

What can I do next?

History is a highly respected academic subject that can be used as a springboard for a variety of courses at university and a diverse range of jobs.

History graduates are regularly recruited into a number of occupations including the law, administration, journalism, business, teaching and many others.

Famous history graduates include Gordon Brown, William Hague, "Ali G", Prince Charles, Alan Green, Lord Sainsbury, Anita Roddick, Simon Mayo and Neil Tennant of the Pet Shop Boys whilst David Cameron took A Level History!

About that Punch Cartoon on the cover...

The butt of the joke was an exhibition to help select new paintings for the Houses of Parliament, being rebuilt after a disastrous fire in 1834. Artists made their entries in the form of cartoons - which originally meant an introductory sketch drawing.

Punch magazines own entry for the exhibition was drawings which it *ironically* entitled 'cartoons'. Punch contrasted the luxurious parliamentary plans with the miserable poverty of the population. Sarcastically, Punch declared that *'the poor ask for bread, and the philanthropy of the State accords - an exhibition'*. Looking again at the cartoon, you can see the desperate paupers puzzling at a gallery of portraits, parodying the beautiful designs submitted for the competition. *The Punch sketch was called: Cartoon, No. 1: Substance and Shadow'. The word 'cartoon' stuck and became linked with pictorial satire and eventually with any humorous drawing.*

Cartoons are just one type of historical evidence that you might discuss in class. The internet provides instant access to a vast range of contemporary sources from speeches, posters to documents. The cartoon archive is just one amazing site at:

<http://library.ukc.ac.uk/cartoons/>

STUDYING I.B. or A LEVEL HISTORY



*Find out how a 'sketchy' idea of humour took off...
AS Modern History students study the
Condition of England in the mid-19th Century.
Find out inside how this grim 1843 Punch sketch
of ragged paupers created the modern meaning of a cartoon*

Why Study History?

The challenge of History is to come to terms with people and ways of life different from those we know now. Some of the ways people behaved in the past seem quite inexplicable, but the past is so much bound up in the present that the questions Historians seek to answer often have contemporary relevance.

That does not mean a study of History will enable humanity to solve all problems but a Historian will be better able to define them. Studying History will give the opportunity to understand the past and also a valuable training in the skills of research, comprehension, analysis of a wide range of material, the formulation of reasoned interpretation, and the ability to communicate coherent judgments.

How reliable is your memory?

Memories, whether oral or written, are the foundation of history. Because of this, the study of history involves a great deal of analysis and interpretation - 'facts' become more complicated than they first appeared.

The study of history seeks to draw historical facts from a mass of otherwise random traces which litter our view of the past. Such traces, often distorted by the passage of time, require careful investigation and interpretation if they are to be made into a clear, yet mature, narrative of past events.



The Coursework Conundrum

One of the key differences between the A level and the I.B. is the different style of coursework:

The I.B. coursework taken at both standard and higher level is a more traditional piece of independent study. This is an opportunity to explore your own interests. You can study a topic which contrasts completely with your exam modules. You have the choice to go back and study something you have touched upon before in British History or choose something with a more international flavour.

The A level coursework is more directed. You will produce 2 x 2000 word essays: a task based on interpretations in passages set by the examination board and an individual investigation. This individual investigation must tie-in with the content taught on the course. For the Early Modern group this will be Aspects of Elizabeth I and for the Modern group this will be Britain under Margaret Thatcher.

The Skills

Whether you study A Level or I.B. History, it is a good choice for those who want to keep their options for the future open.

You will learn to:

- ✓ analyse a range of often conflicting historical sources
- ✓ follow a line of argument in discussion
- ✓ write clear, structured, analytical accounts that represent a balanced assessment but which will also include your conclusions
- ✓ Learn how to research effectively
- ✓ Give seminar-style presentations

