

Local History Detective: Uncovering Our Town

Learning objective: To understand how local history can be studied through physical evidence and to identify changes in a local area over time.

Ellie the elephant has a fantastic memory, but even she needs help remembering how our town has changed! Look at the list of historical clues below. Sort them into two categories: 'Ancient Past' (things that happened over 100 years ago) and 'Recent History' (things that happened within the last 100 years). Then, answer the questions to become a local history detective.

Word bank: Victorian schoolhouse · The old steam railway · The new shopping mall · A medieval stone well · A digital tablet · A local war memorial from 1945 · A thatched cottage built in 1750 · The modern leisure center

1. Sort the items from the word bank into two groups: 'Ancient Past' and 'Recent History'. Why did you choose to put the 'thatched cottage' in the Ancient Past category? (3 marks)

2. If you found an old coin dated 1890 in your garden, what does that tell you about who might have lived there in the past? (2 marks)

3. Ellie says that looking at old photographs is a great way to learn history. Suggest one other source (like a building or an object) that helps us learn about our town's history. (1 mark)

4. Imagine a new building is being built in town. Why is it important for historians to look at the site before the building work starts? (2 marks)

5. If you were to create a time capsule to represent our town today, which three items would you include to show future historians what life is like in the 21st century? (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a 'Then and Now' split-screen image of a street in your local area. On the left side, show how it might have looked 100 years ago, and on the right side, show how it looks today.



Extension challenge: Interview an older relative or a neighbor about how your local area has changed since they were a child. Write down three interesting facts they tell you about the local shops, transport, or parks.