

4 History: What It Is, What It Means



Do you know what history is? Here is one answer. It is everything humans have done and thought. Here is a more specific answer. History is the story of events. It is the story of nations and persons. How people began writing is part of history. So is the Hundred Years' War. So is the first airplane flight. So is last year's election.

How do we know about the past? There are many sources. Some are oral. Some are visual or written. We can learn of the past from one person's memory. We can learn from stories handed down through generations. We can see the past in a piece of Stone Age flint. We see it in old paintings and photos. We read about the past in old records. They may be ships' logs or church records. They may be diaries of pioneers. They may be journals of presidents. Each fact and story is interesting. Each is important. Each is part of history.

It is impossible to record everything about an event or person. Facts must be carefully chosen to tell what happened. Questions have to be asked. Answers must be found. Different accounts of a single event need to be put together.

This is the job of historians. They try to come up with an accurate story. They look carefully at what they find. Then they put the past together again. Historians search for causes of events. They also look for history's effects. Sometimes they do not know how or why something happened. Then they come up with theories.

These theories are based on the facts. They may help explain certain events. When the facts are put together, a story of events and nations comes forth. The story of humans can be told.

Main Idea	1	Answer	Score
Mark the <i>main idea</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M	15
Mark the statement that is <i>too broad</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B	5
Mark the statement that is <i>too narrow</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N	5
a. History is the Hundred Years' War and the first airplane flight.		<input type="checkbox"/>	
b. To understand history, facts must be studied and analyzed.		<input type="checkbox"/>	
c. History is all about the past.		<input type="checkbox"/>	

Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

- Subject Matter** 2 Another good title for this passage is
 a. A History of the World.
 b. The Story of Nations.
 c. How to Become a Historian.
 d. Making Sense of History.
- Supporting Details** 3 Which of the following is an example of a visual history source?
 a. an old photograph
 b. a diary
 c. a person's memory
 d. stories
- Conclusion** 4 To be a good historian, a person must **not**
 a. want to know about the past.
 b. be in a hurry.
 c. be able to analyze information.
 d. read a lot.
- Clarifying Devices** 5 The question in the second paragraph alerts the reader that the sentences that follow will
 a. list some sources of historical information.
 b. tell why there is no information about the past.
 c. tell why history confuses the writer.
 d. give reasons why history is important.
- Vocabulary in Context** 6 The word *accurate* means
 a. mistaken.
 b. agreeable.
 c. believable.
 d. correct.

Add your scores for questions 1-6. Enter the total here Total
 and on the graph on page 214. Score