



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 9			
Term	Topic	Knowledge and Skills	Useful Links
1	People's Health c.1250 to present Unit 1 –Medieval Britain c.1250–c.1500 Unit 2 - Early Modern Britain c.1500–c.1750 Unit 3 - Industrial Britain, c.1750–c.1900	Knowledge: We begin Key Stage 4 with the thematic study 'People's Health'. This term, pupils will examine public health across three distinct historical periods, focusing on the actions of authorities, living conditions, and the impact of epidemics. Alongside this, students will explore the development of surgery over time - an engaging extension topic that, while not part of the GCSE specification, enriches their broader understanding of medical history. Skills: This term, the primary focus is on deepening pupils' substantive knowledge of 'people's health over time' and developing their ability to apply this understanding	BBC bitesize – People's Health – The people's health, c.1250 to the present day - GCSE History - BBC Bitesize <u>Additional Resources</u> Textbook <i>OCR GCSE History SHP: The People's Health c.1250 to present</i> by Jamie Byrom & Michael Riley Books • <i>The Time Traveller's Guide to Medieval England</i> by Ian Mortimer • <i>Murderous Contagion: A Human History of Disease</i> by Mary Dobson



		effectively. Students will also enhance their skills in explaining and analysing historical information through key concepts, enabling them to draw well-supported inferences and make reasoned judgements. Additionally, we will revisit elements of disciplinary knowledge introduced in Year 7, particularly the challenges historians face when studying events from the medieval and early modern periods.	
Assessments		Pupils will regularly answer exam style questions. There are three main types of question in the People's Health topic: 9-mark questions, 10-mark questions and 18-mark questions. For each type of question, pupils will receive guidance on how to answer them and example paragraphs. Below are examples of the questions most likely to be chosen: Assessed Task 1: Write a clear and organised summary of people's living conditions in the later Middle Ages. Support your summary with detailed examples. [9 marks] Assessed Task 2: Why did people's attempts to stop the spread of plague have limited impact? Support your answers with examples. [10 marks] Assessed Task 3: How far do you agree that government responses to plague were more effective in the period 1500-1750 than 1250-1500? [18 marks] Assessed Task 4: How far do you agree that living conditions in towns during the Early Modern period (1500-1750) were no better than during the Middle Ages? Give reasons for your answer. [18] Assessed Task 5: Why were the authorities slow in reforming public health in Industrial Britain? Explain your answer. [10 marks]	
2	People's Health c.1250 to present Unit 4 – Britain since c. 1900	Knowledge: In this first half-term pupils finish studying 'people's health' topic.	BBC bitesize – People's Health – The people's health, c.1250 to the present day - GCSE History - BBC Bitesize



	History Around Us Unit 1 – Bigod ownership	In the second half of the term, pupils begin their next topic: 'History Around Us', which focuses on the study of a local historical site. We have chosen Framlingham Castle due to its close proximity to the school and the pupils' existing familiarity with it. This term, our investigation centres on the castle during the period of Bigod ownership, exploring its role in the medieval era as a defensive stronghold. Skills: Throughout the term, pupils continue to build their substantive knowledge across both topics. In the 'History Around Us' unit, there is a strong emphasis on revisiting and applying recurring knowledge. Pupils also develop their disciplinary understanding by exploring how historians use physical sites (such as Framlingham Castle) to generate historical questions and form evidence-based judgements.	English Heritage – Framlingham Castle – History of Framlingham Castle English Heritage <u>Additional Resources</u> Textbook <u>OCR GCSE History SHP: The People's Health c.1250 to present</u> by Jamie Byrom & Michael Riley Books • <u>The Time Traveller's Guide to Restoration Britain</u> by Ian Mortimer
Assessments		In addition to answering an exam-style question on the final unit of the 'People's Health' topic, pupils will sit a full end-of-topic exam paper to assess their overall understanding. While there are no formal assessments during the study of the 'History Around Us' topic this term, regular homework tasks will continue to be set to reinforce learning and support skill development. Assessed Task 1: The creation of the NHS was the most significant improvement in public health in the twentieth century.' How far do you agree? Give reasons for your answer. [18 marks] Assessed Task 2: End of topic exam – People's Health c.1250 to present exam paper. [40 marks total]	



3	History Around Us Unit 2 – Howard ownership / Early Modern Unit 3 – Hitcham and Poorhouse / Early Modern Elizabethans 1580-1603 Unit 1 – Daily Lives	Knowledge: In the final term of Year 9, pupils will complete their study of the 'History Around Us' topic. This term focuses on Framlingham Castle during two later phases of its history: first, under the ownership of the Howard family, when it was transformed into a grand residence; and second, during its use as a Poorhouse. These contrasting uses of the site help pupils understand how historical buildings can evolve over time and reflect broader social changes. In the final half-term, pupils will begin the third topic of the GCSE course: 'The Elizabethans'. The initial focus will be on 'daily lives', where pupils explore the differences between social classes during the Elizabethan era and examine the growing issue of poverty. Skills: Pupils continue to strengthen their ability to apply knowledge, with a particular emphasis on disciplinary understanding in the 'History Around Us' topic. They explore how historians use physical evidence to construct historical enquiries and interpretations. As they begin the 'Elizabethans' topic, pupils are introduced to interpretation analysis, further developing their disciplinary knowledge by examining how and why historians form different perspectives on the past.	English Heritage – Framlingham Castle – History of Framlingham Castle English Heritage BBC bitesize – Elizabethans – The Elizabethan era, 1558-1603 - The Elizabethans overview - OCR B - GCSE History Revision - OCR B - BBC Bitesize <u>Additional Resources</u> Textbook <u>OCR GCSE History SHP: The Elizabethans, 1580-1603</u> by Michael Riley Books • <u><i>The Time Traveller's Guide to Elizabethan England</i></u> by Ian Mortimer • <u><i>A Traveller in Time</i></u> by Alison Uttley • <u><i>Cue for Treason</i></u> by Geoffrey Trease
Assessment	Pupils will be introduced to how to approach 20-mark questions in the 'History Around Us' topic. One of these questions will be set as a homework task, and pupils will also complete an end-of-topic assessment to consolidate their learning.		



In the second half of the term, pupils will begin answering exam-style questions from the 'Elizabethans' topic. This term, the focus will be on developing their skills in tackling interpretation questions, specifically 3-mark and 5-mark responses. Below are examples of the types of questions pupils are likely to encounter.

Assessed Task 1: Choose one period in your site's history. How far do the physical remains at your site reveal the attitudes and values of people at that time? (20 marks)

Assessed Task 2: End of topic exam – History Around Us exam paper. [40 marks total]

Assessed Task 3: Wealth of the gentry source questions [3 and 5 marks]

Assessed Task 4: Vagrancy in Elizabethan England source questions [3 and 5 marks]