



***“Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.”***

George Santayana (1863 – 1952), Spanish philosopher

## 1. History Discussion

1. Why is it important to learn about history? Did you enjoy studying history at school? What did they teach you?
2. What are some of the most significant events from history? What about from your country? Who are some of the most important historical figures? What about from your country?
3. If you could live in a historical period from the past, which one would you choose and why?
4. What don't schools teach about history that you think they should? What should not be taught in history classes?
5. How important is it for a child to learn about the darker side of their country's history?
6. What is the connection between history and national pride? Is this a good thing or a bad thing? Are you proud of your country's history? Why or why not? How important is it for people to be proud of their country's history?
7. What events from history are still affecting the modern day?
8. Is there one definitive version of history, or are there many narratives?

## 2. History Vocabulary

- **empire** (noun) – a large area of land, territories or foreign countries ruled by a single person or state.
- **revolution** (noun) – a dramatic change from the status quo; overthrowing the current political system to replace it with a new system.
- **the course of history** (noun) – the way history happened or will happen.
- **prehistory** (noun) – the period of history before written records.
- **to go down in history** (verb phrase) – to be remembered as historically significant.
- **to live in the past** (verb phrase) – someone who is too concerned about the past or refuses to accept that the modern world is different from that of the past.

Using the vocabulary words above, complete the following sentences (remember to use the correct form of the word, e.g. verb conjugation or plural noun):

1. At its height, the British **Empire** covered 24% of the Earth's total land and controlled 23% of its people.
2. During the French **Revolution**, the king was executed, and the Republic was born.
3. People need to stop **living in the past** and accept that the Empire is dead and that the country is no longer a major world power.
4. The charge of the Light Brigade **went down in history** as one of the greatest military disasters ever.
5. We know about **prehistory** mainly thanks to studies in the field of archaeology.
6. When Archduke Ferdinand was assassinated in Bosnia, it set off a chain of events that would change **the course of history**.

### History vocabulary comprehension questions

1. Should people from countries that had empires be proud or ashamed of this history?
2. Which revolutions were the most significant in history?
3. Which events truly changed the course of history?
4. What are some things that happened in prehistory?
5. Which people from the modern day will go down in history?
6. Which people do you think are living in the past?

### 3. Video: The History of Everything

You are going to watch a video by Kurzgesagt – In a Nutshell called “Time: The History & Future of Everything.”

Watch the video here: <https://yourenglishpal.com/blog/esl-conversation-lesson-plan-history/>

While you watch the video, answer the following questions:

#### Multiple choice

- Where was a beauty contest held in a nuclear power plant?  
a) France                      **b) Czech Republic**                      c) on the internet
- Which event mainly affected the course of history in the early 21st century?  
**a) the 9/11 Attacks**      b) the invasion of Afghanistan      c) the war in Iraq
- What did we almost destroy ourselves with in the 20th century?  
a) Facebook                      b) Twitter                      **c) nuclear weapons**
- How many years ago did the Industrial Revolution happen?  
a) 150 years                      **b) 250 years**                      c) 350 years

#### Sentence completion

- The way humans saw themselves and the world they live in was changed by the **Theory of Evolution**.
- The Fall of Constantinople and Columbus’ “discovery” of America marked the end of **The Middle Ages**.
- The Great Pyramids were built **4,500** years ago.
- Around **2 million** years ago, our ancestors learned how to create fire and use tools.

#### Short answer

- For how many years did dinosaurs rule the Earth? **(Over) 165 million**
- How many years after the formation of the Sun was the Earth formed? **65 million**
- How many years into the future will the Sun become so hot that life on Earth will not be possible? **(Roughly) 1 billion**
- What is the name of the final stage of the Universe? **Heat death**

## 4. History Conversation Questions

1. To what extent is history written by the victors?
2. In his novel *1984*, George Orwell wrote: "Who controls the past controls the future; who controls the present controls the past." Is this true?
3. Is history written to hide the truth of what happened in the past? Can you think of any examples?
4. Why is it mainly rich men who appear in the history books?
5. Why are so many people interested in rewriting history? Are they actually rewriting history, or are they writing a more accurate version? Can you think of any examples?
6. Should statues of historical figures ever be taken down? How would you feel if you saw a statue dedicated to someone who did horrible things to your people?
7. Why do we find it so difficult to learn the lessons from history? Is history doomed to repeat itself? Can you think of any examples?
8. What will historians 100 years in the future write about the current era we're living in?

## 5. History Writing Task

Write about your opinion of history. Try to use some of the vocabulary you learned earlier in this lesson. In your answer, you could include some of the following topics:

- Why learning history is important.
- The most important events from history.
- Why history repeats itself.

### **Alternative exam practice question:**

George Santayana said that those that fail to learn from the mistakes of history are doomed to repeat them. Do you agree or disagree with this?