

Uncovering Our Local History with Ellie the Elephant

Learning objective: To understand how to investigate local history using primary and secondary sources, and to recognise how our local area has changed over time.

Use your knowledge of historical enquiry to answer the following questions about your own local community. Think like a historian, just like Ellie the Elephant!

Ellie the Elephant is visiting your town to learn about its past. She is looking for clues in old photographs, talking to long-term residents, and visiting the local library archives. History is all around us, hidden in the names of our streets, the age of our buildings, and the stories passed down through generations.

Word bank: primary source · secondary source · archive · chronological · artefact · land use · census

1. Ellie finds an old, hand-drawn map of your town from 1920. Is this a primary or secondary source? Explain why. (2 marks)

2. List two different types of local historical evidence you could look for to see how your high street has changed over the last 100 years. (2 marks)

3. If you wanted to find out how many people lived in your town in 1891, which historical document would you search for? (1 mark)

4. Look at the name of your street or a nearby landmark. Why do you think it was given that name? Does it relate to a person, an event, or the geography of the area? (2 marks)

5. Imagine a local shopkeeper sold a loaf of bread for 2 old pence in 1950. If you were researching the economy of the past, why is it important to know how much money people earned back then as well? (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a 'Then and Now' split-screen image of a local building or park. On the left, show how it might have looked 100 years ago; on the right, show how it looks today.



Extension challenge: Interview an adult who has lived in your area for a long time. Ask them what their favourite local place was when they were your age and write a short paragraph comparing their experience to yours.