of people, reasons for the voyage of the First Fleet and the nature of contact and the effect of these interactions. Students will learn about the way of life of people who migrated to Australia and their contributions to Australia’s economic and social development.

### Key inquiry questions

Stage 2 – Why did Europeans settle in Australia and what was the nature and consequences of contact between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and early traders, explores and settlers?

Stage 3 – Who and why were the people that came to Australia and what contributions did significant individuals and groups make to the development of Australian society?

### Historical skills

**Comprehension: chronology, terms and concepts:**

* respond, read and write to show understanding of historical matters
* sequence familiar and historical people and events
* use historical terms and concepts.

**Analysis and use of sources:**

* locate relevant information from sources provided
* locate information relevant to inquiry questions in a range of sources
* compare information from a range of sources.

**Perspectives and interpretations –**identify different points of view within an historical context, past and present.

**Empathetic understanding:**

* explain how and why people in the past may have lived and behaved differently from today
* explain why the behaviour and attitudes of people from the past may differ from today.

**Research:**

* pose a range of questions about the past
* plan an historical inquiry
* identify and pose questions to inform an historical inquiry
* identify and locate a range of relevant sources to support an historical inquiry.

**Explanation and communication:**

* use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, written) and digital technologies
* develop historical texts, particularly narratives and descriptions, which incorporate source material.

## ****Geography – Year D, semester 2****

### Outcomes

**GE2-1** examines features and characteristics of places and environments.

**GE2-2** describes the ways people, places and environments interact.

**GE2-3** examines differing perceptions about the management of places and environments.

**GE2-4** acquires and communicates geographical information using geographical tools for inquiry.

**GE3-1** describes the diverse features and characteristics of places and environments.

**GE3-2** explains interactions and connections between people, places and environments.

**GE3-4** acquires, processes and communicates geographical information using geographical tools for inquiry.

### Concepts

Scale – types of settlement and the environmental and human characteristics of places on local, regional and global scales.

Interconnection – interconnections between people, places and environments and the diversity of cultures and peoples around the world.

Sustainability – ways in which people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, use and protect natural resources and the extent of environmental change.

Change – changes to environmental and human characteristics of places.

Space – settlement patterns and how people organise and manage spaces in their local environment.

### Content

* Stage 2 – The Earth’s Environment.
* Stage 3 – A diverse and connected world.

The study of The Earth’s environment and A diverse and connected world will allow students to identify sustainable practices and recognise that there are differing views on how sustainability can be achieved. Students will explore countries of the Asia region and the connections Australia has with other countries across the world.

### Key inquiry questions

**Stage 2 –** How do different views about the environment influence approached to sustainability and how can people use environments more sustainably?

**Stage 3 –** What are Australia’s global connections and how do connections affect perceptions?

### Tools

**Maps:**

* large-scale maps, world map, globe, sketch maps, small-scale maps, sketch maps, political maps, topographic maps, flowline maps
* maps to identify location, latitude, direction, distance, map references, spatial distributions and patterns.

**Fieldwork:**

* observing, measuring, collecting and recording data, conducting surveys or interviews
* fieldwork instruments such as measuring devices, maps, photographs, compasses, global positioning system (GPS).

**Graphs and statistics:**

* tally charts, pictographs, data tables, column graphs, simple statistics
* pictographs, data tables, column graphs, line graphs, climate graphs, multiple graphs on a geographical theme, statistics to find patterns.

**Spatial technologies:**

* virtual maps
* satellite images
* global positioning systems (GPS).

**Visual representations –** photographs, illustrations, diagrams, story books, multimedia, web and app tools, aerial photographs, flow diagrams, annotated diagrams.

## Support for history and geography programming

### Additional history resources

The following resources may assist in teaching and learning for history:

* [History K-6 sample learning sequences](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/key-learning-areas/hsie/HSIE-early-stage-13/history/resources)

* [Environmental and zoo education centres (EZEC)](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-across-the-curriculum/sustainability/environmental-zoo-centres)
* [Endeavour: Eight days in Kamay](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-across-the-curriculum/endeavour---eight-days-in-kamay)
* [State Library of NSW](https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/learning/schools-and-teachers)
* [Parliamentary Education Office](https://peo.gov.au)
* [Australian War Memorial](https://www.awm.gov.au/learn/schools)
* [Australian Museum](https://australian.museum/learn/teachers/)
* [National Museum of Australia](https://www.nma.gov.au/learn)

### Additional geography resources

The following resources may assist in teaching and learning for geography:

* [Geography K-6 sample learning sequences](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/key-learning-areas/hsie/HSIE-early-stage-13/geography/programming)
* [Environmental and zoo education centres (EZEC)](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-across-the-curriculum/sustainability/environmental-zoo-centres)
* [Infrastructure NSW](https://www.infrastructure.nsw.gov.au/)
* [National Geographic](https://www.nationalgeographic.com/)
* [NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS)](https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/resources/schools)
* [NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service](https://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/)
* [Australian Government Bureau of Meteorology (BOM)](http://www.bom.gov.au/)
* [Water NSW](https://www.waternsw.com.au/)

## Sources

Historians get their information from two different kinds of sources: primary and secondary. In history, a source is anything that can be used to investigate the past. Historians base their research on sources that are relevant to their inquiry. They need to analyse them to discover if they hold any evidence that will be relevant to their historical inquiry. The evidence is the information contained in the source and historians can retrieve it by asking relevant questions. Thus, a source is not the same as evidence. A source becomes evidence if it is used to answer a question on the past. It may be evidence for one aspect of history but not for another. Some sources contain useful information but often not all the evidence that is needed in the inquiry.

### Primary sources

Primary sources are interesting to read or interpret as they give us firsthand ‘you are there’ insights into the past. Historians use primary sources as an important tool for developing an understanding and knowledge of an event. Primary sources serve as the evidence a historian uses in developing an interpretation and in building an argument to support that interpretation. It is important to note that primary sources are not inherently superior to secondary sources – they are simply one way to gather information about the past.

Examples of primary sources that we may use are:

* personal sources such as letters, diaries, personal narratives, photographs (after 1850s), paintings, memoirs and oral history
* official sources such as newspapers, government publications and archives, speeches, birth and death certificates, shipping lists, court records, council records, maps, military records such as enlistment papers
* artefacts such as gravestones, buildings, war memorials, foundation plaques, war medals, tools, household implements.

### Secondary sources

Secondary sources are those sources produced after the period or event under investigation. They may include histories written over one hundred years after the event, later newspaper accounts, biographies, documentaries, political commentaries and encyclopaedias.

Secondary sources may provide an overview of an event or issue, different opinions and/ or interpretations of events, access to statistics, photographs, maps and other sources that may provide the latest research and scholarship on a particular historical subject.

To help interpret secondary sources the following questions can help:

* Who wrote it?
* When was it written?
* What sources were used to write it?
* Are these sources reliable?
* What has been omitted?
* Why was it written?
* Who was the intended audience?
* Have any facts been omitted?
* Have emotive phrases or words been used?
* Has the writer got an agenda or underlying motive?

Students can ascertain the usefulness and reliability of secondary sources by considering the following elements:

* critical audience
* access to a range of sources
* able to be corroborated
* benefit of hindsight
* emotional detachment.

## Concepts

### What are historical concepts?

The NSW History K-10 Syllabus describes 6 specific, key [historical concepts](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/learning-areas/hsie/history-k-10/historical-concepts-and-skills): change and continuity, cause and effect, perspectives, empathetic understanding, significance, and contestability (Stage 3). These key historical concepts are developed across a continuum of learning K-10. The continuum of concepts in the history K-10 syllabus supports teachers to differentiate student learning in history, by referring to the description of each concept for higher or lower stages of learning to meet the learning needs of specific students.

### What are geographical concepts?

The NSW Geography K-10 Syllabus describes 7 specific, key [geographical concepts](https://www.educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/learning-areas/hsie/geography-k-10/geographical-concepts/concepts-continuum): place, space, environment, interconnection, scale, sustainability and change. These concepts are integral to the development of geographical understanding. They are ideas that can be applied across the subject to identify a question or guide an investigation. They are the key ideas involved in teaching students to think geographically. The K–10 geographical concepts continuum provides an overview of when each concept is introduced to students and examples of how students’ understanding of concepts may be developed across their stages of learning.