



# **The Heritage Family History School Records Project**

## **Introduction**

The Schools History Project has been written to increase children's awareness and appreciation of their own environment and community and how that community has changed over time.

The project looks at the history of their environment while teaching them to access records both past and present in differing formats from IT and the internet to older paper and photographic records. It aims to develop an appreciation of oral history and to encourage an awareness of both the people who have gone before them and the buildings around them and how they have changed with time and why.

The project is suited to key stage 2 meeting the curriculum objectives and bringing to life QCA History Units 18 (What Was it Like to Live Here in the Past) and 13, (How Has Life in Britain changed). It satisfies the National Curriculum Geography units in terms of record collection and analysis and use of maps at different scales and of Art in terms of "Sense of Place" objectives (Unit 6c). It also uses the general requirements of ICT and language learning. The project can be taught as a discreet

history project, or it can be part of your creative curriculum, as there are cross curriculum links with geography and science, Religious Education and ICT.

The project includes the following:

### **Six-Week suggested timetable**

This timetable can be followed closely or be adapted to your requirements. It is designed to be used with the Information sheets and you can also use it with the Sample Family and for class sessions that can be adapted to your needs.

### **Information Sheets:**

1. Schools and Education
2. Maps, Photographs and Directories
3. Census Records
4. How To Research Your School
5. The Poor and the Workhouse
6. The Victorian at Work
7. Transport in Victorian Times
8. Victorian Britain – a brief overview

### **Resources List**

Includes websites and further reading matter and is especially relevant to the sessions on census records and maps.

### **Sample Family – the Ames Family of Stanford, Kent.**

This provides a family tree and census returns for the Ames family as well as an old map of the local area that can be used to save time.

## Six-week timetable for Schools' History Project

Key:

**Teacher's prep is in brown**

Class activity is in blue

Home activity is in green

Although it is nominally based around the history of your school and its locality, the project is also designed to specifically link in with two areas of the National Curriculum, namely *Victorian Britain* and *Local History Study*.

The project also touches on many of the NC requirements of ICT, Art and Design and Geography.

As the teacher, it is up to you to decide whether you wish to follow the suggested timetable to the letter, or whether you wish to adapt it to the pupils' particular needs. Sessions can be taught independently or in isolation and you can also mix and match the content and order of the sessions to suit your individual requirements.

The final week's session is a presentation and you may wish to split the class into small groups and give each a practical theme to work on with a view to each group making a presentation at the end. As you go along you may wish to adapt the children's work into a PowerPoint or other visual format for presentation to the outside world at the end of the project or to present it as a display using media such as painting, collage and photographs at the school for other pupils and parents to view. You may wish to spend a separate session putting together your presentation. Both these link in with National Curriculum requirements in ICT and Art and Design.

This project comes with documents relating to a sample family that teachers can use to illustrate their teaching. If suitable you may wish to build your project around an ex-school pupil in order to make the project more interesting for the children. Doing

this often helps the children relate to the project and research they are doing. In this case the teacher will need to investigate the school records before the project begins in order to identify a suitable candidate. **See information sheet 4.** In session one, you can then introduce this person to the children - tell them about the person and how you will be following his or her life at the school and what life in general would have been like for him or her. Early school records may be at the record office but you may find your school holds some records at the school itself.

Remember that there are Information sheets that relate to each week's session and you can either use these yourself, or let the children work through them.

### **Week 1: Introduction.**

#### **Teacher's prep for Week 1.**

##### **Assess:**

- **Are there any school records the kids can see? What dates are they and what do they cover? –e.g. attendance registers, punishment books, diaries. If you decide to use an ex pupil as the basis of the school project investigate the school records to see if there is anyone suitable – see information sheet 4**
- **Find out how old the school is.**
- **Are there any available old photographs of the school or ex pupils at the school or online?**

### **Lesson 1**

#### **Initial Discussion.**

The aim of lesson one is to get the kids thinking and to plan their project. This first lesson may be best suited to an extended lesson to introduce the project.

- Begin with a brief chat about what sort of things the kids could include in a history of the school. Ask them to start thinking about things they would like to know about the school.

You can use the topics suggested below in the **Start Making Your Project** section, as well as the kids' own ideas to form your own unique school project. The idea behind this session is **not to find out answers to questions**, but to think about **which questions they want to concentrate on and how they can research** them.

### **Forming Ideas to Use in the School History Project.**

Ask the children **what they already know** about the school and the area in which it is situated. Don't forget to refer to the **Information Sheets**.

- Is it a church or community or independent school?
- How old is it?
- Did any of their family go there before them?
- How old do they think the school building is? Do they think it has always looked like this?
- Is the school in a rural or urban area? Do they think the area has changed much over the years? How do they think it has changed?

Then show them any old photographs of the school and pupils – what is different? What does the building look like then as compared to now? What are the children wearing in the old photographs? How does it compare to today?

### **What do the children want to find out?**

In the light of the above discussion and questions, ask the children to tell you what they are particularly interested in learning more about concerning the school, its pupils and the area in which the school is situated. Using the subjects that the class finds of particular interest will help make each school project unique and encourage the children to investigate further. If they need further ideas, use the subject headings

below under the *Start Making Your Project* section to help stimulate their thoughts further.

### Start making your project plan:

Once they have decided where their interests lie then get them to think about what they need to know in order to answer their chosen topics and questions, and to suggest ideas on how to find the information and also how they will present it at the end of the project.

Make a list of these ideas to ensure they are all covered in the project. Use this as a starting point for a plan of subjects the kids want to cover in the project and how they can find out about them. Add other questions and ideas as you go along. Each week's lesson will concentrate on a certain area of research. You may wish to use this timetable to structure your own research or you may wish to "cherry pick" the sections of the timetable that you find most interesting or of most relevance to your school. Remember: you do not have to use the sessions in sequence.

Depending on the size of your class and the number of topics you have listed, you may wish to divide the class into groups and allocate a group to investigate each subject.

Here are some sample subject headings for your project plan. These subjects will fit in with other records you will use as you work through the project timetable:

#### School Life.

- How many children were there in the school compared to today?
- School uniform
- School meals
- School buildings and how they have changed. Has the school building changed over the years or has it always been like this? What did it the school look like in the past?
- Was it always on this site?
- How many pupils did it have when it opened and where did they come from?

- What was life like at school for pupils in the past? e.g. curriculum, length of school days
- How school lessons have changed – subjects and equipment used, teachers and methods of instruction
- Who was the first headmaster/mistress? What can you find out about him or her?
- At what age did they leave school in the Victorian era? What is it today?
- School attendance and children's work out of school, holidays and celebrations. Growth of Victorian Christmas – Christmas trees and cards.

### Life Outside School

- What was life like at home for the pupils? Where did they live, what sort of house, what did their parents do, how many brothers and sisters did they have?
- What jobs did they do after leaving school? Did any go on to further education?
- What jobs did their parents do?
- Where were their parents born – were they born locally? Incorporate this into session 4 about census returns and use as part of ICT learning about how to interpret information organise and bring information together.
- What was life like for the pupils and their families in former times and how was their life different to those of the kids and their families today? How would their lives and those of their parents have been affected by the place in which they lived? **See information sheet 1, 5, 6 and 7**
- Illnesses – what illnesses were common in the past? Could they be fatal? Why don't we suffer from them now?
- How world events affected the pupils at home and school
- Who looked after the poor? Did the system work? **(Information sheet 5)**
- Local industries or employment. Is the area well known for anything either now or in the past in terms of a certain trade or industry (mining, pottery, brewing, hop growing, cotton industry etc)?

Transport.

- What transport links does the area have e.g. railways, roads, canals, sea? Have these have changed over the years? How have the changes affected the local community? Work/Leisure/Transport of goods? [See information sheet 7](#)

Famous People or Events

- Is the town or village connected with any famous person and what did they contribute to society both locally and nationally?
- Is the place associated with a famous event such as a battle or local disaster,? What impact did this have on the local area and its people? Was there a wider impact across the country as well and if so why?

Historic Buildings

- Are there any historic buildings nearby such as castles, bridges, institutions e.g. old workhouses/hospitals? When were they built and why? Are they still used today or did they fall out of use – and if so why?
- How have the housing needs of the local population of the area changed over the years? Have local houses changed in the way they look and what they are built of?

### **How can they find out more?**

Ask the children how they think they could find out more about the topics they have suggested. How can they be sure that the information they find is accurate? ([ICT Finding Things Out](#))

Answers should include:

- Old school registers or records
- Old photographs – on internet or at school

- Maps – old maps to show school in former times. [See information sheet 2](#)
- Ask family or ex pupils what school was like in their day
- Internet sites
- Census records – a census is a survey of the people living in a certain area – a headcount of all the people in an area gives a lot of information about those people that helps understand what life was like in the past. Most of these censuses are available for viewing on the Internet 1841-1911. Note that charges may apply and that many censuses for Ireland were destroyed with only the 1901 and 1911 remaining. [See information sheet 3](#)
- Visits to local museums
- Walk around the local area noting the buildings around them.
- Talking to people – either experts on a particular subject or people who have experienced life in the past first hand e.g. old pupils

### **What do we mean by a “record” and how can they help our project?**

The above are all types of *records*. Records are usually written documents, telling us about something which happened in the past such as a major event e.g. a big train crash, a family holiday, the arrival of a great aunt from Australia, or they may tell us about the way people used to live e.g. Grandmother’s account of what life was like she was growing up. A record like this is what we call a *first hand account* – that means it was written down by the person who witnessed or experienced the event.

Others records may be what we call *second hand accounts* which are accounts written down by someone later in time recalling what he has been told by someone else who experienced the event. Other records such as census records are records created because the government has asked them to be made. The census was collected by a group of people called enumerators who asked each householder to answer the list of questions that the government had put together, such as how old they were and what job they did. The government used the answers given to assess the number of people

working in certain jobs, the type of houses people lived, and any medical conditions they had in order to try and help improve living conditions.

Records also include *oral records*. *These are* spoken accounts of things that have happened. They have never been written down but have been passed down by ***word of mouth*** to each succeeding generation of a family and also pictures or photographs which show us how things looked at a certain date.

### **Getting out on the Ground.**

Explain how we can enhance the knowledge we have gained from records by visiting the places we have learnt about and using our eyes - visiting churches, older buildings, walking the town/village to see how it has changed.

### **Activity**

**Show the children some sample records.** We will be looking at each of the records in greater detail in later weeks but this will give them a flavour of what is to come.

- Photographs
- Maps
- School registers and diaries etc
- Ex pupils' account of school life
- Show them sample census return from information sheet 3 or from the sample pack about the Ames family.

## Home Activity

Suggest to the kids that they ask their parents about what life was like at school when they were young.

Get them to make a list of questions to ask their parents:

- Which schools did they go to
- Which town or village was it in?
- How far from home was it?
- How did they get there?
- Did they have school dinners and if so what were they like?
- Was it a school for both boys and girls?
- What time did school start and finish?
- Did they wear a uniform? What was it like?
- What subjects did they learn
- What were the teachers like?

## **Week 2: Church and School**

### **Teacher's prep for Week 2.**

#### **Assess:**

- **What other schools are in your area and what sort of schools are they?**
- **What local places of worship are in your area? What are they called and which faiths do they represent. Can you arrange to make a visit to one or more?**
- **What is the oldest place of worship in the area?**
- **If you are using a school pupil as the centre of the project find out if they are buried locally or if there is a war memorial with their name on.**

#### Lesson 2

This week we look at the different schools and places of worship in your area and assess how many there are and what the differences between them are. We look at which different religions are represented in the locality.

#### Schools.

In many places there may be more than one school, while in some small villages there are no longer any schools. Ask the children the following questions to see how much they already know.

- How many schools are there in your town or village?
- Is your school in the town or village where you live, or do you travel a long way to school?
- Why might there be more than one school in place?
- Why might there not be a school in some places?

Different types of schools are *founded* (established) to meet the needs of different groups of people.

What different types of schools can you think of?

- Primary usually for children up to 11
- Secondary for children over 11
- Colleges for older children before they go to university

There are also:

- Faith schools
- Community schools
- State Schools

Some schools are given money by the government – these are known as state schools. State is another word for government. However, the Church of England originally founded some schools in the UK many years ago and these are known as *Church of England Schools*. They usually have names connected with the local church such as St Mary's or St Peter's to show they have a link with the local church. The Church of England is the official religion of the UK and people who belong to it are Christians. There are other types of Christians who belong to different groups rather than the Church of England. They have slightly different ways of interpreting the bible and what it means. Some of these groups include Methodist and Baptists.

### Churches and Religion

What is a faith?

A faith is a religion. Christianity is one faith.

What other religions can you name?

Other faiths also have their own schools. Muslim schools are known as *madrasas* and most are part of local *mosques*. Sikhs and Hindus and Buddhists also have their own schools.

**Optional Discussion Topic:** What do the different religions of the world have in common? Do they share any beliefs or teachings about the way we should live our

In the old days in the UK nearly everyone would go to church on a Sunday and hundreds of years ago you would be fined if you did not attend.

Children have not always gone to school though! This may sound great, but they never learned to read or write and never gained the skills that you already have! Many children had to go to school on a Sunday (Sunday School) where they learned basic reading and writing skills and read from the Bible. They had to go to school on a Sunday because the rest of their time was spent helping their parents working in the factories or fields!

Education for children was only made compulsory in the 1880 and only for children under the age of ten. The school leaving age was gradually raised over the years until today it is 16. [See information sheet 1: Schools and Education](#)

Now is the time to expand and research some of the ideas you discussed in lesson one: See [Information Sheet 4: How to research your school and Information Sheets 6](#)

- How old is the school? If it is fairly new, was there a previous school that it replaced and what happened to the previous school building? Perhaps it has been converted to house- if so take a look!
- Are there any school registers or diaries available? Do they cover any memorable dates like the outbreak of WW11- if so read out relevant extracts?
- Where is the parish church in comparison to the school? How old is it? Are there links between the two – e.g. is the school C o E? Are there other churches in the locality? What is the difference between them?
- If you are basing your project around a particular ex pupil of the school then show the children entries in the register or school diaries that relate to him or her. If he or she is buried in the church or is mentioned on the war memorial, take them to the church and let them hunt for his grave.

### Activity.

Take the class on a trip to see different places of worship. If applicable you may wish to show the children the former site of their school.

- How many places of worship are there in your town or village?
- Note the different architecture and the size and location.
- Are they still in use today?
- Are they just used for worship or are they used for other activities as well?
- Take some photographs or sketch of the different places of worship.
- Make a list with the name of each place of worship and which faith it represents.

### Home Activity

Make a list of the advantages and disadvantages for children in the past of not having to go to school.

## **Week 3: Maps and photographs**

**Teacher's prep for Week 3. Use information sheets 2 and 7 for this session.**

**Assess.**

- **What photographs of the school you already have**
- **What else can be found online or perhaps from your local history society or library.**
- **If you have access to a camera this will be useful.**
- **Make sure you have access to a modern day Ordnance Survey map (Landranger or Explorer or both) that covers the school area**

The aim of lesson 3 is to introduce the children to using maps and also learning to use different sources to learn about how their environment has developed.

### Maps

What is a map? A map is a drawing or diagram that shows us what the land looks like and will often include features such as rivers, mountains, buildings and roads. Maps do not always just show the geographical layout of an area. They can, for example, be adapted so show social conditions in a certain place. The nineteenth century poverty maps of Charles Booth (<http://booth.lse.ac.uk/>) use colour coding to show what housing conditions were like in each of the streets of London. Booth wrote a book called "Inquiry into Life and Labour in London (1886-1903)". The poverty maps were an end product of the book and each street is coloured to indicate the income and social class of its inhabitants.

### What is Scale?

The scale of a map is the size at which the land and features on it are shown in relation to real life

Maps help us understand how the place we are interested in has changed over time. Changes might include development of the railways and the growth of local industries or more recently the growth of a new road system and the development of housing. Some maps are designed to show something specific such as First World War trench maps ([www.naval-military-press.co.uk/](http://www.naval-military-press.co.uk/)) or Charles Booth's late 19th century poverty maps (<http://booth.lse.ac.uk/>)

### Activity

- Look at modern day map Ordnance Survey Landranger map and pinpoint the school. Is it in a town or village location? How can you tell from the map?
- Now look at a modern day Ordnance Survey Explorer map – what is the difference? (Much larger scale and shows more detail such as building, pubs, schools)
- What symbols can you see on the map and what do they mean?
- What is meant by the “scale” of a map

Find the school on as many old maps as you can. Compare them with each other and with the modern day maps. Is it in the school in the same location? How has the surrounding environment changed over the years?

### Photographs

We have learnt a lot by looking at maps but we can now use photographs to add to our knowledge. They will show what both the school and its pupils used to look like.

### Activity

Start by looking at any photographs of the school both – old and new. Spot the differences between them.

- What has changed in terms of what the school used to look like and what it looks like now?
- Has the road/environment outside changed? If the exterior of the school has not changed much, do the children think things would have been the same inside the buildings – gas/electricity/water/toilets/chairs/desks?
- Recreate shots of the school in old photograph by taking the same photograph today.
- What are the pupils wearing in the old photographs?
- When do the old photographs date from? How do we know? See information sheet 5 Maps and Photographs
- Take a photograph of modern day pupils and compare with any photographs of pupils in the past.

### Home activity

Look through any old photographs of family members you may have at home. See how the style of clothing has changed over the years. Make a list of what is different.

#### **Week 4. Using school and census records**

#### **Teacher's prep for Week 5. Use information sheet 3.**

##### **Assess your school and/or census records.**

**If you have access to school records for your school look through them to note their content. If there are diaries = what subjects or events do they cover that will interest the children and show them how life has changed over the years. Use the suggested themes below for ideas.**

**If there are school records in the local record office consider a school trip to visit but discuss this with the record office staff in advance. Alternatively you could arrange a trip to a local museum.**

**Make sure you can access one of the census websites – remember that some require payment and some are free – these are listed in [information sheet 3](#) **Census records.****

By now the children should have a good idea of the history of the school and its locality. They can now extend this knowledge by investigating the school registers or diaries and census records. Be sure to incorporate the ideas and records discussed in the preceding weeks, so that the children learn to cross-reference and compare the different sources. This session will hopefully stimulate the children to take another look at sources such as maps, and photographs in particular. The content of this class will be determined by the records you have at the school. If you have school registers or diaries then select themes suitable to the information contained within them. You may wish to divide the class into groups to concentrate on selected themes.

Suggested themes include:

- **Where did the pupils live?** How far away? Do any of the addresses still exist – what were the houses like? Incorporates- Maps and photographs **from week 3**
- **Transport** – how did the children get to school?
- **Illnesses** – what did they suffer from, do children today suffer from these illnesses? If not why not? Did any children die? Did you see a stone for them in the churchyard?
- **School buildings** –location of site of school – new/old buildings. Incorporates-, Maps and photographs from week 3.
- **Occupations** – do the registers say what the parents did or indicate what jobs the children went on to after leaving school? How does this compare with occupations in modern times? Did the children do the same sort of jobs as their parents or were things changing?
- **Major events and celebrations** – The school diaries may cover one or both of the World wars. If so how did the war effect the school. There may be mention of holidays and celebrations. What were they and do we still celebrate them today. How did they celebrate?
- **Lessons and teachers** – who were the staff and what were the lessons taught?
- **Were the teachers local, married, male/female?** How long did they stay in their jobs?
- **If you are using an ex pupil as a theme** – find out if there is anyone with the same surname still at the school today. Are they be related? Did your chosen pupil die unmarried or did he or she have children?

If your school does not have registers or diaries then use census records in a similar manner. If you are lucky enough to have school registers, looking at them in tandem with census records will make the project even more interesting. For more information on census records and how to access them see information sheet ..... You may wish to pick one census year on which to concentrate, or alternatively you may prefer to compare several years to see how things changed.

## **Week 5. First hand oral history**

This week will ideally be a talk from a local resident of some age who has memories to share of what the area and school was like in his or her day. An alternative would be a talk from war veteran or any of the pupils' relatives who previously went to the school could talk about what school life was like in their day Encourage the children to ask questions. Get them to prepare some questions in advance. You may wish to record the talk if your speaker is agreeable. Do ask them first.

Afterwards get the children to tell you their thoughts discuss their feelings and about what they have heard. What do they think is the best way to communicate to others the things they have learned in the session?

Link this back to what they learned in session one about the difference between types of evidence – first and second-hand oral accounts. How reliable are these as evidence of the past?

Alternatively you can use this session for extra time to work on your assignments or as extra discussion time on topics of particular interest or to use the supplied model example of the ex-school pupil that is supplied with the pack.

## **Week 6. Presentation**

Week 6 is for summarising and evaluating what you have covered in the project and for gathering together what you have learned to present to your school or the outside world.

It is a good time to review what you have all learned during this time and to discuss what you found of most interest and why.

If you have split your class into groups this is the week where they can present the work they have done to the class as a whole or you may wish the whole class to present the project in its entirety to the whole school either in a spoken presentation, possibly with PowerPoint slides or as a wall project. The pupils' work could be developed through progression of the topic in ICT lessons as well.