



The Thomas Mills High School & Sixth Form **History** curriculum aims to help pupils develop key historical knowledge, perspectives and skills which will give them a framework for future understanding and enthuse them to continue to explore the subject within and outside of school. At GCSE level pupils study the [OCR - History B \(Schools History Project\) J411](#) course. The course has 5 units which we study over the course of 3 years at KS4 and has 3 exams at the end of year 11. The GCSE has a thematic study (the People's Health, c.1250 to present), a British depth study (The Elizabethans, 1580–1603), the study of a site in its historical context (Framlingham Castle, a period study (The Making of America, 1789–1900) and a world depth study (Living under Nazi Rule, 1933–1945).

There are times throughout the course where we go into more depth on a topic or explore related examples because we feel it gives pupils a broader and richer understanding of History. This benefits them in both achieving their GCSE but also their all-round appreciation of History.

| Year 10 | | | |
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| Term | Topic | Knowledge and Skills | Useful Links |
| 1 | <p>Elizabethans 1580-1603</p> <p>Unit 2 – Elizabeth and Government</p> <p>Unit 3 – Catholics and the nature and extent of their threat</p> <p>Unit 4 – Popular culture (Merry England?)</p> | <p>Knowledge: At the start of this academic year, pupils continue their investigation into the topic of 'The Elizabethans'. This term, they will study three key units that explore life during the later years of Elizabeth I's reign. The focus will be on the various threats faced by the Queen and the culture of the time—ranging from internal political tensions within the government to external pressures from Catholics and Puritans.</p> <p>Skills: Pupils continue to develop their ability to apply knowledge critically when answering questions. As an interpretation-focused topic, this unit also strengthens their skills in source analysis. Pupils learn to apply</p> | <p>BBC bitesize – Elizabethans – The Elizabethan era, 1558-1603 - The Elizabethans overview - OCR B - GCSE History Revision - OCR B - BBC Bitesize</p> <p>GCSE History podcasts - Elizabeth I - BBC Bitesize</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Additional Resources</u></p> <p>Textbook <i>OCR GCSE History SHP: The Elizabethans, 1580-1603</i> by Michael Riley</p> <p>Books</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Time Traveller's Guide to Elizabethan England by Ian Mortimer |



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| | | contextual knowledge to better understand historical interpretations and to evaluate how provenance influences the content and reliability of sources. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u><i>A Traveller in Time</i></u> by Alison Uttley • <u><i>Cue for Treason</i></u> by Geoffrey Trease |
| Assessments | | <p>Pupils will regularly practise answering exam-style questions throughout the term. In the <i>Elizabethans</i> topic, there are four key types of questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3-mark source questions • 5-mark source questions • 12-mark source questions • 20-mark knowledge-based essay questions <p>For each question type, pupils will receive clear guidance on how to structure their responses, along with model paragraphs to support their understanding. Below are examples of the types of questions pupils are most likely to encounter.</p> <p>Assessed Task 1: Interpretations B and C both focus on the power of Elizabeth I. How far do they differ and what might explain any differences? [12 marks]</p> <p>Assessed Task 2: Mary Queen of Scots source questions [8 marks]</p> <p>Assessed Task 3: In his 2012 book <i>The Watchers</i>, the historian Stephen Alford argued that 'Elizabeth and her government over-reacted to the supposed "Catholic threat".' How far do you agree with this view? [20 marks]</p> <p>Assessed Task 4: Witchcraft source question [12 marks]</p> <p>Assessed Task 5: According to the book <i>Travel: London, Elizabethan theatres</i> 'had the support of everyone from the Queen to the peasants.' How far do you agree with this view of people's attitudes towards theatres between 1580 and 1603? [20 marks]</p> | |
| 2 | <p>Elizabethans 1580-1603</p> <p>Unit 5 – The wider world</p> | <p>Knowledge:</p> <p>This term, pupils will complete their study of the 'Elizabethans' by examining the motivations, achievements, and impact of Elizabethan explorers. They will then begin their fourth topic, '<i>The Making of America</i>', which explores how and why American territory expanded. The unit investigates the</p> | <p>BBC bitesize – Elizabethans – The Elizabethan era, 1558-1603 - The Elizabethans overview - OCR B - GCSE History Revision - OCR B - BBC Bitesize</p> <p>GCSE History podcasts - Elizabeth I - BBC Bitesize</p> |



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| | <p>The Making of America, 1789–1900</p> <p>Unit 1 – America's expansion 1789–1838</p> | <p>complex relationships between this expansion and the experiences of Indigenous Americans, African Americans, and white Americans.</p> <p>Skills: With the conclusion of the 'Elizabethans' topic, pupils will temporarily step away from interpretation analysis. The focus will now shift back to the acquisition, processing, and application of substantive knowledge as they begin their new unit, 'The Making of America'.</p> | <p>Timelines Tv Video clips – American West – SEVEN JOURNEYS IN THE AMERICAN WEST - YouTube</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Additional Resources</u></p> <p>Textbook <u>OCR GCSE History SHP: The People's Health c.1250 to present</u> by Jamie Byrom & Michael Riley</p> <p><u>OCR GCSE History SHP: The Making of America 1789-1900</u> by Alex Ford</p> <p>Books</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>The Pioneers</u> by David McCullough |
| <p>Assessments</p> | <p>Throughout the term, pupils will regularly practise answering exam-style questions for both topics being studied. There will also be an end of topic exam on the 'Elizabethans' topic.</p> <p>Assessed Task 1: Francis Drake source questions. [8 marks] Assessed Task 2: Interpretations B and C both focus on England's attempt to establish a colony on Roanoke Island in 1585. How far do they differ and what might explain any differences? [12 marks] Assessed Task 3: End of topic exam - Elizabethans, 1580-1603 exam paper [40 marks total] Assessed Task 4: Write a clear and organized summary of how the US forced the Indian removal from the East between 1830 and 1838. [9 marks]</p> <p>In addition to this ongoing practice, they will sit a Year 10 internal preparatory exam. This will be a 1 hour and 45-minute paper, divided into two sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section A will assess the entire <i>Elizabethans</i> course. • Section B will focus on content covered in Unit 1 of the Making of America topic. <p>Year 10 Internal Preparatory exam: 'Elizabethans' and 'Making of America' topics. [80 marks]</p> | | |



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| <p>3</p> | <p>The Making of America, 1789–1900</p> <p>Unit 2 – The West 1839–1860</p> <p>Unit 3 – Civil War and Reconstruction 1861-1877</p> <p>Unit 4 – Settlement and conflict on the Plains 1861–1877</p> | <p>Knowledge: In the final term of Year 10, pupils will focus exclusively on the study of 'The Making of America'. They will begin by exploring the experiences of various groups who moved west, examining the challenges they faced and the strategies they used to overcome them. Next, pupils will study the impact of the Civil War and Reconstruction on Black Americans. Finally, they will investigate how the settlement of the Great Plains led to growing conflict with Native American communities.</p> <p>Skills: The focus in this final term is on the acquisition, processing, and application of substantive knowledge as pupils continue their study of 'The Making of America'. In addition to building their understanding of key events and developments, pupils will begin to draw comparisons between the different groups studied, analysing how their lives and experiences changed across different time periods.</p> | <p>Timelines Tv Video clips – Making of America – SEVEN JOURNEYS IN THE AMERICAN WEST - YouTube</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Additional Resources</u></p> <p>Textbook</p> <p><u>OCR GCSE History SHP: The Making of America 1789-1900</u> by Alex Ford</p> <p>Books</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Empire of the Summer Moon</u> by S.C. Gwynne • <u>Walk on Earth a Stranger</u> by Rae Carson |
| <p>Assessment</p> | | <p>Throughout the term, pupils will regularly practise answering exam-style questions. The three main types of question have the same structure as the questions from the 'People's Health' topic studied in Year 9. These consist of: 9-mark questions, 10-mark questions and 18-mark questions. Below are examples of the questions most likely to be chosen:</p> <p>Assessed Task 1: What were the difficulties faced by early migrants on their journeys to Oregon and California in the 1840s and 1850s? Support your answer with examples. [10 marks]</p> <p>Assessed Task 2: How far do you agree that the lives of African Americans changed little during the Civil War 1861-1865? Give reasons for your answer. [18 marks]</p> | |



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| | <p>Assessed Task 3: "The period of Reconstruction from 1863 to 1877 was a time of progress for former slaves in America's southern states". How far do you agree with this statement? Give reasons for your answer. [18 marks]</p> <p>Assessed Task 4: Why did the building of the railroads have such a big impact on the Plains? Explain your answer with examples. [10 marks]</p> |
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