

Uncovering Our Local History

Learning objective: To understand how local history can be investigated through physical evidence and historical records.

Read the text carefully and answer the questions below to show your understanding of local historical enquiry.

Ellie the elephant loves visiting the local archives to discover how her town has changed over the centuries. Local history is like a giant jigsaw puzzle where every old building, street name, and dusty photograph acts as a piece of the picture. To understand our area, we must look for evidence. This might be a grand Victorian town hall, or perhaps the ruins of an ancient mill by the river that once powered the local economy. Ellie often examines old maps to see how the landscape shifted from quiet farmland to the busy high street we recognize today. She notes that street names, such as 'Mill Lane' or 'Weaver's Row', often tell us exactly what people did for a living long ago. By reading diaries from local families or checking the census records, we can learn about the lives of ordinary people who lived here before us. Whether it is a statue in the park or a faded plaque on a store front, our town is a living museum. When we piece these clues together, we gain a deeper connection to the place we call home.

Word bank: archaeology · archives · evidence · settlement · primary source · chronological

1. According to the text, what two things can act as clues to show what people did for a living in the past? (2 marks)

2. What does Ellie visit to find out information about how the town has changed? (1 mark)

3. Why might a historian look at a map from a hundred years ago and compare it to a modern map of the same area? (2 marks)

4. What does the author mean when they describe the town as a 'living museum'? (2 marks)

5. Do you think it is important for children to learn about the history of their own town? Give a reason for your answer. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a local landmark or an old building from your town and label two historical features that tell us about its past.



Extension challenge: Research one street name in your local area. Can you find out why it was given that name and what the area might have been used for in the past?