



A-Level History Summer Project

It is fantastic news that you have decided to study history at Meadowhead Sixth Form, we are very much looking forward to seeing you in September and working in partnership to help you gain a valuable A-Level. We wish to extend a huge thank you to all our current students who have completed the transition work already set on South Africa and the USA, some of the work returned shows us how ready you are to make the leap from GCSE to A-Level study. We would also like to send a warm welcome to any new students joining our sixth form from other schools.

To quench your historical thirst over the summer break we are encouraging you to take part in an independent research project that demonstrates your enthusiasm and passion for this subject. In the words of Maya Angelou *“The more you know of your history, the more liberated you are.”*

We are sure you will have many questions about this and hopefully they are answered below.

Question	Answer
What can my research project be about?	The beauty of this project is you can select any time period, event or person in human history that you are interested in or wish to find out more about.
How can I possibly decide what to research?	If like so many of us, you suffer from being chronically indecisive fear not. Choose an area of history you already know about and explore a new part of it. For example, you have all studied Medicine Through Time and Hippocrates, but did you know about the important role medicine played in Ancient Greece and how it links to the Greek God Asclepius?
How should I present my research when it is completed?	However you wish, although we do have some recommendations of what to avoid. Nobody likes scrolling through 30 PowerPoint slides (have some compassion for your teacher), who has ever been excited when handed an A4 page of dense text (nobody we want to know).
I am still worried about how to present it; your last answer was no help!	You could make an A2 research poster or infographic, perhaps a video and upload it to YouTube, or be even more creative in your approach. We are looking for independent thinkers who are self-motivated, show us what you are capable of.

Your next steps

The key thing is to decide upon the time period, event or person to research. The best projects always focus around an enquiry question, this allows you to look at different historian's interpretations and also put your view across. For example, my final dissertation at University was titled *“How far should we consider General George Brinton McClellan the ‘Young Napoleon’ or ‘Lincoln’s problem child’?”* (Please don't research this for your project, after much investigation on my part the answer was actually quite dull).

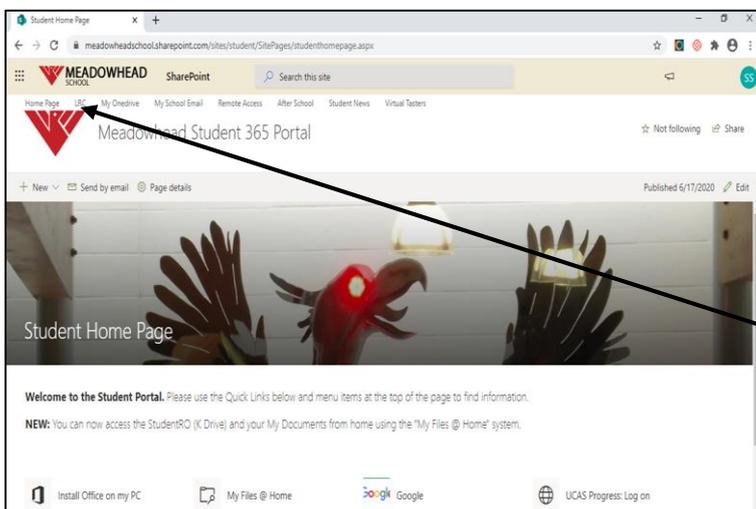
Use the formula below to help you create an enquiry question.

- Why was _____ significant in the history of _____?
- How accurate is it to say that _____ was a significant historical moment?
- How far should we consider _____ to be an important historical figure?
- How important was _____ as a cause of _____?
- How far did _____ impact (country)?

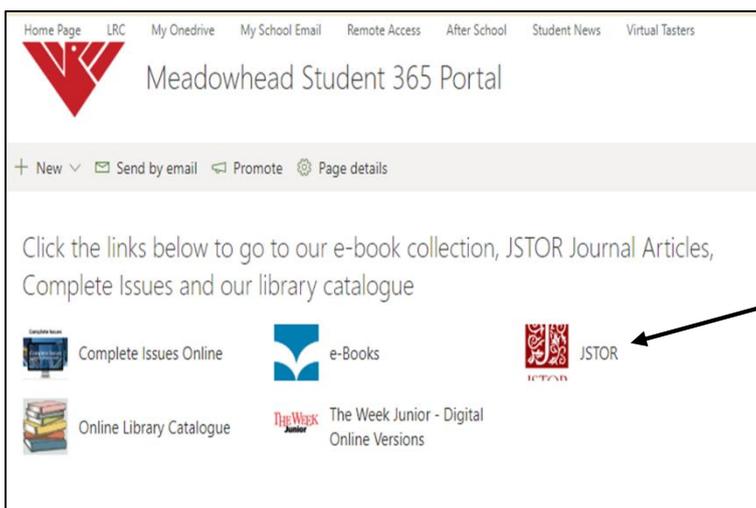
Historical research involves studying, understanding and interpreting past events, it entails more than simply compiling and presenting factual information; it also requires interpretation of the information and a consideration of its significance.

Don't worry though, we aren't expecting you to run down to London to the National Archives to find ancient documents, we would like you to explore a range of sources though. Obviously the internet is a fantastic source of information, be mindful and question everything you read though, is the information from a verifiable source?

In Sixth form we encourage students to use JSTOR, this is a brilliant online library of primary sources, book reviews, historical journals and articles. You can access it through the school website as seen below.



Click on the LRC tab after logging into the Student Portal on the Meadowhead website



Click on the JSTOR icon and you're sorted.

Success Criteria

- | |
|--|
| Explain what happened (if researching an event) |
| Explain who they were (if researching a person) |
| Explain some background to the period (if researching a wider period of history) |
| Consider the views of two different historians |
| Explain the significance of the event, person or time period researched |
| Use clear evidence to back up your explanations |
| Present your research in an accessible format for somebody new to the topic |
| Reach a conclusion that states your own view on the question |
| Use at least two articles as well as websites for collecting your evidence |

On the next page you will find what is called the Cornell Note Template. This is a really handy method of taking efficient notes when researching. Conveniently it is also the method we recommend when taking notes in lesson so you will be able to get some practice in before September.

Name

Date

Topic

Subject

Main Ideas/Key Words/Topic Headings

Specific Notes e.g. evidence, explanation, historian's views

Key points to take away from research

Skills we value as a department

- ✓ **Focused and motivated** – can you select a topic and conduct research into it independently?
- ✓ **Open minded to new interpretations** – can you identify what different historians say or think about your research focus?
- ✓ **Clear presentation of information** – can you take your research and present it in a format that would be useful to somebody new to the topic?
- ✓ **Effort and dedication** – can you show us you understand the benefits of careful thought and planning.

Holiday work: this is outrageous

As a department we completely understand how precious holidays are and you have all worked so hard in what has been a difficult year. The purpose of this project is to build some of the essential skills you will need to be successful when studying A-Level History as well as demonstrating to your teachers your commitment to History as a subject.

Most importantly we want you to have fun researching your chosen topic and creating a piece of work you are proud of. We are excited to see you in September and hope you have a brilliant summer break.

Don't hesitate to contact Mr Sampson (KS5 History curriculum leader) if you have any further questions about the project. For current students most efficient method would be the messenger function on Class Charts, for new student's please email sampsons@meadowhead.sheffield.sch.uk

Enjoy!